

# PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS



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# PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS

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Cover: Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*). Certainly one of the most unexpected birds to appear in Pennsylvania in recent years was this remarkable Brown Booby that materialized at the Penn Warner Tract, Bucks 14 (here) to 17 November 2015. (Devich Farbotnik)

**Looking back, and forward**

As I sat down to gather my thoughts for this final editorial, I went back and reread every editorial that I've written since I started in this role back in 2007. I could not help but be struck again at how much has changed in the very short time since I wrote my first editorial for this journal. Even in those days, on the occasion of those first few editorials, I was marveling then too at how much had changed in the few years before that.

I caught the birding bug at Presque Isle all the way back in 1984. Thinking back, it's not hard to remember an entirely different world—growing up a child of the 80s playing *Kaboom!* on the Atari 2600 and marveling at the latest Space Shuttle launch—but it's all dusty, ancient history now. After high school I moved to Michigan for a while, only to finally return to Pennsylvania in 2001 and return to birding in a serious and dedicated way. It doesn't seem that long ago, actually—and it wasn't—but by relative comparison to what birding is today, 2001 might as well have still been 1984. In that first year of the new millennium, I was still two years away from even using a cell phone, let alone owning one. Facebook would not be invented for another three years either. The PABIRDS listserv was still in its relative infancy, in a brief era when email listservs were still the only halting step that birders had taken into the budding Information Age.

But even by 2007, as I took up the task of serving as this journal's chief editor, things had already jolted radically forward again. Cell phones were not only ubiquitous but were quickly morphing into smartphones. Facebook was breaking out into the general population from its roots on college campuses. Suddenly, the birds weren't the only ones "tweeting". The digital SLR camera, and the revelation that one could tether a point-and-shoot camera to a spotting scope, were both permanently changing the way birders of all stripes approached a day in the field.

And now looking back again today, 2007 looks just as much like the Stone Age as 2001 did in 2007. Nowadays, there's an app for that—any "that"—including, shortly, one that will identify the bird in the photo you just took.

(Imagine that.) Email listservs, so revolutionary in 2001, are almost arcane today, as birders turn to the latest social media interfaces for the latest up to the second information. There is no doubt that birding continues to evolve in drastic ways, and to be sure most of these developments have been nothing but positive. But as I mentioned in this space in the last issue, these leaps "forward" are most certainly not *all* positive.

**The Information Affirmation Age**

Birding's rapid evolution is not unique. Instead, it has only gone along for the same ride that nearly all aspects of our society have taken in the past 20 years. The rapid shift to a world of instantaneous, on-demand information has touched all aspects of culture, right down to the ways we think and interact.

I think back to that kid I used to be, so fascinated by the big things that society did, like launch space shuttles. These days we spend much less time marveling at those latest technological advancements than we seemed to before, and perhaps that is because we now are so much more used to giant technological leaps forward—we even expect them—and they do seem to come more frequently than ever before. Or perhaps our attention spans are just that much more addled, what with the exponential increases in the amount of information we have access to, that as a society we now find it much harder to concentrate on any one thing.

Or, maybe it's just me, increasingly older and increasingly tottering on that inevitable edge of becoming just another old man yelling at the clouds. Indeed, every generation looks with despair on the younger ones coming up behind it. In the 1930s, jazz music was the signal for disaster; in the 1960s, it was the electric guitar and long hair. In the 1990s, it was grunge and so much feigned apathy. Today, it's the Millennials and their constant thumbing of their phones who are the ones hopelessly lost. In 30 years, it's anyone's guess what the Millennials will think of their progeny, but one thing is sure—they will find their kids' and grandkids' generations to be utterly hopeless and lost, of course.

Yet I think this time around, there really is fundamental change afoot,

something much deeper and more elemental than the usual expressions of rebellion against the past—music, art, politics—that characterized so many generational differences in centuries gone by. The present era really is unique—and ground zero for truly foundational change that will likely frame the course of things for generations to come. And it all starts with information. It goes without saying people have access to more information and interconnectedness than at any point in history, more than anyone can even comprehend, let alone absorb—and therein lies the subtle but insidious problem. We are faced with a veritable deluge of data, everything from the untold exabytes of information on the internet to the 850 channels pumped into so many homes on cable wires or satellite signals. In the face of all this, it's understandable that people will have a hard time focusing.

And so, they don't. Along with the explosion of information availability has come a concurrent explosion of *channels* of information, each highly specific and tailored to a particular audience. This goes for everything from a 24-hour cable news channel to one's personal Twitter feed. Before long, the line between the information being delivered and the channel it's being delivered by becomes not only blurred, but erased. Ultimately, despite having literally all the information in the world at their fingertips, people tend to seek out only those sources of information which *affirm* what they already believe, and which present it in an agreeable way. The drawback is that quite often this kind of highly tailored information is also highly superficial, or "Wikipedia-ized", for lack of a better term. People can become informed on a topic but still have no real understanding of it, no *depth*, while still believing that they do. In other words, the Information Age is quickly devolving into the Affirmation Age—we don't seek *information* so much as we seek *affirmation* of ourselves and our beliefs via specific channels of information—and the great irony of the Information Age is that people, in some important ways, are becoming more ill-informed than ever before.

This idea of people seeking out and spending their time with others of like mind isn't exactly news. But it's the way

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we do it today, and in the context we do it in, that is new. At the heart of it is social media, the new and revolutionary technology of the moment. Social media exaggerates our already deeply ingrained tendencies to seek out affirmation. Down through the centuries people have always sought out peer groups of the like-minded, but now they can do it and become world famous too, or at least “internet famous” among their group, seeking those all-important “likes” and “favs”. YouTube’s motto is “Broadcast Yourself”, and that is exactly what society does, yet it seems we do it in increasingly shallow ways. These days anyone can know anything about everything, and perhaps more than ever people do in fact know a little about a lot more things than folks in the past have, but if one isn’t careful this comes at the cost of depth. People tend not to have patience, or concentration, to really learn and deeply understand any one thing.

### Birding in the Affirmation Age

What does this have to do with birding? As I mentioned, birding is not unique, and increasingly I sense it going down these same roads that the rest of society is on. And as the hobby of birding continues its inexorable transformation into eBirding, I wonder what will become of the modern birder and indeed of eBird in the years to come. eBird itself is transforming along the same lines as society, and is becoming considerably more social media-like, and I’m not sure that’s necessarily a good thing.

It goes back to depth, and real understanding. In this space a year ago, I wrote about the “new birding”, in which birders just starting out today, fully steeped in the culture of smartphones, apps, Wikipedia, and social media, are increasingly more likely to invest in a camera than in a spotting scope. Too many beginners, I wrote, are increasingly reluctant to be patient, to get things wrong, to leave birds unidentified... in other words to take time, make mistakes, and really learn. Instead many are content to snap a picture to chat about on facebook later, and move on to the next eBird alert they just received. In other words, they tend to be more concerned with *affirmation* than *information*, or perhaps more specifically, than with developing a real depth of knowledge that easily available information should facilitate. eBird, in some ways only exacerbates this, with devices like the “Top 100” and “eBirder of the Month”, both of which ostensibly are designed to increase participation in eBird, but which also encourage the “affirmation” culture by giving birders a social media-like platform for getting their names “out there”.

In the end, I do not delude myself into thinking that birders back in the 80s were somehow inherently better than today’s crop. But they certainly were different. Without a doubt, the relative lack of information back then forced birders to carry around much more information in their heads than birders need to today, and that’s perhaps the real difference. One way is not necessarily “better” than the other but the modern way comes with these caveats: that it’s easier to get distracted, and easier to get away with “shooting first (with a camera) and asking questions later”, and to simply just get caught up rushing to the latest GPS coordinates that came across in one’s eBird feed. In other words, ironically here in the Information Age, it’s a lot easier now to get away with a much shallower knowledge of birds than birders in the past had out of necessity—and I think this ultimately can even result even in a lesser appreciation for the very birds themselves. (And that’s a topic that demands another 3000 words unto itself.)

eBird and the Information Age have indeed enabled amazing things, and are the tools of amazing and important work. It can’t be understated the importance of the increased focus that these tools have brought to the citizen science of birding. But it’s important to keep the focus of eBird there—on the science—and not on the social aspects of it all. Although that too begs a certain question...

### What is “Citizen Science”, anyway?

And is the collection and vetting of bird records really “citizen science”? If you’ll allow a bit of a tangent, frankly, I think the answer to this question is no.

Consider another project that is classified as citizen science—the Galaxy Zoo ([www.galaxyzoo.org](http://www.galaxyzoo.org)). This project invites the citizenry to examine literally millions of images of galaxies that have been collected by research astronomers, and classify them according to certain criteria. Assembling this enormous catalog of galaxy types, if left to a comparatively tiny cadre of professional astronomers, would (if being optimistic) take decades to complete—and there are thousands of new images being made every day. By crowd-sourcing the classification process, those decades of work shrink to months, or even weeks.

Sounds pretty familiar, right? By crowd-sourcing the gathering of bird records, we are able to assemble a large online, real-time database with millions of observations that would otherwise take a smaller group of dedicated surveyors many years to match in scope. Yet there is a difference in the “science” of birding and a project like Galaxy Zoo—the matter of *verifiability*. Whereas the

amateur classifications of Galaxy Zoo images are 100% verifiable (those galaxies aren’t going anywhere), nearly all bird data—probably better than 99.99% of all records that have ever been collected—are entirely not verifiable.

In Galaxy Zoo, anyone at any time can reexamine an image that has already been classified by a “citizen”, and offer their own classification. In fact this is built right into the methodology—the project actively encourages multiple people to classify every image, as a way of measuring and increasing the reliability of the data set as a whole. In birding, however, and therefore also throughout eBird, nearly every single datum (a bird sighting) is an entirely subjective and non-verifiable judgment being made by a field surveyor who has little or no training in formal science. Only a tiny proportion of all bird records are independently verifiable—these are the birds that are reported in frequently birded areas, within driving range of several birders, and which do not fly away immediately after first being seen and identified. Verifiable sightings also include the vanishingly small percentage of bird records that are documented by photo or recording, provided such evidence was not faked, an alarmingly increasing phenomenon. (See the earlier bit about seeking affirmation.) The vast majority of all other bird records are single-observer, one-time observations that are not in any way verifiable. Vetting of bird records is just as subjective, in fact even less so, than the gathering of bird records. Unlike the observer who can at least rely on their own eyes, ears and identification skills in real time, the reviewer of records (eBird reviewer, county compiler, bird records committee, *Pennsylvania Birds* editor) makes further subjective judgments only on what an observer says they saw, judgments which normally hinge merely on how well the observer can explain what they claim to have seen. Nearly all bird data, therefore, necessarily hinges almost entirely on the *credibility* of the observer, which puts birding’s “citizen science” in stark contrast with the much-closer-to-true science being done by the amateurs participating in Galaxy Zoo.

In actual practice, reviewing bird records is somewhat more like being an FBI agent interviewing many witnesses to an event. In a less than scientific way, it’s up to the agent to decide which eye witnesses are unreliable and to weight the evidence provided by each witness according to their presumed reliability. It’s not an accident that bird records committees operate more like juries than forensic investigators. Thus, tracking bird records is much more akin to the work of historians or archivists than it is to that of hard scientists. When you boil

it down, our “citizen science” is really nothing more than a billion little eye witness accounts (in other words, not science) that have to be subjectively vetted (also not science).

This difference between birding and other more truly scientific “citizen science” projects has profound impacts—on this journal, on eBird and the implementation of eBird, and on birders themselves. Many of these issues are almost wholly unrecognized by birders, or at least underappreciated. The impacts to eBird specifically are perhaps a topic for a different outlet. It’s enough to say here that as we as a society put more and more value and importance on bird data, for example in policy decisions, it becomes that much more important to do everything we can to ensure the integrity of the data, and that in turn means we need to ensure the integrity of the observers themselves. By this I don’t mean merely that birders not “cheat”, though that is certainly part of the picture, but also that new birders (at least those who are eBirders) are taught precisely what it is that we are doing, why it’s important, and what it takes to become a reliable contributor. There’s a lot more to it than just chasing whatever just popped up on the latest eBird alert. I want to stress that none of this is to say that bird data can’t be used for scientific endeavors, much less is it to say that bird data is not important—that would be quite a claim from a guy who spent close to 10 years as *Pennsylvania Birds* editor! Bird data is extremely important. What this is to say is that we would do well to understand exactly what bird data really is (it isn’t citizen “science”, at least not in the strictest sense) and to understand what weaknesses and shortcomings there are in the whole process of gathering it and cataloging it. We need to take steps to ensure that the next generation of birders, the ones most enamored of the trappings of social media, knows how to resist the temptation to approach birding as just another outlet for affirmation.

### So where does this journal go from here?

So here we are in the throes of the Information Age, still diligently printing *Pennsylvania Birds* in basically the same way (or at least with the same content) as it was back when the journal was founded in 1987. The inevitable question I frequently hear, from readers and even from our own staff of compilers and editors, is “with the advent of eBird, why do we publish this anymore? Isn’t it mostly just a rehashing of what you can already find on eBird?”

Well, yes and no. “Yes”, in that eBird is indeed increasingly used by ever more contributors, so there is a great deal of

overlap between the data published here and the data catalogued in eBird. But I think eBird adoption is still not as universal as I think many assume. At least in western Pennsylvania, there is a still a *lot* of birding that goes on that is not logged in eBird. At least around here, eBird remains a source of data, not *the* source of data. This will continue to change, of course, but I don’t think eBird is really close (yet) to being the whole story of bird distribution in our state.

But the answer is also “no”, eBird does not replace *Pennsylvania Birds* and in my view doesn’t really come close. There is still quite a lot of important data that is not in eBird, and quite possibly never will be. eBird is still pretty much entirely lacking in meaningful historical data prior to about 2008 or so. How many times do we hear from a new birder, “this is the first eBird record of such and such!” only for it to be in actuality not a particularly unusual occurrence in the context of all known history. All of the really usable history, which is so helpful and necessary to the creating the context that makes this journal valuable, is still contained in non-eBird sources, works of research like McWilliams and Brauning’s seminal *The Birds of Pennsylvania*, or even just the data that still resides only in our collective heads.

This is the value of *Pennsylvania Birds*—it is an outlet for exactly this kind of knowledge, analysis, and expertise. Underneath it all, eBird is just a database. In my view it is still up to people with real depth of knowledge and expertise (editors and county compilers) to do the actual *interpretation* of the data. Some of the data exploration tools that eBird offers are most certainly useful and do replicate the sorts of things we discuss in the journal, for example typical arrival and departure dates and a season’s departures from those. But I think there is still something to be said also for the whole matter of real perspective, and depth, and yes, even the occasional enjoyable storytelling, brought to bear by people with extensive experience and knowledge, which just browsing eBird data does not provide.

There is one other consideration, perhaps the most important one, which I suspect not many birders think much about: the matter of archival longevity. Humans are notoriously short sighted, and to us here today, after even just a few short years of truly wide adoption of eBird, it already seems impossible to imagine a world without it. But is eBird really permanent? Will it always be at least what it is today? Will the project ever have a serious problem or extended disruption? The point is not to predict that eBird will not endure, but rather to point out that *Pennsylvania Birds* is at its core an archive, one of a few (though

in my view, the primary one) covering bird records in Pennsylvania. What is the future of record keeping and archiving in a digital age? What are the drawbacks to abandoning written reports altogether in favor of the “wisdom of the cloud”? It’s not just bird journals facing this question. It’s a much bigger philosophical question that touches on nearly all aspects of culture, which can only be answered by the next generation and beyond. I don’t know the answer myself, of course, but whatever the outcomes are ten, twenty, fifty years from now, here today in our own little sphere of influence (bird data), I don’t think we should go “all in” with eBird as “the only answer” just yet.

I don’t mean to dwell too long on cautionary admonishments and yelling at clouds. There are indeed many amazing things afoot in the world of birding, and many amazing new birders, young and old, out there blazing new trails. There’s information enough out there for all of us, beginners and veterans alike, to learn and contribute something new every day. I still get quite a thrill even after all these years just being out in a wood that’s alive with birdsong, and I certainly hope you all do too.

It’s been my great pleasure to serve as the editor of this journal for the past nine years, and I want to thank everyone—editors, compilers, and readers alike—for all the hard work, support, and encouragement everyone has provided over the years. I’m looking forward to some new projects and challenges, and continuing to contribute to these pages too. With Greg Grove at the helm, I know I am leaving *Pennsylvania Birds* in good hands, and that the journal will continue with just as strong a standing as it has always held. And, perhaps, I’ll be seeing more of everyone in the field now, what with this glut of free time that’s coming my way. See you out there, and good birding!

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### Announcement: PA Birdlists

The incoming editorial board has decided that the PA Birdlists feature will no longer be printed in *Pennsylvania Birds*. Discussions are underway to determine the best format and medium in which to publish the lists going forward. Look for further news on this topic in the near future.

# Identification of a challenging empidonax flycatcher resolved

Andy Wilson

On Friday, 6 November 2015 I decided to take my Wildlife Ecology class for a birding walk on the Gettysburg College campus. We were scheduled to spend the rest of the morning in the computer lab, it was a pleasant morning, and it was my birthday—three good excuses for an “in the field” teaching opportunity. At 08:20, shortly after beginning our walk, I heard a “whit” call that to me sounded like a Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*), much the most common Empidonax around Gettysburg and my home in nearby Maryland. I immediately saw the source of the call in a low shrub close to a railway embankment that runs along the western edge of the campus. It was definitely an “empid” and it being November, I realized that there was a reasonable chance of it being a western vagrant. My experience with this group from western North America is somewhat limited, and I wasn’t carrying a field guide. Given the circumstances, I decided to take a few photos, post them on the “ID that PA Bird” facebook page, and hope that someone might be able to help with the identification. I continued the walk, hoping not to disrupt my lesson plan, but shortly afterwards an initial response to my posting suggested that the bird showed characteristics of Dusky Flycatcher (*Empidonax oberholseri*). Panic!

My class and I backtracked a few hundred meters and relocated the bird almost immediately. We got the word out and kept on the bird until the first visiting birders arrived in late morning. Several birders saw the bird through Friday and dozens more over the weekend. It wasn’t until Sunday 8 November that serious questions about the putative Dusky Flycatcher identification were raised. I next saw the bird on Monday and multiple times over the next few days. It was last seen in the afternoon of 16 November. During that time, several birders obtained good photographs of the bird in various lighting conditions, and several observers obtained reasonable quality audio recordings. My description draws on the photos and recordings made by several individuals, to whom I am grateful for their help in documenting this challenging bird.

Following the discussion of photos and recordings posted in multiple online venues, a consensus (though not unanimous) formed that the bird was in fact a Least Flycatcher (*Empidonax minimus*). However, as the Dusky Flycatcher is a potential vagrant in Pennsylvania, I hope that these notes may be helpful when the next challenging late fall Empidonax graces our state. Additionally, while there is now a great deal of literature on identifying Empidonax flycatchers in North America, many of the excellent articles and books that are available (I recommend Rowland 2009 and Kaufman 2011) focus on separating sympatric species pairs or groups, and note that the separation of Least from Dusky Flycatcher is a challenge that deserves more scrutiny.

The Dusky Flycatcher breeds in open forests of the Rocky Mountains and winters in Mexico and Central America. As with other western flycatchers, vagrants have been noted in eastern North America with increasing frequency, although it is still a great rarity and has only been documented in a few states, including Alabama (3 records), Delaware in 2002), Georgia in 2012), and Virginia in 2012 (Heller et al. 2016). Remarkably, there are four records in Nova Scotia, including three from 2012 to 2014 (see <tinyurl.com/zq9hr4o>). The Virginia bird was banded and identification confirmed using molecular techniques (Heller et al. 2016).

The Least Flycatcher is a common breeding migrant in high elevation forests in Pennsylvania, and is a fairly common passage migrant in both spring and fall. Spring migration commences in late April and peaks in mid-May (Figure 1). Fall migration begins in mid-August and peaks during September, with occasional records during October. November records of

Least Flycatchers are rare in Pennsylvania, with only four prior documented records and, interestingly, one more at the same time as the Gettysburg bird:

- Powdermill, *Westmoreland* – to 27 Nov 1988 (banded)
- Bucktoe Creek Preserve, *Chester* – 10-27 Nov 2003
- Tuscarora SP, *Schuylkill* – 25 Nov to 2 Dec 2010
- Exton Park, *Chester* – 25 Nov 2011
- SGL 249, *Cumberland* – 11 Nov 2015

So, although very rare, Least Flycatcher does have precedent in November in Pennsylvania.

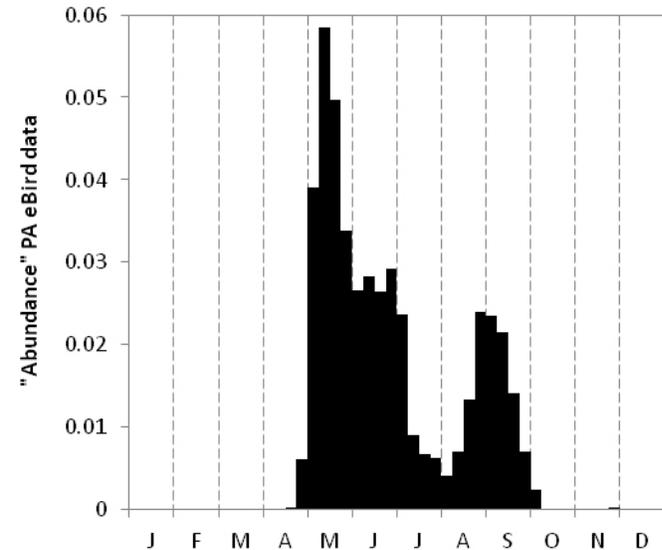


Figure 1. Abundance of Least Flycatcher observations in Pennsylvania 2000-2014, from eBird (Sullivan et al. 2009).

## Description

**Bill:** Dark gray upper mandible and yellow lower mandible, with a diffuse dark tip to lower mandible (Figure 2). Bill rather short, culman evenly curved, with a slight flaring above the nostril. Bill shape, as judged from photos of the underside of the bill, showed slightly convex edges (Figure 2). Bill length/width ratio appeared to be slightly long for Least Flycatcher (see Rowland 2009), but without in-hand measurements this is uncertain.

**Head:** Bold and complete off-white eye ring, with distinct “tear drop” shape at the rear. Front of eye ring blended with extensive pale lores. Head shape varied with posture – sometimes the bird looked distinctly crested, forming a square-headed appearance, but at other times it appeared more round-headed. Crown, ear coverts and nape olive-colored, but appeared drab gray-brown in dull light (see “Upperparts” below, and Figure 3 and 4). Somewhat gray and paler at the sides of the nape, but less so than in most Dusky Flycatchers.

**Upperparts:** Coloration of crown, nape, mantle, back and rump was a fairly bright olive, when the bird was seen in strong sunlight. However, in dull light (included the first morning that the bird was seen, and much of the second day), the bird looked much more drab, with upperparts appearing to be mid-gray brown. The differences are clearly evident in photographs (e.g. compare Figures 3 and 4), but I can confirm that this is not just

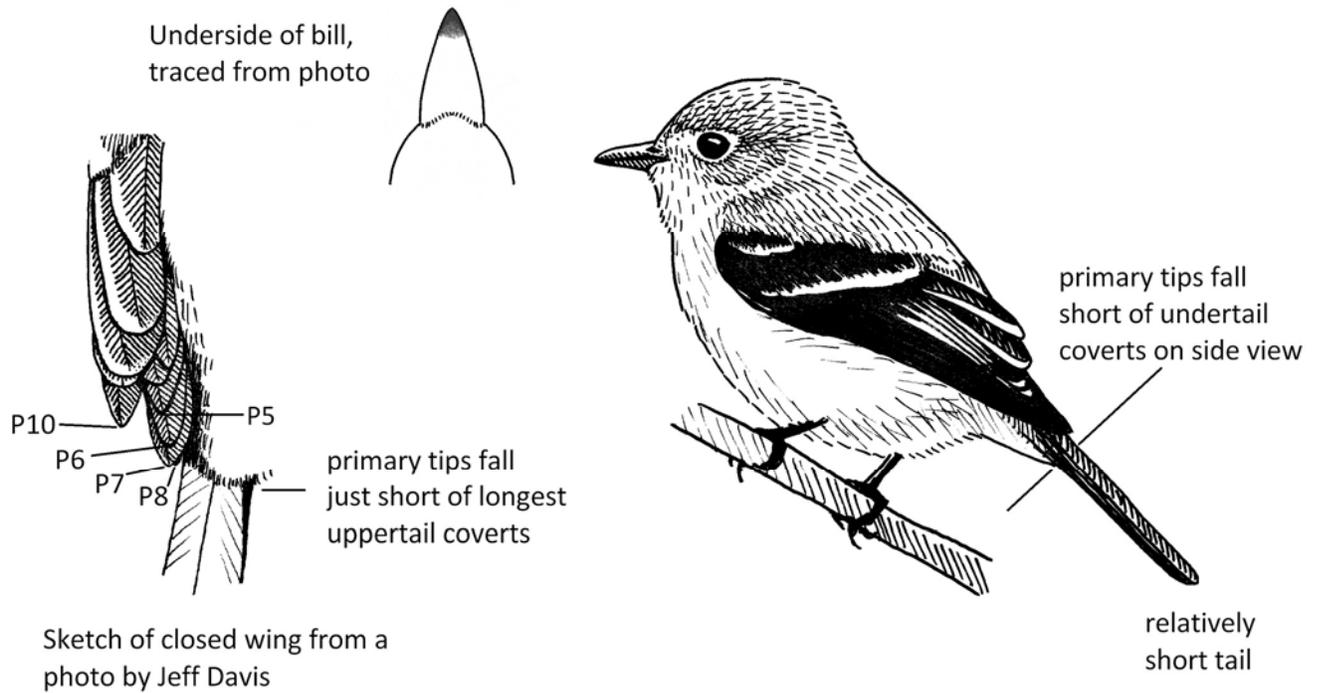


Figure 2. Sketches of the Least Flycatcher at Gettysburg College, November 2015, showing bill shape and wing morphology (Andy Wilson)

photographic artifact—the color of the bird really did look much brighter and greener in strong sunlight.

**Underparts:** throat, breast, belly and flanks were pale, palest on the throat, darker brown on flanks, and distinctly yellow on lower belly and vent. Brightness of yellow on vent was particularly pronounced in strong sunlight.

**Tail:** Dark gray/brown with olive fringes. Tail length was rather short.

**Wings:** Neatly defined off-white fringing of secondaries, formed a “wing panel”. Broad, well-defined bright white fringing on outer web of tertiaries. White tips to the median and greater secondary coverts formed distinct upper and lower wing bars. Narrow and diffuse pale tips to the primaries. A slightly misplaced P10 primary feather evident in a photo of the closed wing by Jeff Davis suggests that P10 was slightly longer than P5 (Figure 2). Primaries relatively short, falling just short of the tips of the uppertail coverts and undertail coverts (Figure 2).

**Behavior:** very active, but occasionally rested in deep cover for long periods. Fed both in tree tops and in low shrubs. Was mainly observed in low vegetation on the first day, when there was a strong breeze. Flicked tail repeatedly.

**Call:** Called frequently, especially when out in the open—a monosyllabic “wit”. Several empids have short calls notes variously described at “pit”, “whit”, or “wit” (Kaufman 2011). Sonogram analysis of the call showed that the call was very short with a clean upsweep (Figure 5). Peak frequency was 1.5 to 3.5 kHz. Comparison of the call with spectrograms on XenoCanto <[www.xeno-canto.org](http://www.xeno-canto.org)> showed that the Gettysburg bird’s call lacked a slight change in pitch mid-note, which spectrograms of the Dusky Flycatcher typically show, resulting in a slightly kinked profile.

### Discussion

A combination of the call, the short primary projection, and medium-length bill rules out all Empidonax species except

Dusky and Least Flycatcher. The following are the features in favor of Least Flycatcher:

- Wing morphology: P10 longer than P5, P10=P4 on Dusky (Pyle et al. 1997)
- Short tail when compared with Dusky
- Convex bill edges (straight in Dusky)
- Lack of strong gray tone on the nape/sides of the head
- Contrasting feather edges in wings (tertiaries and wingbars)

In absence of in-hand measurements, or better still, a DNA sample, it is impossible to be 100% certain that the Gettysburg College bird was a Least Flycatcher. However the wing morphology observed in photographs provides compelling evidence that the bird was a Least Flycatcher. Above all else though, to me the most striking feature of Dusky Flycatcher, based on examination of many photographs, is that the Dusky Flycatcher always looks long-tailed, sufficiently so for this to be considered a diagnostic characteristic that is readily observed in the field.

Note that wing contrast, which was emphasized by several commentators from photographs, remains somewhat troubling to me. I have scoured many photographs of late fall and winter Dusky Flycatchers, and many of them show considerable contrast in the wings! I suggest readers check the “Explore Rich Media” option in eBird to locate photos of fall Dusky Flycatchers, and indeed any other species for which they need photographs for ID purposes—it’s a wonderful resource. Further, it is interesting that in the second edition of the peerless *The Sibley Guide to Birds*, the author says of first winter Dusky Flycatcher, “low-contrast edges on wing feathers (compare Least)”, and yet his illustration, to my eye, shows the opposite (Sibley 2014)! This is not to criticize Sibley’s masterly work, but merely to emphasize the point that contrast in wings is at best, an additional factor to be considered, but is perhaps not a diagnostic feature.

Analysis of various recordings of the call suggests that the spectrogram is closer to that of a typical Least Flycatcher than a typical Dusky Flycatcher. The calls of these two species are so similar, even with spectrographic analysis, that I’m not

convinced they can be relied on for diagnostics, even from recordings. However, all observers of challenging Empidonax flycatchers are encouraged to take recordings of calls. In some instances, they may provide strong supporting evidence.

So, the Gettysburg bird provided a wonderful learning opportunity for me. As it turned out, the tables were definitely turned, I learned way more than my students did on that birding walk! I still feel rather guilty than many dozens of birders traveled considerable distances to see what turned out to be a bird that is common in Pennsylvania. But as Ryan Tomzin kindly pointed out “It is definitely better to have more people look at a Least than to have too few people look at a possible Dusky”. I hope other birders learned from this bird, too, and that we’ll all be a little more prepared for the next challenging fall empid.

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Figure 3. Least Flycatcher at Gettysburg College, 7 November 2015, in subdued lighting (Geoff Malosh)



Figure 4. Least Flycatcher at Gettysburg College, 8 November 2015, in strong sunlight (Todd Fellenbaum)

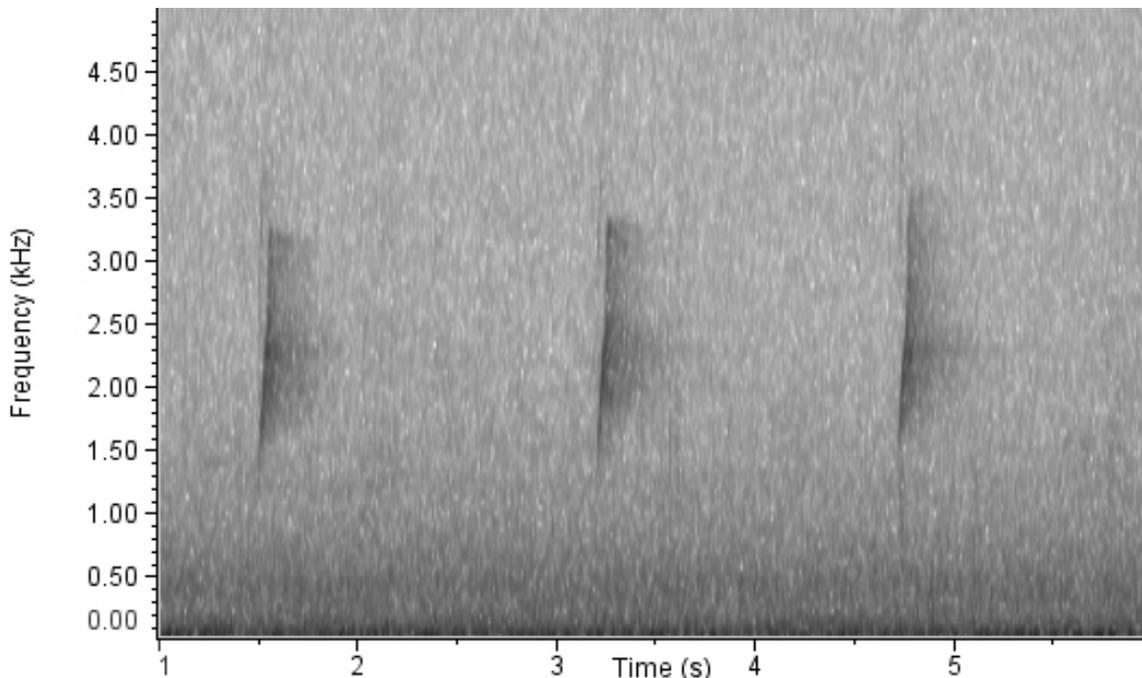


Figure 5. Spectrogram of audio recording of the Gettysburg empid, 12 November 2015 (Tom Johnson)

## Western Tanager in Centre County Dick Snyder

On the morning of Saturday, 21 November 2015, while participating in Project FeederWatch, I noted an unusual bird in the cedar tree adjacent to our back porch. Its striking bright yellow and black colors immediately caught my eye, and I knew the bird should not be here. I was able to snap a few pictures while it enjoyed eating sunflower seeds from a tray feeder. Definitely a new bird for me, I posted a picture on the Whatbird's Help Me Identify a Bird website and included information as to our location in State College. Almost immediately I received responses not only that it was an adult male Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*), but I was also encouraged to submit documentation of this rare bird to the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee, which I did.

The following Monday, Joe Verica of the State College Bird Club arrived at our house hoping to see this rare visitor, and I invited him to watch the feeders from our spare bedroom window. The bird didn't show up while Joe was there, but it was obvious that he was still excited to have a Western Tanager in the area, and he informed us that we could expect significant interest from fellow birders. We told him birders were welcomed in our yard. Happily, the bird itself obliged, and settled into a routine of daily visits to our yard that lasted throughout the winter and into the spring, affording all birders the opportunity to see our remarkable avian guest at their convenience.

Joe helped get the word out to the birding community via eBird and the Pennsylvania birding email list, and announced that birders would be welcomed in our yard. He made sure to include instructions for visitors to park a short way up the road from our house to minimize disturbing our neighbor's dogs, and everyone very courteously observed these guidelines. Darla and I began daily record keeping, noting times the bird was at the feeders and numbers of birders visiting the yard. Birders came from all parts of Pennsylvania, plus neighboring Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland, and New Jersey. At times our yard took on a sort-of "home coming" atmosphere, with numerous visitors already acquainted with one another. Armed with binoculars, spotting scopes, cameras, lawn chairs, thermoses, and snacks, over 300 visitors frequented our yard over the course of the winter. Even the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology visited before their February meeting, which was being held at a local eatery here in State College. A 17-member ornithology class from Penn State enjoyed seeing the

tananger—and a few dozen other species—during a morning field trip to our yard. A few out-of-area visitors even combined a stop at our yard with a sporting or cultural event at Penn State. Others stopped by while *en route* to the Brambling that spent a number of weeks in the Cleveland area this winter, or while on their way to visit the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Wayne Laubscher was a frequent visitor to the yard and made efforts to record video and images of the bird and its vocalizations. Numerous birders posted their lists of the birds seen and heard in our yard to eBird. I don't have an "ear" for bird vocalizations so it was enlightening to learn about the birds around our home that I have not often seen. Imagine my sharing with one guest about a Golden-crowned Kinglet I got to see late last summer, only to have my guest say, "Dick, there is one sitting and calling in that tall spruce right next to us!"

Visitors also made suggestions as to feeding the bird throughout the long winter. Early on it fed on suet, which was mostly store bought, and sunflower seeds. I noted the bird wasn't as efficient at shelling sunflower seeds as, for example, our local cardinals. One birder suggested adding meal worms, another promoted grape jelly, and yet another mentioned raisins. The (freeze-dried) meal worms and raisins were an instant hit with the tanager. Often the bird would head right for meal worms, either in the tray or on the porch railing, consuming ten or more in a single feeding. It would take a single raisin and mope a bit while in the cedar tree or elsewhere in the backyard before returning for seconds. It took suet from feeders at the edge of the area, or picked off the ground. The bird often drank from our bird bath as well.

The bird didn't seem to take much "guff" from the other birds at the feeders, although active feeding by European Starlings and Blue Jays appeared to discourage the tanager from approaching. Sudden flight by the flock of House Sparrows often "scared" the tanager off, and, of course, any appearance by a Cooper's or Sharp-shinned Hawk, though never observed targeting the tanager directly, was certain to clear out the yard.

All-in-all the presence of the Western Tanager has been a wonderful experience for us. We made numerous new friends and gained considerable knowledge about birds and birding. We thank all the visiting birders for the personal cards, superb photographs, books, fair trade coffee and yes, even homemade apple butter—all unexpected and appreciated gifts.



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[Editor's Note: There are about 20 records of Western Tanager for the state, and at least 10 in the past 25 years. However the majority of those were "one-day wonders". A few have stayed around for one or a few weeks, for example one in Chester from Dec 1959 to early Jan 1960, or more recently one in Bucks 20-29 Dec 1997 and one in York from mid-Feb through Mar 1999. The Snyder's bird, however, was the first Western Tanager known to successfully overwinter in the state, and was easily the longest-staying of its kind in the state's history. In fact it was still present in the Snyder's yard as this issue went to press in early April 2016.]

Adult male Western Tanager shown during its first appearance, 21 Nov 2015. (Dick Snyder)

# BOOK REVIEW

Gene Wilhelm

**TEN THOUSAND BIRDS: Ornithology since Darwin** by Tim Birkhead, Jo Wimpenny, and Bob Montgomerie, 94 color illustrations, 60 halftones, preface, eleven chapters, afterword, two appendices, notes, references, index, image credits, 8 x 10 in., 544 pp., Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2014, cloth, \$45.00.

Currently there are about ten thousand recognized species of birds in the world. Ornithology, the study of these thousands of species, has been more extensive than almost any other group of vertebrates. Ornithology has also enhanced in countless ways the human enjoyment and understanding of nature. It has been central to many major scientific breakthroughs in biology, illustrated by the at least 380,000 publications on the subject since Charles Darwin issued *The Origin of Species* in 1859. In 2011 alone there were as many published scientific papers on birds as there had been during the entire period between Darwin's *Origin* and 1955 (p. vii). This is the challenging message to readers of *Ten Thousand Birds: Ornithology since Darwin*, delivered by authors Tim Birkhead, professor of zoology at the University of Sheffield, United Kingdom, Jo Wimpenny, post-doctoral research associate at the University of Sheffield during the writing of this book, and Bob Montgomerie, professor of biology at Queen's University in Ontario, Canada. Indeed, the authors enumerate the fascinating history of the who, what, when, where, why, and how of late twentieth century ornithology. The primary intent of the authors is to present the history of modern ornithology in a readable fashion, and in this book they definitely achieve that goal.

Modern avian science began in the mid-seventeenth century with the work of Francis Willughby and John Ray, who provided not only a firm scientific foundation for ornithology but also initiated the two major threads in the study of birds. The first and by far most long-running was systematics—the naming and description of all known species in the world. This consisted almost exclusively of museum work that was dependent upon the killing and collecting of field specimens. It was only after Darwin seeded the idea that the behavior and ecology of animals, including birds, might have evolved through natural selection, did the second thread—field ornithology—begin to take hold.

Although unmentioned in the book, about this same time in the mid-1800s

the German zoologist Ernst Heinrich Haeckel (1834-1919) was the first to coin the term “ecology”, which he defined as the interrelationship of an animal to its organic and inorganic environment, and used his law of Biogenesis to support Darwin's theory of evolution.

He was also the first to attempt to put birds on a “tree of life”. His book *Generells Morphologie der Organismen* (1866) was based on Darwin's ideas about evolution. In it, he depicted a few of the major avian groups and their phylogenies on a surprisingly accurate geological scale (p. 93). It is quite clear that the biological concept of ecology became a strong and dynamic framework for field ornithology, a framework that continues in the present time.

*Ten Thousand Birds* starts with Darwin, simply because “nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution” (p. ix), and because Darwin made so many perceptive observations and comments specifically about birds, which inspired untold numbers of pioneers in field ornithology to test his ideas. He possessed not only good ornithological credentials in raising birds and recording their biology, but also was, in my opinion, an excellent ecologist due to his broad interests in the interrelationships of natural and human history. The result is that many of today's ideas in anthropology, biology, and ecology still have their genesis in his writings.

The authors admit their book is unavoidably biased geographically (their data were mostly from Europe and North America), and in its choice of topics, stories, and the people involved in those stories. To decide the book's scope, the authors made a database of 325 prominent ornithologists since the 1960s and created for each a citation report, which they ranked according to the total number of times each ornithologist's work had been cited in scientific publications. Next, they conducted a survey of thirty-one senior ornithologists worldwide and asked them to name the ten ornithologists and the ten ornithological books that they considered to be the most influential in the twentieth century. David Lack was considered to be the most influential ornithologist (30 votes), followed by Ernst Mayr (23), and eight others. Lack's books were also considered to be the most influential, with the top three titles on the list authored by him.

Lastly, the authors identified eleven topics that encompass most of ornithology since Darwin, which became the topics of the book's eleven chapters.

The authors state that there is no particular logic to the order of the chapters other than what they thought would make interesting reading, thus each chapter stands alone from the others. The eleven topics are as follows:

*Chapter 1: Yesterday's Birds*

*Chapter 2: the Origin and Diversification of Species*

*Chapter 3: Birds on the Tree of Life*

*Chapter 4: Ebb and Flow*

*Chapter 5: Ecological Adaptations for Breeding*

*Chapter 6: Form and Function*

*Chapter 7: The Study of Instinct*

*Chapter 8: Behavior as Adaptation*

*Chapter 9: Selection in Relation to Sex*

*Chapter 10: Population Studies of Birds*

*Chapter 11: Tomorrow's Birds*

Especially appealing is that each chapter opens with a painting or illustration of a bird or particular group of birds relevant to the topic. In each case the authors chose an artist whose work was inspiring, which highlights the enormous contribution to our appreciation of wild birds that artists have made. Appreciated too are the graphical timelines in each chapter, which provide a chronological summary of events, key concepts, discoveries, and publications. The authors used direct quotations either from published sources or from personal interviews, experiences, and interactions with people who study birds. All quotes are referenced at the end of the book. Audio recordings of interviewed ornithologists are available at <myriadbirds.com>. The authors also present many autobiographies of key researchers who were involved in the development of each topic. It was informative for this reviewer to be able to identify distinguished ornithologists only known by name beforehand with photographs of these same personalities. Lastly, a list of most of the ornithologists referred in the text is presented in a galley of 500 ornithologists at the back of the book. The authors indicate that the roll is not intended to be a list of the most influential ornithologists since Darwin.

Early in the twentieth century ornithologists thought that the origins of birds, their feathers, and the mechanics and evolution of flight were well understood. In Chapter 1, the authors discuss why this was not so. New fossils, technologies, and insights in the past decade demand returning to Darwin's tree of life. Scientists now claim that slime molds, mushrooms, and other fungi are more closely related to humans and other animals than they are to plants.

Molecular biologists claim that birds, crocodiles, and dinosaurs are only distantly related cousins to each other. The consensus currently is that bird flight is more complex than once thought but the new tools of advanced computers, wind tunnels, and electromyography hold promise for unraveling that complexity.

*Darwin's Finches*, published in 1947 by David Lack, was a powerful confirmation of the strength of the emerging "Modern Synthesis", formed by a remarkable group of naturalists who combined the concepts of genetics, population biology, paleontology, systematics, and evolution (Chapter 2). So many technological advances have occurred in molecular genetics since 2000. A few of the highlights: Using a microarray analysis of gene transcription in different species of Darwin's finches, ornithologists discovered that expression of the protein calmodulin is related to the development of beak shape and elongation. New discoveries about the interactions between genes and the environment are broadening our knowledge of evolutionary processes. Two subjects, epigenetics and plasticity, have been the focus of recent research. The former is the study of environmental influences on DNA that result in changes to an organism's phenotype, which are then passed onto its offspring. The latter refers to the ability of an organism to change phenotypically, not genetically, in response to its environment. Plasticity has implications for the responses of animals, including birds, to changing environmental factors, e.g., global warming, and can tell us which species are most likely to survive rapid environmental shifts.

Avian migration has preoccupied researchers far longer and more consistently than almost any other area of ornithology (Chapter 4). Research into migration began in the 1800s and continues to this day. The feats accomplished by some species can leave anyone awestruck—ornithologists and birders alike. Take, for example, the Bartailed Godwit, which migrates from its breeding grounds in Alaska to wintering areas in New Zealand in a single nonstop, nine-day flight (p. 153). Or the Blackpoll Warbler, which completes an arduous nonstop flight over the Atlantic Ocean from forests in New England and eastern Canada to Puerto Rico and Hispaniola—an average of nearly 1,600 miles—in two to three days, despite weighing just half an ounce. Our knowledge of the various mechanisms of migration continues to grow even today, as more data are collected about birds' senses of smell, hearing, and direction while on migration.

Perhaps one of the most exciting discoveries about migration is that it is

not a species-specific phenomenon. It now seems that all individuals of most avian species of mid- to high latitudes have the potential to be migratory; that is, they all possess most of the traits necessary to make such journeys (ability to navigate, to store fuel supplies, etc.). As a result, migratory behavior can evolve quickly. However, we should not assume that all aspects of migration are adaptive. For example, the migration routes of some birds appear to be consequences of gradual changes in geographical distribution and thus are unlikely to represent the most economic travel routes. As the Northern Wheatear, for example, spread eastward across Europe into Siberia, the birds breeding in Siberia continued to migrate the long-distance to sub-Saharan Africa just like their European relatives, rather than minimizing the costs of travel and wintering in southern Asia. Further, it now appears that traits like morphology, physiology, and navigational ability can evolve independently according to the various circumstances that birds encounter. Finally, at the writing of this book (2014), the anatomy and mechanisms by which birds may sense the earth's magnetic field during migration continues to be hotly debated subjects.

Charles Darwin can be considered the father of the modern study of animal behavior (Chapter 7) because of two books: *The Descent of Man* (1871) and *The Expression of the Emotion in Man and Animals* (1872). But the work of Konrad Lorenz and Niko Tinbergen marks the beginning of modern ethology, through their collaborative and complementary studies. As the authors state: "Over time, ideas that once seemed useful for explaining behavior were reassessed and re-evaluated and, if necessary, replaced by better ideas and explanations ... Tinbergen, especially, was open to what must have been a painful reassessment of these ideas by Lehrman ... Partly because of this openness, Tinbergen has remained ethology's hero, despite the fact that some of his class experiments—the bill pecking by young gulls and the hawk-goose model experiments—have since been shown to be poorly done ... While the early experiments can be criticized for their design and execution, and their results open to various interpretations, the fact remains that the description of behavior provided by the ethologists will stand the test of time" (p. 283).

In the 1970s researchers of animal behavior were seeking new ideas and new approaches (Chapter 8). Behavioral ecology's blending of ecology, behavior, evolution, and its unambiguous focus on individual selection provided both a theory base and an array of exciting new

hypotheses. In fact, the formulating and testing of predictions from theory made behavioral ecology more scientific, more rigorous, and ultimately more successful than ethology (p. 316). While it's obvious that the initial excitement generated by new theories is past, behavioral ecology currently shows little sign of decline, certainly because of the ever-increasing array of conservation issues we face, and the extraordinary diversity of the natural world, in which new discoveries and species continue to emerge. As the authors conclude: "Because birds have been the behavioral ecologist's favorite taxonomic group, the increase in our understanding over the last forty years of topics as diverse as foraging, reproduction, cooperative breeding, parental care, brood parasitism, and cognition in birds is truly extraordinary (p. 317)."

In 1836, in addition to natural selection, Darwin started thinking about traits that could not be explained by natural selection, such as colorful plumages, spectacular songs, or the elaborate antics of male birds, which demand energy and hence are costly and did nothing to enhance survival (Chapter 9). Darwin envisioned that increases in reproductive success occurred through aggressive competition between members of the same sex, and by mate choices. Birds were crucial to the development of Darwin's ideas about sexual selection, including the idea that there was a struggle between males for access to females in all animals. He also believed that in certain species, females actively chose males, whereas by contrast, most naturalists at the time assumed females to be entirely passive, waiting to be chosen by males (p. 327). Unfortunately, Darwin's ideas on female choice found little favor and his attempts to keep the two processes of sexual selection separate (male-male competition and female choice) failed. With a few exceptions, for example Edmund Selous, Eliot Howard, and a few others, most simply lost interest in the topic and sexual selection continued to be ignored by most ornithologists. It was Julian Huxley who sounded the death knell for studies of sexual selection, and by the 1930s sexual selection was all but dead for the next thirty years.

However, in the 1960s (Chapter 8) the spotlight on individual selection thinking kick-started a renewed interest in sexual selection. Ornithologists turned their attention to the issue in the 1970s and 1980s with a fervor that continues to the present day, exploring its influences on plumage colors, songs, ornamentation, speciation, and reproductive anatomy (pp. 341-349). With convincing evidence that female birds were discriminating between males on the basis of the quality

of their ornamentation, Darwin's idea was finally vindicated. Another major ongoing challenge is postcopulatory female choice: why do females of socially monogamous species engage in extra-pair copulation? There is still no consensus. And why do socially monogamous species, like Great Crested Grebes, continue to perform elaborate courtship displays well after pair formation has occurred? We still don't know.

The original motivation for studying avian populations (Chapter 10) was to comprehend what causes bird numbers in a particular area to increase, decrease, or remain stable. The question was addressed in four phases: 1) collection of population parameters such as birth rates, death rates, emigration, and immigration. Data on such parameters and numbers are now routinely collected by citizen scientists and organizations like the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology; 2) population regulation or control—what for example, keeps a population stable? Regulation assumes that there is a ceiling or equilibrium level imposed by competition for resources. Control, on the other hand, refers to any factor that offers upward or downward numbers. The stability of some bird population studies implied that they were regulated; 3) intrinsic or extrinsic regulation. A debate dominated ornithology in the 1960s with both sides agreeing that bird numbers are regulated, but whether this was intrinsic or extrinsic was unknown. Wynne-Edwards favored intrinsic processes while David Lack favored extrinsic processes. In the end Lack's thinking won out not only because he resolved the way avian populations were regulated, but also because he revealed the individual level at which selection operated; 4) what extrinsic factors regulated numbers: food, predators, diseases, or all three? Lack argued that although predators and diseases are factors, competition for food was what regulated bird populations.

One of the most disturbing aspects of avian conservation is that it is such a recent phenomenon (Chapter 11). The scientific study of birds is about 500 years old, yet, by contrast the idea that we might need to conserve birds is a little more than a century old (see Timeline for Conservation, p. 391). Conservation is a consequence of problems created by humans and is concerned with the protection of species from human-made threats. Discouragingly, as the exponential growth in our understanding of the biology of birds occurred during the twentieth century, it was accompanied by a simultaneous exponential decline in numbers of birds. Nonetheless, as all conservationists know, most issues boil down to *human behavior and politics*.

The process of extinction is insidious, especially when the so-called *shifting baseline* is followed by our cultures: each generation adjusts to the present abundance of birds and assumes that what they experience is the norm. It's not, of course, for the real baseline is "living things living everywhere in profusion" (p. 391). Many species of birds worldwide were in serious trouble at the end of the last century: twelve percent of all species were at risk of imminent extinction. Although some outstanding successes in preventing extinctions were achieved (Whooping Crane, California Condor, Peregrine Falcon, Bald Eagle, Brown Pelican, many seabirds), it is worth noting that for every species saved, ten have gone extinct. Yet studies of birds have led the way in many aspects of conservation science: there are almost twice as many atlases of bird species distribution than for plants, and over eight times more than mammalian species. Birds also have been disproportionately important in the designation of lands to be set aside for conservation, for example the concept of the Important Bird Area that was developed in the 1980s. There were 11,000 IBAs in 2009 in 200 countries worldwide. Still, massive gaps remain in our knowledge of many avian species in certain areas, for example the Caribbean, Central America, and the Pacific Basin. Bird conservation remains a constant challenge. The primary message is that scientific knowledge of bird biology—especially from an historical perspective—is crucial if we are ever to slow and ultimately halt the worldwide decline in numbers of birds.

In the Afterword (p. 425) the authors ask: "Why is it that we know more about the biology of birds than almost any other group of animals? What has driven ornithology to its current level of sophistication?" They claim four things: people, education, funding, and technology, in that order. Three iconoclasts in particular overturned previous ornithological paradigms and forged ahead in the twentieth century: Erwin Stresemann in the 1920s to 1940s, for recognizing that there was more to birds than museum studies; Ernst Mayr in the 1940s to 1980s for being the driving force in the modern synthesis of evolution and systematics that incorporated natural selection and genetics, and for setting a high scientific standard for ornithologists; and David Lack in the 1940s to 1960s for bringing the research of avian ecology and behavior into an individual selection framework. These three possessed the attributes necessary for success in this field, attributes identified by Darwin long before: sustained enthusiasm, curiosity, tenacity, and open-mindedness. The

book's authors added Darwin's fair share of invention and common sense, and their own values of hard work and mentorship. Nearly all ornithologists who have made significant contributions to ornithology have been amazingly hard working, and this reviewer can attest to the value of mentors in the field or in the laboratory who offer time, guidance, easement, and encouragement.

One of the consequences of the increasing popularity of bird watching in the first half of the twentieth century is that it vastly increased the number of young students who were interested in studying ornithology. Recognizing that science and technology drove material progress, many western governments, in turn, provided substantial funds for scientific research with no strings attached. This open policy attracted many bright scholars to ornithological research for decades to come.

Meanwhile, remarkable advances in technology certainly drove many aspects of the ornithological revolution of the twentieth century. Ornithologists are quick to exploit new technologies, and in doing so, they keep ornithology at the forefront of biological research.

Topics of interest come and go, but there is one topic whose relentless progress should be of concern to us all: the process of bird extinction. As the authors conclude: "A century from now ... it is unlikely that authors would be able to use the same title—*Ten Thousand Birds*—for at the current rate of extinction, it is more likely that there will be fewer than 9,000 bird species on the planet" (p. 429). This is a sad concluding commentary of an otherwise marvelous history of modern ornithology. The authors advise: "The long-term health of birds and other wildlife depends on teaching our children and students to value the natural world" (p. 429). Values determine human behavior, and unless or until we change our culture to value the natural world, conservation will only be so effective. What is really called for is simple honesty: that the human species has met its match in the natural world and that our species is comparatively ignorant in earthly matters. The history of modern ornithology as depicted in this book, proves the point that birds are "smarter than we are" and always will be.

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## 2015 Autumn Raptor Migration Summary

### Laurie Goodrich

*Weather: “the state of the atmosphere with respect to wind, temperature, cloudiness, moisture, pressure, etc.” (merriam-webster.com)*

Weather can bring bliss or boredom to hawkwatchers. It determines the patterns of the migration, if birds fly low or soar high, or if they hug ridges and lakeshores or travel in broad fronts. In 2015, *El Niño* strengthened during autumn months and led to above average temperatures in fall and early winter, and a shifting jet stream that frequently brought unusual wind patterns (www.noaa.gov). September was beset with east winds, fog, and drizzle. The remainder of the migration was warm and winds often light. The strong cold fronts and frigid temperatures typical of November and December never arrived, which in turn perhaps dissuaded late season buteos from moving south at all.

Despite the unusual weather, Pennsylvania hawkwatchers tallied 91,876 raptors at 14 watchsites at a rate of 12.2 hawks per hour. The total number of hawks was 28% below the 10-year average and the lowest in more than a decade for the state (Table 1). Hours of observation statewide were slightly above average at 7649, compared to a 10-year average of 7461 hours; however the 1108 total days of counting was slightly lower than average (1121, Table 1). One southern watchsite, Tuscarora Summit, went uncovered for the first year in over a decade, due to lack of hawkwatchers, and two of the 14 sites reporting were only covered for one or two days. Rarities included an immature light morph Swainson’s Hawk at Waggoner’s Gap 19 October and another immature light morph at Hawk Mountain 4 October. Three Mississippi Kites included one adult 16 September at Militia Hill, an

immature 22 September at Militia Hill, and one at Hawk Mountain 25 Sept.

Statewide, 13 of the 16 regularly recorded raptors were counted in below-average numbers during autumn 2015 (Table 1). The three most numerous migrants were observed less often in 2015 than any year in more than a decade. Pennsylvania watchers tallied 20,764 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 25% below the 10-year average, 41,283 Broad-winged Hawks, 34% below average, and 9434 Red-tailed Hawks, 30% below average (Table 1). The largest dips compared to averages were encountered for Osprey at 1870 or 33% below average, Northern Goshawk at 60 or 64% below average, and Rough-legged Hawk at 6 or 53% below average. Three of the 16 regularly detected raptors were counted in above-average numbers; these included Turkey Vulture at 6498 or 1.3% above average, Bald Eagle at 2164 or 12% above average, and Golden Eagle at 1295 or 23% above average.

**Allegheny Front (Somerset/Bedford)** – Allegheny Front recorded 5035 raptors in 833.5 hours and 139 days of observation from 15 August to 26 December, a rate of 6.04 hawks per hour (Table 1). Counts were 44% below average, with Broad-winged Hawks showing the largest drop—1039 compared to the recent average of 4795, the lowest broadwing count since 1998. A new season record was set for Golden Eagle at 320, 58% above 10-year average of 204 (Table 1). Other above-average counts were tallied for Black Vulture (55), Turkey Vulture (775), and Bald Eagle (112). Southeast winds 24 October ushered one of the largest single-day counts for Golden Eagles for the state and for the site—74 in total, 58 of which were adults. Only 101 other raptors were tallied that day,

led by 37 Red-tailed Hawks and 44 Sharp-shinned Hawks, but only 2 Bald Eagles. A total of 150 Golden Eagles were added to the season total during November, with many double-digit days including 27 on 4 November and 32 on 21 November. On the latter day eagles flew late in the afternoon with the last ones spotted against the starry sky.

**Bake Oven Knob (Lehigh)** – Bake Oven counters tallied 11,645 hawks in 107 days and 895 hours, for a rate of 13 hawks per hour (Table 1). Above-average counts were tallied for Black Vulture (381), Turkey Vulture (1074), and Bald Eagle (264). All other raptors appeared in below-average numbers (Table 1). East-southeast winds 26 September brought one of the largest Bald Eagle flights for the season—13 total which included 10 adults. Two Golden Eagles joined the flight, one adult and one juvenile, two of the four goldens recorded for the month. Northwest winds 11 November ushered a late season eagle flight to the lookout, including 11 Golden Eagles, five of which were immatures, and a lone adult Bald Eagle. A busy accipiter flight was recorded 17 October with 350 Sharp-shinned and 15 Cooper’s Hawks passing the watch; other highlights included 7 Merlins and 10 Bald Eagles.

**Broadwing SEPT, Pipersville (Bucks)** – This Broad-winged Hawk site in eastern Pennsylvania was covered 20-21 September and tallied 959 hawks including 914 broadwings. The higher count occurred 21 September when 708 broadwings, 22 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 2 Cooper’s Hawks, one Bald Eagle, one Merlin, one Northern Harrier and one unidentified accipiter were all tallied (Table 1). The season total recorded at the site was only 8% below average.

**Council Cup (Luzerne)** – In contrast to most sites, Council Cup counts were slightly above-average in 2015; the total of 1042 hawks compared to the average of 941.3, with slightly below average hours of coverage at 98.5 (Table 1). Highlights included 690 Broad-winged Hawks, the highest count for that species since 1999, which included a big day of 567 on 20 September. Northwest winds that same day also brought other highlights, including 2 Bald Eagles, 4 Osprey, 2 Sharp-shinned Hawk and 5 American Kestrels. The 4 Golden Eagles for the season was also above the average of one per autumn; this was achieved on the strength of the 3 goldens 13 November, accompanied by 82 Redtails, 3 Turkey Vultures, and 4 Bald Eagles.

**Table 2. Peak one-day migration counts for selected species.**

Site	Broad-winged Hawk		Golden Eagle	
	Count	Date	Count	Date
Allegheny Front	189	9/24	<b>74</b>	10/24
Bake Oven Knob	1237	9/17	9	11/11
Pipersville (BW)*	708	9/21	-	-
Council Cup	567	9/20	3	11/13
Hawk Mountain	<b>1532</b>	9/18	10	10/23,11/14
Jack’s Mountain	965	9/19	<b>18</b>	10/30
Little Gap	1349	9/22	16	11/14
Militia Hill	<b>2333</b>	9/20	2	10/24
Rocky Ridge*	648	9/18	-	-
Rose Tree Park	772	9/14	1	10/17
Second Mountain	1638	9/19	6	11/14
Stone Mountain	590	9/17	<b>30</b>	11/20
Waggoner’s Gap	<b>1760</b>	9/19	<b>41</b>	10/24

*Bold counts indicate top four totals by species*

*\*limited coverage*

**Hawk Mountain (Berks/Schuylkill)** – Hawk Mountain recorded 13,468 hawks in 128 days and 1127 from 12 August to 31 December. Total raptors were 29% below average, and only one species showed above-average counts: Bald Eagle at 316 or 6% above the 10-year average. This continued a long-term upswing in this species. The most abundant migrants, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk and Sharp-shinned Hawk, were 27%, 49%, and 20% below the 10-year averages, respectively (Table 1). The count of American Kestrel, 232, was 46% below the 10-year average. On 25 September, a Mississippi Kite of unknown age was observed repeatedly swooping down and up, presumably catching flying insects above the ridge, before circling higher to soar with a Broad-winged Hawk. The sun angle prevented examination of plumage and therefore classifying the bird's age. Another rarity, an immature, light morph Swainson's Hawk, was sighted soaring south with a small flock of Turkey Vultures at 14:27 on 4 October. The largest one-day count for 2015 was 1588 raptors 18 September when 1532 Broad-winged Hawks swirled past along with 17 Osprey, 4 Bald Eagles and a few other raptors. A cold front in mid-October released a three-day Sharp-shinned Hawk deluge that featured 452 on 16 October, 521 on 17 October, and 282 on 18 October. The three day total represented nearly 33% of the autumn's count for the species. The first Golden Eagle was early on 14 September, and the highest one-day count of 10 eagles passed by 23 October and again 14 November. Counters 14 November also recorded 175 Red-tailed Hawks, the one-day high count for the species.

**Jack's Mountain (Mifflin)** – Jack's hawkwatchers recorded one of the few above-average counts for the state—5536 compared to 4417 for their 10-year average. The above-average coverage of 530 hours and 92 days may have partly accounted for this increase (Table 1). Counts of all raptors at Jack's were above-average except the 102 Turkey Vultures, which compared to the average of 131 in the recent 10 years. The largest flight day for the site was 19 September with 1000 hawks sighted, including 965 broadwings and 7 Bald Eagles. Jack's Mountain recorded an above-average 152 Golden Eagles for the autumn of 2015, including several double-digit flight days. On 14 October, 16 goldens were recorded along with a one-day high count of 81 Red-tailed Hawks. On 30 October, another 18 Golden Eagles were tallied, mostly adults, and on 13, 14, and 20 November, Jack's recorded 15, 12, and 15 Golden Eagles respectively, culminating in an impressive eagle season for 2015.

**Little Gap (Northampton)** – Little Gap counters tallied 12,526 hawks in 104 days and 700 hours of hawkwatching, 13% below their 10 year average (Table 1). Five raptors were counted in above-average numbers: 106 Black Vultures, 277 Bald Eagles, 115 Golden Eagles, 111 Merlins, and 61 Peregrine Falcons. A light north wind 22 September switched to the northeast for the afternoon and brought the season's largest one-day flight of 1349 Broad-winged Hawks and the second Golden Eagle for the fall. The highest number of Sharp-shinned Hawks (452) and Cooper's Hawks (47) were tallied following one of the few cold fronts of the autumn 16 October; these appeared along with 3 Peregrine Falcons. A strong west-northwest wind 14 November brought the high count for late season migrants including 159 Red-tailed Hawks, 9 Bald Eagles, and 16 Golden Eagles, one of the best days for the fall.

**Militia Hill (Montgomery)** – Militia Hill's total of 4954 was its lowest count since 2003 and 63% below the 10-year average (Table 1). The Broad-winged Hawk count of 2830 was 73% below average. The only species showing an above-average count was the Bald Eagle at 103 compared to an average of 101 (Table 1). Most of the broadwings spotted in 2015 flew past 20 September, when a light northwest wind carried 2333 of them over the platform. These were accompanied by 14 Bald Eagles and 26 Ospreys, with most birds passing during the afternoon. The one-day count of Broad-winged Hawks was the largest recorded for Pennsylvania sites in 2015 and the Bald Eagle count was the highest for Militia Hill for the season.

**Rocky Ridge (York)** – Rocky Ridge hawkwatchers tallied 2379 hawks in 24 days and 119 hours of coverage, 15% above average. The slight increase was largely due to a 40% increase in Broad-winged Hawks. The total of 1851 broadwings was largely spotted between 17 and 19 September with a peak of 648 on 18 September. Five count days in September exceeded 100 raptors and the monthly total of 2060 raptors comprised most the migrants for the site. A late cold front 23 October brought 88 raptors, the highest one-day count for the late season, including 15 Black Vultures, 44 Turkey Vultures, 3 Bald Eagles, 20 Red-tailed Hawks, 5 Sharp-shinned Hawks, and 1 Cooper's Hawk. Only two days were covered in November at this partial coverage site, for a total of 9 hawks.

**Rose Tree Park (Delaware)** – Rose Tree Park hawkwatchers counted 3195 hawks in 500.3 hours and 79 days of counts from 1 September to 21 November 21 (Table 1). The total was 54% below average with

a 74% dip in Broad-winged Hawks, which accounted for much of the difference. Counts of most raptors were below average except Turkey Vultures, which came in at 480 compared to 394 on average (Table 1). The highest one-day raptor count for 2015 occurred on 14 September when 772 broadwings flew over the site, along with 8 Bald Eagles, 9 Ospreys, 19 Sharp-shinned Hawks, and 24 other raptors. Light west winds 19 October brought one of the best October flights for the autumn. Counters tallied a parade of vultures including 157 Turkey and 11 Black Vultures, as well as 2 Osprey, 2 Bald Eagles, 23 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 10 Cooper's Hawks, 5 Red-shouldered Hawks, 26 Red-tailed Hawks, 6 American Kestrels, 3 Merlin, and one Peregrine Falcon. Flights slowed in November, as was the case at most sites in 2015, with only 311 migrants tallied in that month.

**Second Mountain (Lebanon)** – Second Mountain watchers counted 6746 hawks in 834 hours and 135 days of counts from 12 August to 31 December. The 2015 total was the lowest since 1986, and no species registered in above average numbers (Table 1). Despite the lackluster flight some exciting highlights were recorded. On 19 September, 1638 Broad-winged Hawks glided past the site and gave counters great looks as they hugged the ridgetop. The highest one-day count during October occurred during threatening rain clouds, when the 207 raptors coursing downridge included 148 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 24 Turkey Vultures, a lone Peregrine Falcon, and 2 Golden Eagles. November's highest count occurred 21 November when 86 raptors were tallied, including 53 Red-tailed Hawks and 2 Golden Eagles. Intrepid late season watchers tallied another 92 migrants during December, including on the very last day of counting, 31 December, when they added a surprising 25 migrants to the season's total, including two Bald Eagles.

**Stone Mountain (Huntingdon)** – Stone Mountain recorded 4091 hawks in 460 hours from 30 August to 4 December, only 6% below the 10-year average (Table 1). The 460 hours of coverage were up 25% compared to prior years, which helped this site buck the downward trends seen at most other sites (Table 1). Five species were above-average for the site; these included 43 Black Vultures, 295 Turkey Vultures, 61 Northern Harriers, 2335 Broad-winged Hawks, and 34 Merlins. In addition, new records were set for Bald Eagle at 149, compared to the prior record of 113 in 2012, and Golden Eagle at 171. The above average count of 2335 Broad-winged Hawks was 43% above the 10-year average and the

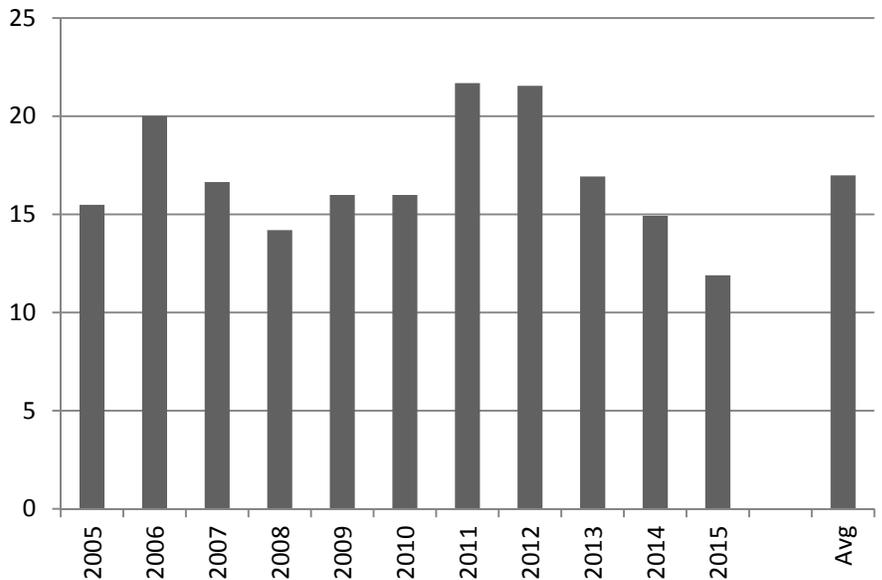
third highest count ever recorded there. The largest one-day flight for 2015 season occurred 17 September when 590 broadwings soared overhead along with 7 Osprey, one Bald Eagle, 2 Sharp-shinned Hawks, and 2 Northern Harriers. Golden Eagles were sighted nearly every day in November with several double digit count days. The highest one-day count was 20 November, when 30 goldens were counted, the first passing by at 07:15 and the last at 16:30. Most of the eagles were adults. Nine Bald Eagles and 19 Red-tailed Hawks joined the parade of goldens. On 4 December, the last day of the count, Stone watchers spotted 5 Golden Eagles and one Bald eagle.

**Waggoner's Gap (Cumberland)** – Waggoner's Gap hawkwatchers recorded 19,752 hawks in 1084 hours and 137 days, 17% below the 10-year average of 23,718 hawks (Table 1). Above-average counts were tallied for four species: 1730 Turkey Vultures, 528 Bald Eagles, 246 Red-shouldered Hawks, and 259 Golden Eagles. On 19 October a juvenile light morph Swainson's Hawk was observed harassing an immature Bald Eagle, providing the site's rarest bird of the autumn. September counts began building on 16 September when 796 Broad-winged Hawks sailed past. The next day 1050 broadwings appeared, and a light south wind 19 September ushered the largest flight day of the autumn, which consisted of 1760 broadwings along with 11 Bald Eagles, 21 Osprey, 44 Sharp-shinned Hawks, and singles of Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, American Kestrel, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon. Unlike many sites, the accipiter flights at Waggoner's Gap were steady through October, despite a shifting wind direction. By mid-month, counts surpassed 300 birds a day on most days and several days surpassed 600. The highest one-day count in October occurred 21 October and included 524 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 70 Cooper's Hawks. Several days later the site was graced by the highest one-day count of 41 Golden Eagles. November began slowly, but a cold front 14 November brought another eagle day to Waggoner's with 17 Bald and 29 Golden Eagles along one of the best 161 Red-tailed Hawks, the best count of that species for the season. December counts added another 206 late season migrants including 51 Bald and 8 Golden Eagles and a light morph Rough-legged Hawk 3 December (Table1).

**Conclusions**

In 2015, the state's hawkwatchers were reminded how important local, regional, and global weather patterns can be to the birds we see during autumn migration. The mild temperatures, fog,

**Figure 1. Hawks per hour at Pennsylvania sites, 2005-2015**



and weak winds in 2015 suppressed totals of many common species. Despite this, the flights of Bald and Golden Eagles were surprisingly strong. Some species that continued their upswings, e.g. Black and Turkey Vultures, were also seen in higher than average numbers.

We are just beginning to understand the complexities and changes occurring in weather patterns in recent years. Researchers have documented changing migration behaviors and distances in short-distance migrants, while long-distance migrants such as Broad-winged Hawks, may be traveling higher and faster, using the lift provided by warmer temperatures to travel more efficiently. Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks are lingering farther north in winter and being spotted less often at Pennsylvania migration sites. Kestrels, Cooper's Hawks and others also may be showing some changes as well. The strong impact that *El Niño* had in 2015 should diminish in 2016, and, hopefully, north winds, cold temperatures, and snow will return to next year and bring a torrent of raptors. Regardless of the vagaries of weather, Pennsylvania hawkwatches continue to provide some of the best hawkwatching experiences possible. The ninety-one thousand hawks this year was less than usual but still quite a lot of hawks.

**Acknowledgements**

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North America and managed by Jason Sodergren, database manager. Locations of sites and site totals can be viewed at <www.hawkcount.org> as well. I thank David Barber for the site map and Katerina Ramos for assistance with the tables. This is Hawk Mountain Sanctuary contribution number 262.

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Table 2. Autumn 2015 count results for Pennsylvania watchsites.

**ALLEGHENY FRONT (Bedford/Somerset) - Bob Stewart, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	17	114.0	20	0	7	3	1	6	3	0	0	111	27	0	0	7	3	0	0	7	195
September	30	215.5	32	0	70	55	11	104	18	1	5	885	89	0	4	18	10	14	0	32	1348
October	31	205.8	2	715	4	31	28	863	85	3	22	43	641	2	164	18	12	6	0	38	2677
November	30	211.3	1	60	2	23	13	55	9	0	15	0	463	0	150	3	0	0	0	12	806
December	31	87.0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>833.5</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>1029</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1039</b>	<b>1224</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>5035</b>
Total per hr			0.07	0.93	0.10	0.13	0.07	1.23	0.14	0.00	0.05	1.25	1.47	0.00	0.38	0.06	0.03	0.02	0.00	0.11	6.04
% of flight			1.1	15.4	1.6	2.2	1.1	20.4	2.3	0.1	0.8	20.6	24.3	0.0	6.4	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.0	1.8	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	112.1	810.4	32.1	425.5	98.1	98.2	53.0	1170.6	217.2	6.9	60.6	4794.6	1450.0	2.9	204.3	67.4	30.6	28.4	0.1	167.9	8999.5

**BAKE OVEN KNOB (Lehigh) - Bob Hoopes, Dan Kunkle, co-compilers**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	17	155.3	41	197	49	27	1	11	7	0	0	108	54	0	0	13	3	2	0	48	561
September	30	265.0	74	244	225	95	14	499	27	1	8	4904	60	0	64	0	65	19	0	174	6435
October	31	252.5	102	424	33	87	41	1756	77	9	56	9	253	0	44	40	45	19	0	198	3193
November	29	222.5	164	209	1	55	34	88	6	4	52	0	738	0	42	0	4	0	0	59	1456
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>895.3</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>1074</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>2354</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>5021</b>	<b>1105</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>11645</b>
Total per hr			0.43	1.20	0.34	0.29	0.10	2.63	0.13	0.02	0.13	5.61	1.23	0.00	0.10	0.13	0.09	0.04	0.00	0.54	13.01
% of flight			3.3	9.2	2.6	2.3	0.8	20.2	1.0	0.1	1.0	43.1	9.5	0.0	0.7	1.0	0.7	0.3	0.0	4.1	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	102.8	806.0	288.6	954.9	459.1	230.7	126.8	3312.3	301.9	25.1	127.9	5725.3	1,802	1	102	163	96	53	0.0	293.0	14071.3

**BW SEPT - Pipersville (Bucks) - Diane Allison, Kirk Moulton, co-compilers**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
September	2	9.8	6	4	1	1	1	25	2	0	1	914	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	959
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>959</b>
Total per hr			0.60	0.40	0.10	0.10	0.10	2.50	0.20	0.00	0.10	91.40	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.20	95.90
% of flight			0.6	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1	2.6	0.2	0.0	0.1	95.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	100.0
Average for 10 yrs	3.0	14.5	5.0	5.8	5.9	3.0	1.1	35.3	1.5	0.0	0.1	1115.3	1.5	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.4	1047.0

**COUNCIL CUP (Luzerne) - Donald Kapral, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
September	10	43.0	0	0	10	7	1	14	1	0	0	689	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	4	741
October	6	22.0	0	22	1	4	5	47	8	0	0	1	13	0	0	14	0	0	0	1	116
November	8	33.5	0	9	0	8	5	9	3	0	0	0	143	0	4	1	0	1	0	2	185
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>690</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1042</b>
Total per hr			0.00	0.31	0.11	0.19	0.11	0.71	0.12	0.00	0.00	6.97	1.58	0.00	0.04	0.30	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.07	10.53
% of flight			0.0	3.0	1.1	1.8	1.1	6.7	1.2	0.0	0.0	66.2	15.0	0.0	0.4	2.9	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.7	100.0
Average for 10 yrs	22.3	100.8	1.4	150.9	18.8	39.6	6.8	105.6	10.8	0.0	0.8	325.8	225.5	0.0	0.8	25.5	0.1	1.1	0.0	26.6	941.3

**HAWK MOUNTAIN (Berks and Schuylkill) - Laurie Goodrich, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	19	161.5	4	8	33	25	6	16	8	0	3	138	33	0	0	35	4	0	0	0	313
September	30	308.3	5	10	242	102	22	499	86	0	2	5489	61	0	2	121	72	17	0	93	6823
October	31	287.5	48	263	61	98	61	3128	271	2	36	21	334	0	53	75	86	38	1	90	4666
November	30	249.0	48	135	1	67	58	172	28	7	74	0	912	0	53	0	14	1	0	22	1592
December/January	18	121.5	10	1	0	24	0	3	0	0	0	0	24	0	10	1	0	0	0	0	74
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>1127.8</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>3818</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>5648</b>	<b>1364</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>13468</b>
Total per hr			0.10	0.37	0.30	0.28	0.13	3.38	0.35	0.01	0.10	5.01	1.21	0.00	0.10	0.21	0.16	0.05	0.00	0.18	11.94
% of flight			0.9	3.1	2.5	2.3	1.1	28.3	2.9	0.1	0.9	41.9	10.1	0.0	0.9	1.7	1.3	0.4	0.0	1.5	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	123.7	139.9	563.4	512.7	298.9	181.1	4743.1	678.9	37.3	196.8	7685.0	2650.2	1.9	136.7	432.2	178.3	59.9	0.3	273.0	18969.7	

\*Hawk Mountain total includes one Mississippi kite.

**JACK'S MOUNTAIN (Miffin) - Ron Singer, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total	
August	1	4.0	0	0	2	2	0	3	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
September	30	166.3	0	3	49	58	20	81	16	0	7	3460	37	0	1	30	2	8	0	11	3793	
October	31	174.0	24	79	6	11	14	496	53	1	15	4	296	0	60	19	12	4	0	11	1105	
November	27	163.8	12	20	2	36	21	28	10	1	14	0	381	0	83	4	1	0	0	2	615	
December	3	21.5	0	0	0	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	23	
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>529.5</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>3465</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5536</b>	
Total per hr			0.07	0.19	0.11	0.22	0.11	1.15	0.15	0.01	0.07	6.54	1.36	0.00	0.29	0.10	0.03	0.02	0.00	0.05	10.45	
% of flight			0.7	1.8	1.1	2.1	1.0	11.0	1.4	0.1	0.7	62.6	13.0	0.0	2.7	1.0	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.4	100.0	
Average last 10 yrs	55.0	312.9	25.0	131.0	55.7	64.7	30.6	559.0	58.5	1.8	11.8	2615.4	428.4	0.1	49.6	49.9	11.3	10.8	0.0	15.0	4117.0	

**LITTLE GAP (Northampton) - Michael Schall, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	7	45.0	3	0	15	6	1	9	3	0	1	40	11	0	0	5	1	0	0	2	97
September	30	223.0	8	47	184	93	19	684	48	0	3	6190	77	0	2	134	52	19	0	39	7599
October	31	228.5	41	211	39	80	33	2081	254	3	31	6	268	0	50	43	45	39	0	34	3258
November	30	171.3	44	190	2	70	38	163	43	4	45	0	818	0	59	0	13	2	0	20	1511
December	6	31.8	10	0	0	28	0	1	0	0	0	0	17	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	61
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>699.5</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>2938</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>6236</b>	<b>1191</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>12526</b>
Total per hr			0.15	0.64	0.34	0.40	0.13	4.20	0.50	0.01	0.11	8.91	1.70	0.00	0.16	0.26	0.16	0.09	0.00	0.14	17.89
% of flight			0.8	3.6	1.9	2.2	0.7	23.5	2.8	0.1	0.6	49.8	9.5	0.0	0.9	1.5	0.9	0.5	0.0	0.8	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	92.3	568.5	88.0	470.7	366.7	208.0	111.9	3332.7	379.2	21.3	102.8	7120.9	1658.9	0.7	74.5	186.4	93.5	40.8	0.1	104.0	14361.2

**MILITIA HILL (Montgomery) - Andy Fayer, Lynne Jackson, Rich Conroy, co-compilers**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
September	30	232.0	0	0	169	63	16	337	24	0	12	2827	1	0	0	111	10	9	0	32	3611
October	31	225.0	8	512	24	40	20	488	70	0	28	3	41	0	6	43	19	6	0	34	1343
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>457.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>2830</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>4954</b>
Total per hr			0.02	1.12	0.42	0.23	0.08	1.81	0.21	0.00	0.09	6.19	0.09	0.00	0.01	0.34	0.06	0.03	0.00	0.14	10.84
% of flight			0.2	10.3	3.9	2.1	0.7	16.7	1.9	0.0	0.8	57.1	0.8	0.0	0.1	3.1	0.6	0.3	0.0	1.3	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	59.8	448.1	28.6	613.0	281.6	101.2	79.6	1115.8	148.3	1.6	64.9	10496.7	119.8	0.2	3.9	266.8	32.8	28.4	0.0	68.1	13452.1

**ROCKY RIDGE (York) - Randy Phillips, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
September	13	75.5	0	0	38	14	5	132	2	0	0	1848	1	0	0	16	2	1	0	1	2060
October	9	37.5	19	58	3	6	8	102	7	0	1	3	33	0	0	18	0	1	0	1	260
November	2	6.3	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>119.25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1851</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2329</b>
Total per hr			0.16	0.49	0.34	0.18	0.11	1.99	0.08	0.01	0.01	15.52	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.29	0.03	0.02	0.00	0.02	19.53
% of flight			0.8	2.5	1.8	0.9	0.6	10.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	79.5	1.6	0.0	0.0	1.5	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	34.6	120.7	14.1	68.9	34.875	52.0	17.9	289.6	30.5	1.0	8.5	1336.4	147.6	0.1	1.9	52.4	2.4	3.1	0.0	10.3	2073.1

**ROSE TREE PARK (Delaware) - Holly Merker and Janet Crawford, co-compilers**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
September	30	206.3	0	0	112	59	11	211	33	0	5	967	9	0	0	70	10	5	0	21	1513
October	30	196.0	25	396	34	34	22	472	98	0	66	9	84	0	1	74	19	17	0	20	1371
November	19	98.0	23	84	0	11	4	58	14	0	42	0	66	0	0	1	2	1	0	5	311
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>500.3</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>976</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>3195</b>
Total per hr			0.12	1.22	0.37	0.27	0.09	1.89	0.37	0.00	0.29	2.49	0.41	0.00	0.00	0.37	0.08	0.06	0.00	0.12	8.15
% of flight			2.4	24.1	7.3	5.2	1.9	37.2	7.3	0.0	5.7	49.0	8.0	0.0	0.1	7.3	1.6	1.2	0.0	2.3	160.3
Average last 10 yrs	90.1	578.4	85.6	393.6	210.9	133.6	80.2	1174.0	177.6	2.6	171.2	3899.3	339.9	0.2	3.6	177.3	35.4	17.9	0.2	51.3	6954.5

**SECOND MOUNTAIN (Lebanon) - David Schwenk, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	16	97.0	0	0	9	10	6	6	0	0	2	66	42	0	0	5	0	2	0	1	145
September	29	217.0	43	0	45	44	11	124	28	1	4	3274	48	0	3	40	7	4	0	8	3684
October	31	238.8	78	359	17	64	51	985	114	9	44	7	178	0	31	32	21	10	0	18	2018
November	29	189.0	97	206	0	26	19	55	10	3	14	0	339	2	28	1	1	1	0	5	807
December	30	92.5	38	7	0	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	35	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	92
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>834.3</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>1170</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>3347</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6746</b>
Total per hr			0.31	0.69	0.09	0.18	0.10	1.40	0.18	0.02	0.08	4.01	0.77	0.00	0.08	0.09	0.03	0.02	0.00	0.04	8.09
% of flight			3.8	8.5	1.1	2.3	1.2	17.3	2.3	0.2	0.9	49.6	9.5	0.0	0.9	1.2	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.5	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	131.5	927.1	337.9	713.1	162.7	168.8	114.1	2329.8	254.0	24.3	122.2	4038.8	1049.1	2.6	92.9	108.5	39.6	27.3	0.7	61.3	9649.2

**STONE MOUNTAIN (Huntingdon) - Greg Grove, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	1	4.5	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	8	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	14
September	22	136.8	0	0	63	48	9	89	22	0	3	2311	15	0	0	24	7	9	0	6	2606
October	27	158.8	22	139	8	54	24	685	69	4	16	16	201	1	61	28	24	13	0	13	1378
November	24	145.0	21	156	0	43	28	36	13	0	16	0	248	0	99	0	3	0	0	1	664
December	2	15.0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	11	0	11	0	0	0	0	1	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>460.0</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2335</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>4091</b>
Total per hr			0.09	0.64	0.15	0.32	0.13	1.77	0.23	0.01	0.08	5.08	1.04	0.00	0.37	0.12	0.07	0.05	0.00	0.05	8.89
% of flight			1.1	7.2	1.7	3.6	1.5	19.9	2.5	0.1	0.9	57.1	11.7	0.0	4.2	1.3	0.8	0.5	0.0	0.5	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	65.6	367.1	24.1	217.1	77.1	90.7	58.9	886.3	152.0	8.0	52.5	1633.9	891.9	0.9	123.2	91.0	31.4	20.1	0.1	44.3	4343.8

**WAGGONER'S GAP (Cumberland) - David Grove, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	30	183.5	0	0	30	43	1	28	7	0	3	149	63	0	0	23	2	2	0	9	390
September	28	241.8	0	0	201	168	23	726	50	0	5	6718	64	0	2	92	22	9	0	22	8102
October	29	290.5	23	1424	77	168	117	5186	455	3	122	64	840	0	146	101	46	38	1	78	8899
November	28	245.0	11	269	1	98	90	194	37	1	112	0	1256	0	103	3	0	1	0	19	2195
December	22	123.3	3	37	0	51	2	2	1	1	4	0	94	1	8	0	0	1	0	2	206
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>1084.0</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>1730</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>6136</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>6931</b>	<b>2317</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>19752</b>
Total per hr			0.03	1.60	0.29	0.49	0.21	5.66	0.51	0.00	0.23	6.39	2.14	0.00	0.24	0.20	0.06	0.05	0.00	0.12	18.22
% of flight			0.2	8.8	1.6	2.7	1.2	31.1	2.8	0.0	1.2	35.1	11.7	0.0	1.3	1.1	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.7	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	140.2	1128.9	86.6	1611.3	444.0	442.2	245.2	8059.6	760.9	47.0	243.2	7769.4	3123.8	3.6	240.1	317.6	109.3	60.7	0.1	153.8	23718.4

**2015 TOTALS FOR ALL WATCHSITES**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	108	765	68	205	145	117	11	81	29	0	9	621	234	0	0	89	13	6	0	67	1,695
September	314	2,340	168	308	1,409	807	163	3,525	357	3	55	40,476	463	0	14	736	221	114	0	445	49,264
October	318	2,317	392	4,602	307	677	424	16,289	1,561	34	437	186	3,182	3	616	505	329	191	3	536	30,274
November	256	1,735	421	1,338	9	438	310	861	173	21	384	0	5,367	2	621	13	39	7	0	147	10,151
December	112	493	61	45	0	125	6	8	1	2	5	0	188	1	44	1	0	2	0	3	492
<b>Total</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>7649</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>6498</b>	<b>1870</b>	<b>2164</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>20764</b>	<b>2121</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>41283</b>	<b>9434</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1295</b>	<b>1344</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1198</b>	<b>91876</b>
Total per hr			0.15	0.86	0.25	0.29	0.12	2.75	0.28	0.01	0.12	5.48	1.25	0.00	0.17	0.18	0.08	0.04	0.00	0.16	12.19
% of flight			1.2	7.2	2.1	2.4	1.0	22.9	2.3	0.1	1.0	45.5	10.4	0.0	1.4	1.5	0.7	0.4	0.0	1.3	101.3
Average of last 10 yrs	1121.4	7461.4	1288.3	6411.2	2809.0	1937.3	1134.0	27581.2	3163.9	168.1	1141.1	62566.8	13544.8	12.7	1054.1	1955.5	666.5	372.2	4.3	1201.0	126997.7
% compared to average	-1.2	2.5	-13.8	1.4	-33.4	11.7	-19.4	-24.7	-33.0	-64.3	-22.0	-34.0	-30.3	-52.8	22.9	-31.3	-9.7	-14.0	-30.2	-0.2	-27.7

\*Total includes 3 hours of coverage from Chambers Lake, Chester County counting one American kestrel; also includes 1 Mississippi kite recorded at Hawk Mountain and 2 recorded at Millita Hill.

“Cool and dry” described well the fall of 2014, but would be only half right for the fall of 2015. Both seasons were dry, but otherwise they could not have been more different. El Niño sprang to life in 2015 and eventually developed into one of the strongest cycles on record. Initial forecasts of the event made in mid-summer did not call for particularly drastic effects in the northeastern U.S., but as autumn wore on it became obvious that this El Niño was only strengthening further, but that it would eventually drive significantly higher than normal temperatures in our region deep into the winter. Indeed, most stations across the state reported a departure from normal temperature of only about +1°F for August, but by season’s end everywhere from Erie to Pittsburgh to Philadelphia reported a departure of +4.5°F to +6°F for November, setting the stage for what would prove to be an equally warm winter across the state. The contrast with November 2014 in particular could not have been more stark; one year prior to El Niño wreaking havoc on the November record books in 2015, Pennsylvanians were dealing with one of the coldest Novembers on record in 2014, which included significant snowfall by Thanksgiving. In 2015-16, the first real snowfall of the season didn’t arrive for much of the state until mid-January.

September and November in particular were excessively dry more or less statewide, with most areas reporting a rainfall deficit of -2 to -3 inches in November alone. But aggregated for the whole season, western Pennsylvania fared better than the east in terms of rainfall; at Pittsburgh the departure from normal for the entire period August-November was just -0.02 inches, while at Philadelphia it was -4.03 inches.

The effects on the birds and birding this fall season were as expected in such conditions. Many compilers commented on the extremely poor waterfowl flight, no doubt due to the mild weather in October and November and the near total lack of strong late-season cold fronts. Passerines also did not show particularly well, though only a few compilers specifically classified their passage as poor, either. In clear contrast to November 2014, many half-hardy and late lingering migrants enjoyed the balmy conditions that persisted to the close of the season this year, whereas last year nearly all of them seemed to have been knocked out of the state by the middle of November. As is often the case, the dry conditions resulted in good but highly local shorebird habitat, with some areas reporting great seasons and others

having nothing worth mentioning at all. Shenango River Reservoir in *Mercer* was drawn down a bit early in 2015, creating good mudflats by mid-September. Lake Erie was at a higher than normal level, which combined with the generally benign weather to make for a pedestrian season (by *Erie* standards) at Gull Point. Somerset Lake in *Somerset* was drawn down anyway due to the ongoing problems with the dam at the lake, which helped drive a very nice season of 15 shorebird species there. In eastern Pennsylvania, Chambers Lake in *Chester*, Green Lake Park in *Montgomery*, and especially John Heinz N.W.R. in *Philadelphia* and *Delaware* enjoyed excellent shorebird flights due to low water levels.

Indeed, the place to be this season for rarities was Heinz. In addition to a superb showing of shorebirds, several remarkable rarities at the impoundment, including long-staying birds like **Tricolored Heron** and **Anhinga**, along with an elusive group of **Gull-billed Terns**, drew the attention of birders from across the state and the region. Yet without a doubt, the honors for “bird of the season”, and one of the most unexpected, almost random rarities to appear in the state in many years, went to the **Brown Booby** that graced *Bucks* for a few days in November.

The usual southeastern counties reported **Greater White-fronted Goose** by season’s end, but what was going on with the white-fronted that appeared in *Crawford* on the extraordinarily early date of 9/27? That date was early enough to at least suggest the possibility that the bird was not wild, but it also happened to appear in the company of an equally early, equally surprising **Brant**. That white-fronted did not stick around but the Brant was seen through the first week of October. In fact this year, for whatever reason, there was a spate of Brant reported across the state in the first ten days of October, close to a month earlier than their usual peak window of passage. In early October they were also reported in *Luzerne*, *Lycoming*, and *Philadelphia*. Adding to the oddity, the last Brant for the season was noted in *Philadelphia* 10/21, which was just two days later than the first Brant in 2014! Surely the mild weather would account for their poor showing (actually, absence) in November, but one can only guess what might have accounted for their comparatively excellent showing one month too early in October. Scattered reports of **Snow Goose** flocks in western counties were made from *Erie*, *Bedford*, *Forest*, and *Greene*. In *Berks*, an apparent

family of Snow Geese stuck around with a wounded member of its clan through the season. No longer detailed in the Birds of Note for fall, **Cackling Geese** were noted in 11 counties including *Erie*, *Huntingdon*, and *Mercer* in the west.

**Trumpeter Swans** are now annual in the state. One bird that first appeared as a juvenile in *Bucks* in December 2013 returned last year and again this year. Another was in *Huntingdon* this season. **Tundra Swans** bucked the trend set by most waterfowl, with many southbound flocks seen in good numbers statewide right on time in the second half of November, despite the settled weather. At least 15 counties reported one or more flocks of 100 or more. The big day was 11/22, when notable totals included 750 at Sunset Point in *Erie*, 562 at Stone Mountain in *Huntingdon*, 500 in *Butler*, 360 at the Allegheny Front in *Bedford*, 228 in *Allegheny*, 190 in *Venango*, and 160 in *Somerset*.

Dabbling ducks showed much better than diving ducks in this warm and quiet season. The biggest count of **Wood Duck** was made in *Crawford* as usual, where 1453 were tallied during an annual fall census 9/19. Nice counts of **Gadwall** included 138 in *Butler* 11/19, 127 in *Crawford* 10/16, and 100 in *Dauphin* 11/13. September (i.e., early) **American Wigeons** popped up in seven counties led by one in *Erie* 9/13. **Eurasian Wigeon** is much more common in spring than fall, and is frequently missed in the autumn altogether. That would have been the case this year as well if not for the male that appeared at a golf course in *Philadelphia* 11/17 and stayed through the month. **American Black Ducks** continue to defy a predictable pattern of occurrence or distribution; this year they were reported in noticeably higher numbers and more widely in eastern counties than in the west, including a very early bird in *Montgomery* 8/7. **Blue-winged Teals** appeared in 24 counties, perhaps a little better than average, and took advantage of conditions to linger into November in *Chester*, *Crawford*, *Dauphin*, *Montgomery*, and *Philadelphia*. **Northern Shovelers** were also widespread, headed by a count of 250 in *Philadelphia*. Early **Northern Pintails** appeared before the end of the first week of September in *Allegheny*, *Chester*, *Crawford*, and *Montgomery*. A **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** was noted in *Chester* 11/24.

As mentioned, it was with the diving ducks that the overall poor waterfowl season really showed. The lack of cold fronts forced precious few scaup, ring-necks, Canvasbacks, and Redheads onto

the state's bodies of water. One notable event occurred in the western counties anyway 11/29, in mainly clear weather. That day there was a region-wide fallout particularly of **Bufflehead**, which included 694 of that species in *Allegheny* and 300 in *Butler*. Farther east, counts of 200 and 300 Bufflehead were also noted 11/29 in *Clearfield* and *Lancaster*, respectively. It was as if the birds finally got tired of waiting and pushed through into the region despite generally unfavorable winds. All three species of **scoters** were reported, each in from nine to 11 counties and each in unremarkable numbers. A few **Surf Scoters** were associated with the 11/29 event in *Allegheny* and *Clearfield*. A summering **White-winged Scoter** in *Philadelphia* was last seen 9/5. **Long-tailed Duck** fared slightly better, noted in 15 counties mostly in the second half of November. A very early Long-tailed around Gull Point, *Erie* 9/4-19 was probably injured. Somewhat unusual, especially in a season like this, was the appearance of **Common Goldeneyes** in an impressive 12 counties before the end of November, again some specifically on 11/29 in *Allegheny*, *Armstrong*, *Chester*, *Clearfield*, and *Indiana*. **Ruddy Ducks** usually put in a four-digit showing somewhere in fall but this season the top count was just 509 in *Indiana*. A male Ruddy that lingered late in the spring at Canonsburg Lake, *Washington* might have been the same bird that was seen there again 8/13 (early) and 9/17.

**Ruffed Grouse** was noted in 18 counties including a flock of 10 birds (plus one road-killed grouse) that provided a new high count for *Lebanon*.

**Red-throated Loon** was another species that showed surprisingly well despite the weather. Normally most

autumn records of this species are closely associated with powerful November cold fronts, yet this season, despite lacking such weather, they were reported in 16 counties across a much wider range of dates than usual. One passed Sunset Point, *Erie* 9/20 and established a record early date there, and three flew over the Rose Tree Park Hawkwatch in *Delaware* 10/3. One in *Bucks* 10/24 was still showing a good bit of its alternate plumage. Lastly a handful of them appeared with the 11/29 "fallout", including birds in *Butler* and *Lancaster*, and one *Washington* 11/29 among 19 **Common Loons** was *Washington's* first ever Red-throated. Regarding Common Loons, a remarkable 1400 passed Sunset Point, *Erie* 10/31, and the day before, 221 flew over Stone Mountain, *Huntingdon*. Early (or lingering summering) Common Loons were noted in August in *Bucks* and *Armstrong*. A **Pied-billed Grebe** at Big Spring, *Cumberland* has now been resident there for three years. Early **Horned Grebes** were scored in *Centre* 9/6 and *Crawford* 9/13. **Red-necked Grebe** was noted in just four counties, including *Erie* where they are annual at Sunset Point. The others reporting were *Bucks*, *Centre*, and *Chester*.

Quite shocking was Pennsylvania's first **Brown Booby**, an adult female at a restricted, private area at the Penn-Warner Tract in *Bucks* 11/14-17. Thanks to the efforts of the bird's discoverer, Devich Farbotnik (who has permission to enter the restricted area), agreements were reached with the property owner to allow birders access to the property and a chance to see this perhaps once-in-a-lifetime Pennsylvania rarity. Judging by eBird entries and other sightings, at least 40-50 people (or more) were successful. This bird may seemed to have appeared

out of nowhere, but there actually were a few other Brown Boobies in the region in late fall. These included one very long-staying bird at Baltimore, Maryland and one on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, both of which were in those locations simultaneously to the *Bucks* bird. Another was in Cape May 11/23.

Another headliner was the **Anhinga** at John Heinz N.W.R. that was seen on both the *Philadelphia* and *Delaware* sides beginning in August. It was difficult to pin down for several weeks before it at last developed a pattern of taking mid-morning flights over the impoundment beginning in late Sept. From then until 10/23, patient observers needed only to position themselves on the boardwalk in the morning and watch the skies, and almost invariably the Anhinga would appear. Anhingas are reported nearly annually in Pennsylvania, but almost exclusively they are not "chasable"; most have been fly-bys at hawkwatches or just seen randomly overhead, so birders found this predicable, long-staying bird to be a special treat.

A late **American Bittern** in *Huntingdon* 11/10 put the species on the ninth county list for the season. **Least Bittern** was seen in three counties: *Delaware* and *Philadelphia* (both at John Heinz N.W.R. where they bred) and one wayward bird in *Luzerne* 9/11 was incongruously perched in a shrub amid scrub oak barrens "miles from water". The mild weather saw **Great Egrets** holding on into November in at least four counties and in *Beaver* to 10/31. **Snowy Egrets** were seen as usual in four southeastern counties—*Bucks*, *Delaware*, *Montgomery*, and *Philadelphia*. Up to 10 were counted at John Heinz N.W.R. through 10/23. **Little Blue Heron** was seen in 11 counties, all in the southeastern corner except one bird at Plymouth Flats, *Luzerne* that continued from the summer to 8/11, and 2 in *Bradford* 8/23. For the latter county they were a first. Back in *Philadelphia* the rarity parade kicked off at Heinz with one or 2 juv. **Tricolored Herons** that were enjoyed by many on both sides of the *Philadelphia/Delaware* line 7/30-8/12. The only **Cattle Egrets** (no doc) were reported on the *Philadelphia* side of Heinz on the early dates of 8/1 and 8/3. A **Green Heron** lingered in *Beaver* to 11/4 and set a new late date for the county, no doubt a consequence of the very mild season. Reclusive **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were variously noted in 10 counties, including a late bird unexpectedly in *Washington* 11/14. **White Ibis** has become nearly annual again in Pennsylvania, but nearly all records are of juveniles, so the beautiful white adult that hung around Green Lane Park, *Montgomery* 10/17-21 was a nice change of pace. The only other White



This Anhinga at John Heinz N.W.R. in *Philadelphia* was one of several red-letter rarities there this season that entertained many birders from around the region. (Holly Merker)

Ibis was a juvenile at John Heinz N.W.R. that spent one day there in each of two reporting seasons 7/31-8/1. **Glossy Ibis** was seen in just two counties (*Luzerne*, the third record for that county, and *Philadelphia*), but dark ibises, as always probably Glossies, were also seen in *Berks* and *Bucks*.

**Black Vultures** may be pushing their range slightly westward into southwestern Pennsylvania. This fall, continuing an almost indiscernible trend in recent years, sightings were made in *Allegheny*, *Greene*, and *Indiana*. *Indiana* had three sightings this fall compared to just four prior records ever for the county. Away from hawk watches, **Ospreys** lingered into November in six counties including *Beaver*, *Indiana*, and *Jefferson* where they are not as expected in late fall as in the southeast. Speaking of hawk watches, results were down almost across the board this year, but **Golden Eagles** were way up—some 23% above their ten-year statewide average (see the separate fall hawkwatch summary in this issue). Golden Eagles were also well reported away from the ridges, including early birds in *Bucks* 9/20 and in *Centre* 10/2. Off-ridge **Northern Goshawks** were noted in *Centre*, *Lebanon*, and *Somerset*. It was not a good start to the winter for **Rough-legged Hawk**, with records away from watches in just four counties. As usual a few **Swainson's Hawks** and **Mississippi Kites** were noted by hawkwatchers, but the only one of either that was noted away from a watch was a Mississippi Kite in *Montgomery* 9/21.

The elusive **Virginia Rail** was noted in seven counties, and the less elusive **Sora** in 20; the latter was a fixture at John Heinz N.W.R. that made its way onto the many checklists of the rarity-seekers who visited the refuge. **Common Gallinule** was in *Lawrence* and *Crawford* as usual but also in *Philadelphia* this fall. **Sandhill Cranes** were frequently noted in the usual locations, especially in *Lawrence* and *Bradford*. They are also on the increase in *Crawford* as a mostly year-round resident, though a mid-fall aggregation of at least 67 of them in the Miller Ponds area was very impressive for anywhere in Pennsylvania.

Shorebird migration, taken as a whole, was perhaps a little better than average despite an unremarkable year at Gull Point (which still featured 23 species of shorebirds). Key locations were Shenango Res. in *Mercer* (14 species), Somerset Lake in *Somerset* (15 species), Green Lane Park in *Montgomery* (17 species), and John Heinz N.W.R. in *Delaware* and *Philadelphia* (19 species). *Bucks* also had 16 species across several sites. The hit-or-miss **American Avocet** was certainly a miss this season, with only one report of 9 birds in *Clearfield*

10/7. Normally this species is found in at least three or four counties in fall. **Black-bellied Plover** was noted in 10 counties including several in Oct and a few lingering around the east end of Presque Isle, *Erie* to at least 11/19. **American Golden-Plovers** were a little off with reports in 12 counties but none in noteworthy numbers. **Semipalmated Plovers** were very widely reported; most interesting among these was a banded individual at the Conejohela Flats, *Lancaster* 8/7 that was later learned to have been banded at Maranhao, Brazil 1/31/2015. One lingered in *Indiana* 10/28.

A few **Spotted Sandpipers** carried into October here and there but one that stayed to 11/14 in *Lancaster* was definitely procrastinating. **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, and **Lesser Yellowlegs** were all widely reported but generally unremarkably, except for some impressive late September tallies of Lessers that included 50 in *Montgomery* 9/30 and 87 at Shenango River Res., *Mercer* 9/27, which was an all-time record for that storied lake. **Willetts** had a very impressive showing, noted in *Cambria*, *Dauphin/Perry*, *Erie*, *Lebanon*, *Luzerne*, *Lycoming*, and *Philadelphia*. The two records in *Philadelphia* were both at John Heinz N.W.R., of course, and included a credible report of 9 there on the very late date of 11/8, which may well represent a new latest-ever date for Pennsylvania. **Upland Sandpipers** put on a nice show in *Lancaster* in August, and were noted in three other counties as well. The only report of **Whimbrel** was one at Gull Point 8/3. Absolutely outstanding were the four **Hudsonian Godwits** that put down at John Heinz N.W.R., *Philadelphia* 10/4-5 and delighted the many observers there with some wonderfully close views. Earlier in the season, a **Marbled Godwit** also entertained throngs of birders at the Heinz impoundment 9/11-23. Another Marbled was noted in *Lancaster* 8/21-28. **Ruddy Turnstone** and **Red Knot** were noted only at Gull Point. Turnstones are regular there (seen on six dates through 9/28 this year) but are very rare to accidental anywhere else in fall despite good seasons for them recently from 2011-2013. Red Knot is casual anywhere except *Erie* these days, with fall records away from Presque Isle in just eight years since 2000. A juvenile **Ruff** was briefly a celebrity at the thoroughly unassuming Greencastle Reservoir, *Franklin* 9/25-26. Another was reported in *Lancaster* 9/18. **Stilt Sandpiper** was found in 10 counties, and seemed to have a particularly good season in the southeastern counties. **Sanderling** was back to its normal habits with scattered records in just seven counties as well as *Erie*. A nice October flock of 39 passed

Sunset Point 10/17. Reports of **Dunlin** were unremarkable save a flock of 100 in *Crawford* 10/21. Twelve counties for **Baird's Sandpiper** represented the "new normal" for this species that long ago was considered rather rare in the state. One in *Erie* was still hanging on 10/16. Top single-site counts of **Least Sandpiper** maxed out at just 100 in *Bucks* and 200 in *Philadelphia*. **White-rumped Sandpipers** had a very good flight with reports in 14 counties; most notable was an October push of birds at Shenango River Res. which maxed out at 38 on 10/7 and set another record for the reservoir. **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was reported in its typical window from mid-August to mid-September in *Chester*, *Lancaster*, and *Montgomery*. Like a few other species, **Pectoral Sandpipers** were widely reported but in unremarkable numbers and dates. While Least Sandpipers were lacking at John Heinz in *Philadelphia*, **Semipalmated Sandpipers** came through in spades, including a count of 1000 there 8/15. **Western Sandpiper** was exceptionally well reported with mentions in eight counties, including *Armstrong's* first, a beautiful juvenile wonderfully photographed at Crooked Creek 8/22. **Short-billed Dowitchers** were scarce, as is often the case, with reports in *Chester*, *Erie*, *Luzerne* (late on 10/9), *Montgomery*, and *Schuylkill*. **Long-billed Dowitcher** was seen in *Crawford* twice in October and also in *Lancaster* and *Lawrence*. The only **Wilson's Phalaropes** were in *Crawford* and *Philadelphia*. **Red-necked Phalarope** fared better with reports in five counties.

The only jaegers in this subdued season were single **Parasitic Jaegers** (or the same one twice) passing Sunset Point, *Erie* 10/29 and 10/30. In fact reports of gulls in general were forgettable, except for the historic mass movement of **Franklin's Gulls** into the region 11/13-14. In what was probably the most extensive Atlantic invasion of this species on record, they were noted at dozens of coastal sites on those two days everywhere from Massachusetts to Georgia—including triple-digit counts at Cape May. This event came on the heels of a powerful low pressure system that crossed the upper Midwest and the Great Lakes in the days prior. Indeed, this was one of the few very powerful systems that reached the region at all this season, and perhaps the scarcity of such systems was itself a factor here. Franklin's Gulls may have lingered in large numbers in the upper Great Plains longer than usual, waiting for those strong north winds for their ride south, and once this particular system finally appeared it swept great numbers of these birds up but ultimately pushed them much farther east than they would otherwise have traveled. At

any rate, the invasion was in many respects a repeat of a similar event, almost to the day, that occurred in November 1998 (Brinkley, 1999), when a powerful system pushed an unprecedented flight of Franklin's Gulls into the Great Lakes region and ultimately to the Atlantic seaboard. Unfortunately, also much like 1998, this year's event managed to skip over most of Pennsylvania again. In '98, the only Franklin's reported in Pennsylvania were up to 5 at Presque Isle over two days. In 2015 during the 11/13-14 window, small numbers of Franklin's Gulls were again reported from *Erie*, but also *Berks*, *Bucks*, *Lancaster*, and *Montgomery*, a great showing by Pennsylvania standards to be sure, but a very far cry from the hordes seen on the coast and elsewhere in the Great Lakes.

Other gull news was slim. **Little Gull** was noted only from Sunset Point, *Erie* 10/21-29. **Laughing Gulls** in western Pennsylvania are always headliners; one juv. at Lake Arthur, *Butler* 8/14-29 drew much attention from area birders. An **Iceland Gull** in *Bucks* 11/1 set a new early arrival date there. An immature **Great Black-backed Gull** in *Crawford* 8/7 was far out of place.

Where gulls failed to impress, terns picked up the slack. Most notable by far were the occasional sightings of **Gull-billed Terns** at John Heinz N.W.R. in both *Philadelphia* and *Delaware*. Sightings began with a flock of 5 on the *Philadelphia* side 8/8, after which they were seen on a few dates up to 8/22 in both counties. **Caspian Terns** were noted in 17 counties including late birds in *Adams* and *York* 10/7. **Black Terns** were found in 10 counties, one of their strongest showings in recent years. All sightings but one were made in August. **Common Terns** were noted in just four counties (*Centre*, *Crawford*, *Erie*, and *Lancaster*) but among those were some notable records in *Erie*: a flock of 107 passed Sunset Point on the late date of 11/1, and at least one was still hanging around the east end of Presque Isle 11/14. **Forster's Tern** was also reported in 10 counties, all but two of which had the species only in August.

A **Eurasian Collared-Dove** at Willow Street in *Lancaster* was the only report of a bird away from their usual haunts. The epicenter of their range in Pennsylvania remains the Greencastle area of *Franklin*, where as many as 90 were reported this season.

The decline of the **Black-billed Cuckoo** in Pennsylvania continued unabated, with reports in just 15 counties, and many compilers lamented their scarcity or absence in recent years. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was much more common, as usual. Late breeding was noted in *Chester*, where young were being

fed 9/8-17, and in *York* were nest building was witnessed 8/12.

**Barn Owls** were hardly reported at all, though this probably doesn't represent an absolute lack of the species' presence. An immature **Snowy Owl** in *Lebanon* 10/24 was extraordinarily early, especially in a year with such calm air, and a non-invasion year to boot. The only other **Snowy** by season's end was one in *Erie* 11/24. **Long-eared Owl** was noted only in *Cumberland* 11/23 and *Schuylkill* 11/22, and **Short-eared Owl** in only five counties. It was another off year for **Northern Saw-whet Owl** banders; 50 were netted at the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch, which wasn't terrible, but only 75 were caught in *Schuylkill* which was far short of previous year's highs. Next year's flight is forecast to be significantly better.

Compilers and eBirders go well out of their way to gather as much data on the declining **Common Nighthawk** as possible, resulting in an exceptionally good picture of their fall migrations through the state. This season they were reported in 35 counties but mostly in small numbers. A dedicated nighthawk watch in *Venango*, for example, tallied just 186 for the season, and few sites statewide reported one-day totals in excess of 100. A very late bird in *Montgomery* 10/27 was notable, but the species does linger into the last week of October occasionally, and there are at least three November records of the species as well. Lucky birders scored fall season **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** in *Erie*, *Indiana*, *Lebanon*, *Somerset*, and *Sullivan*. An extremely late **Chimney Swift** was noted in *Philadelphia* 11/2. I could not find references to any other November records for this species in Pennsylvania.

A small number of **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** lingered into October as usual, but one in *Blair* 11/21 was exceptionally late. The amazing fall of 2012 has perhaps jaded Pennsylvania birders' estimations of the fall flights of **Rufous Hummingbird** since then, but this season's eight birds in eight different counties wasn't actually all that bad.

**Red-headed Woodpecker** has been tracked in this space for some years. This season's collection of records from 28 counties was quite impressive, and a welcome sign for this charismatic species. Also on the upswing is **Merlin**, with reports this fall in 31 counties including August sightings in eight of those.

A **Myiarchus sp.** in *Montgomery* 11/14 (during the Franklin's Gull incursion) was unfortunately not identified to species. The only other rare flycatcher was a **Western Kingbird** that entertained many birders in *Carbon* 10/11-27. A **Least Flycatcher** at Gettysburg College, *Adams* caused quite

a stir 11/6-16, when it was initially suspected as a possible **Dusky Flycatcher**. Many excellent photos, as well as recordings of the bird's "whit" calls, eventually led to a convincing identification of **Least**, however. See the separate article in this issue on this "confusing fall flycatcher". Another **Least** was noted in *Cumberland* 11/11. Otherwise there was not much to report for this family; **Olive-sided Flycatcher** and **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** reports were about typical, though again the large number of **Yellow-bellied** reported probably included some misidentified birds. A juvenile **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was begging for food in *Bucks* 9/5. A very late **Eastern Kingbird** was reported in *Northampton* 10/5.

Not unexpectedly, it was not a good start to the winter for **Northern Shrike**, with reports in only six counties by season's end and not very many of those birds obviously hanging around in one place to close the season. **Philadelphia Vireo** is another species that gets the attention of birders and compilers alike; this season's haul encompassed 30 counties, with nearly all reports in September, but one in *Huntingdon* 10/31 was quite late. Extraordinary is the only word to describe the **Red-eyed Vireo** in *Crawford* 11/29, the second-latest date for that species in Pennsylvania history, bested only by one that was found on the Reading CBC 12/21/2975. The disjunct population of **Fish Crows** in Pittsburgh appears to be expanding, with many sightings across an increasingly wide area of the eastern half of the city. Interestingly, however, they have not been noted in any adjacent counties except for a few spring records in *Armstrong*, *Beaver*, and *Westmoreland* in 2012 and 2013. **Common Ravens**, on the other hand, continue to expand just about anywhere and everywhere, with many reports statewide across the southern and western tiers in areas they were unheard of just 15 years ago.

Twelve **Tree Swallows** that passed Sunset Point, *Erie* 11/18 were record late for that count; another in *Lancaster* 11/11 was also late. A **swallow sp.** reported in the daily notes for the Bake Oven Knob hawkwatch, *Lehigh* 11/13 was listed as a **Cliff**, but was actually much more likely a **Cave Swallow** at that date, assuming it was indeed an orange-rumped swallow. That unconfirmed sighting left the state for the second autumn in a row with no definitive reports of **Cave Swallow**. They had been reported in five of six fall seasons from 2008-2013. **Bank** and **Barn Swallows** lingered into Oct in a few counties each. It was yet another bad year for **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, which has officially broken out of its alternating two-year cycle of highs and lows here in Pennsylvania. Despite being

reported in 26 counties, nearly all of those had only one or a handful of reports. The last big invasion year for this species was 2012, which, admittedly, was one of the biggest on record. **Marsh Wrens** were fairly well reported on migration, garnering sightings in 16 counties including a record late bird for *York* 11/22-23. **Sedge Wrens** were noted only in *Montgomery* 10/18 and *Northumberland* 10/23.

A few **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** lingered well into November; these included birds in *Chester* to the end of the season, *Cumberland* 11/27, and *Luzerne* 11/16. Excellent flights of nocturnally migrating thrushes were heard in *Allegheny* 9/11, 9/21, 9/23, and 10/5. A few late **Swainson's Thrushes** were still calling overhead there 10/19. Significant flights were also detected in *Clarion* on a few of those same days. By daylight thrushes were elusive as they tend to be in fall. A **Wood Thrush** was still around in *Montgomery* 10/16. Reports of **Gray-cheeked Thrush** were okay, with ones and twos in 18 counties from mid-September to mid-October. As is often the case, **Swainson's Thrush** was the most widely reported *Catharus*, including an total of 328 netted by Powdermill banders for the season. The mild weather kept many **Gray Catbirds** around well into November and beyond; this season there were 12 counties reporting this species in November.

**American Pipit** also had a nice showing, with reports in 22 counties and many double-digit flocks. A very early bird was noted at Gull Point 8/13-14. It was surprising to see the number of compilers who went out of their way to mention large flocks of **Cedar Waxwings** this season; impressive three-digit flocks were noted in *Adams*, *Allegheny*, *Beaver*, *Berks*, *Bucks*, *Butler*, *Philadelphia*, *Westmoreland*, and *York* at least. A surprising number of **Snow Buntings** appeared before the end of the season (18 counties), proving that sometimes these "northern" birds don't wait on the weather before moving south. Conversely only two counties reported **Lapland Longspur** and both very early: *Erie* 10/11 (to 11/25) and *Venango* 10/8.

As mentioned in the outset, the mild weather allowed many migrants to simply overfly our state, and there was a decided lack of passerine fallouts. Yet most compilers did not classify the season as an outright failure for warblers or passerines in general. Most of the news among warblers, of course, came in the form of late lingering birds taking advantage of the abnormal temperatures. Once again **Ovenbirds** lingered well into November in the city of Philadelphia, with 2 on the campus of Temple University 11/8 and one even seen foraging on the marble floor inside the

payment kiosk at the Philadelphia Art Museum 11/29! It's anyone's guess what this species finds so appealing about Philadelphia in November. **Northern Waterthrush** was seen in 13 counties, a pretty decent fall showing. Some 16 **Golden-winged Warblers** were found in 10 counties, which was about as good as it gets anymore for this rapidly declining species. A wayward **Blue-winged Warbler** was found at Moraine State Park 11/22, establishing a new latest-ever fall date for Pennsylvania. It was seen again in December; details will be forthcoming in the next issue. One each of **Brewster's** and **Lawrence's Warbler** were found, in *Blair* and *Cumberland*, respectively. A **Black-and-white Warbler** tarried in *Montgomery* to 10/17. **Tennessee Warbler**, one of the "budworm specialists", once again had a good fall season, judging by compiler comments. Tennessee's close look-alike, **Orange-crowned Warbler**, was reported in 16 counties, but only once before 9/24, a hopeful sign that most of these were identified correctly. A **Nashville Warbler** in *Bucks* 11/9 was quite late. Birders continue to find **Connecticut Warblers** with increasing frequency, this season in 20 counties—yet another example of the effects of increased birder knowledge and awareness leading to increased records of a hard-to-find species. The closely-related and nearly as skulking **Mourning Warbler** was noted in 18 counties. Like Tennessee Warbler, **Cape May Warbler** also continued a recent trend of strong showings, this season in 20 counties and with many compilers from all corners of the state commenting on their good numbers. **Bay-breasted Warbler** was the least mentioned of the three budworm birds but itself was not missing from many county lists this season. A late **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was noted in *Montgomery* 11/1. In *Bucks*, a **Pine Warbler** returned 11/18 to the same yard for the ninth consecutive winter. It wasn't all late birds that made news; also in *Bucks*, a **Blackburnian Warbler** 8/1 and a **Black-throated Green Warbler** 8/5 each set new early dates for the county. **Canada** and especially **Wilson's Warbler** were both widely reported across the state; a very late Wilson's was photographed in *Philadelphia* 11/25.

Very little of note was reported among sparrows. **Clay-colored Sparrow** was noted on migration in six counties, a better than average showing. **Henslow's Sparrows** in *Indiana* 10/14 and *Montgomery* 10/11 were both quite late. Eleven reports of **Nelson's Sparrow** spanned eight counties, all in October, another case of birders getting increasingly better at finding what is probably not all that uncommon a

species, despite its history in the state. **Lincoln's Sparrow** and **Fox Sparrow** were both widely reported.

A **Scarlet Tanager** in *Bucks* 10/15 set a new late fall date for the county, but there is one winter record there as well. A **Summer Tanager** was noted at Hawk Mountain 9/15. One of the red-letter highlights of the winter season actually first appeared 11/21: an adult male **Western Tanager** at a feeder in State College, *Centre*, which stayed throughout the winter and would prove to be the most confiding of its kind ever to appear in Pennsylvania. See the separate article in this issue. A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** appeared at a feeder in *Westmoreland* 10/28, yet another late bird in this mild season. It wasn't a good summer for them, but **Dickcissel** was nevertheless noted about eight times in five different counties in fall from mid-August through October.

**Rusty Blackbird** is another species that compilers keep close tabs on. This season they were fairly well reported in at least 31 counties, including a number of larger flocks. For the fourth year in a row, two adult male **Baltimore Orioles** returned to feeders in *Bucks*, this year on 11/7 and 11/13.

It was forecast to be a poor finch year and that did indeed prove to be true. **Purple Finch** had about an average statewide flight, of which some reports included locally breeding birds, of course. Surprisingly there were a number of **Red Crossbills** found. Among these were one recorded by a webcam in *Berks* 10/12, a season total of 19 at Hawk Mountain, and other records in *Clarion*, *Lehigh*, and *Northampton*. The latter county saw as many as 22 passing the Little Gap hawk watch in early November. Conversely the only **White-winged Crossbill** was at Hawk Mountain 11/3. **Common Redpoll** was noted in five counties in November, but did not put in much of a winter appearance after that. Despite it being an off year for finches, **Pine Siskins** were reported in 33 counties anyway, though not in huge numbers anywhere so they were more or less under the radar despite their widespread distribution. Many counties reported them on only one or a few dates. Very surprising and random were 6 **Evening Grosbeaks** in *York* 10/18, the only report for the season.

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Reference:

Brinkley, E.S., 1999. Changing seasons: low pressure. *North American Birds* 53(1):12-19.

## Birds of Note – August through November 2015

This listing 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. “eBird” indicates valid records deemed credible which were entered into the eBird database for counties with no reporting compiler.

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. Undocumented reports of review species are included in this listing but are generally excluded from most analyses of the historical record; for this reason, documentation is highly desirable for these species. 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 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.

**Greater White-fronted Goose** – *Bucks*: one at Peace Valley Park 11/21 (August Mirabella); *Chester*: 2 at Coatesville Reservoir 10/29 (Holly Merker), and 4 at Octorara Reservoir 11/1 (Eliza Fraser, Scott Fraser); *Crawford*: one very early bird at the Hartstown Project pond 9/27 (ph. Matt Juskowich); *Cumberland*: one at Laughlin Mill, Newville 11/12 (Vern Gauthier, Bill Franz, Linda Franz); *Lebanon*: 7 at Lion’s Lake 11/14 (Ted Nichols II) were identified as *flavirostris*, and were present there again 11/23-25 (m.ob.); *Montgomery*: 2 at Green Lane Park 11/27 (Kevin Crilley, George Franchois).

**Brant** – *Crawford*: one at the Hartstown Project pond 9/27 (Matt Juskowich) and again there and at the nearby Miller Ponds 10/4-7 (m.ob.); *Luzerne*: 6 at Harveys Lake 10/9 (Rick Koval); *Lycoming*: one at the Market Street Bridge 10/1 (Maddi Dunlap, Jean Klotz); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 10/1-5 (ph. Damon Orsetti), one at the Naval Business Center 10/2 (George Armistead), and 2 at the Betsy Ross Bridge 10/10 (Tom Bailey).

**Trumpeter Swan** – *Bucks*: one at Lake Towhee Park 9/21-11/8 (Paul Teese, m.ob.); *Huntingdon*: one at the Marklesburg waterfowl area 10/23 (Zachary Adams).

**Eurasian Wigeon** – *Philadelphia*: one at the FDR golf course 11/17 through the season (Brian Henderson).

**Green-winged (Common) Teal\*** – *Chester*: one at Eagleview Pond 11/24 (Rick Robinson, *no doc*), presumably the same bird at that location for the third winter in a row.

**Brown Booby\*** – *Bucks*: one adult female at the Penn-Warner Tract 11/14-17 (ph. Devich Farbotnik, *doc submitted*) would represent the first record for Pennsylvania if accepted.

**Least Bittern** – *Delaware*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 8/10 (Damon Orsetti); *Luzerne*: one perched in a shrub on a ridge top in Laurel Run 9/11 (Rick Koval); *Philadelphia*: nested at John Heinz N.W.R. with 7 birds present at the beginning of Aug (Paul Bernhardt).

**Anhinga\*** – *Delaware*: present at John Heinz N.W.R. for most of August, September, and October, same bird as in *Philadelphia* (which see); *Montgomery*: one flying north over the Fort Washington S.P. hawkwatch 9/13 (Rich Conroy, Andrew Fayer, *no doc*); *Northampton*: one over the Little Gap Hawk Watch 8/29 (Michael Schall, *no doc*); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 8/12 (David Allen, Anna Mindel) was seen again 8/23 and 9/18 before it was then seen nearly daily 9/23-10/23 by hundreds of observers, same bird as in *Delaware* (*doc submitted*).

**Snowy Egret** – *Bucks*: 3 at Rohm & Haas, Bristol 8/2 (Devich Farbotnik); *Delaware*: 2 at John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge 8/10-19 (Damon Orsetti); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 9/10-10/3 (Al Guarente); *Philadelphia*: up to 10

at John Heinz N.W.R. through 10/23 (m.ob.).

**Little Blue Heron** – *Bedford*: one at Dunning’s Creek Wetlands 8/31 (Tom Dick); *Berks*: one imm. at Fleetwood 8/22 (Steve Fordyce); *Bradford*: 2 on the Susquehanna River at Sugar Run 8/23 (Liz Hart); *Bucks*: 2 at R ohm & Haas, Bristol 8/2 (Devich Farbotnik) and one at the Penn-Warner Tract 8/8-11 (Devich Farbotnik); *Chester*: one at the Cassatt Preserve in Berwyn 9/8-10/3 (Brian Raichich); *Delaware*: one imm. at John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge 8/2 (Al Guarente, Damon Orsetti); *Dauphin*: juv. at Wildwood Lake Park 8/3 (Lou Carpenter, eBird); *Lancaster*: one at Middle Creek W.M.A. 8/1 (Vince Pantanella), one at the Conehela Flats to 8/2 (Devane Hoffman), and one at the Conewago Recreation Trail and Wetlands 8/2-7 (Lou Carpenter, Daniel Hinnebusch, Ted Nichols II); *Luzerne*: juvenile at Plymouth Flats continued from the summer to 8/11 (Jonathan DeBalko, Jim Hoyson, Rick Koval, Stan Galenty); *Montgomery*: one imm. at Green Lane Park 8/9 (George Franchois) and one at the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove 8/23 (Edie Parnum, et al.); *Philadelphia*: up to 8 at John Heinz N.W.R. 8/29-10/9 (m.ob.).

**Tricolored Heron\*** – *Delaware*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 8/10 (Todd Fellenbaum, Al Guarente), same bird as in *Philadelphia*; *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 7/30 was joined by a second bird 8/3-12 (Todd Fellenbaum, m.ob.) (*doc submitted*).

**Cattle Egret\*** – *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 8/1 (Jeff Hopkins) and 8/3 (Belynda Stewart) (*no doc*).

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** – *Dauphin*: one at the Harrisburg colony 8/1 (Aidan Place, eBird), one at Front Street 8/21 (Ian Gardner, eBird), and one at West Fairview 9/5 (Ramsay Koury, Anette Mathes, eBird).

**White Ibis\*** – *Montgomery*: one adult at Green Lane Park 10/17-21 (Kevin Crilley, et al., *doc submitted*); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. from 7/31 was last seen 8/1 (m.ob., *doc submitted*).

**Glossy Ibis** – *Luzerne*: one at Plymouth Flats 8/27-9/11 (Joseph Greco, Jeff Greco); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 8/13-9/4 (David Allen, m.ob.) and 5 flyovers there 9/7 (Harris Brown).

**Plegadis sp.** – *Berks*: a flock of 6 dark ibises flew over a Boyertown yard 8/28 (Rudy Keller); *Bucks*: one flyover at Peace Valley Park 9/12 (Steve Shreiner).

**Mississippi Kite\*** – *Berks*: one at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary 9/25 (Laurie Goodrich, *doc submitted*); *Montgomery*: one adult at Fort Washington 9/13 (Steve Grunwald, *no doc*), one adult at Militia Hill 9/16 (Rich Conroy, Chris Dooley, Judd Friedman, *doc submitted*), one adult at West Norriton

9/21 (Kim Gruener, Anthony Uhrich, *doc submitted*), and one immature at Fort Washington S.P. 9/16 (Chris Dooley, Marlene Morano, *no doc*).

**Swainson's Hawk\*** – *Berks*: one light morph at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary 10/4 (David Barber, Pablo Santonja, *doc submitted*); *Montgomery*: one adult at the Fort Washington S.P. hawk watch 10/23 (Peter Burns, Andrew Fayer, et al., *no doc*).

**American Avocet** – *Clearfield*: 9 at Bimini Lake 10/7 (Dan Richards, listserv).

**Willet** – *Cambria*: one at Prince Gallitzin State Park 8/15 (Dave Gobert); *Dauphin*: one on the shore of the Susquehanna at a residence in Marysville 8/23 (Daniel Bogar, listserv), same bird as in *Perry*; *Erie*: singles at Gull Point 8/10, 8/31, and 9/6 (Roger Donn, eBird); *Lebanon*: one injured bird at Fox and Prescott Rd. 10/11-16 (Stan Stahl, Ted Nichols II, Jim Fiorentino, Randy Miller, Ian Gardner); *Luzerne*: one at Plymouth Flats 8/11 (Jonathan DeBalko, Jim Hoyson, Rick Koval, Stan Galenty); *Lycoming*: one at Mill Street 8/13-15 (Bobby Brown); *Perry*: one at a residence on the Susquehanna River in Marysville 8/23 (Ian Gardner, Ted Nichols II, Michael David), same bird as in *Dauphin*; *Philadelphia*: 4 at John Heinz N.W.R. 8/14 (Lindsey Simmonds) and 9 there 11/8 (Belynda Stewart).

**Upland Sandpiper** – *Chester*: one heard (via microphone) on nocturnal migration over Unionville 9/13 (Kelley Nunn); *Lancaster*: up to 8 at the Ephrata farmlands 8/1-14 (Bruce Carl, et al.), up to 11 at the Lancaster Airport 8/1-17 (Ven Gauthier, Bill Oyler, Zachary Millen, Larry Bernhardt), and one at Manheim 8/22 (Meredith Lombard, Fern Bauman); *Montgomery*: one at Dixon Meadow Preserve 8/25 (W. Brian Henderson); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 9/8 (Dirk Robinson).

**Whimbrel** – *Erie*: one at Gull Point 8/3 (Roger Donn, eBird).

**Hudsonian Godwit** – *Philadelphia*: 4 at John Heinz N.W.R. 10/4-5 (Denice Hardtmann, m.ob.).

**Marbled Godwit** – *Lancaster*: one at the Conejohela Flats 8/21-28 (Mike Epler, Meredith Lombard, Ted Nichols II); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 9/11-23 (Debbie Beer, m.ob.).

**Ruddy Turnstone** – *Erie*: up to 3 on six dates 8/3-9/28 (Roger Donn, Don Snyder, eBird).

**Red Knot** – *Erie*: up to 3 at Gull Point 8/15 and 8/22-31 (Roger Donn, David Yeany II, Colleen Yeany, eBird).

**Ruff\*** – *Franklin*: one juv. at Greencastle Reservoir 9/25-26 (Carl Garner, Dale Gearhart, Bill Oyler, *doc submitted*); *Lancaster*: one female at Riverfront Park 9/18 (Tom Raub, *no doc*).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper** – *Chester*: one at Chambers Lake 9/13 (Rick Robinson); *Lancaster*: one or 2 at Manheim 8/22-9/1 (Meredith Lombard, Fern Bauman); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 8/29 (Stephen Kacir).

**Western Sandpiper** – *Armstrong*: one at Crooked Creek Park 8/22 (ph. Steve Gosser) was the county's first; *Berks*: 3 at Blue Mountain Academy 10/23 (Matt Wlasniewski); *Bucks*: one at Rohm & Haas, Bristol 10/10 (Devich Farbotnik); *Dauphin*: one at Wildwood Lake Park 9/2-4 (Holger Pflücke, et al., eBird); *Delaware*: up to 4 at John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge 8/19-29 (David Eberly, Al Guarente, Deuane Hoffman); *Erie*: one at Gull Point 9/13 (Carl Engstrom) and 9/19 (Roger Donn); *Lebanon*: one juvenile at the Reistville and Prescott Rd. Ponds 9/29 (Randy Miller); *Philadelphia*: up to 6 at John Heinz N.W.R. 8/30 (Frank Windfelder); *Somerset*: 2 at Somerset Lake 8/22 and one there 9/17 (Jeff Payne).

**Long-billed Dowitcher** – *Crawford*: 3 at the Pymatuning Causeway 10/15 (Ron Leberman) and 2 at the Hartstown Project pond 10/30 (ph. Geoff Malosh); *Lancaster*: one at the Conejohela Flats 9/14 (Mike Epler) and one at the Conewago Recreation Tail and Wetlands 10/21 (Daniel

Hinnebusch); *Lawrence*: one juv. at Black Swamp 9/18-20 (Mark Vass).

**Wilson's Phalarope** – *Crawford*: one at the Miller Ponds 9/20 (Ron Leberman, Isaac Field); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 9/10 (ph. David Allen).

**Red-necked Phalarope** – *Crawford*: one juvenile at the Miller Ponds 8/18-20 (Shawn Collins, Ken Pinnow, m.ob.); *Franklin*: one at Kriner Road 10/3 (Carl Garner); *Lancaster*: one at Prescott Rd. 10/3 (Larry Bernhardt); *Lebanon*: one juvenile at Fox and Prescott Rd. 10/1-3 (Andy Keister, Mike Epler, Ted Nichols II, Timothy Becker, Ian Gardner); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 9/13 (James Funk, George Franchois).

**Parasitic Jaeger\*** – *Erie*: one passing Sunset Point at Presque Isle State Park 10/29 (Jerry McWilliams, *no doc*) and one there again 10/30 (Jerry McWilliams, Geoff Malosh, *no doc*).

**Little Gull** – *Erie*: single adults passing Sunset Point at Presque Isle State Park 10/21, 10/24, and 10/29 (Jerry McWilliams).

**Franklin's Gull** – *Berks*: one at Brenneman's Quarry 11/13 (Rudy Keller, Pablo Santonja); *Bucks*: 4 at Peace Valley Park 11/13 (ph. Kurt Schwarz), one (presumed to be different) at Peace Valley Park later in the day 11/13 (ph. August Mirabella, et al.), one at Bradford Dam 11/14 (ph. August Mirabella), and one at the Penn-Warner Tract 11/14 (Devich Farbotnik); *Erie*: 3 at Presque Isle Bay 11/14 (Aidan Place, Jack Chaillet, Jerry McWilliams, Don Snyder); *Lancaster*: one first winter bird at Middle Creek W.M.A. 11/14 (Bruce Carl) and an adult and a first winter bird at Octoraro Res. 11/22 (Tom Raub); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 11/14 (ph. Kenneth Reiker).

**Iceland Gull** – *Bucks*: 2 at Lower Makefield Twp. 11/1 (Seth Ausubel, Mary Normandia); *Northampton*: one at the Grand Central Landfill 11/29 (Matt Sabatine, Rob Staiano).

**Gull-billed Tern\*** – *Delaware*: 2 at John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge 8/19-22 (David Eberly, *doc submitted*); *Philadelphia*: 5 at John Heinz N.W.R. 8/8 (Andy McGann) and one still there 8/9 (Ann Reeves, *doc submitted*).

**Black Tern** – *Bedford*: 4 at Shawnee State Park 9/15 (Tom Dick); *Bucks*: one at the Penn-Warner Tract 8/11 (Devich Farbotnik); *Centre*: one at Bald Eagle State Park 8/27 (Brian Schmoke); *Dauphin*: up to 6 on the Susquehanna River near Marysville 8/22-24 (Ted Nichols II, Michael David, eBird) and one at Fort Hunter 9/16 (Ed Bernot, eBird); *Franklin*: one at Pleasant Hill 8/20 (Bill Oyler, eBird); *Juniata*: 2 on the Juniata River at the Mifflintown River Access 8/19 (Chad Kauffman, Aden Troyer); *Lehigh*: 2 at Nestle Way 8/21 (Frank Dickman); *Mercer*: one at the Shenango Wildlife Area 8/5 (Steve Sanford); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 8/19 (Kenneth Rieker); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 8/19 (Frank Windfelder).

**Common Tern** – *Centre*: one at Bald Eagle State Park 9/13 (Brian Schmoke); *Crawford*: one at Tamarack Lake 8/12 (Ron Leberman); *Erie*: seen from the Sunset Point Waterbird Count beginning 10/7, when a remarkable 107 were counted, to 11/1 (Jerry McWilliams, et al.), and at least one remaining around the east end of Presque Isle to 11/14 (ph. Aidan Place, Jack Chaillet); *Lancaster*: one at the Conejohela Flats 8/11 (Mike Epler, Meredith Lombard).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove** – *Berks*: up to 4 present as usual through the season at Shartlesville (Matt Wlasniewski) but any nest sites are still not known; *Franklin*: large numbers (up to 90) continued in the Greencastle area (m.ob.); *Lancaster*: one at Willow Street 8/15 (Bob Schutsky).

**Snowy Owl** – *Erie*: one at Gull Point 11/24 (Roger Donn, Jerry McWilliams); *Lebanon*: one immature on the east end of Lebanon City 10/24 (Bob Schlegel, Don Billett, Jim and Kitty Logan, Fritz Heilman, Mike Shull).

**Long-eared Owl** – *Cumberland*: one at King's Gap Environmental Center 11/23 (Elora Grahame); *Schuylkill*: one in Wayne Twp. 11/22 (Scott Weidensaul).

**Rufous Hummingbird** – *Adams*: adult female at Mountain Rd. 10/4 and into January (Ralph and Deb Siefken) was banded 10/15; *Chester*: adult male at Elverson 11/12-17 (Ruth Cook) was banded 11/13; *Dauphin*: adult female at Lykens from Nov to at least 11/27 (Ethel Sherman) was banded 11/20 (Scott Weidensaul, listserv); *Jefferson*: first year male at Moore Bridge Rd. north of Brookville 8/2-11/8 (Vicky McGinnis) was banded 10/17; *Lancaster*: adult female at Quarryville 10/15-11/30 (*fide* Scott Weidensaul) was banded 11/25; *Lehigh*: female at Best Station 10/16-21 (John Good) was banded 10/20; *Luzerne*: adult male in a yard in Mountaintop 8/1 was photographed but not captured (Bernice Ziniewicz); *Montgomery*: one first year female at Willow Grove 11/22 to at least 11/30 (observer undisclosed) was banded 11/30 (Sandy Lockerman).

**Myiarchus sp.** – *Montgomery*: one bird not identified to species at West Mill Creek Park 11/14 (Marshall Walthew), late enough that Great Crested was not necessarily the most likely possibility.

**Western Kingbird\*** – *Carbon*: one near Palmerton 10/11-27 (Rich and Barbara Rehrig, *doc submitted*).

**Northern Shrike** – *Centre*: one at Bald Eagle State Park 10/31-11/27 (Joe Verica, et al.) and 2 there 11/21 (Bob Snyder); *Crawford*: one or 2 at Erie National Wildlife Refuge beginning 11/4 (m.ob.); *Dauphin*: one at Fort Indiantown Gap 11/16 (Ian Gardner, eBird); *Juniata*: one on a farm near Old Port 10/28 (*fide* Aden Troyer); *Luzerne*: one at Upper Lehigh 11/13 (John Leskosky); *Northumberland*: one at Warrior Run Wetlands 10/25-11/7 (Karol Pasquinelli, eBird).

**Sedge Wren** – *Montgomery*: one at Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust 10/18 (Paul Driver); *Northumberland*: one at Warrior Run Wetlands 10/23 (Andy Keister).

**Golden-winged Warbler** – *Allegheny*: one at Beechwood Farms 8/22 (Todd Hooe, Oliver Lindheim, Steve Denninger), and there again 8/29 (David Yeany, Todd Hooe, Oliver Lindheim, Kyle Carlson); *Blair*: one at Frosty Hollow 8/1 (Lowell Burket); *Bucks*: one at Nockamixon State Park 9/10 (Vicky Mahmoud); *Butler*: one at Jennings Environmental Education Center 8/31 (Richard Nugent); *Centre*: one at Black Moshannon State Park 8/2 (Jim Dunn) and one at Scotia Barrens 9/7 (Brian Schmoke, Allie Causey); *Indiana*: one at Blue Spruce County Park 9/4 (Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee) and 9/11 (ph. Tony Bruno); *Luzerne*: one at Nescopeck State Park 9/3 (Jonathan DeBalko); *Montgomery*: singles at Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust 8/16 (Glenn Bryson) and 8/22 (Steve Grunwald) and at Fort Washington S.P. 8/28 (Paul Bernhardt); *Northampton*: one at Housenick Memorial Park 8/16 (Marc Chelemer) and one at Monacacy Nature Center 8/19 (Linda Freedman); *Perry*: one at Laurel Run Rd. 8/28 (Vern Gauthier) and one at Miller's Gap 9/19 (Ramsay Koury).

**Brewster's Warbler** – *Blair*: one at Frosty Hollow 9/7 (Lowell Burket).

**Lawrence's Warbler** – *Cumberland*: one at the SGL 169 propagation pond 8/29 (Vern Gauthier, Bill Oyler).

**Clay-colored Sparrow** – *Bucks*: one at the Penn-Warner Tract 10/10 (ph. Devich Farbotnik); *Chester*: one hatch-year bird at the Rushton Farm Banding Station 10/15-20 (Doris McGovern); *Huntingdon*: 2 at the Markelsburg waterfowl area 10/15 (Zachary Adams) and one at Old Crow Wetland 10/26 (Greg Grove); *Luzerne*: one at Plymouth Flats 10/9 (Rick Koval); *Philadelphia*: one at Bartram's Garden 9/15-17 (David Allen, Matt Halley); *Tioga*: one at Phippen Rd. 9/30 (John Corcoran, eBird).

**Nelson's Sparrow** – *Bucks*: one at Pine Run Dam 10/11

(Devich Farbotnik, Ken Rieker, Richard Smith) and one at Bradford Dam 10/22 (Ron French); *Carbon*: one at Beltzville State Park 10/11 (Billy Weber, eBird); *Centre*: one at the Haugh Family Preserve 10/2 (Joe Verica) and one at Colyer Lake 10/4-10 (Kurt Engstrom, et al.); *Clinton*: up to 3 at the Central Mountain High School wetlands 10/10-14 (ph. Eric Hartshaw, et al.); *Dauphin*: one on islands in the Susquehanna River near West Fairview 10/6 (Ian Gardner, eBird); *Huntingdon*: one at Old Crow Wetland 10/5 (Greg Grove); *Lancaster*: up to 5 at the Bainbridge Islands 9/30-10/1 (Deuane Hoffman, Vince Pantanella, Mike Epler, Ted Nichols II) and 2 at the Conewago Recreation Trail and Wetlands 10/7 (Deuane Hoffman, Vince Pantanella); *Union*: one at the UCEDC Site 10/11 (Andy Keister, eBird).

**Summer Tanager\*** – *Berks*: one adult or immature female at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary 9/15 (Rudy Keller, *no doc*).

**Western Tanager\*** – *Centre*: one adult male at a feeder in State College 11/21 and well into the winter season (ph. Dick Snyder, Darla Snyder, m.ob., *doc submitted*).

**Dickcissel** – *Bucks*: one at Maple Knoll Farms 9/13 (Richard Smith); *Chester*: detected on nocturnal migration at Unionville 10/8 and 10/10 (Kelley Nunn); *Lancaster*: one singing at the Conewago Recreation Trail and Wetlands 8/17 (Larry Bernhardt) and a female at the Chestnut Grove Natural Area 9/9 (Larry Bernhardt, Barbara Hunsberger, Pam Holmes, Pam Fisher); *Montgomery*: one at Norristown Farm Park 8/27 (W. Brian Henderson, Paul Bernhardt), one there again 10/31 (Steve Grunwald), and detected on nocturnal migration at Elkins Park 9/15 (Paul Driver); *Northampton*: up to 2 at the Koch Property 9/22-24 and 10/14 (Arlene Koch, et al.).

**Red Crossbill** – *Berks*: one caught on a webcam at an Exeter home 10/12 (Jay Drasher), season total at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary was 19, beginning 10/25 (m.ob.); *Clarion*: one female at a feeder in Strattanville 11/29 through the period (ph. Shari Hindman); *Lehigh*: 2 at Leaser Lake 10/31 (Chris Hugosson); *Northampton*: noted periodically at the Little Gap Hawk Watch 11/1-9 with a high of 22 on 11/2 (Michael Schall, Corinne Campbell Schall, Matt Sabatine).

**White-winged Crossbill** – *Berks*: one at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary 11/3.

**Evening Grosbeak** – *York*: 6 in a gas line right-of-way near Cordorus Furnace Rd. 10/18 (Jerry Dyer).



**Greater White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*).** Quite unexpected on the early date of 27 September 2015 was this Greater White-fronted Goose at the Miller Ponds, *Crawford*. It appeared, curiously, in the company of an equally early and surprising Brant, which see below. (*Matthew Juskowich*)



**Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*).** This handsome male at the FDR Park golf course, *Philadelphia* 11 (here 25) November 2015 through the season was the fall's only Eurasian Wigeon in Pennsylvania, but a nicely (and unusually) cooperative one that was enjoyed by many. (*Todd Fellenbaum*)



**Brant (*Branta bernicla*).** In a season when Brant moved through the state a full month early (see the Summary of the Season in this issue for details), this bird at the Miller Ponds, *Crawford* 27 September 2015 was the earliest. What it was doing here so early, with a Greater White-fronted Goose no less, is anyone's guess. (*Matthew Juskowich*)



**American Wigeon (*Anas americana*).** Alongside its Eurasian cousin at the FDR Park golf course, *Philadelphia* was this "Storm Wigeon", the handsome peach-faced variant of American Wigeon, 14 to at least 18 (here) November 2015. (*George Armistead*)



**Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*).** This interesting comparative image of a Cackler (second from front) among a flying flock of Canada Geese was made at John Heinz N.W.R., *Philadelphia* 23 October 2015. (*Todd Fellenbaum*)



**Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*).** It was a good season for Little Blues with reports in 11 counties. This juvenile at Plymouth Flats, *Luzerne* from the summer season to 11 August 2015 (here 9 August) was away from the usual southeastern haunts. (*Jonathan DeBalko*)



**Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*).** These two juvenile Tricoloreds were among the parade of rarities that drew hundreds of birders to the impoundment at John Heinz N.W.R., *Philadelphia* throughout the season. Both were present 3 to 12 August 2015; this image depicting the stark difference in size between Tricolored and Great Blue Herons was made 9 August. (*Michael David*)



**Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*).** Hard to come by in fall, birders nevertheless turned this species up in seven counties. Among those was this bird wonderfully photographed at the Chestnut Grove Natural Area, *Lancaster*, 30 August 2015, one of two recorded in *Lancaster* this fall. (*Dave Kerr*)



**Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*).** Another highlight at the Plymouth Flats, *Luzerne* was this Glossy Ibis, the third for the county, present 22 August to 11 September 2015, shown here with a Great Egret 30 August. (*Jonathan DeBalko*)



**Sora (*Porzana carolina*).** Birders at John Heinz N.W.R., *Philadelphia* who found themselves forced to wait for the rarity of the day to appear were frequently entertained by a number of Soras that obligingly made themselves available for study near the boardwalk. This bird was photographed there 9 August 2015 during a Tricolored Heron vigil. (*Geoff Malosh*)



**Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*).** The El Niño conditions that dominated this season contributed to a down year for hawk watching pretty much across the board, but Golden Eagle, up 22% over its 10-year average, was an exception. This immature was at Little Gap, *Northampton* 4 November 2015. (*Matt Sabatine*)



**Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*).** Sandhill Cranes have become fixtures at an increasing number of locations in Pennsylvania in recent years. One of those areas is southern *Bradford*, where these birds were photographed near Hollenback 30 August 2015. (*Dawn Snyder*)



**Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*).** Black-bellied Plovers were noted in a better than average 10 counties and lingered well into November at Presque Isle, *Erie*, as they occasionally do. This bird was nicely photographed there 14 November 2015. (*Aidan Place*)



**Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*).** Yet another treat for happy birders at John Heinz N.W.R., *Philadelphia* was this Marbled Godwit that spent a few weeks at the impoundment 11 (here 13) to 23 September 2015. (*Todd Fellenbaum*)



**Upland Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*).** Another notable find at the place to be this fall was this Uppie at John Heinz N.W.R., *Philadelphia* 8 September 2015. Unfortunately it was only a one day wonder. (*Frank Windfelder*)



**White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*).** This juvenile was one of 38 at Shenango River Reservoir, *Mercer* 7 October 2015, a new high count of White-rumps at this storied western Pennsylvania shorebird hotspot. (*Geoff Malosh*)



**Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Calidris subruficollis*).** Buffies were noted in just three counties this season; this bird at Chambers Lake 13 September 2015 was a top highlight for the fall migration in *Chester*. (*Rick Robinson*)



**Western Sandpiper (*Calidris mauri*).** Simply outstanding was *Armstrong's* first Western Sandpiper beautifully photographed at the tiny "beach" at Crooked Creek Park 22 August 2015. Unfortunately it was there only that one day. (Steve Gosser)



**Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*).** Always notable in western Pennsylvania, this confiding juvenile frequented the north shore of Lake Arthur, *Butler* 14 (here) to 29 August 2015, where it was seen by many birders. (Geoff Malosh)



**Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*).** A nice late-season collection of shorebirds at *Crawford's* Hartstown Project ponds 30 October 2015 included this Long-billed Dowitcher (one of two there that day, at top) with Pectoral Sandpiper (leftmost) and Greater Yellowlegs (bottom). (Geoff Malosh)



**Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*).** Normally gone by the end of October, this Common Tern lingered at Presque Isle State Park, *Erie* 14 November 2015, probably taking advantage of the excessively mild and settled November weather that dominated the end of the season. (Aidan Place)



**Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*).** A fine fall shorebird flight at Green Lane Park, *Montgomery* featured among other highlights this sharp juvenile Red-necked Phalarope 13 September 2015. (August Mirabella)



**Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*).** In severe decline in Pennsylvania, Black-billed Cuckoos were reported in just 15 counties, and just once in many of those. This bird was at Mingo Creek County Park, *Washington* 15 September 2015. (Fred Kachmarik)



**Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*).** This chick was part of a notably late-season brood at Aaronsburg, Centre 21 November 2015, perhaps yet another record begat by the excessively mild conditions that persisted throughout the season and state. (Wayne Laubscher)



**Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*).** Reports of nighthawks were perhaps more widespread than usual but in lower numbers this year, including at dedicated "nighthawk watches". This bird was over West Chester, Chester 30 August 2015. (Nick Pulcinella)



**Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*).** Red-headed were recorded in an impressive 28 counties this season. This bird at North Park, Allegheny 25 November 2015 would, along with a juvenile, go on to spend the entire winter there. (Jeff McDonald)



**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*).** This perhaps somewhat over-reported species was nicely documented at Barking Slopes, Allegheny 5 September 2015, one of four found in Allegheny this fall. (Todd Hooe)



**Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*).** This unexpected bird photographed at Stone Mountain, Huntingdon on the late date of 31 October 2015 was by far the latest in the state this season. (Nick Bolgiano)



**Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*).** This bird near Palmerston, Carbon 11 (here 15) to 27 October 2015 represented the second Western Kingbird for Carbon. The county's other Western Kingbird was one that stayed at Beltzville State Park from the spring of 1997 all the way until 27 June. (Jonathan DeBalko)



**Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*).** Another species reported in better than average numbers was Marsh Wren, which made the seasonal list for 16 counties. This remarkable image was made Bradford Dam, Bucks 28 September 2015. (Bill Keim)



**Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*).** Half-hardy birds enjoyed a boom year in Pennsylvania this fall and winter owing to the mild conditions. Among these was Gray Catbird, which persisted into November in at least 12 counties. This bird was at Lions Lake Park, Lebanon 17 November 2015. (Alex Lamoreaux)



**Common Raven (*Corvus corax*).** Corvids are known as one of the most intelligent families of birds, but even that doesn't always explain their sometimes eccentric behavior. This bird carrying a mushroom, quite possibly as a counterweight, was described as "windsurfing" on a strong updraft with a few cohorts for most of an hour at the Stone Mountain hawk watch 14 November 2015. Birds never do cease to amaze. (Nick Bolgiano)



**American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*).** Yet another species that was seen in good numbers this fall was American Pipit, with reports in 22 counties. This bird was at Gravers Hill, Northampton 27 November 2015. (Dustin Welch)



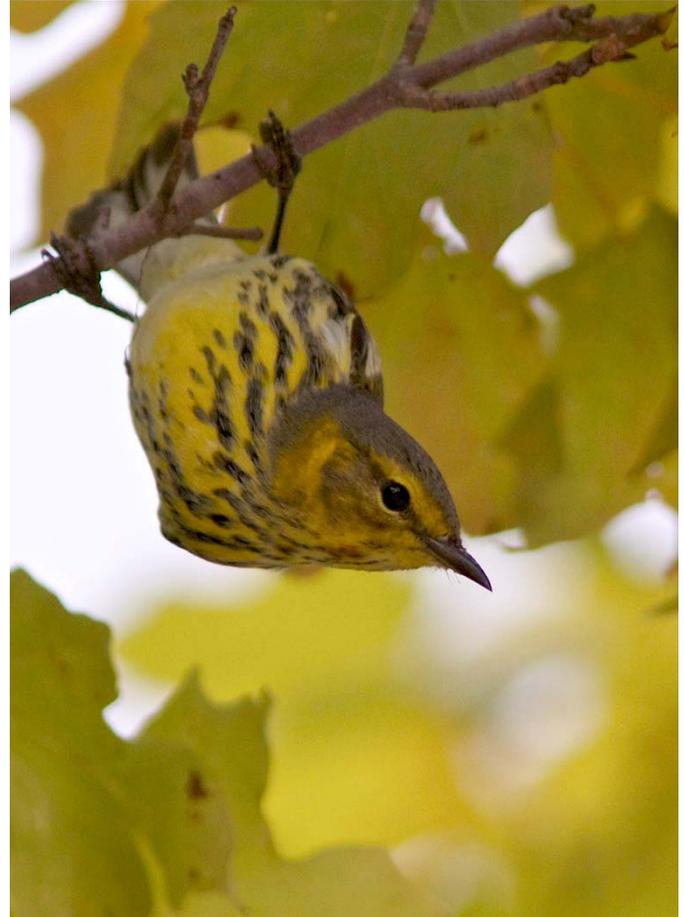
**Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapilla*).** This wayward bird was found foraging on the marble floor inside the payment kiosk of the Philadelphia Art Museum 29 November 2015. It eventually found its way out. (Carol Majors)



**Northern Waterthrush (*Parkesia noveboracensis*).** This species turned up in 13 counties, but few were seen, let alone photographed, as well as this one at John Heinz N.W.R., Philadelphia 24 September 2015. (Todd Fellenbaum)



**Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*).** Birders seem to be finding the skulking Connecticut Warbler with increasing frequency these days, probably a result of increased knowledge of when and where to look to maximize ones chances. This bird was photographed at Chadds Ford, Chester 10 September 2015. Chester was one of 20 counties reporting the species this fall. (Hank Davis)



**Cape May Warbler (*Setophaga tigrina*).** One of the “budworm” warblers, Cape Mays have had a few good fall seasons in a row lately. This confiding bird was photographed at Marsh Creek State Park, Chester 21 September 2015. (Holly Merker)



**Bay-breasted Warbler (*Setophaga castanea*).** Of the budworm birds, Bay-breasted was the least reported this year, while Tennessee was by far the most. This Bay-breasted was nicely photographed at Peck Hill, Bradford 10 September 2015. (George Vivino-Hintze)



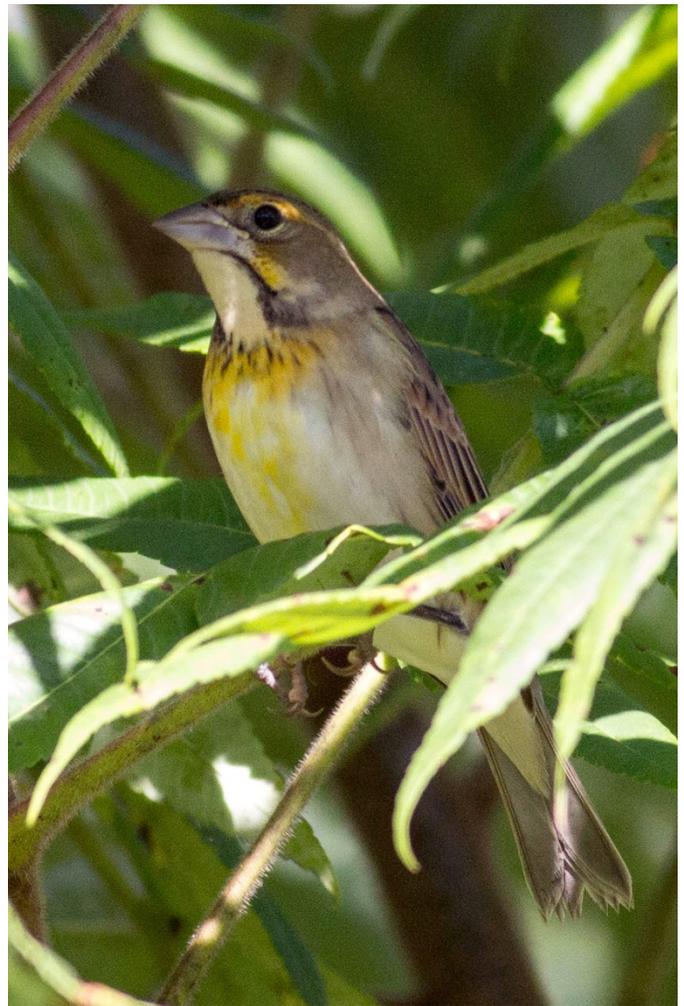
**Wilson's Warbler (*Cardellina pusilla*).** Even not-so-half-hardy birds lingered well into late fall in the state in this El Niño year. Another example was this Wilson's Warbler at John Heinz N.W.R., Philadelphia 25 November 2015. (Todd Fellenbaum)



**Nelson's Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*).** As is apparently the case with Connecticut Warbler, birders are better than ever at turning up Nelson's Sparrows in Pennsylvania during fall migration. This bird at Mill Hall, Clinton 10 October 2015 represented one of 11 reports in eight different counties this fall. (Wayne Laubscher)



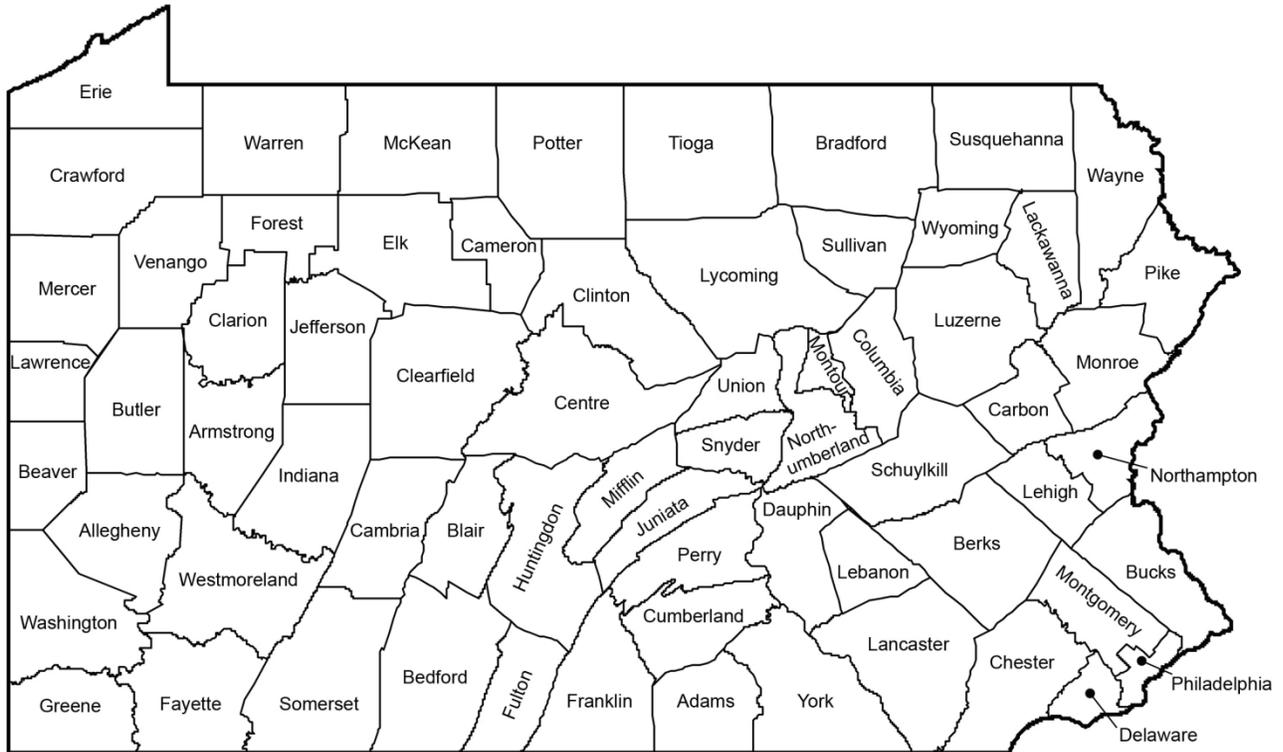
**Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*).** John Heinz N.W.R. had a little bit of everything this season—certainly enough rarities to fill three autumns, but also a nice selection of birders' favorite migrants too. This beautiful Fox Sparrow was there 7 November 2015. (Todd Fellenbaum)



**Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*).** Despite an average at best summer for them, there were about eight records of Dickcissel during the fall migration. This bird was one of up to two at the Koch property, Northampton this season, here 24 September 2015. (Matt Sabatine)



**Common Redpoll (*Acanthis flammea*).** It was a poor year for winter finches other than Pine Siskin, yet a few Common Redpolls were turned up here and there across the state in November. This bird was at Presque Isle State Park, Erie 15 November 2015. (Tim Lenz)



**ABBREVIATIONS**

BBS	Breeding Bird Survey	max	maximum	RBA	Rare Bird Alert
C.A.	Conservation Area	min	minimum	Res.	Reservoir
CBC	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).	juvenal [plumage]; juvenile(s)	R.	River	W.M.A.	Wildlife Management Area
L.	Lake	R.A.	Recreational Area	WRS	Winter Raptor Survey

**eBird Usage:** Data for these reports and throughout this journal include observations collected from the eBird database <<http://www.ebird.org>>. Citation: eBird. 2012. eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. eBird, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. Available: <http://www.ebird.org>. (Accessed: 15 March 2016)

**Adams County**

Locations: Crooked Creek Wetland (CCW), Cunningham Road (CUNN), Gettysburg College (GC), Gettysburg National Military Park (GNMP), Long Pine Run Reservoir (LPRR), Mountain Road (MTN), State Game Lands #249 (SGL), Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve (SHNP).

It was a good fall with 160 species reported including 21 species each of waterfowl and warblers. The weather for the period was marked by above average temperatures, especially for September and November. Harrisburg's average daily temperature for those months was, respectively, 4°F and 6°F above normal. It appears the unseasonably mild November resulted in reduced numbers of waterfowl. As noted, species count was reasonable but single digit counts of the species themselves were the norm.

All waterfowl reports were from LPRR unless otherwise noted. **Mute Swan** continued at Devonshire Village 8/2-9/6 (AT). The only report of **Tundra Swan** was 11/23 (MB). Single **American Black Ducks** were reported 10/23 (VG) and at CUNN 11/30 (VG). A quartet of **Northern**

**Shoveler** was sighted 11/2 (BO). Both scaup were reported: a single **Greater Scaup** 11/9 (NM) and four **Lesser Scaup** 11/13 (BO). Uncommon for the county were a **White-winged Scoter** 11/10-23 (MB, IC, NM, AW) and a **Long-tailed Duck** 11/14 (MB, VB, NM). An exception to the low counts of individuals was the 49 **Bufflehead** 11/15 (JSD).

Unusual was a **Red-throated Loon** 11/4-5 (BO). There was only one report of **American Coot**, a trio at Lake Meade 10/26 (JV). The latest of the four **Great Egret** reports came from GC 10/13 (AW,MZ). Highlighting the ten reports of **Northern Harrier** was a one evading a diving **Peregrine Falcon** at CCW 11/7 (RDS). A nice find for Adams, a **Golden Eagle** was seen from McLaughlin Rd 11/3 (PMo).

The **Sora** reported at the pond at the Hamiltonban Education Center in the prior period carried over until at least 8/7 (AW) when a pair was heard. With minimal shorebird habitat and a good amount of rainfall year to date, shorebirds were limited to seven species. A **Greater Yellowlegs** was found along Bigham Rd 11/1 (BP), a **Lesser Yellowlegs** was at Peach Glen 8/25 (BO), and a **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at GC 11/6-7 (m.ob.). A pair of **Caspian Terns** was at Long Arm Reservoir 10/7 (AW).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were found at five locations but, as is typical, Black-billed Cuckoo went unreported. Two reports of **Common Nighthawk** included 7 birds at GC 9/3 (AW,MZ) and ~25 at MTN 9/1 (RDS). Good numbers of dragonflies were noted during the MTN observation. Latest **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were a pair at MTN 10/4 (RDS). This date also coincided with the initial observation of a *Selasphorus* sp. at MTN (RDS). Subsequent capture and banding 10/15 (GSL) identified it as an adult female **Rufous Hummingbird**. This site previously hosted a rufous in the fall of 1996. This year's rufous remained through the season and into January. The trend of strong reporting among woodpeckers continued for all expected species. With 12 reports, **American Kestrel** appeared to have a good year in the county. Breeding was noted at MTN 8/4 (RDS) with two adults and two juveniles. It's possible that the 7 observed along a 250-yard stretch of Fickes School Rd. 10/4 (PK) were also a family unit. **Merlin** singles were reported 9/27 (DJG) at SGL, 10/16 (AW) at GC, and 11/26 (DH, RDS) at MTN. In addition to the earlier noted peregrine/harrier encounter, **Peregrine Falcons** were noted at Lake Meade 10/26 (JV) and in McSherrystown 10/29 (BP).

Flycatcher continued to be rather elusive during the fall period. **Acadian, Willow, and Great Crested Flycatcher** were limited to one report each. A nice count of up to 7 **Eastern Wood-Pewees** was made at SHNP 9/11-14 (AW). The highlight among flycatchers was a very late **Least Flycatcher** at GC 11/6-16 (AW, m. ob.). The bird received a great deal of observation, discussion, and analysis before reaching consensus that the bird was not a vagrant Dusky Flycatcher. The information and dialogue presented were an excellent learning experience for all who followed it and certainly reinforced the challenges that the *Empidonax* flycatchers can pose, especially in late fall.

Reports of vireos were limited as well. White-eyed and Philadelphia Vireo went unreported, and single reports of **Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, and Red-eyed Vireo** were made at SHNP 9/11 (AW), GC 9/28 (AW), and SHNP 9/11-14 (AW), respectively. In contrast to their close relatives, **Blue-headed Vireos** were reported four times, a normal showing. Six locations reporting **Horned Lark** was more than usual, but high count was just 3 at Oakside Community Park 10/23 (VG). The three reports of **Black-capped Chickadee** were paced by 11 birds at SHNP 9/14 (AW) that had all the appearance and vocalizations typically associated with pure black-caps. **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was found at LPRR 8/31 (MB), at GNMP 10/23 (CH), and at Camp Nawakwa 11/26 (DH). Seven reports of **Brown Creeper** spanned 10/22-11/26 (m.ob.). **Winter Wren** was at GNMP 11/10 (TG, JT) and at Camp Nawakwa 11/26 (DH). Both kinglets were well-reported. High count among seven reports of **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was 13 at Camp Nawakwa 11/26 (DH) and among the eight reports for **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, 5 at GC 10/5 (AW).

A pair of **Swainson's Thrushes** were at SHNP 9/14 (AW). **Wood Thrush** was last reported 9/27 (DJG) at SGL. A **Gray Catbird** at Pine Swamp Rd 11/3 (BO) was late. **American Pipit** was at GC 10/16-11/18 (m. ob.) and 21 were at Freedom Twp. 11/1 (BP). Some nice counts of **Cedar Waxwing** were made 11/6-11 within a fairly small area, suggesting the possibility that the same flock was involved each time. There were 120 at GC 11/6 (AW), 80 at GNMP 11/7 (BH), and 80 at GC 11/11 (AW).

Visits to SHNP 9/14 (AW) and to Michaux S.F. 9/19 (VG, AM, TN, SS) bolstered reports of warblers this season. Both trips produced **Tennessee, Nashville, Hooded, American Redstart, Cape May, Northern Parula, and Black-throated Green Warblers**. The SHNP visit also reported **Worm-eating, Blackburnian, and Chestnut-sided Warbler** while the Michaux S.F. trip added **Black-and-White, Common Yellowthroat, Blackpoll Warbler, and Black-throated Blue Warbler**. MTN saw a mini-fallout of passerines 9/22 (RDS) with **Tennessee, Cape May, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, and Black-throated Green Warbler** accompanied by **American Robin, Eastern Bluebird, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak**. A **Blue-winged Warbler** was at LPRR 8/31 (MB). A very late **Yellow Warbler** was at SGL 10/12 (PK). A **Palm Warbler** was at GC 10/9-16 (AW) and high count for **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was 11 birds at Oakside Community Park 10/23 (VG).

**Scarlet Tanager** was detected more frequently than usual with five reports 9/11-30 (m.ob.). The unseasonably warm weather may have been the reason for just one **American Tree Sparrow** sighting for the fall—3 at MTN 11/26 (DH). In a reversal of typical frequency for the two, **Savannah Sparrow** was well reported with six reports spanning 8/12-11/6 (m.ob.) but **Grasshopper Sparrow** was only found along Possum Hollow Rd. 8/7-12 (PK). **Fox Sparrow** was at MTN 10/24 and 11/26 (DH, RDS), at LPRR 11/24 (BO), and at SGL 11/24 (PM). **Lincoln Sparrow** was found at MTN 10/16 (RDS) and GNMP 10/17 (PMo). Five reports of **Swamp Sparrow** spanned 10/17-11/24 (m.ob.). Four locations, all at 900 feet elevation or higher, produced **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks**. An adult and a juvenile male **Blue Grosbeak** were at SGL 8/31 (PK). Very rarely reported in fall, four **Bobolinks** were at CCW 8/10 (AW). A flock of 600 **Red-winged**

**Blackbirds** along CUNN 11/30 (AW) held an abnormally plumaged individual resembling a Yellow-headed Blackbird, and two others showed some white in the plumage. **Eastern Meadowlark** was seen at five locations through the period. High count was 14 along CUNN 11/30 (AW).

The four reports of **Purple Finch** were all in November and included a count of 8 at MTN 11/26 (DH). **Pine Siskins** were limited to a pair at GC 10/15-11/12 (m.ob.), a single at Lake Meade 11/1 (JV), and a single at Lake Kay 11/24 (AW).

Note: The observer listing that follows does not begin to capture the many dozens of birders who observed the Least Flycatcher at GC 11/6-16.

Observers: **Phil Keener, 198 Jacobs Street, East Berlin, PA 17316, (717) 259-9984, pittche74@yahoo.com**, V Barnes, Tim Becker, Mike Bertram, Dustin Brace, Ian Clarke, Steve Collins, Michael David, Eli DePaulis, Josh & Sue Donaldson (JSD), Rob Emelander, Mike Epler, Vern Gauthier, Ron George & Tracy Snyder, Don & Jen Gilbert (DJG), Tina Green, Al Guarente, Holly Hartstone, Brian Henderson, Chris Hiatt, Daniel Hinnebusch, Deuane Hoffman, Chad Kauffman, Stephen Kloiber, Kyle Klotz, Tom & Janet Kuehl, Nancy Locher, Gary & Sandy Lockerman (GSL), Lone Star Genealogy, Nancy Magnusson, Geoff Malosh, Peter Martin, Annette Mathes, Peter Morgan (PMo), Ted Nichols II, Bill Oyler, Aidan Place, Bonita Portzline, Rick Rehrig, Mary Anne Romito, John Schauf, Ralph and Deb Siefken (RDS), Susan Strasser, Andrew Taylor, Jory Telster, Mark Vass, Jason Verdier (JV), Joseph Verica, Andy Wilson, Megan Zagorski.

### **Allegheny County**

Locations: Barking Slopes (BS), Beechwood Farms (BF), Imperial (IMP), Wingfield Pines (WP).

There's always a lot of variety to report for this lengthy season that includes the earliest of fall migrants and the first arriving winter residents. This year a late fall featured very mild weather with unseasonably warm temperatures.

**Tundra Swans** appeared in early November right on schedule. The largest flocks included at least 187 over Franklin Park 11/14 (OM) and 228 flying Imperial 11/22 (MV). Six **Gadwall** were at IMP 11/1 (MV), 2 were in nearby Findlay Twp. 11/1 (MV) and one was at IMP 11/20 (MV). An early **American Wigeon** was at IMP 10/4 (JT). **Blue-winged Teal** reports included one at North Park 8/27 (DP) and 2 in Findlay Twp. 9/7 (MV). A **Northern Pintail** at a small pond in Monroeville 9/3-5 (DK) was unusually early. Two were at Duck Hollow 10/25 (MF) and two were at WP the first half of November (ST). A **Green-winged Teal** was at IMP 9/12 (MV) and one was at Duck Hollow 11/21 (JS, SS). Two early **Ring-necked Ducks** were in Findlay Twp. 9/7 (MV). Two early **Buffleheads** were at IMP 9/7 (MV). Six were at Wood's Run 11/9 (MJ). Two **Hooded Mergansers** were at Boyce-Mayview Park 11/11 (FK). A **Common Merganser** was at Dashields Dam 10/1 (MV). A female **Red-breasted Merganser** at Duck Hollow 11/19 (MJ) was the first for the season.

An unexpected fallout of waterfowl occurred on the area's rivers 11/29. It was an overcast day but the heavy rains that normally produce fallouts were not in progress, however the passage of a front could have been the contributing factor. **Bufflehead** were the most numerous species with a total was 694 tallied from various locations (ST, MV, BP, RC, AH). Other waterfowl seen that day included 14 **Greater Scaup** and 10 **Lesser Scaup** at Duck Hollow (ST, JHa), 93 **Hooded Mergansers** tallied on all the rivers (RC, ST, AH), an early **Common Goldeneye** at Duck Hollow (ST, JHa) along with 3 **Surf Scoters** and a **Canvasback** (ST, JHa). Eight **Redheads** and 3 **Long-tailed Ducks** were on the Ohio R. (MV, ST). Finally a single **Ruddy Duck** was at Wood's Run on the Ohio R. (MV). Perhaps a holdover from the fallout, a **Long-tailed Duck** was at Sharpsburg 11/30 (JH).

Although **Northern Bobwhites** sightings are all released birds, I like to collect reports of them. A covey of 10 walked across a road in Robinson Twp. 8/8 (MF). One visited the feeders at the nature center at Harrison Hills Park 9/2 (PK). Three **Common Loons** were spotted over IMP 10/31 (MV) and one was at Duck Hollow 11/24 (JS, SS). Six were on the Ohio R. around Brunots Island 11/29 (MV, ST). A **Green Heron** at WP 10/6 was a bit late (MJ). A large flock of 87 **Turkey Vultures** were seen from Dashields Dam 10/19 (MV). Two **Black Vultures** were a surprise in Jefferson Hills 10/17 (JHa). A dark morph **Rough-legged Hawk** was at IMP 11/26 (MV), the first of the season. A single chick was seen at the **Osprey** nest on Neville Island 8/7 (PB). The last migrant report was from Harrison Hills Park 10/4 (AH, PM).

A **Sora** was at Boyce-Mayview Park 8/27 (FK). This wetland has become a regular stopover for this species in recent years.

Autumn is shorebird season, but here in *Allegheny* prospect continue to dwindle in the face of the ongoing development at the Imperial

Grasslands. A **Semipalmated Plover** at Duck Hollow 8/18-19 (MD, TH) and one at Fox Chapel 8/27 (TH) provided rare records away from IMP, the usual location for this species in the county. A few **Killdeer** were still present through the season as mild weather continued. Reports of **Solitary Sandpiper** included one at Fox Chapel 8/16 (TH), one at BF 8/23 (TH), 3 in Findlay Twp. 9/6 (MV) and one at IMP 10/11 (JT). Amazingly, there was only a single report of **Greater Yellowlegs**, one at IMP 10/31 (MV). Report of **Semipalmated Sandpiper** included one at Marshall Lake 8/26-27 (DN), one at Duck Hollow 8/27-28 (MJ, et al.) and one at Chapel Harbor 8/28-31 (TH, et al.). **Least Sandpiper** was the most reported migrant shorebird. Three were at Fox Chapel 8/16 (TH) and one was still there 8/27 (TH). One was at Duck Hollow 8/19 (TH), one was at Janoski's Farm pond in Findlay Twp. 9/7 (MV) and two were there 9/16 (MV). One was at IMP 9/12 (MV). A **Baird's Sandpiper** was at IMP 9/12 (MV) and one (probably the same one) was nearby in Findlay Twp. at a small farm pond 9/16 (MJ). The Janoski's Farm pond hosted single **Pectoral Sandpipers** 9/7 and 10/8 (MV). A **Dunlin** was there 10/11 (MV). A **Wilson's Snipe** was at a small pond in a housing development in Findlay Twp. 9/6 (MV), one was at IMP 11/21 (MV) and an **American Woodcock** was flushed at BS 10/25 (TH).

Terns are much less numerous in the fall than they are spring when they are reliable along the Ohio River. A **Forster's Tern** was at Dashields Dam 8/11 (MV) and a **Caspian Tern** was there 8/13 (MV).

A **Barred Owl** was heard calling at North Park 10/25 (STI) at a location where they have been in the past. Once again, a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** banding station was operated at Sewickley Heights Park (BMU) and generously opened to the public. One bird was banded 10/17 and 2 were caught 11/7. Reports of migrating **Common Nighthawks** were few. The highest count was 75 flying over Aspinwall 8/28 (STh, SuT), and the same day 41 passed over Moon Twp. (GM). A bit late were 3 flying over Moon Twp. 10/6 (GM). Two large flocks of over 100 **Chimney Swifts** were observed this fall. One flock was at North Park 8/18 (TM, NM, SuT) and another was over the McKees Rocks Bridge 10/9 (LA).

The last **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was reported in Verona 10/12 (SK). An adult and immature **Red-headed Woodpecker** was a great find at North Park 11/20 (KS, BM). The birds were gathering acorns and caching them in a small area of the park. Both remained through the season. Interestingly, these birds were very close to the site where several birds were discovered in the summer of 2012. A **Merlin** was at Duck Hollow 10/27 (KSJ, JE); a fairly reliable winter location for this species the past few years. One was observed flying over Frick Park 11/23 (JC).

An **Acadian Flycatcher** and a **Willow Flycatcher** were at Harrison Hills Park 9/6 (JV). There were four reports of **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**: Sewickley Heights Park 8/29 (GM), BF 8/30 (DYE), BS 9/5 (TH) and Sewickley Heights Park 9/6 (GM). An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was a nice surprise during an unplanned stroll in Frick Park 10/5 (MD). **Great Crested Flycatchers** are scarce in fall. Two reports included one at Sewickley Heights Park 9/4 (GM) and one at BS 9/5 (TH). Last dates for **Eastern Kingbird** are also difficult to pin down in the fall. There were two reports: one at Harrison Hills Park 8/15 (PH, JS, SS) and 2 at BS 9/6 (TH).

**Common Ravens** continued to be reported from new areas. One was in Hamar Twp. 9/5 and again 11/18 (JV), one was along the Allegheny River at BS 9/6 (TH) and one was in Hampton Twp. for the first time 10/14 (DN). Two **Fish Crows** were at Duck Hollow 11/26 (JS, SS). A rare breeder in the county, six active **Cliff Swallow** nests were at North Park 8/6 (OM), the only known breeding site for the county, which was discovered a few years ago. A **Marsh Wren** continued its lengthy stay at WP and was seen 8/11-12 (FK, ST) and again 10/14 (FK). **Cedar Waxwings** become widespread in the fall as ripening fruits become available, particularly black cherry. The largest flock was 200 at Sewickley Heights Park 9/25 (GM).

A total of 29 species of warblers were reported this fall. Fall **Northern Waterthrush** reports are rare due to their secretive nature at this time of year. One was photographed at Harrison Hills Park 8/30 (SG) and relocated the following day (DYE). One was photographed at BS 9/5 (TH). A **Golden-winged Warbler** was a great find at BF 8/22 (TH, OL, SD). It was relocated there 8/29 (DYE, TH, OL, KC). A **Black-and-white Warbler** near Duck Hollow 8/4 (YC) provided an interesting record. They are not known to breed at that location, but the habitat could support them. Of course it could have been an early migrant as well. **Mourning Warblers** were detected by nocturnal flight calls in Moon Twp. (GM) 9/5 (4 calls) and 9/11 (one call). A female was at Sewickley Heights Park 9/27 (GM). A **Kentucky Warbler** at Harrison Hills Park 8/31 (DYE) was the only report of this species. A late **Common Yellowthroat** was at BS 11/8 (TH). **Cape May Warbler** nocturnal flight calls were detected in Moon Twp. 9/5 and 9/11 (GM). Two were at North Park 8/29 (SC), one was at Harrison Hills Park 8/30 (SG), four were at Knob Hill Park 9/10 and two were there 9/16 (KD), two were at Harrison Hills Park 9/20 (DYE), one was at BF 10/3 (TH, OL), three were at Harrison Hills Park 10/5 (PH, JS, SS) and single birds were at Natrona Heights 10/5 (PH) and Gibsonia 10/6 (KP). **Northern Parula** seems to be reported more often

in fall than spring. Reports were all single birds from BS 9/6 (TH), Frick Park 9/14 and 10/7 (JS, SS), BF 9/22 (MD, DYE) and Sewickley Heights Park 9/25 (GM). A **Pine Warbler** was found at Harrison Hills Park 8/28 (PH). A **Yellow-throated Warbler** was found in Jefferson Hills 8/24 (JHa) in an area where they breed. They sing well into July so this was probably a local bird that nested in the area. One at Boyce-Mayview Park 9/24 (FK) may have been a local breeder as well. Rarely seen in migration, a **Prairie Warbler** was a great find at BF 9/10 (TH). **Canada Warblers** were quite numerous. Nocturnal flight calls were detected in Moon Twp. 8/26, 9/5, and 9/16 (GM). Single birds were at BF 8/26 (BSh), 8/30 (DYE) and 9/13 (DYE). One was at Sewickley Heights Park 8/31 (BVN). Single birds were at Frick Park (DWE, MF), BF (DYE, TH, OL, KC) and North Park 8/29 (SC). **Wilson's Warbler** was also frequently reported. Four reports came from Harrison Hills Park where one was there 9/5 (DYE, MF), two 9/6 (JV) one 9/13 (AP) and one 10/1 (PH). Two were detected migrating at night in Moon Twp. 9/5 (GM) and single birds were at BF 9/10 (TH) and 9/13 (DYE).

**American Tree Sparrows** arrived at BF 11/19 (CK). **Fox Sparrows** are always a welcome sight. Three were at Homewood Cemetery in the East End of Pittsburgh 11/2 (JC), a reliable location for many years. One was at BS 11/8 (TH), two were at IMP 11/15 (MV) and one was at Knob Hill Park 11/24 (KD). **Lincoln's Sparrows** were only reported at two locations: BF 9/27 (MD) and Sewickley Heights Park 9/27 (GM) and 10/5 (BVN). Two **Swamp Sparrows** were at WP 8/11 (FK). Others were reported through October at various locations. **White-crowned Sparrows** passed through in Oct with reports from Forest Hills 10/3 (TBI), Harrison Hills Park 10/4 (AH, PM) and Homewood Cemetery 10/5 (MF) and 11/2 (JC).

A leucistic **Northern Cardinal** visited at yard in Swissvale in October and was photographed. The body was white but the other parts of the bird were close to normal in color (RB). It continued through the season. Up to 50 **Red-winged Blackbirds** were at WP 10/14 (FK). **Eastern Meadowlarks** were still at IMP 10/11 (JT) where they may winter. This may change as development progresses at the grasslands. There were no reports of large flocks of **Common Grackle** this fall. Two **Orchard Orioles** were photographed at BF 8/23 (TH).

There are always a few reports of **Purple Finch**, usually from the northern part of the county. One was at Knob Hill Park 9/16 (KD), a male was in Pine Twp. 9/7 (PL, SL), one was in Natrona Heights 10/21 (PH) and two visited a bird bath in Harmar Twp. 11/19 (JV). A few **Pine Siskins** were in the area in October and November.

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#### Armstrong County

Locations: Armstrong Trail (AT), Crooked Creek Park (CC), Keystone Reservoir (KR), Lock & Dam (L&D).

**Canada Goose** maxima included 200 at CC 11/16 (AK, JK) and 90 near New Bethlehem on Redbank Creek 11/29 (MD), where 2 **Mute Swans** also appeared 11/29 (MD). KR hosted the season's first 15 **Tundra Swans** 11/11 (AB); high tally of 120 occurred at CC 11/22 (TR). The AT n. of L&D 8 yielded the high **Wood Duck** count of 56 on 9/25 (AB, MH, RH). First 24 **Gadwalls** were reported 11/22 (LC) at KR, where the only 10 **American Wigeons** were found 10/29 (MH, RH). **American Black Duck** reports included 2 n. of L&D 8 on 10/11 (TR) and 10 at CC 11/20 (MVT). **Mallard** tallies included 28 at KR 10/18 (LC) and 20 on Redbank Creek near New Bethlehem 11/29 (MD). A single **Blue-winged Teal** at CC 9/26 (TR) was the only one noted. Fourteen **Ring-necked Ducks** were listed at KR 10/18 (LC) and 16 were counted at CC 11/29 (MVT). KR harbored 102 **Buffleheads** 11/22 (LC). Twelve was a good count of **Common Goldeneyes** at CC 11/29 (MVT). Twelve **Hooded Merganser** and 128 **Common Mergansers** were counted at CC 11/29 (MVT) in the early

afternoon, but by 17:00 there were 50 Hooded and 300 Common present (MD). Numbers of Common Mergansers at KR ranged from 28 on 10/29 (MH, RH) to 34 on 11/9 (MH, RH). First 2 **Ruddy Ducks** arrived 10/18 (LC) at KR; 4 were there 11/22 (LC).

A single **Ruffed Grouse** at CC 11/16 (AK, JK) was amazingly the only one noted. **Wild Turkeys** were in short supply with counts of 18 at Mahoning Dam 10/10 (AD), 3 near Widnoon 10/16 (MH, RH, FM, JM), and one at CC 11/29 (MVT).

A very early basic plumaged **Common Loons** appeared 8/27 (MH, RH) at KR, the only location to host this species this fall; another was observed 11/9 (MH, RH) and 6 on 11/29 (TR). **Pied-billed Grebe** arrived at CC 9/12 (TR); eleven was the high count at KR 11/22 (LC). A singleton at Rosston 11/15 (TR) comprised the entire report for **Horned Grebe**. Two **Double-crested Cormorants** arrived at KR 9/28 (MH, RH) and two days later at CC (MVT). CC hosted 2 **Great Egrets** 8/9 (BB). Five **Green Herons** were counted 8/7 (MH, RH) at KR where the last was found 9/17 (MH, RH).

Last 9 **Turkey Vultures** were at CC 10/31 (TR). Migrating **Osprey** were reported between 8/7 (MH, RH) at KR and 10/25 at CC (MVT). **Bald Eagles** were numerous with 4 along the AT n. of L&D 8 on 9/25 (AB, MH, RH) and 3 at CC 11/27 (AK, JK). First **Northern Harrier** was spotted 9/17 (MH, RH) near Elderton; one was noted 10/1 (MVT) at WT where 2 were photographed 11/11 (MVT).

With low water levels at KR, higher than usual numbers of shorebirds were reported. One to 2 **Semipalmated Plovers** were spotted at KR between 8/7 (MH, RH) and 9/17 (MH, RH); CC hosted 3 on 8/30 (TR) and 2 on 9/6 (TR). Top **Killdeer** counts included 40 at CC 8/30 (TR) and 25 at KR 10/24 (SG). A rather late **Spotted Sandpiper** was at KR 10/29 (MH, RH). **Solitary Sandpipers** peaked at 11 at KR 9/5 (SG); last migrant was sighted there 9/17 (MH, RH). **Greater Yellowlegs** included one at CC 9/3 (MVT) and 3 at KR 10/29 (MH, RH). Single **Lesser Yellowlegs** visited KR between 8/27 (MH, RH) and 9/17 (MH, RH); one also appeared at CC 9/6 (TR). KR harbored 3 **Dunlin** 10/18 (MH, RH) and 5 on 10/24 (SG) and 10/25 (MVT). A **Baird's Sandpiper** at KR 9/4 (ph. AB), was still present the next day (AB, SG). **Least Sandpipers** visited CC between 8/21 (MVT) and 9/7 (MVT); KR's reports ranged from 8/7 to 9/17 (MH, RH); respective high counts of 6 at CC and 12 at KR occurred 9/6 (TR) and 8/16 (LC). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** at KR 9/17 (MH, RH) was the only one noted. A **Western Sandpiper**, representing a first county record, was at CC 8/22 (ph. SG). KR hosted 12 **Ring-billed Gulls** 11/22 (LC), the only gulls reported.

Last **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was listed 8/11 (FM, JM, TS) at CC. An **Eastern Screech-Owl** was calling near Leechburg 8/25 (MVT); a yard near SGL 247 produced an Eastern Screech-Owl 10/20 (TR) and a **Great Horned Owl** 11/12 and 11/22 (TR). Last **Chimney Swifts** were 8 at CC 10/2 (TR). Last **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was one at CC 9/7 (MVT). Single **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were in the CC area between 9/26 (TR) and 11/22 (MVT). A **Merlin** was noted near WT 8/18 (MVT).

CC yielded the last **Eastern Wood-Pewee** 9/24 (MVT). An **Eastern Phoebe** still remained at KR 10/18 (LC) while 2 **Great Crested Flycatchers** at CC 8/9 (BB) were last. Two **Eastern Kingbirds** lingered at CC 8/26 (AK, JK). Last dates for vireos included 9/7 (MVT) for **White-eyed Vireo** at CC, 9/27 (TR) for **Yellow-throated Vireo** n. of L&D 8, 9/28 (MH, RH) for **Blue-headed Vireo** at KR, and 10/1 (MVT) for **Red-eyed Vireo** near WT.

Two **House Wrens** still lingered at CC 10/1 (MVT). Single **Winter Wrens** were sighted along the AT n. of L&D 8 on 10/11 (TR), along the same trail 11/18 (MH, RH), and at CC 10/18 (MD). Three **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** remained at CC 8/26 (AK, JK). First migrant **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was found at KR 9/28 (MH, RH). **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** moved through the county between 9/28 (MH, RH) and 10/30 (MVT). The only **Swainson's Thrush** and the last **Wood Thrush** were noted at CC 9/26 (TR). CC produced the last **Gray Catbird** 10/1 (MVT) and the CC watershed the last **Brown Thrasher** 10/24 (MVT). Eight **American Pipits** visited KR 10/24 (SG).

Last **Ovenbird** was found along the AT n. of L&D 8 on 9/27 (TR). A **Blue-winged Warbler** stopped at CC 8/26 (AK, JK). The WT area yielded the last **Black-and-white Warbler** 10/1 (MVT). **Tennessee Warblers** moved through between 9/25 (AB, MH, RH) and 10/11 (TR). A single **Nashville Warbler** at KR 9/17 (MH, RH) comprised the entire report for this species. Last dates included 10/1 (MVT) for **Common Yellowthroat** near WT; 9/27 (TR) for **Hooded Warbler** along the AT n. of L&D 8; and 10/1 (MVT) for **American Redstart**, both near WT and at CC. **Cape May Warbler** was listed only at KR 9/17 and 9/28 (MH, RH). Other last dates included 9/30 (MVT) for **Northern Parula** at CC and 9/28 (MH, RH) for **Magnolia Warbler** at KR. CC hosted the only reported **Bay-breasted Warblers** with reports on 9/7 and 10/1 (MVT). Last **Yellow Warbler** and last **Chestnut-sided Warbler** were at CC 8/9 (BB) and near WT 10/1 (MVT), respectively. One **Blackpoll Warbler** along the AT n. of L&D 8 on 9/27 (TR) and 2 at KR on 9/28 (MH, RH) were the only ones reported. **Yellow-rumped Warblers** moved through *Armstrong* between 9/30 (MVT) and

11/16 (AK, JK). The AT n. of L&D 8 harbored a nice mixed flock of warblers including 4 **Black-throated Green Warblers** 9/28 (MH, RH); this same area produced the last on 10/11 (TR). A single **Wilson's Warbler** at CC 9/24 (MVT) was the lone one noted.

First **American Tree Sparrow** popped up near Elderton 11/9 (MH, RH). A small flock of 15 **Chipping Sparrows** was noted near Widnoon 10/16 (MH, RH). A single **Field Sparrow** remained at CC 11/29 (MVT). **Fox Sparrows** put in a good appearance between 11/4 (SM) and 11/18 (MH, RH) with more than the usual number of reports. **White-crowned Sparrows** were sparsely reported: one in the CC watershed 10/24 (MVT) and 2 at CC 10/30 (MVT). First 2 **White-throated Sparrows** arrived 10/11 (TR) along the AT n. of L&D 8. The last **Eastern Towhee** was listed along the Cowanshannock Branch of the Great Shamokin Path 11/9 (MH, RH).

The AT n. of L&D 8 yielded the last **Scarlet Tanager** 9/27 (TR) and the last **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** 9/25 (MH, RH). An **Indigo Bunting** lingered at KR 9/28 (MH, RH). A **Baltimore Oriole** remained at CC through 9/3 (MVT). Three **Pine Siskins** visited CC 11/22 (MVT).

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### Beaver County

Locations: Economy Borough (ECON), Independence Marsh (IND), New Brighton (NB), Raccoon Creek State Park (RCSP), Mouth of the Beaver River at Rochester (RCH).

Waterfowl reports were rather poor, as El Niño-driven mild weather dominated much of the latter half of the season. Top count of **Canada Goose** was 152 at IND 10/1 (GR). An **American Black Duck** at IND 11/4-6 (MJ) represented the only report. Likewise, 2 **Blue-winged Teal** at IND 8/27-31 (MV) were also the only ones reported. Up to 2 **Green-winged Teal** were seen at IND 9/6-11 (MV). The only report of **Ring-necked Duck** was 8 on the Ohio R. at Vanport 10/25 (GR, DR). Three **Common Mergansers** were at NB 9/13 (MV) and 11/7 (TJ).

An errant **Ring-necked Pheasant** wandered into a yard in Vanport 10/25 (ph. DR). First **Pied-billed Grebe** appeared at IND 9/16 (MJ), and **Double-crested Cormorant** (6) first showed up at NB 9/13 (MV). Four late **Great Egrets** that put down at Big Beaver Wetlands 10/31 (GR, DR) were also the only ones reported. The count of **Green Heron** at IND maxed out at an impressive 13 on 9/6 (MV). Quite surprising was a very late **Green Heron** flushed at IND 11/4 (MJ).

Top count of **Turkey Vultures** by far was the 123 roosting on high tension towers at Monaca 10/24 (MV). One or 2 **Ospreys** were seen at RCSP frequently in Aug and Sep (m.ob.), and one was still there 11/6 (MV), very late for *Beaver*. One was also noted at IND 8/24 (FK, AK), but there were no reports from the nest sites along the Ohio and Beaver after the summer. Up to 3 **Bald Eagles** were seen around RCH and NB through mid-Nov (MV, CA), and one showed up unexpectedly at Big Beaver Wetlands 10/31 (GR, DR). A small movement of raptors was noted during a brief visit to the Hilltop East picnic area at RCSP in the lunchtime hour 9/11 (GM), which included 2 **Red-shouldered Hawks**, 2 **Broad-winged Hawks**, one **Red-tailed Hawk**, and 7 **Turkey Vultures**. **Red-shouldered** was also reported at RCSP 9/5 (GM) and **Broad-winged** at ECON 9/22 (KD).

A **Sora** at IND 9/3-4 (MV) was a nice find. Most recent previous records there were one in spring 2009 and one in the fall of 2013.

It was an extremely poor fall for shorebirds. Following last year's remarkable resurgence at Little Blue Lake, the ongoing operations there this year unfortunately flooded out the entire area for the duration of the season, and shorebird reports there were nil. IND also had a very poor year despite reasonable mudflats especially in Sep. To wit: top count of **Killdeer** for the season was just 35, at that count was made at the spillway at RCSP 8/1 (GR, DR) and not at IND. A single **Lesser Yellowlegs** at IND 9/3-13 (MV, et al.) was the only individual of this normally common species reported anywhere in the county. Even **Solitary Sandpipers** topped out at just 14 at IND 8/10 (GR) and all were gone by 9/11. A meager 3 **Least Sandpipers** at IND 8/14-15 (GR, DR, MD) were first and last for the season. **Ring-billed** and **Herring Gull** were both first reported at 9/13 NB (MV) and were both very sparsely noted through mid-Nov primarily at NB.

**Black-billed Cuckoo** continued its apparent decline. By comparison, **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was reported at least 17 times from four locations 8/4-9/20 (m.ob.), but Black-billed was noted just twice: one at RCSP (GM) and one at IND (GR), both 9/11. The only report of **Common Nighthawk** was a single over ECON 9/15 (KD); it's likely *Beaver* observers weren't

paying much attention to the evening skies in late Aug or early Sep. A nice count of 250 **Chimney Swifts** were over Beaver 9/12 (GR, DR). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was at ECON 9/22-24 (KD) and 3 were at RCSP 9/24 (SD), but surprisingly they were not reported after that. An **American Kestrel** with prey was seen at Lake Forest Gardens (near Fombell) 8/6 (DK). A **Merlin** returned to the Beaver area again this winter, first noted atop the First Baptist Church in NB 11/28 (TJ). An adult and juvenile **Peregrine Falcon** were noted at the mouth of the Beaver River 11/8-14 (TJ, MV).

The flights of both the flycatchers and the vireos were unremarkable. **Blue-headed Vireo** was noted at ECON 9/22 and 9/25 (KD) and **Philadelphia Vireo** was seen three times: RCSP 9/5 (GM), IND 9/17 (GR), and RCSP again 9/24 (SD). A **Common Raven** was heard and seen over Ambridge 8/30 (MV). This bird was possibly one of the pair that attempted to nest (and presumably failed) in RCH this spring. They have also been seen sporadically at Dashields Dam in nearby *Allegheny* in recent years.

Classification of the chickadees in *Beaver* continues to be a messy endeavor; however at this time **Carolina Chickadee** seems to have at last claimed much of the southern half of the county, and there is little point in listing "chickadee sp." in that region anymore without obvious evidence of Black-capped lineage. A close inspection of at least 50 chickadees throughout RCSP 8/30 (GM), for example, revealed no outward evidence of Black-capped at all, the first time this observer has been able to say that after 30 years of birding in the park. Black-caps that look and sound more or less correct continue to be the rule north of the Ohio River, while the regions close to the river still form a clear hybrid (read: confusion) zone. That said, eBirders, perhaps carelessly, continue to report both species throughout the county instead of the more prudent "Carolina/Black-capped" for mixed-up birds seen outside of their safe zones. Despite the Carolina's slow march northward, it's clear that chickadee identification in *Beaver* will remain a thorny problem for some time to come.

**Brown Creeper** was noted on Lake Trail at RCSP 9/7 (GR, DR) and at the RCSP Wildflower Reserve 10/17 (TH, OL), both areas where the species was singing well into May past the time when spring migrants are mostly gone from this region. Perhaps their appearance in both of these areas this fall was merely coincidence, but there were no other reports of creepers anywhere else in the county this season. The only **Winter Wren** was noted at RCSP 10/25 (RT). A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** at ECON 9/22 (KD) was the only one reported. **Swainson's Thrush** was reported much more frequently though 10/9, including 7 at RCSP 9/11 (GM). A very nice count of 200 **Cedar Waxwings** was talked at RCSP 9/19 (GR, DR).

Twenty-nine species of warbler were reported, and for the first time in a while coverage of woodlots in Sep was very good. An **Ovenbird** lingered at ECON 10/7 (KD). Very nice was a **Northern Waterthrush** at IND 8/24 (ph. AK, FK). It was seen again 8/25 (CD). Last **Blue-winged Warbler** was still at RCSP 9/19 (GR). **Tennessee Warbler** was well reported and **Nashville Warbler** a bit less so, but both were seen only at RCSP. A **Connecticut Warbler** at RCSP 9/24 (SD) put the species on the *Beaver* fall list for the third time in four years, after not having been reported for more than a decade before that. **Cape May Warbler** was noted at RCSP three times 8/30-9/11 (GM, GR, DR). Single **Northern Parulas** put in appearances at RCSP 8/30 (GM) and IND 9/17 (GR). **Magnolia Warbler** was very well reported through Sep up to the last bird at RCSP 10/2 (GR, DR). **Bay-breasted Warbler** was also quite well reported through late Sep including a nice early count of 8 at RCSP 8/30 (GM). **Blackburnian Warbler** was—a bit surprisingly—reported only four times (all at RCSP) in this season of better than average coverage, Records spanned from the first 4 on 8/30 (GM) to the last single 9/24 (SD). A trio of early **Blackpoll Warblers** was noted at RCSP 8/30 (GM). The only two **Black-throated Blue Warblers** noted were singles at RCSP 9/24 (SD) and ECON 9/30 (KD). An out of place **Palm Warbler** at a feeder in Vanport 9/20 (GR, DR) was the only one noted this season. A **Pine Warbler** was at RCSP 9/11 (GM). **Canada Warblers** included a beautiful male at RCSP 8/30 (GM) and one there again 9/7 (GR, DR). A **Wilson's Warbler** was at RCSP 9/12 (GR, DR), and one late bird was at the Wildflower Reserve 10/17 (ph. TH, OL).

A **Fox Sparrow** was at IND 11/6 (MV). Best count of **Song Sparrow** was 20 at IND 10/1 (GR, DR), the same date and location that saw the only two **Lincoln's Sparrows** of the season (GR, DR). **White-crowned Sparrows** were at IND 10/8 (MV) and 10/21 (JM). The usual post-breeding aggregations of **Scarlet Tanager** at RCSP included 15 there 8/19 and 17 on 9/5 (both GM). Four **Rusty Blackbirds** appeared at IND 10/9 (MV) and were followed by an impressive 65 there 11/6-7 (MV). A flock of 200 **Common Grackles** descended onto an ECON yard 9/17 (KD). The large flock of 15 **Scarlet Tanagers** at RCSP 8/19 also included 8 **Baltimore Orioles** (GM). Three **Pine Siskins** flew over IND 11/6 (GR, DR). Top count of **American Goldfinches** was 22 at ECON 9/24 (KD).

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## Bedford County

Locations: Allegheny Front (AF), Allegheny Front Hawk Watch (AFHW), Bedford at Large (BAL), Dunning's Creek Wetlands (DCW), Shaffer Mountain (SM), Shawnee State Park (SSP), White-tail Wetland (WTW).

The weather was mild throughout the fall season which made it difficult to find the expected water birds. Some of the more interesting reports were as follows: **Little Blue Heron**, **Greater White-fronted Goose**, **Blue Grosbeak**, **Sandhill Crane**, **Orange-crowned Warbler**, and a significant fallout of flycatchers in heavy fog at the AFHW. Unless stated otherwise the observations are those of the author.

A single **Greater White-fronted Goose** arrived 10/26 and lingered for 5 days. Most likely this is the same visitant for the last 3 years. The peak numbers for waterfowl were as follows: Seventy **Snow Geese** passed over the AFHW 11/23, 380 **Canada Geese** settled into DCW 9/15, and 360 **Tundra Swans** crossed the AFHW 11/22 (BS, BW). **Wood Ducks** peaked at the low number of 46 at DCW 9/8. The following waterfowl were seen at DCW: 10 **Gadwall** 11/15, 11 **American Widgeon** 11/15, 53 **American Black Duck** 10/2, 64 **Mallards** 11/11, 30 **Blue-winged Teal** 10/26, 7 **Northern Shovelers** 11/15, 17 **Northern Pintails** (at SSP) and 3 **Green-winged Teal** 10/26. The few diving ducks were mostly at SSP: 12 **Ring-necked Ducks** 11/15, 3 **Greater Scaup** 11/15, one **White-winged Scoter** 10/8, 7 **Buffleheads**, and 2 **Red-breasted Mergansers**. Seven **Ruddy Ducks** were counted at DCW 11/15.

Again **Wild Turkeys**, **Ruffed Grouse** and **Ring-necked Pheasants** had a good year due to mild temperatures. Ruffed Grouse, however, seems to thrive on not only wild grape, but also on the berries of autumn olive, which is found throughout the area especially near state game lands. This invasive is no longer planted, but it still prevails throughout the county.

Twenty-seven **Common Loons** flew over the AFHW 10/8 (BW, BS). Three **Pied-billed Grebes** were in Teal Lake at DCW 10/5. A count of 82 **Double-crested Cormorants** was made at SSP 11/12. An **American Bittern** was flushed at DCW 9/5. Six **Great Blue Herons** were at DCW 11/11. The biggest surprise was a **Little Blue Heron** 8/31.

The fall raptor report from AFHW was as follows: **Black Vulture** 55, **Turkey Vulture** 774, **Osprey** 83, **Bald Eagle** 112, **Northern Harrier** 52, **Sharp-shinned Hawk** 1027, **Cooper's Hawk** 115, **Northern Goshawk** 4, **Red-shouldered Hawk** 42, **Broad-winged Hawk** 1039, **Red-tailed Hawk** 1202, and **Rough-legged Hawk** 2. The real excitement was the new record for **Golden Eagles** at 318, topping the previous record of 279 in 2011. This year's count was the highest in the eastern U.S. for 2015. Falcon counts at AFHW: **American Kestrel** 46, **Merlin** 25, **Peregrine Falcon** 20, and 89 unidentified raptors.

Bittern Pool at DCW is specifically regulated for sandpipers by draw-downs to expose mudflats for shorebirds to rest and eat. Two **Sora Rails** and one **Clapper Rail** visited DCW on 8/10. Two **Sandhill Cranes** were at Bittern Pool 9/4-15. Three **Black-bellied Plovers** were at DCW 9/5. Two **Semipalmated Plovers**, 14 **Killdeer**, 3 **Greater Yellowlegs**, 2 **Lesser Yellowlegs**, one **Solitary Sandpiper** and one **Willet** were all observed 8/31. The following sandpipers were counted: 2 **Spotted Sandpiper** 9/1, one **Western Sandpiper** 9/3, 2 **Least Sandpiper** 9/3, 2 **Pectoral Sandpipers**, 2 **Dunlin** 9/17, 2 **Stilt Sandpipers** 9/17, and one **Short-billed Dowitcher** 9/3. Two **Wilson's Snipe** and 3 **American Woodcock** were observed at WTW 8/31. The few reports of gulls were spotty: 2 **Bonaparte's Gulls**, 6 **Ring-billed Gulls** and one **Herring Gull**. Four **Black Terns** were at SSP on 9/15.

A **Short-eared Owl** was seen in full daylight at the AFHW 10/6 (RR). Fifty **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were banded at the AFHW (DD).

Birders are all eager for those special times when birds have crowded together due to rain, fog or other weather events. That was the situation at the AFHW with a very heavy fog 8/29 and in early Sep. In such conditions the following were seen: **Olive-sided Flycatcher** 9/15, 2 **Eastern Wood Peewee** 9/3, 2 **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, 3 **Acadian Flycatcher**, one **Alder Flycatcher** 9/4, 2 **Willow Flycatcher** 8/30, 2 **Least Flycatcher**, one **Eastern Phoebe**, 2 **Great Crested Flycatcher** 8/9, and **Eastern Kingbird** 8/30 (TD,SD). **Blue-headed Vireo** and **Red-eyed Vireo** were the only vireos reported. The only **Brown Creeper** was a single at SSP 9/9. The following wrens were at DCW: 2 **Carolina Wrens**, one **House Wren**, one **Winter Wren** 11/2, and 4 **Marsh Wrens** 8/19.

The fast-declining Golden-winged Warbler was not found this year at WTW for the first time since I began writing this report for *Bedford*. The

habitat at WTW has not changed, so other factors must be involved. The following warblers were seen at the AF unless stated otherwise: **Tennessee Warbler** 9/4, one **Orange-crowned Warbler** 11/3, 2 **Chestnut-sided Warbler** 9/3, 2 **Magnolia Warbler** 9/3, one **Cape May Warbler** 9/3, 2 **Black-throated Blue Warbler** 9/3, 2 **Yellow-rumped Warbler** 9/3, one **Black-throated Green Warbler** 9/3, one **Blackburnian Warbler** 9/3, 2 **Pine Warbler** 9/3, 2 **Palm Warbler** 9/5, one **Black-and-white Warbler** 8/31, one **Worm-eating Warbler** 9/3, one **Ovenbird** 10/6, one **Kentucky Warbler** 10/6, one **Connecticut Warbler** at DCW 10/6, 2 **Common Yellowthroat** 8/30, one **Hooded Warbler** 8/19 at AFHW. A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was at DCW 8/5-9/15.

The following Sparrows were mostly seen 9/3 on Lambert Mt. Rd: 2 **Chipping Sparrows**, one **Field Sparrow**, 2 **Savannah Sparrows**, one **Grasshopper Sparrow**, one **Henslow's Sparrow**, 2 **Fox Sparrows**, 3 **Song Sparrows**, one **Lincoln's Sparrow** 10/13, 2 **Swamp Sparrows** at DCW, and 3 **White-throated Sparrows** at the AF, and one **White-crowned Sparrow**. Two **Scarlet Tanagers** were at the AF 9/15. It was nice to see the first **Snow Bunting** on 12/2 at the AF. A **Blue Grosbeak** was at DCW 8/15. Dunning's Creek Wetlands has seen this beautiful southern bird every few years and nesting is quite probable.

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## Berks County

Locations: Adam's Hotel Road pond (AHR), Blue Mountain Academy (BMA), Blue Marsh Lake (BML), Brenneman's Quarry (BQ), Exeter Scenic River Trail (EXST), Green Hill Preserve (GHP), Hamburg Reservoir (HR), Hawk Mountain Sanctuary (HMS), Kaercher Creek Park (KCP), Kernsville Dam Recreation Area (KDRA), Lake Ontelaunee (LO), Lake Ontelaunee West Shore Drive (LOWs), Peter's Creek (PC), Shartlesville Farm Pond (SFP), School Road Fleetwood Pond (SRFP), Skyline Drive, Mount Penn (MP), State Game Lands 106 (SGL110), State Hill Launch, Blue Marsh Lake (SHL). The official counting season at HMS is 8/15-12/15.

Weather patterns, primarily the lack of concentrated cold fronts, determined the volume of migrating birds for the second fall season in a row. The effects were felt mostly along the Kittatinny Ridge in regards to both raptor and passerine migrants. The lack of hurricane activity and heavy rainfall resulted in weak waterfowl and shorebird numbers.

The 7 (sometimes 9) **Snow Geese** presumed to be a supportive family for a wounded member, were seen throughout the period at KCP and nearby farms (KG, MW). A migrating flock of **Canada Geese** at KDRA 11/5 contained 2 **Cackling Geese** (KG). **Canada Geese** appeared at the usual stopovers sites at LO and BQ, with 800 at LO 11/6 and flocks numbering 900 on 11/4, 1100 on 11/13 and 2000 on 10/29 at BQ (RK). HMS counted 9576 **Canada Geese** at North Lookout. The **Mute Swan** population of just 9 at LO 11/21 still showed the effect of the 2014 culling by the PGC. The highest count of 13 **American Wigeon** and 60 **Mallards** 10/17 at LO were lower than normal (RK). Waterfowl fallouts at LO and BQ were sparse this quarter. Ten **Redhead** were at BQ on 10/29 and 11/10 (RK). Rare heavy rain storms resulted in 3 **Surf Scoter** at BM 11/1 (DH), one **White-winged Scoter** at LO (MS), and one **Black Scoter** at SHL 11/12 (MSI, JW, PW). A single **Long-tailed Duck** stopped at LO 10/29 (RK). High counts of **Bufflehead** were lower than usual: 40 at SHL 11/22 (KL), and 61 on 11/10 and 85 on 11/14 at LO (RK). 11 **Red-breasted Mergansers**, more common in spring, were at LO 11/30 (RK).

A total of 218 **Common Loons** flew by HMS this season with a high one-day count of 117 on 11/14. A lone and probably injured **Common Loon** lingered at LO 8/10-11/13 (m.ob.). Two migrant **Common Loons** were found at SHL 11/10 (KL, JW, PW). The only reported **Red-throated Loon** was one at HMS 11/14 (KL). Ten **Pied-billed Grebes** were at LO 11/6 (RK), and 418 **Double-crested Cormorants** were seen at HMS, with a high daily count of 82 on 10/23. One **Great Egret** was at BMA pond 9/14-30 (MW). Two **Great Egrets** were at LO 8/8 (RK). An immature **Little Blue Heron** put in a one-day appearance at a pond in Fleetwood 8/22 (SF). A flock of 6 **Plegadis ibis** over a Boyertown yard 8/28 was a surprise (RK). Flying in loose formation, these southbound birds were most likely **Glossy Ibis**.

The HMS fall raptor migration report will be included in the next issue; highlights for the fall season follow here. A **Mississippi Kite** of undetermined age was flying in the vicinity of the Pinnacle 9/25 (LG).

Observed by scope in the morning sun, the bird swooped along the ridge toward Owl's Head before reversing and flying south. The first **Bald Eagle** was counted 8/18. Off ridge, the over-wintering **Bald Eagles** began arriving at the Shartlesville chicken farms with the appearance of 5 on 10/4 (MW). The **Bald Eagle** high daily count at HMS was 20 on 9/13 and 9/14. The first **Northern Goshawk** of the count passed the lookout 10/18. The peak period for **Broad-winged Hawks** was 9/15-26 with 1532 passing the lookout 9/18. An adult light morph **Swainson's Hawk** appeared with a small group of Broadwings 10/4 (DB, PS). The first **Golden Eagle**, perhaps not a migrant, was counted 9/14. The **Golden Eagle** at KDRA 11/2 was a new species for that site's growing list (KG).

Single **Greater Yellowlegs** were at BMA 10/7 (MW) and KDNA 10/16 (KG). Four **Lesser Yellowlegs** stopped at BMA 10/23 (MW). Three **Western Sandpipers** were also at BMA 10/23 (MW). An early **Pectoral Sandpiper** was found in Maxatawny Twp. 8/28 (RK). The last report of **Wilson Snipe** was 10/23 at BA (MW).

Eleven **Bonaparte Gulls** were at SHL 11/12 (MSI) and a single **Bonaparte's Gull** was at LO 11/29 (MW). A rare **Franklin's Gull** was a pleasant surprise at BQ 11/13. Notably smaller than the surrounding **Ring-billed** and **American Herring Gulls**, its age was undetermined but appeared to be older than first winter, and was part of a large influx of Franklin's Gulls into the mid-Atlantic around this date (RK, PS).

The small colony of **Eurasian Collared-Doves** was consistently present in Shartlesville with a high count of 4 (MW). A nest has yet to be discovered. Since the loss of the Reading High School nesting site, **Chimney Swifts** have declined in *Berks*. The highest count of migrants now comes from HMS where 1092 were counted for the season with a high daily count of 224 on 8/29. **Common Nighthawk** migration in *Berks* was very light with only 3 counted at HMS. Sightings off ridge were of only single birds. A late **Common Nighthawk** passed North Lookout on 10/24 (MW). A lingering **Red-headed Woodpecker** was at AHR 11/21 (RK).

A **Merlin** was seen in an unusual place—downtown Reading 11/1 (MS). One of the **Peregrine Falcon** fledglings became a celebrity at the beach in Hogate, New Jersey, 110 miles from her nest on a high rise in downtown Reading. "Red" was a female who was banded 5/26 with band 12/BR. An article in the *Reading Eagle* (*vide* BU) told the story of this aggressive Peregrine claiming this beach as her territory in October, chasing away all trespassers.

HMS remains the best site for migrating **Olive-sided Flycatcher** where 5 were counted this fall. Only two **Least Flycatchers** were reported from the lookout and single **Least Flycatchers** were found off-ridge at KDRA 8/18 (KG) and PC 9/3 (JW, PW). A well-described **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** stopped over near Bernville to rest in a crab apple tree 10/10 (EB). **Philadelphia Vireos** are most often found at HMS on fall migration, but their numbers were lower this year with only 5 counted.

Counts of migrant swallows along the Kittatinny Ridge included 1220 **Tree Swallow**, 148 **Cliff Swallow**, 866 **Barn Swallow**, 108 **Bank Swallow**, and 103 **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** (HMS). LO hosts migrant swallows off ridge and these high counts were noted: 200 **Tree Swallow** 9/26 (RK), 20 **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** 8/29 (RK), 20 **Bank Swallow** 8/8 (RK), and 40 **Cliff Swallow** 8/10 (BS). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were conspicuous by their low numbers. Only 9 were counted at HMS with the first bird passing the lookout 8/26. The latest bird was one in Boyertown 10/23 (RK). Counts of 68 **American Pipits** SRFP 10/24 and 37 at LO 10/29 were tops for the species (RK). There were 6489 **Cedar Waxwings** counted at HMS with a high daily count of 567 on 9/2. Eleven **Snow Buntings** called as they went past North Lookout HMS 11/16.

Warbler migration in *Berks* is normally concentrated along the ridges. Totals were low this season for this family as well, again with the weather playing a significant part as demonstrated by the high daily counts for several species on 9/15 after the arrival of mild northwest winds. Totals at North Lookout 9/15 were: 22 **Tennessee Warblers**, 10 **Magnolia Warblers**, 8 **Black-throated Blue Warblers**, 126 **Black-throated Green Warblers**, 21 **Blackburnian Warblers**, and 26 **Bay-breasted Warbler**. Season totals of 447 **Black-throated Green Warblers**, 105 **Cape May Warblers**, and 243 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** represented the highest species counts for the season. A **Yellow Warbler** at HMS 9/3 was rare for the location. A **Northern Waterthrush** was at the LO Water Street access 8/6 (MS). A **Wilson's Warbler** at PC 10/3 was a nice surprise among a small wave of migrants (MW). KDRA continued to produce species of note, such as the **Orange-crowned Warbler** there 10/5 (DHo). Another rare fall migrant, **Connecticut Warbler**, was seen near Stony Run 10/22 (MC).

**First American Tree Sparrows** were 2 at GHP 11/2 (AZ). The largest flock of migrant **Chipping Sparrows** was at KDNA 10/21 (KG). Single **Lincoln Sparrows** were at KDNA 10/5 (DHo) and 10/22 (KG).

The highest one day total for **Scarlet Tanagers** at HMS was 21 on 9/15—the same date as the high warbler counts. Among one group of **Scarlet Tanagers** 9/15 was an adult or immature female **Summer Tanager**

(RK). The bird was perched 20 feet above the lookout. Extensive notes were taken in regards to the bird's plumage, head shape and overall size in comparison to the **Scarlet Tanagers** it was perched with. Interestingly, Maurice Broun reported female and/or immature Summer Tanagers with Scarlet Tanagers in the early 1930s and early 1940s.

A total of 8466 **Common Grackles** were counted at HMS. Reports of **Rusty Blackbirds** were of small numbers scattered around *Berks*; 10 in Birdsboro 11/7 was the highest count (JT).

Winter finches were scarce as predicted. The season total of **Pine Siskins** at HMS was 294 with 63 on 10/31. A single **Red Crossbill** was caught on a web cam at a home in Exeter 10/12 (JD). The first **Red Crossbill** passed by HMS North Lookout on 10/25 and 19 were counted for the season. One **White-winged Crossbill** was counted 11/3 at HMS. HMS counters tallied 3 **Common Redpolls** 11/26.

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### Blair County

Locations: Canoe Creek State Park (CCSP), Lower Trail-Mt. Etna Trailhead (LT-ME), Monastery Rd. Impoundment (MRI).

Information for this report was obtained primarily from eBird with additional records from the State College Bird Club listserv. Background and status information is from *Birds of Central Pennsylvania* by Nick Bolgiano and Greg Grove, 2010 (*B&G, 2010*).

The only duck species of note was **Blue-winged Teal**; 4 were at MRI 9/13 (DH). Two **Horned Grebes** were spotted at CCSP 11/12 (DaH). A **Green Heron** was at the Bald Eagle Sportsmen Cooperative Nursery 8/28 (MN), and 2 were at MRI 9/13 (DH).

A trio of **Black Vultures** was observed 10/11 on the 6 to 10 Trail west of Altoona (TA). One **Osprey** was at CCSP 9/13 (DH), and a **Golden Eagle** was spotted 11/4 on a back road from Penn State-Altoona to Bellwood (MB). A single **Bald Eagle** was present at LT-ME 9/13 (DH).

A **Spotted Sandpiper** was at MRI 9/13 (DH), and a **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at CCSP 8/9 (JD). A late migrating male **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** decided to take a lengthy stop at a feeder in Tyrone. It was first reported in October and was still present through 11/21, when it was photographed (ph. SB and IM).

**Belted Kingfishers** were spotted on two occasions at the Bald Eagle Sportsmen Cooperative Nursery. Two were present 8/28, and one was observed 9/25 (both MN). One was also at MRI 9/23 (DH), and birders at CCSP found one or 2 at CCSP 9/13-11/28 (DH, TA, ST). Two **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were at the LT-ME 11/16 (TA).

A few migrating flycatchers were reported. A single **Acadian Flycatcher** was observed 8/29 at Frosty Hollow (LB), and one **Alder Flycatcher** was present 8/9 at the Albemarle Nature Trail (JD). A **Least Flycatcher** was also at Frosty Hollow 8/16 (LB). **Great Crested Flycatchers** included one at CCSP 8/9 (JD) and one or 2 at Frosty Hollow 8/16-23 (LB). **Yellow-throated Vireos** are rarely reported in the fall, but one was at CCSP 9/13 (DH). A few **Philadelphia Vireos** were noted at Frosty Hollow 8/29-9/26 (LB).

**Common Ravens** were widely observed throughout *Blair*. Single **Red-breasted Nuthatch** 11/15 (TA), **Brown Creeper** 11/28 (ST), and **Winter Wren** 10/11 (TA) were identified at CCSP. One **Veery** was at Frosty Hollow 9/7 (LB), and another was at LT-ME 9/13 (DH). A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** visited Frosty Hollow 9/26 (LB), and a **Swainson's Thrush** stopped at CCSP 9/13 (DH).

Twenty-five warbler species and one hybrid were present this fall; nine were common to abundant, and sixteen were uncommon. The majority of reports were made by a single observer at Frosty Hollow (LB), which are summarized in the table at the end of this report.

Other warbler observations included single **Ovenbirds** at Plummer's Hollow 9/7 (JP) and CCSP 9/13 (DH). Also at CCSP were 2 **Worm-eating Warblers** 8/9 and 2 **Black-and-white Warblers** (both JD). Two Black-and-white Warblers were also present there 9/13 (DH). A **Hooded Warbler** was spotted on the Albemarle Nature Trail 8/9. That same day a **Cerulean Warbler** was noted at CCSP (both JD). A **Bay-breasted Warbler** was present 9/13 at CCSP (DH), as was a **Canada Warbler** on 8/9 (JD).

Several uncommon sparrows were present in *Blair*. Five **Fox Sparrows** were noted in Plummer's Hollow 11/26 (MB), and single **White-crowned Sparrows** were observed at CCSP 10/11 (TA) and on the Albemarle Nature Trail 10/27 (MN). Two **Savannah Sparrows** were at MRI 9/13 (DH), and Frosty Hollow hosted 3 **Lincoln's Sparrows** 9/26 (LB). A single **Swamp Sparrow** was noted at CCSP 8/9-13 (JD, DH).

### Summary of warblers at Frosty Hollow, autumn 2015 (LB).

Species	Dates	Count
Ovenbird	8/1-9/26	1-2
Worm-eating Warbler	8/1-29	1-2
Golden-winged Warbler	8/1	1
"Brewster's" Warbler	9/7	1
Blue-winged Warbler	8/16-9/7	1
Black-and-white Warbler	8/1-9/26	1-3
Tennessee Warbler	8/23-9/26	2-3
Hooded Warbler	8/29-9/19	1
Cape May Warbler	9/19-26	3-5
Northern Parula	9/19-26	1-3
Bay-breasted Warbler	9/19	1
Blackburnian Warbler	9/7-26	1-2
Palm Warbler	9/26, 10/12	1-7
Pine Warbler	8/29-9/26	2
Wilson's Warbler	8/29	1

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### Bradford County

Locations: Beebe's Pond (BEP), Browning Pond, Wyalusing (BRP), Browning Family Farm, Spring Hill (BFF), Edwards Rd, Stevensville (ERS), Peck Hill (PEH), Riverfront Park, Towanda (RFP), Seeley Rd. East Canton (SEE), Stevensville (STE), Susquehanna River (SUR), Trudy Gerlach farm near New Era (TNE).

Temperatures were warmer than usual throughout much of the autumn, with practically no snow late in the season. A flock of 100+ **Snow Geese** flew south over TNE 11/30 (TG). A **Long-tailed Duck** was at BRP 11/15-16 (KR). Four **Bufflehead** were on the SUR behind courthouse in Towanda 11/8 (SR), 3 were at BRP 11/11 (KR), and 5 were on Lake Wesauking (LF). Two or 3 **Ruddy Ducks** were at BRP on 10/27-11/16 (KR). A **Green Heron** was at a beaver pond at TNE 8/4-7 (TG), and one was at BRP 8/8 (BG). On 11/11 a pair of **Ring-necked Pheasants** was noted at TNE (TG). A number of **Great Egrets** were observed: 2 on 8/11 on the SUR by Towanda (TG), one 9/29 along the SUR in Towanda (AJ, SR); and one at Dunning's Pond, Gillett 9/29 (PM). A county first, 2 **Little Blue Herons** were on the SUR at Sugar Run 8/23 (LH).

**Osprey** were noted at BEP 8/18 and 9/8 (KR). There were at least 24 sightings of **Bald Eagle** throughout the period (m.ob.). A male **Northern Harrier** was at Peck Hill and Lamb Rd. 9/17 (AV, GV), one was on Marcy Hill Rd. 9/23 (BF), a male was at TNE 10/7 (TG), one was at BRP 10/29 (KR), one was at ERS 11/1 (KR), one was in Troy 11/5-10 (LH), and one was on Jennings Rd near Canton 11/6 (LF). **Red-shouldered Hawks** included one at ERS 8/14 (KR) one at TNE 10/14 (TG), one at GRR 11/21 (LF), and one in Troy 11/29 (LH). A **Broad-winged Hawk** was seen on Rt. 409 N. of Wyalusing 9/4 (KR), and also at ERS 9/16 and 9/19 (KR). Two were interacting with each other and a Common Raven at TNE 9/5 (TG). One fortunate observer (KR) had an amazingly large number of **Golden Eagle** sightings during fall migration. At ERS: one 11/2, two 11/3, two 11/9, one 11/16, five 11/17, two 11/18, one 11/20, and two 11/25; and elsewhere one near Beebe Pond 11/15, and one at Water Street and Rte.706 Campdown 11/18. Lastly one was over Athens 11/14 (IW).

**Sandhill Cranes** were reported throughout the season (m.ob.). Two **Solitary Sandpipers** and 3 **Least Sandpipers** were at WFB 9/3 (LF).

A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at ERS 8/7 and 8/14 (KR). An **Eastern Screech-Owl** was calling at both ERS (KR) and at Quick's Bend 9/28 (DB, MB). Uncommon in recent years, 3 **Common Nighthawks** were at ERS 8/16 (KR). An even more unusual sighting was a **Red-headed Woodpecker** near Evergreen 11/14 (MM, SM). **Merlins** have bred in the Sayre/Athens area in recent years. An additional pair was in the N. Keystone Ave. vicinity, Sayre all summer, and fledged 3 young which were present to 8/30 (TG). A **Peregrine Falcon** was at RFP 9/30 (EH).

Once again a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was observed at PEH, this year on 8/8 (AV, GV). An **Acadian Flycatcher** was at PEH 8/8 and 9/5 (AV, GV). A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was in ERS 8/3 (KR) and one was singing at TNE 9/3 (TG). A **Blue-headed Vireo** was at ERS 10/6 (KR). There were two sightings of a **Philadelphia Vireo**: one at PEH 9/10 (GV) and one at ERS 9/11 (KR). **Horned Larks** were at SEE 11/6 and 11/13 (LF). Two **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** were at WFB 9/3 (LF). A marvelous sighting was a **Swainson's Thrush** at PEH 10/13 (AV, GV). **Snow Buntings** were present at SEE 11/13 (LF).

A female **Black-and-White Warbler** was at PEH 8/5 (AV, GV). A **Tennessee Warbler** was observed on 8/11 and 9/27 at PEH (AV, GV), and one was at ERS 9/25 (KR). A **Nashville Warbler** was at PEH 8/25 and 9/24 (AV, GV), and one was at ERS 9/25 (KR). A **Mourning Warbler** was at PEH 9/2-3 (AV, GV). Two **Hooded Warblers** were at the BRR 8/8 (BG). A **Magnolia Warbler** was at ERS 8/17 and 9/21 (KR) and at PEH 9/4 and 9/27 (AV, GV). **Bay-breasted Warblers** were at PEH 9/10 and 9/27 (AV, GV). A **Blackburnian Warbler** was at ERS 8/27 (KR). A **Blackpoll Warbler** was at PEH 9/27 (AV, GV). There were two sightings of **Palm Warbler**: one at ERS 10/4 (KR) and one in Canton Twp. 10/11 (LF). A **Prairie Warbler** was at PEH 8/5 and 9/28 (AV, GV).

An **American Tree Sparrow** was at ERS 11/10 (KR). Unusual was a **Lincoln's Sparrow** 9/21-25 at PEH (AV, GV); and at RFP 9/30 (EH). A juvenile **White-crowned Sparrow** was noted at PEH 10/3, 10/18, and 11/18-21 (AV, GV), and one was at ERS 10/19 and 11/2 (KR).

A female **Purple Finch** was feeding a juvenile at PEH 8/11, and 3 were there 11/8 (AV, GV). Five **Pine Siskins** were at GRR 10/31 and several were there 11/21 (LF).

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## Bucks County

Locations: Bradford Dam (BRD), Churchville Park (CVP), Core Creek Park (CCP), Lake Towhee Park (LTP), Maple Knoll Farms in Buckingham Twp. (MKF), Lower Makefield Twp. (LMT), Nockamixon State Park (NSP), Peace Valley Park (PVP), Pine Run Dam (PRN), Penn-Warner Tract (PWT), Rohm and Haas, Bristol (RHS), State Game Land #157 (SGL157).

Temperatures were above normal for all four months: August (+1.6°F), September (+5.3°F), October (+0.7°F), and November (+4.4°F). All four months had below normal rainfall, with a total deficit of 4 inches. Overall, the fall migration was lackluster across the board, following the poor showing of the spring migration as well. Northern irruptive species were barely noticed or completely unreported. A county big day 9/12 resulted in 116 species including 20 warbler species (DFa, BW). Further evidence of the poor season, the species count of 222 for the four month period compared to the previous five-year average of 242. There were six new fall early arrival dates and five new fall late departure dates. 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 nearby Trenton, New Jersey, with climate normal values based on the recent three decades per the NOAA website.

The only reported **Greater White-fronted Goose** was at PVP 11/21 (AM). Three **Snow Geese** at PRN 10/14 (AH) provided the fall's first report. The only higher counts were 60 at LMT 11/7 (NR), and 40 at Doylestown 11/30 (AH). **Cackling Goose** was reported at four sites starting in late Oct (m.ob.). Groups of possible Cacklers as large as 9 at PVP and 7 at PRN (BK, SA, MN) may have been correct but at least some were felt to be possible hybrids based on photos. Verifying these reports without excellent photos is impossible, but even with photos it is tough sometimes. The **Trumpeter Swan** first detected at NSP in Dec 2013 as a juv., has returned as an adult in 2014 and 2015. The most likely site to see it is at LTP where it was noted 9/21-11/8 (PT, m.ob.). Three **Tundra Swans** passed over CVP 11/28 (BL *vide* VD). **Mute Swan** was reported at five sites mostly in low single digits, but PWT as usual had the high report of 24 on 11/18 (AB, DB). Nine dabbling duck and 13 diving duck species were reported in generally modest numbers. Some higher counts for dabblers above single digits were **Wood Duck**: 18 at PVP 8/16, 10/17, and 10/31 (AM) and 30 at LTP 9/24 (BK), **American Black Duck**: 30 at LTP 11/24-27 (PT), **Mallard**: 113 at LMT 10/24 (MG), and **Green-winged Teal**, 34 at BRD 10/22 (AM). The

more noteworthy diving ducks included a high single site count of 11 **Greater Scaup** at NSP 11/30 (DFa). Single **Surf Scoters** were at PVP 10/10 (AM), PWT 10/17 (DFa), and NSP 10/18 (DFa). A **White-winged Scoter** stopped briefly at PVP 11/24 (AM ph.). Single **Black Scoters** were at NSP 10/2 (DFa), 10/24 (PC), and 10/28 (DFa, BE). Single **Long-tailed Ducks** were at PVP 10/21 (AM ph.), 11/14 (m.ob.), and 11/29 (DFa, KS). Another stopped at NPS 11/29 (PC). Peak counts for **Bufflehead** were 98 at PVP 11/22 (KS) and 90 at NSP (DFa, AM). Four **Common Goldeneye** were the first arrivals on 11/14 at PVP (m.ob.). Twenty-four **Hooded Mergansers** at PVP 11/24 (AM) was the only count higher than low single digits. Two **Red-breasted Mergansers** at NSP 10/26 (PT) and 5 at PWT 11/18 (MD, AL) provided the only reports. The only high report for **Ruddy Duck** was 162 at Falls Twp. Park 11/5 (BK).

The standout report by far for **Wild Turkey** was 68 at Bedminster Twp. on a private farm 11/14 (ZM). A **Red-throated Loon** 10/24 at PVP was unusual for being in mostly alternate plumage (ph. AM). Four more were reported 11/17-29 at PVP, PWT, and NSP (m.ob.). The imm. **Common Loon** in Jul at NSP continued to 8/3 (RH). Another imm. was at PWT 8/8-29 (DFa). As many as 15 more were reported at NSP and PVP between the more expected migration dates of 9/25 to 11/22 (m.ob.), including 8 migrating over NSP 11/22 (DFa, AM). Only a total of 7 **Horned Grebes** were reported at PVP and NSP 10/22-11/14 (m.ob.). A **Red-necked Grebe** at PVP 11/15-21 provided the only report (AM, m.ob.). Certainly by far the standout of the season was a well-documented first state record of an adult female **Brown Booby** at PWT 11/14-17 (DFa ph.). Some entered this in eBird as the Atlantic subspecies. Technically, the female cannot be field identified as to subspecies and thus should have been entered only to the species level. Although we can assume that it is likely an Atlantic type, there is no evidence to prove it. Two **Great Cormorants** 11/21 at PWT provided the only report for the season. An **American Bittern** at Central Park, Doylestown Twp. 9/19 (RHe) was also the only report. **Great Egret** was well represented with 19 sites reporting (m.ob.). They lingered at several sites in very good numbers. High reports were 35 at RHS 9/5, 8 at PWT 8/8, 8 at CCP 9/19 (all DFa), 6 at CVP 8/15 (RS), and 6 at Silver Lake Park 8/25 (RFe) and 10/3 (MG). The last report was at PWT 11/18 (JA). One was killed by a snapping turtle in late Aug at PVP (*vide* Rfo), and one was found dead at CVP 9/7 (AM, VD). The only report of **Snowy Egret** was 3 at RHS 8/2 (DFa). Two **Little Blue Herons** were at RHS 8/2 and one was at PWT 8/8-11 (DFa). **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was reported at six sites between 8/1 and 11/24, with a total of only 9 individuals (m.ob.). Contributing to the decline of this Pennsylvania endangered species, one trapped in fishing line 9/5 at CVP was too injured to be saved and had to be euthanized (RS, HD). A fly over **Plegadis sp.** at PVP 9/12 was presumed to be the far more likely **Glossy Ibis** (SS).

The high report for **Black Vulture** was 50-60 at PVP 10/19, and **Turkey Vulture** had a high count of about 75 at NSP 10/24 (both AM, JM). The NSP **Broad-winged Hawk** Count effort was 80 hours 9/13-22 and resulted in a total count of 1918 individuals of nine species. **Broad-winged Hawk** totaled 1783, with the single day high of 945 on 9/21 (BF, et al.). At Pipersville, a 9.75-hour effort 9/20-21 produced 949 raptors of nine species. The total **Broad-winged Hawk** count was 914, with 708 on 9/21 (DA). Vultures are not included in these totals. A well described imm. **Golden Eagle** was over Paunacussing Preserve on the early date of 9/20 (DB).

**Sora** individuals were reported at BRD 9/27 (GJ) and PRN 10/15 (AM). The standout high count for **American Coot** was 105 at Falls Twp. Community Park 11/5 (BK). Sixteen shorebird species were reported for the four-month period. After one this spring, a **Black-bellied Plover** was at BRD 10/22 (AM ph.) for the only report. **Semipalmated Plover** also was scarce being reported at only four sites, with 4 being a poor high count at RHS 8/11 (DFa). The single site high count of 4 **Solitary Sandpipers** at CCP 8/5 and 8/10 (MG) is noteworthy only in reflecting the poor numbers of most shorebirds this fall. The only standout count for **Killdeer** was 90 at Wrightstown 8/22 (DFa). **Greater Yellowlegs** does not usually linger at PVP at any time and certainly not as late as during this fall. One to 4 were reported almost daily 10/18-11/23 (m.ob.). **Lesser Yellowlegs** also lingered into mid-Nov at both BRD and PVP (m.ob.). Most counts for both yellowlegs were in the low single digits, with very few exceptions only for **Lesser Yellowlegs**, which had a high report of 11 at CVP 9/7 (VD, AM). A **Lesser Yellowlegs** at BRD 11/23 provided a new fall late date (AR). Single **Stilt Sandpipers** were at PWT 8/29 (DFa), CVP 9/5-6 (VD, HD), and RHS 9/12 and 9/19 (DFa), with 3 at RHS 9/5 (DFa). **Dunlin** was only represented by singles at PVP 10/3 (KR ph.) and 10/18 (AM ph.). **Least Sandpiper** was tallied at 10 sites, with highest counts over 100 at RHS from mid-Aug to early Sep (DFa). A late one was at RHS 11/1 (DFa). A **White-rumped Sandpiper** was at RHS 8/22 and 8/29 (DFa). **Pectoral Sandpiper** was reported at five sites in low to mid-single digits, with high report only 9 at BRD 10/25 (AM). **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was reported from six sites all in the low single digits except for about 50 at RHS in late Aug (DFa). Often

missed completely, a **Western Sandpiper** stopped at RHS 10/10 (DFa). Seven sites reported **Wilson's Snipe** between 9/5 and 11/13 in very low numbers (m.ob.). The highest report was 3 at BRD 10/24 (JBa). **American Woodcock** was at Tinicum Twp. 11/3 (DA), and 2 were at PVP mid-Aug (JH), with one there 11/13 (DFa, AM).

Seven gull species were reported. **Bonaparte's Gull** was reported in low single digit counts between 9/27 and 11/22 at only three sites (m.ob.). The exception was 13 at PVP 11/13 (m.ob.). A close count of 475 **Laughing Gulls** was made at Morrisville 9/7 (AM). A crude estimate of 10,000 was reported at PWT 10/17 (DFa). It is rare to get a total count estimate for this surprisingly abundant species in the tidal zone of southern Bucks where the landfill must be the main source of food. The last entry in eBird was an estimated 300 on 11/18, but this was after a larger number not counted had departed (ALa, MD). A few were still there at the end of Nov (DFa). They were not reported in the central or upper part of the county this fall. Certainly a highlight of the season, but unfortunately short lived and seen by only a few, was the movement of **Franklin's Gull** into the area. **Bucks'** previous records totaled nine occurrences, one in 1956 and the rest since 2002. They were confirmed at three sites probably totaling 7 birds. Four were found mid-day at PVP 11/13 but quickly left (KS ph.). One first winter bird arrived there late in the afternoon 11/13 (AM, et al. ph.), one was at BRD 11/14 mid-day but apparently quickly left as well (AM ph.), and one was at PWT 11/14 (DFa). Two **Iceland Gulls** at LMT farm fields 11/1 established a new fall early arrival date by nine days (SA, MN). Two **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** 8/22 at CVP (HD) were the first noted fall arrivals. The monthly high counts all at PVP were 36 on 9/13, 164 on 10/24, and 447 on 11/21 (all AM). Tern reports were very low. Two **Caspian Terns** were at Mud Island 8/2 and 8/8 (DFa), 3 stopped at NSP 8/12 (RM) and 9/3 (VM), with at least 3 at PVP 9/4 (MH). One **Black Tern** was at PWT 8/11 (DFa) for the only report. A **Forster's Tern** was at NSP 8/11 (DFa), and 2 were at PWT 9/27 (MN, SA).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo** reports came from only 10 sites (m.ob.), with the last at PVP 9/16 (KI). There were only five reports of **Black-billed Cuckoo** (DA, VD, KI, AM), with the last 8/23 at PVP. No **Barn Owl** breeding site was reported this year. **Barred Owl** was near Quakertown Swamp as usual (DFa). No migrant owl species were reported. **Common Nighthawk** continues to be in decline, with reports mostly in low single digit counts between 8/26 and 9/28 at 15 sites (m.ob.). The high was only 9 at Solebury Twp. 8/28 (DFa). The SGL157 breeding site for **Red-headed Woodpecker** had a high of 5 adults and 3 juvs. at the beginning of Aug (DFa, AM). Various numbers were reported there up until the last report 10/14, when one was sighted (EB, m.ob.). Three birds were at a nearby private restricted access property in Haycock Twp. 11/16 (DL). Information recently was provided that this private property is believed to host three breeding pairs (*vide* DL). So, this gives hope that their status is not as bad as recently thought, although still a very localized and rare breeder in the county. A likely migrant was at Nockamixon Twp. 9/23 (DFa), and another flew over MKF 9/24 (RS). A probably wintering imm. bird at MKF was first noted 11/8 and a second was detected 11/21, with both continuing through the period (RS, VS). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was reported regularly starting 9/21, with 25 sites in eBird although most counts were of only single birds, with 3 being the high. **Merlin** was reported from 12 sites starting 8/27 (m.ob.). **Peregrine Falcon** was again reported from locations away from the normal southern Delaware River sites. Singles were at PVP 8/29 (SL, FR) and 9/5 (AM), BRD 9/7 (AM), LTP 9/12 (PT), Haycock Twp. 9/13 (PT), and MKF 10/6 and 11/1 (RS). Two **Peregrine Falcons** and 3 **Merlin** were spotted during the 9/13-22 NSP hawk watch (BF et al.). A **Merlin** was also tallied at the Pipersville hawk watch site 9/21 (DA).

Single **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were reported at the Pearl S. Buck Estate 8/12 (DA), SGL157 8/27 (EB, RM), and NSP 8/29 (PT). A juv. **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was still begging and being fed by adults 9/5 at PVP (AM). Eight **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were reported from five sites between 8/13 and 9/18 (m.ob.). Often missing from descriptions in these reports is the dusky breast separating the more yellow throat and belly. **Acadian Flycatcher** was still at its usual Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve location 8/5 (BK), and one was at SGL157 8/29 (PC). **Least Flycatcher** was reported from nine sites on 20 dates between 8/13 and 9/24 (m.ob.). It has not been a regular breeding species here since the mid-1970s, with possible nesting in 1992 at PVP. There were 9 **Philadelphia Vireos** reported from six sites between 8/27 and 9/22 (m.ob.). **Common Raven** was reported from at least 13 sites (m.ob.), with about 18 individuals (m.ob.). Although **Horned Lark** has possibly bred a couple of times in recent years, a bird at PRN 9/16 was probably a migrant and provided the earliest fall migrant date in our records (AM ph.). Two at NSP provided the only other report 10/3 (KR). There were no Black-capped Chickadees reported. A melanistic **Tufted Titmouse** was at Tinicum Twp. 11/22 (PC). One **Red-breasted Nuthatch** report at NSP 11/26 (BL) presumably indicated this was an extremely off year for this species. PRN and BRD are **Marsh Wren** hotspots. The first report was 9/12 at PRN (DFa) and the last 11/2 at BRD

(GJ). Two was the high count at both sites (m.ob.). **Winter Wren** was detected at 11 sites, almost all single birds (m.ob.). The first report was at SGL157 9/14 (EB). A poor showing of **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was proven by 80% of the eBird entries being one bird only. The highest counts were only 5 at CVP 10/24 (VD) and 4 at NSP 11/7 (PC).

In general, migrant **Catharus thrush** reports mixed. Species with summer residents here were probably normal in numbers during migration, but those that just pass through were probably below normal in reports. No reports were received at all for Gray-cheeked Thrush. Seven sites reported **Swainson's Thrush** on a total of 12 days between 9/15 and 10/10 (m.ob.), but all except an entry of 2 at MKF 9/18 (RS) were of one bird only. About a dozen **Hermit Thrushes** at NSP 11/7 (DFa) far surpassed any other site reports. Reports of 6 **Gray Catbirds** lingering into Nov. came from five sites, with the latest 11/28 at Silver Lake Park (DFi, SB). A **Brown Thrasher** at PVP 11/17 (BK) was the only one reported in Nov. **American Pipit** was reported at five sites (DFa, MG, AM, SA, MN), with 45 the only relatively high count at LMT (SA, MN). **Cedar Waxwing** counts were generally modest, with the highest report by far about 200 at NSP 11/7 (PC). A single **Snow Bunting** was at NSP for a few days starting 11/5 (MH, ML, Dfa). Possibly the use of herbicides there resulted in poor conditions at their usual haunts resulting in a poor showing. The one was only there due to bird seed temporarily spread to attract them (DFa) at their normal arrival time and place. The only other report was of 8 at PVP 11/24 (BK ph.).

A total of 32 warbler species was reported. Orange-crowned Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, and Yellow-breasted Chat were not reported. Three species only made the list due to one report (see below). **Bay-breasted Warbler** had only 5 reports (PC, Dfa, SG, AM), as did **Wilson's Warbler** (PC, Dfa, RFe, RS). **Worm-eating Warbler**, **Cape May Warbler**, **Blackpoll Warbler**, and **Hooded Warbler** had only 7 to 11 reports each (m.ob.). **Louisiana Waterthrush** apparently cleared out quickly on schedule, with one 8/1 at SGL157 (DFa, AM) and one at Bowman's Hill 8/6 (BK) the only reports. A **Golden-winged Warbler** at NSP 9/10 (VM) was the only one reported. The only **Prothonotary Warbler** report was from PVP 8/2 (RM). Although there have been at least three Dec reports and one for Jan for **Nashville Warbler** of possibly wintering birds, one at Upper Makefield firehouse 11/9 represented the county's latest fall report that might be still considered in the normal migration window (MG). Single **Connecticut Warblers** were at PWT 9/19 and 9/27 (DFa) for the only reports. The only report of **Mourning Warbler** was at Quakertown Swamp 9/1 (DFa). Considering most reports of **Northern Parula** were of one bird, 18 at the west end of PVP (DS) and 12 at the east end (JBU), both 9/27, were noteworthy. A **Magnolia Warbler** at NSP 8/5 (DFa) arrived on a new fall early date by eight days, and one at PVP 10/21 (JBU, Ale ph.) was one day later than any previous fall late date. A male **Blackburnian Warbler** at SGL157 8/1 provided a new fall early date by six days (AM, Dfa). This was the third consecutive year for new early dates for this species. A **Palm Warbler** was on the late side 11/21 at PWT (DFa). A **Pine Warbler** 11/18 at a LMT yard was assumed to be the same bird returning for the ninth winter (CF). A repeat of last fall, the only report of **Yellow-throated Warbler** was at Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve 9/16 (MG). Single **Black-throated Green Warbler** and **Canada Warbler** at NSP 8/5 (DFa) provided new fall early dates by two and three days respectively.

**Eastern Towhee** reports came from five sites in Nov (m.ob.), a slight increase from the two reports of lingering birds last Nov. **American Tree Sparrow** was first noted 11/9 at Tinicum Park (AG), with Nov having reports from six sites compared to two last Nov. (m.ob.). Each report was of one or two birds. A species that is not reported often, **Clay-colored Sparrow** was at PWT 10/10 (DFa ph.). **Vesper Sparrow** may be getting even harder to find here. One was at CCP 10/24 (MG), one to 2 were at MKF 11/3-4 (RS, AM), and one was at Van Sant Airport 11/9 (AG). **Savannah Sparrow** can still be found in good numbers during migration. The high site reports were 27 at PRN 10/13 (AM), 22 at LMT 10/31 (MG), and 21 at MKF 10/21 (RS). Single **Nelson's Sparrows** stopped at PRN 10/11 (DFa, KR, RS) and BRD 10/22 (RfR). **Fox Sparrow** was scarce, with only five sites reporting compared to 16 last fall. Almost all were one individual at a time (m.ob.). The hotspot again for **Lincoln's Sparrow** was MKF, where they were reported on 14 dates, with multiple birds on 10 dates. The high count there was 4 10/8 (RS). **White-crowned Sparrow** was again scarce being detected at 12 sites, with highs of only 4 at PRN 10/5 (SG), 6 at Honey Hollow Environmental Center 10/17 (ZM), and 5 at MKF 10/20 (RS). A **Scarlet Tanager** 10/15 at PVP (VM, KI) was later by three days than any previous fall late dates. The only later date for the county was an extremely rare wintering bird in late Dec to mid-Jan 2013-2014. **Blue Grosbeak** continued at the MKF breeding area until 10/15, with 5 on 9/13 the highest eBird entry (RS). The PWT site had reports until 10/10 (DFa), with the high report 12 on 9/27 (MN, SA). One was also at RHS 10/10 (DFa). A new fall late date by one day was set by one at Croydon 10/22 (RFe ph.). A **Dickcissel** at MKF 9/13 provided the only report (RS) after one in Jul at PWT, where they were

proven to breed starting in 2008 (DFa). Confirmation of breeding there was not possible in recent years due to access restrictions (DFa). **Bobolink** was reported from five sites, with modest high site reports of 20 at MKF 8/28 (RS) and 14 at PVP 9/9 (AM). A large number were at PWT 9/29 but not quantified (DFa). **Eastern Meadowlark** was reported from only four sites. A count of 10 at PRN 8/19 (RM) was by far the best. **Rusty Blackbird** was reported from 10 sites (m.ob.), with the first report one at PVP 9/22 (BK ph.). The highest single site reports were about 25 at LTP 10/24 (AM, JM), 20 at Silver Lake Park 11/7 (DFI), and 10 at CVP 11/18 (BK). For the fourth year in a row, **Baltimore Orioles** returned to the same feeders in Middletown Twp. The first adult male was noted 11/7 and the second adult male 11/13 (DP). This compares to arriving 11/22 last year. **Purple Finch** made a small movement into the area starting 9/26 at BRD (GJ). The high counts were about 12 at NSP 11/7 (DFa), 5 at Doylestown Twp. 11/15 (BG), and 9 at PVP 11/25 (AM). One **Pine Siskin** flew over New Hope 10/22 (DFa), and 2 flew over PVP 11/14 (MB).

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#### **Butler County**

Locations: Bear Run Boat Launch (BRBL), Clay Township (CT), Glade Run Lake (GRL), Lake Arthur (LA), Lake Oneida (LO), Moraine State Park (MSP), North Shore (NS), South Shore (SS), Squaw Valley Woodlands (SVW), Sunken Garden Trail (SGT), Watts Bay (WB), Whitestown Road (WR), Wolf Creek Narrows (WCN), Wildlife Observation Area (WOA). Note: Bear Run Boat Launch, Bike Trail, Lake Arthur, Muskrat Cove, Davis Hollow, North Shore, Park Road, Porter's Cove, South Shore, Sunken Garden Trail, Watts Bay, and the Wildlife Observation Area are all located in Moraine State Park.

The warm September gave way to a few days of more seasonal weather in October, but highs in the 70s allowed many birds to remain longer than expected. Most notable of these was a **Blue-winged Warbler** that was spotted at Moraine State Park in November and remained in the same area through most of December. Warm weather persisted through most of the season which featured a nice assortment of migrants. Highlights included an immature **Laughing Gull** and a **Red-Throated Loon**.

The **Canada Goose** population remained robust; sightings included three reports of over 200 birds at Whitestown Road 10/7 and 11/11 (RN) and at the WOA 10/24 (MAR). **Tundra Swans** were reported 7 times 11/10-22 including 32 at SGL95 11/10 (DH), 50 at Clay Township 11/20 (BBa), 40 at South Shore 11/22 (HC) and an excellent movement over Lake Arthur with 500 seen in 7 flocks 11/22 (KSJ). **Wood Ducks** were widely reported, mostly from LA with 14 reports in double digits. The high counts included 100 at the WOA 10/24 (MAR) and 93 there the next day (JV, DK). **Gadwall** was reported 15 times between 10/23 through the end of November with a nice total of 84 at WOA 11/17 and 138 there 2 days later (JG). **American Wigeon** was spotted 8 times beginning 10/25, with high counts of 6 at WOA 10/25 (BBa) and 6 there 11/15 (TR). **American Black Duck** was seen 7 times beginning with a high count of five near Muskrat Cove on 9/20 (BB). Only one **Blue-winged Teal** was reported all season, at WOA 10/8 (LS). **Northern Shoveler** normally moves through *Butler* starting in September but there was only one seen at WOA 9/19 (MV). None were seen again until 2 appeared at WOA 11/14 (MJ), 4 were there 11/15 (MF, JV), 2 were at WOA 11/17 (KD) and 2 were there 11/19 (JG), possibly the same birds. The high count was 10 at LA 11/27 (MD). **Green-winged Teal** were seen 8 times 9/19-11/19, all at LA (m.ob.); the high count was 5 at WOA 10/25 (JV). **Redhead** was reported 12 times beginning with 5 at WOA during a Three Rivers Bird Club outing 10/25. The high count was 12 at SS 11/17 (KD). **Ring-necked Duck** was well represented with 15 sightings, most at LA,

starting 10/9. High counts included 88 at WOA 10/23 (GK MAK), 60 there the next day (MAR) and 73 on 10/25 (JV, DK). The only **Greater Scaup** reported were at LA 11/29 (MD) and the only **Lesser Scaup** were 7 at WOA 10/25 (BBa). The only scoters seen in the period were 4 **White-winged Scoters** at the 528 Boat Launch 10/25 (BBa). **Buffleheads** were spotted 4 times: 7 at SGL95 on 11/10 (DH), 13 at SS 11/14 (MJ), 2 at WOA 11/19 (JG), and an exceptional total of 300+ at MSP 11/29 (GK, MAK). The only report of **Common Goldeneye** was 13 at LA 11/27 (MD). **Hooded Mergansers** were noted 13 times 10/31-11/27 at LA and SVW (m.ob.). The high count was 23 at WOA 11/15 (JV, MF). Two **Common Mergansers** were at LO 9/20 and 7 were at SVW 10/31 (DW). **Ruddy Ducks** made their regular appearance with 9 reports, all from LA starting with the high count of 24 at WOA 10/25 (JV).

**Ring-necked Pheasants** were reported six times, mostly from SGL95 where they are released by the PGC (BBa, GK, MAK). **Ruffed Grouse** remain scarce. This season there was one at Weckerly Road 8/8 (KK) and one at SGL95 10/31 (BBa). **Common Loon** was seen regularly at LA 10/25-11/27, frequently in groups of 2 or 3. A weather event 10/30 brought a nice fallout of 27 at the NS (DK, KD) and 29 on the SS (MV) which may or may not have been the same birds. A nice surprise was a **Red-throated Loon** at LA 11/29 (MD). **Pied-billed Grebe** was seen through the season, 15 times at LA and once at LO (m.ob.). **Horned Grebes** were not plentiful, being seen only 7 times, all at LA. The high count was 3 at WOA 11/19 (JG). **Double-crested Cormorant** is becoming more and more common at LA and at SGL95, reported close to 30 times this season. The most recent 10 years of eBird data shows a steady increase in their presence both in the fall and generally year round. This could be attributed to increased birder coverage, but anecdotal evidence from local fishermen also supports a true increase in cormorants in recent years. High counts included 8 at SGL95 on 8/29 (SG) and 8 at the Upper 528 Boat Launch 10/6 (GK, MAK). Forty-one **Turkey Vultures** over AK Steel in Butler 11/5 was an impressive Nov gathering (CW). **Osprey** was seen regularly until mid-October (m.ob.). Three known active nests in MSP, including the widely visited and photographed nest at McDanel's Boat Launch, fledged young this year. **Bald Eagles** were seen 22 times at 7 different locations with most reports of single birds. Most were seen at LA and SGL95 (m.ob.) but one was seen over Zelenople 10/23 (DK). Two **Northern Harriers** were reported, one at CT 10/27 (BBa) and one near Gallery 10/29 (RN). **Red-shouldered Hawks** were seen in four different locations: LA, SGL95, CT, and Zelenople (m.ob.). Single **Broad-winged Hawks** were seen at CT, Jennings, LA, SGL95, the last one reported was at McDanel's Boat Launch 10/6 (KSJ KM).

Secretive **Soras** only made two appearances: 2 were at SGL95 on 8/29 (SG), and one was there 9/17 (AB SG). **American Coot** continued the pattern of resting at LA in large numbers in the fall season. Beginning 10/7 and continuing through the season there were 14 reports of over 100 birds: 12 reports of over 100, 2 reports of over 200 birds and one report of 400, the last at SS 11/11 (JK, AK).

Shorebird migration produced 10 species, better than average given the limited habitat. Once again, LO led the way with seven of the 10 species. One **Semipalmated Plover** was at SS 10/11 (BBa). High counts for **Killdeer** included 25 at WR 9/1 (RN) and 54 at SVW 11/1 (DW). **Spotted Sandpiper** was reported through 10/19 (m.ob.). **Solitary Sandpipers** were seen 8 times at 4 locations 8/30-10/19 with a high count of 6 at LO 9/4 (MJ). Two **Greater Yellowlegs** arrived at SVW 10/18 (DW) and 2 were at WOA 10/23 (GK, MAK). Single **Lesser Yellowlegs** were seen at SGT 8/12 (RN), at SVW 8/29 and 10/10 (both DW), and 2 were at LO 10/11 (RN). **Single Semipalmated Sandpiper** and **Least Sandpiper** were at LO 8/30 and a lone **White-rumped Sandpiper** was there 10/11 (all RN). A single **Wilson's Snipe** was at SGT 9/16 (RN) and 2 were at SGL95 on 10/11 (GK MAK).

**Bonaparte's Gull** was seen 9 times beginning with an early bird at Watts Bay 8/18 (DD). The high count was 37 at SS 10/30, the same day that 27 Common Loons dropped in. A nice surprise was an immature **Laughing Gull** at WB 8/14 (MV) where it remained to be seen by many birders until 8/29. **Ring-billed Gulls** are a fixture at LA with a high count of 141 at SS 11/20 (JL). **Herring Gull** was only reported twice: one at WB 8/23 (MV) and one at MSP 9/6 (JD). The only terns reported were a lone **Caspian Tern** at WB 8/16 (MV) and a **Forster's Tern** there 8/22 (MJ).

**Black-billed Cuckoo** was seen only once, a single at Lancaster Township 8/17 (RN). **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was seen seven times, twice at WB 8/22 and 8/23 (MV), singles at SGL95 on 8/29 (SG) and 9/20 (BBa), one at Jennings 8/31 (RN), and two at WCN 9/13 (BBa). Five owl species were located this season. **Eastern Screech Owl** was heard at Seven Hills Road 8/22 (KB), 2 were at CT 10/30, and one was there 11/5 (BBa). A **Great Horned Owl** was heard at SVW 10/10 (DW) and one was at WCN 10/14 (BG, KSJ). A lone **Barred Owl** was at Park Road 9/26 (GK, MAK) and one was heard at Kiester Road 11/11 (OM). A **Long-eared Owl** was heard at CT 11/6 and a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was there 11/7 (both BBa). Probably under-reported, the only **Common Nighthawk** was at Butler

8/30 (RN). A notable count of 90 **Chimney Swift** at SS 10/4 was probably a low estimate according to the observer (AP). An immature **Red-headed Woodpecker** was at Jennings 9/26 (AG). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was seen in CT 8/5, 8/27 and 9/23 (BBa). This species breeds in the nw. corner of *Butler* so these birds could have been local breeders or early migrants. Singles were also seen at SGL95 on 10/11 (GK MAK) and at SS 10/30 (KD DK). Two **American Kestrels** were at CT 11/3 (BBa) and the only report of **Merlin** was of one at the 528 Boat Launch 10/6 (GK, MAK).

Only one **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was reported, seen at McDanels Boat Launch 8/26 (GK, MAK). Three reports of **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, all singletons, included one from McDanels 8/26 (GK, MAK), one at Jennings 8/31, and one at Lancaster Twp. 9/16 (both RN). The last **Willow Flycatcher** lingered at SGT until 9/1 (RN). **Philadelphia Vireo** was noted four times: one at MSP 9/6 (JD), one at CT 9/20 (BBa), one at Jennings 9/22 (RN) and one at SGT 10/4 (BBa). **Common Raven** was listed as only a probable breeder in *Butler* during the second BBA, but increased sightings offer the hope of confirmation. One raven was at SGL95 on 8/29 (SG), 2 were there 9/20 (BBa), 6 were there 10/11 (GK, MAK), and a single was seen 10/31. Other sightings include single ravens at NS 8/29 (MVT) and at CT 9/12 (BBa). Two **Bank Swallows** were seen at Lost Cove 8/17 (LG) and one was at LO 8/30 (RN).

**Winter Wren** began appearing in Oct with two at Kiester Rd. 10/12 (OM), one at SGT 10/12 (AB), one at SVW 10/18 (DW), and one at SGT 10/31 (MD, PL). A **Veery** was noted at CT 9/2 (BBa) and one **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was at SGL95 on 9/21 (RN). **Swainson's Thrush** was reported 13 times 9/8-10/6 around MSP and 5 other sites in the county. Four **Hermit Thrushes** were reported: one at CT 9/10 (BBa), one at the 528 Boat Launch 10/6 (GK, MAK), one at WCN 10/14 (BG, KSJ), and one at the MSP bike trail 10/25 (TR). A notable count of 170 **Cedar Waxwing** was tallied at NS 10/30 (DK, KD).

Twenty-six species of warbler were reported, compared to 31 in the spring. Most warblers were gone by the second week of Oct but mild temperatures including high 60s in the first week of Nov apparently encouraged a very hardy **Blue-winged Warbler** to remain at SGT where it was found 11/22 (KSJ). The surprising bird would remain into December. Other notable reports included a **Golden-winged Warbler** at Jennings 8/31 and a **Connecticut Warbler** there 9/22 (both RN). A single **Mourning Warbler** was seen at McDanels Boat Launch 8/26-27 (GK MAK) and one was at Glade Run Lake 9/6 (RN). "Western" **Palm Warbler** was noted at McDanels Boat Launch 9/26 (GK MAK), at SGT 10/4 (BBa) and one was seen at SGT 10/7 (BBa). A nice tally of 48 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** was made at the Upper 528 Boat Launch 10/6 (GK, MAK). Single **Canada Warblers** were noted at SGL95 on 8/29 (SG) and at GRL 9/4 (RN). Four sightings **Wilson's Warbler** were reported: singletons at McDanels Boat Launch 8/26, 8/27, and 9/8 (GK, MAK) and one at Swamp Road 8/31 (RN).

**American Tree Sparrows** normally appear in *Butler* at the end of Oct but the only reports were 2 at CT 11/20 (BBa) and a nice total of 11 at SS 11/27 (TR). Late **Chipping Sparrows** were at Zelienople 10/26 and 10/28 (DK) and 3 **Field Sparrows** lingered at Jennings until 11/7 (BBa). One **Vesper Sparrow** was at MSP 9/6 (JD) and single **Savannah Sparrows** were at Glade Run Lake 9/4 and at Jennings 9/22 (both RN). **Fox Sparrows** were right on time but evidenced by only two reports: 2 at the MSP bike trail 10/25 (TR) and 4 at Upper 528 Boat Launch 10/25 (BBa). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** appeared at SGL95 with 2 savannahs 9/20 (BBa) and 3 were there 10/11 (GK, MAK). The first **White-throated Sparrows** were noted at McDanels Boat Launch 9/26 (GK MAK) and the first **White-crowned Sparrows** appeared the same place 10/6 (KSJ KM). A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** lingered at CT until 9/22 (BBa). Four **Bobolink** were noted at SGL95 on 8/29 (SG), 2 were at SS 8/29 (MVT), and 2 were at SGL95 on 9/20 (BBa). **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported three times: one at Kiester Road 10/19 (OM), 2 at CT 11/3 (BBa), and 5 at SGL95 on 11/29 (DY). **Pine Siskins** included 3 at the Upper 528 Boat Launch 10/25, 2 at WOA 10/31, and 3 at CT 11/3 (BBa).

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## Cambria County

Locations: Patton (PA), Prince Gallitzin St. Park (PG).

Waterfowl migration at PG was the worst in the 30 years that records have been kept. The weather was extremely mild, and most of the lake being open to hunting, were the likely factors. One large flock of **Tundra Swans** 11/17 was the only report (DG). With the exception of a few small flocks of **Buffleheads** and **Ring-necked Ducks**, ducks were rare. A lone **Osprey** was still present at PG 11/2 (DG). It was a good fall for **Northern Harriers** as up to a dozen were seen in the PA and PG areas (DG). The only shorebird of note was a single **Willet** at PG 8/15 (DG). About 50 **Bonaparte's gulls** were at PG 10/17 (DG). Three **Caspian Terns** were at PG 9/17 (DG). A single **Common Nighthawk** was at PA 9/2 (DG).

Two **Marsh Wrens** were at PG in Oct (DG). A possible late date for **Barn Swallows** was established at PG 10/14 when a small number was among a large flock of **Tree Swallows** (DG). A late **Gray Catbird** was at PA 10/17 (DG). Two late sightings of **Wood Thrush** were made at PA 10/6 (DG). A single **Snow Bunting** was at PG on 11/9 (DG). Warbler migration was slow with sightings made over the whole month of September. A good number of birds including **Canada** and **Black-throated Blue Warbler** were at PG 9/13 (DG, JS). Six **Rusty Blackbirds** were at PG 10/11 (DG).

ADDENDUM: A single **Franklin's Gull** was at PG 7/27/2016 (RH).

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## Cameron County

No compiler.

## Carbon County

No compiler.

## Centre County

Locations: PSU Arboretum (ARBOR), Bald Eagle S.P. (BESP), Black Moshannon S.P. (BMSP), Colyer L. (COL), Governor Tom Ridge Wetland Preserve (GTRWP), Jo Hayes Vista (JHV), PennDOT remediation ponds on Rte. 220 west of Julian (JUL), Millbrook Marsh Nature Center (MMNC), Penn-Roosevelt S.P. (PRSP), Scotia Barrens and Pond (SCO), Toftrees pond and game lands (TOF).

Information for this report was obtained primarily from the State College Bird Club listserv and eBird with background and status information from *Birds of Central Pennsylvania* by Nick Bolgiano and Greg Grove, 2010, Stone Mountain Publishing, State College, PA (B&G, 2010).

The following uncommon or rare species were reported in five or more locations and will not be discussed further in this report: **Great Egret** (rare), **Green Heron**, **Black Vulture**, **Osprey**, **Northern Harrier**, **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, **Bald Eagle**, **Spotted Sandpiper**, **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Common Nighthawk**, **Belted Kingfisher**, **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, **Merlin**, **Peregrine Falcon**, **Least Flycatcher**, **Great Crested Flycatcher**, **Eastern Kingbird**, **Warbling Vireo** (rare), **Philadelphia Vireo**, **Common Raven**, **Horned Lark**, **Cliff Swallow**, **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, **Brown Creeper**, **Winter Wren**, **Veery**, **Swainson's Thrush**, **Hermit Thrush**, **Ovenbird**, **Worm-eating Warbler**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, **Tennessee Warbler**, **Mourning Warbler** (rare), **Hooded Warbler**, **Cape May Warbler**, **Northern Parula**, **Magnolia Warbler**, **Bay-breasted Warbler**, **Blackburnian Warbler**, **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, **Palm Warbler**, **Canada Warbler**, **Wilson's Warbler**, **Fox Sparrow**, **White-crowned Sparrow**, **Savannah Sparrow**, **Lincoln's Sparrow**, **Swamp Sparrow**, **Eastern Meadowlark**, **Rusty Blackbird**, **Purple Finch**.

A rare migrating **Snow Goose** was heard in State College 10/31 (KE). Up to 8 **Gadwall** were at the Duck Pond 10/24-11/30 (CB, et al.), and up to 7 were at BESP 10/25-11/20 (JV, et al.). Five were at BMSP v10/29 (NiB). A **Blue-winged Teal** was at Penn's Cave 9/26 (DeH). One to 4 **Northern Pintails** were at the Duck Pond 11/1-30 (JaC, et al.), and a single bird was at BESP 11/9 (JC). Two **Redheads** were spotted at BESP, one on 9/21 (JV) and another on 11/21 (RH). Another was present 10/15-11/29 at the Duck Pond (JoL, et al.). A single **Long-tailed Duck** was noted 10/25 at BESP (JV, BEeTT), while another was present there 11/15 (CE). On the same date, a single bird was also observed from the Howard park boat ramp; this may have been the same bird as was reported at BESP (CE). As many as 9 **Common Goldeneyes** were noted at BESP 11/14 (JV, BrS, AIC), and up to 5 **Red-breasted Mergansers** were there 11/14 (JV, AL, JoL).

**Red-throated Loons** are rare during migration, but one was at BESP 11/10-28 (JV, et al.). A few **Horned Grebes** were also reported. Seven were seen 9/6 at BMSP (JuP), one to 3 were noted 10/25-11/28 at BESP (JV, et al.). Two representatives of another rare species, **Red-necked Grebe**, were identified 10/10 at BESP (AC).

A trio of **Golden Eagles** were reported, one each at JHV 10/2 (CW, et al.), MMNC 10/2 (JD), and BMSP 10/29 (NiB). A single rare **Northern Goshawk** flew by BESP 11/13 (JC). A number of **Red-shouldered Hawks** were spotted, including 3 at BMSP 8/30 (NiB). The species was also reported 9/23 at PRSP (AG). Single birds were observed on multiple occasions 9/25-11/25 at BESP (BC, et al.), and one was at COL 10/4 (CE, KE). As many hawks moved south out of the area, **Rough-legged Hawks** began to slowly move in. One was reported 10/17 at GTRWP (JuP), and 2 light morph were spotted on I-99 near the Rockview SCI (JL), and 3 were at Woodward Gap 11/29 (JD). A **Sora** was heard at COL 8/24-10/10 (BrS, et al.), and 3 rare **Sandhill Cranes** were at BESP 11/27 (AL, JoL).

Two rare **American Golden-Plovers** were reported 9/10: one on Dogtown Rd. (CE, KE) and the other at COL (JV). **Semipalmated Plovers** were also present, with one on Old Gatesburg Rd. 9/6 (CE) and another on Dogtown Rd. 9/10 (AR). A single **Greater Yellowlegs** and 2 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were on Old Gatesburg Rd. 10/2 (CE). Another Lesser was at SCO 9/26 (MaB). A couple rare **Sanderlings** had close encounters with area birders 8/29-30 at BESP (JD, JV, CE). A **Least Sandpiper** was at PRSP 8/12 (NiB), and half a dozen were located along Old Gatesburg Rd. 8/20 (CE, KE). One **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was identified PRSP 8/12 (NiB), and up to 6 were present 8/20-9/10 on Old Gatesburg Rd. (CE, KE). A single bird was also found at BESP 8/30 (CE). Two **Wilson's Snipes** were noted: one at COL 10/8 (CE, KE) and one at BESP 10/10 (JV).

A few uncommon or rare gulls and terns were observed at BESP. Up to 25 **Bonaparte's Gulls** were noted 11/14 (BrS, AIC, JV), and a single **Herring Gull** was present 11/15-27 (AIM, AL, JoL). Three **Caspian Terns** were observed 9/19 and a rare **Black Tern** was identified 8/27 (both BrS). A rare **Common Tern** was encountered 9/13 (BC).

A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at SCO 8/16-18 (JV), and a late migrant was at BESP 10/11 (NB). A few owls were reported, including a rare **Barn Owl** in Spring Mills 9/14 (JV). **Barred Owls** were also present, with one at BMSP 9/23 (AG) and another off TR 3025 on 10/14 (MN). A single **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard at SCO 11/15 (BC). The only woodpecker of note was a **Red-headed Woodpecker** at BESP 11/4 (BC).

A few rare **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were spotted: one at SCO 8/31-9/27 (JV, et al.) and one at Bear Meadows 9/4 (RD). **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were also present. One was reported at each of the following locations: 8/25-9/28 at SCO (BC, et al.), 9/2 at Lederer Park (CE), 9/3 at MMNC, and 9/4 at Musser Gap (both JV). Three **Acadian Flycatchers** were identified 9/12 in the Thickhead Wild Area of Rothrock SF (NiB). One made an appearance in State college 8/16 (CE), and one was present 8/23 (JD) and 9/13 (DB) at SCO. A single bird was found 8/27 near Monument (KE). One **Alder Flycatcher** was at BESP 9/16 (BC). **Willow Flycatcher** was at MMNC 8/2 and 9/5 (both JD). Another bird was at COL 9/2 (JV), up to 3 were at BESP 8/24-9/26 (BC, AuC), and one was at JUL 9/6 (NB).

**Northern Shrikes** were once again reported at BESP. At least one was observed 10/31-11/27 (JV, et al.), and 2 were observed at the same time 11/21 (BS). BESP also played host to a single **White-eyed Vireo** 10/18-22 (JC, BS). A single **Yellow-throated Vireo** was at BMSP 8/2 (JD). One or 2 were reported 8/22-9/13 at SCO (JV, et al.). **Fish Crows** continue to be fairly common around State College, but they have been reported in other areas as well. One was noted 8/8 at Fisherman's Paradise (AIM). Up to 3 were present 8/9-10/1 at BESP (BC, AuC, JuP), and 5 were spotted there 11/1 (L&JC). All **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** observations were made 8/8, when 2 were spotted at BMSP (M&LJ), and 2 others were along Beaver Rd. (AC). A single **Purple Martin** remained at BESP 8/23 (DeG, Anon), and a **Bank Swallow** was at Muddy Paws Marsh 8/22 (JuP).

A bumper crop of 3 rare migrating **Marsh Wrens** were at COL 10/4 (JV). Single birds are more typically encountered, like the one at Muddy Paws Marsh 11/8 (JG). **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were noted at two private locations in State College 9/11-12 (JV, CE). One was also spotted 9/20 in the Thickhead Wild Area of Rothrock SF (NiB), and 2 were present 9/28 at SCO (JV). Fifteen **American Pipits** were at Rock Springs 10/31 (BC), and up to 24 rare **Snow Buntings** were at BESP 10/25-11/28 (BEeTT, et al.).

Twenty-nine species of warbler were observed, of which six were common to abundant. Of the remainder, twenty were uncommon, and three are rare fall migrants. Of those, fifteen uncommon species and one rare species were present in five or more locations and are included in the list at the beginning of this report. A few rare migrating **Northern Waterthrushes** were spotted, with one each noted at Walnut Springs Park 8/8 (MC), MMNC 8/31 (JV) and 9/22 (AC), and 9/9 TOF (JV). A **Golden-winged Warbler** was spotted at BMSP 8/2 (JD), and another was at SCO 9/7 (BrS, AIC). The last report was at Stan Yoder Memorial Preserve, where a single bird was noted

9/22 (AIM). A few **Blue-winged Warblers** were also spotted. Lederer Park hosted one 8/27 (CE), and one or 2 were present 8/29-9/20 at SCO (JV, et al.). One was at ARBOR 9/12 (MB, RD). A few rare **Connecticut Warblers** were located: one at SCO 8/25-9/26 (BC, et al.), and another at Chicory Lane Farm 9/27 (JG). Although common during spring and summer, **Yellow Warbler** is an early fall migrant... but seldom reported then (B&G, 2010). Nonetheless, a few crossed paths with area birders. One was located 8/1 at Gregg (JG). Two were spotted 8/8: one in Bellefonte (BC, AuC), and one at Walnut Springs Park (MC). Two were reported 8/9 at MMNC (AIM). Up to 8 **Pine Warblers** were present at BESP 8/17-25 (BEeTT, et al.). As many as 6 were at SCO 8/18-10/8 (JV, et al.), 4 were at BMSP 8/30 (NiB), and another was there 10/11 (JD). A single **Prairie Warbler** was at SCO 8/28-9/21 (JV, MR); the species was also identified 9/6 at BESP (BC, AuC).

Three **Grasshopper Sparrows** and a **Henslow's Sparrow** were at SGL 100 on 8/2 (German Settlement Grasslands) (RyD). A few rare **Nelson's Sparrows** also made appearances in *Centre*, with one reported at the Haugh Family Preserve 10/2 (JV), and another at COL 10/4-10 (KE, et al.). **Vesper Sparrows** included one or 2 at Whitehall Farms 8/16-23 (JV, JD), and 2 more along Tusseyville/Williams Rd. 9/29-10/3 (JV).

*Centre's* first **Western Tanager** appeared at a feeder on Walnut Grove Dr. 11/25 and was admired by many through the end of the month and beyond (D&DS, et al.). See the separate article in this issue that was authored by the homeowner graciously who hosted both the bird and the many birders who came to see it.

Four **Bobolinks** in beautiful fall plumage were admired on Whitehall Rd. 8/23 (JD). **Pine Siskins** began moving into the area in mid-Oct. with the first 3 spotted 10/17 in Eagleville (WY). Eight more were counted 10/23 at SCO (CE), 2 were observed 11/20 at Grays Woods-Marywood (DK), and 4 were found 11/28 at BESP (AK).

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### Chester County

Locations: Bucktoe Creek Preserve (BCP), Chambers Lake (CL), Exton Park (EP), Coatesville Reservoir (CORES), Longwood Gardens (LWG), Marsh Creek State Park (MCSP), Octorara Reservoir (OCTRES), Rushton Farm Banding Station (RFBS), Struble Lake (SL).

Weather was marked with some decided contrasts, and offered few of the anticipated cold fronts but rather some unexpected patterns that seemed never-ending. A fairly unremarkable summer developed into a fall that featured a draught, and the lack of strong cold fronts resulted in a fairly slow fall birding season. There were a handful of days where migration's bounty fulfilled birders expectations, but mostly, it was relatively unremarkable. Some of the seasonal highlights featured shorebirds, including a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** and an **Upland Sandpiper**. A stand-out of the late fall was an adult male **Rufous Hummingbird** that visited a feeder in Elverson for five days in November.

Annually occurring in Chester, but still rare in Pennsylvania, a pair of **Greater White-fronted Geese** was discovered 10/29 at CORES, historically a good location to find them (HM). A few days later, 11/1, the number of White-fronts increased to 4 among the few thousand **Canada Geese** congregating at OCTRES (EF, SF, m.ob.). A **Northern Pintail** with **Green-winged Teal** at CL 9/5 (RR) were the first detectable evidence of duck migration in early fall. A handsome drake **Eurasian Green-winged**

**Teal** was found 11/24 at the Eagleview Pond (RR), a spot that hosted what is presumed the same wintering individual for three seasons. A rare and welcomed fall visitor was a hen **Black Scoter** at MCSP 11/18 (HM, m.ob.). The only **Long-tailed Duck** appeared in the final moments of the period, at SL 11/29 (RR). On this same day and location, a **Common Goldeneye** and **Red-breasted Merganser** were also observed, and were the only records of those species for the season (RR). All three of the previously mentioned species are typically more common in *Chester* in spring migration.

The rare and irregular **Red-throated Loon** was noted at the lake at MCSP 11/18-19 (JMcn, m.ob.). A pair of **Red-necked Grebes** took up residence on CL 10/19-11/3 (RR, m.ob.), and another could be found at MCSP 11/8-11/21 (HM, m.ob.). This species is also a rare, irregular visitor to the county. Recent years have yielded more sightings, however, presumably due to extreme weather patterns during winter months.

A different and interesting location for **Little Blue Heron** was the Cassatt Preserve of the Upper Main Line YMCA in Berwyn. The heron, the first for the property, was first found 9/8 and continued there through 10/3 (BR, m.ob.). Little Blue Herons are uncommon but annual in fall migration, and typically immature birds appear here. There were more sightings of **Black-crowned Night-Herons** around the county this fall than other recent years. While this species is not known to nest in the county, it is suspected due to some intriguing recent sightings in summer. This fall, records included one at CL 8/8-13 (RR), 2 at EP 8/16, singles at OCTRES 8/23 and 8/30 (PM, JS), one at LWG 9/11 (CM, JF), and one at SL 9/19 (JM).

A late **Osprey** lingered around MCSP until 11/30 (m.ob.). Osprey numbers tend to taper-off after the beginning of Nov., so this late date is notable, but not unprecedented. A reported total of 8 **Golden Eagles** were spotted in migration over the hawkwatch at BCP this fall (LL). A pair of **Virginia Rails** was heard grunting on the private Great Marsh Property 9/20 (MC), the only observation of this species this season.

The summer push of southbound shorebirds did not yield much due to lack of suitable foraging habitat. However, the drought conditions that set in during Sep-Oct provided some excellent habitat, especially at CL where water levels dropped precipitously and offered a fantastic stopover point for a wide array of shorebirds. Rare and irregular in fall, an **Upland Sandpiper** was heard calling through a nocturnal listening microphone from a rooftop in Unionville 9/13 (KN). Up to two **Stilt Sandpipers** took advantage of the feeding grounds at CL 9/13-10/10 (RR, m.ob.). A **Dunlin** was a good find at CL 10/22-25 (RR, m.ob.). Two **White-rumped Sandpipers** joined the flock at CL 10/24-11/8 (RR, AS, m.ob.). A highlight of the season was a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** foraging among the rocky, exposed island of mud and vegetation at CL 9/13 (RR). It represented the only known documented occurrence of this species in the county. Regularly found *Calidris* during Sep-Nov at CL were: **Least Sandpipers**, **Pectoral Sandpipers**, and **Semipalmated Sandpipers** (m.ob.). A **Short-billed Dowitcher** 9/21-22 (GT, NP) was also among the shorebirds stars at CL this fall.

**Bonaparte's Gulls** were sporadic 11/9-28 (m.ob.). A high count was of 3 at SL 11/28 (EH). There were two reports of **Laughing Gulls** through the period. This species is irregular, and considered rare here. While manning the skies at the BCP Hawkwatch, 4 were spotted flying over 9/7 (LL). Another 3 were discovered in the pile of gulls feeding at the SECCRA landfill 11/21 (BQ), when birders were scouring the county for possible Franklin's Gulls after the regional fallout of that species. *Chester* had no confirmed records of Franklin's during the event despite these searches.

A late nesting **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** seen feeding young at RFBS 9/8-17 (DM, m.ob.). A lingering Yellow-billed Cuckoo was photographed at EP 10/14 (PG). There were scattered reports of the less commonly found **Black-billed Cuckoo** 8/12-9/19 (m.ob.). A pair of **Barn Owls** continued in an undisclosed location due to captivity and species sensitivity (KF). The RFBS had their lowest yield of captured and banded **Northern Saw-whet Owls** in their six-year history. This year's count was 20 individuals. The low number was comparable to other Saw-whet banding stations in the eastern region (DM). The only other report was of one that responded to an audio lure during an owl prowl at BCP 11/22 (HM). **Common Nighthawk** migration was considered light this fall compared to other recent years. That said, the species was seen in handfals through 10/12 (a later date than typical) when 16 were observed in Chadds Ford (HD).

One of the season's highlights was an adult male **Rufous Hummingbird** that appeared at a feeder in Elverson 11/12-17 (RC) and was banded 11/13 (NP). This bird was a delight to the property owner and many local birders who enjoyed seeing this handsome visitor from the west. **Red-headed Woodpecker** is annual in fall, but uncommon to rare. Two (one adult, one immature) visiting a feeder near French Creek S.P. were welcomed visitors 8/21-30 (PW). Other reports came from LWG (m.ob.) and Rushton Farm Preserve 10/14 (RK).

Two **Olive-sided Flycatchers** hawking insects were a nice surprise during a birdwalk at Rushton Farm Preserve 9/16. At least one of the 2 continued there through 9/19 (BQ, m.ob.). There were multiple reports of

**Yellow-bellied Flycatchers**, a rare but regular fall migrant, from 8/28-9/23.

A nor'easter 10/3 brought in a few late swallows to MCSP. A very late **Bank Swallow** and an equally late **Barn Swallow** were among a few hundred **Tree Swallows** swarming the lake in search of insects. The Bank Swallow was seen again 10/4. Tree Swallows declined rapidly thereafter.

This was not an irruption season for **Black-capped Chickadees** or **Red-breasted Nuthatches**. There were no records of the former, and reports of the latter were scarce, and came from Loch Nairn 9/24 (JS), 2 in Downingtown 11/2 and 11/11 (HM), and Elverson 11/15 (BQ, CH, RC).

An unlikely location for **Marsh Wren** was a small retention area at Goddard Park 9/6-16 (BH). Other reports of this uncommon fall migrant came from the Great Marsh private property 9/20 (MC), and MCSP 9/25 (PG, SS, NF) and 10/4 (HM). A very late **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was found at MCSP 11/16 (SS, NF) among a small feeding flock of Tufted Titmice, Carolina Chickadees, and both kinglet species. This individual continued there through the end of the reporting period (m.ob.). This species is infrequently encountered after the third week of Oct anywhere in Pennsylvania. A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was banded at RFBS 9/23 (DM). This species is rarely encountered in part due to its quiet nature in fall, but is presumed to be a regular migrant. Another was in Kennett Square 10/5 (JS).

The fall warbler migration was uneventful and lacking in big fallout days. This was mostly attributed to the weather patterns, which brought few good cold fronts. An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at EP 10/12 (NP). A total of 6 **Connecticut Warblers** were banded at RFBS 9/15-10/1 (DM). Other Connecticut Warblers found were 9/10 in Chadds Ford (HD), one at Great Marsh property 9/20 (MC), and another at Warwick CP 10/12 (SS, NF). An exciting capture at a mist-net setup at BCP was a **Mourning Warbler** 8/12 (IS, SJ). Another Mourning Warbler was found at MCSP 8/28 (HM). There were more **Cape May Warbler** encounters, which began 8/24 and continued through 10/10, with a high count of at least 8 at MCSP 9/21 (m.ob.). MCSP was the most reliable location to find this species, specifically in the parking lot in the main entrance area.

The sparrow highlight of the season was a hatch-year **Clay-colored Sparrow** banded at RFBS 10/15. This rare and irregular sparrow continued there through 10/20 (DM). Only one **Vesper Sparrow** was reported this fall, which is not too surprising since this species has been declining in *Chester* in the past several decades. The single Vesper this season was at Kirkwood Preserve 10/21 (NP). A late **Blue Grosbeak** was reported from BCP 10/31 (KN). Reports of this species, which breeds at this location, trickled through mid-Oct. (m.ob.). Single **Dickcissels** were detected on nocturnal migration in Unionville 10/8 and 10/10 (KN). This is a presumed low-density breeder in the county, but is only occasionally detected in migration.

Birders had good opportunity to find **Rusty Blackbirds** in autumn, especially if they paid a visit to CL 10/5-11/5 (RR, m.ob.). Up to 6 were seen there 10/21 (RR, DL). Other reports came from EP 10/23-11/19 (m.ob.), Stroud Preserve 11/4 (RR, DL), and MCSP 11/21 (EC).

Winter finches were fairly light this season. Numbers of **Purple Finches** were about average for the season. Flocks of up to 4 were reported, but the bulk of reports were of singles (m.ob.). After a booming winter and spring season for **Pine Siskins**, fall reports were markedly light. First encountered 10/24, a trickle of reports continued through the end of the season (m.ob.).

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#### **Clarion County**

Locations: Curlsville (CV), Mt. Zion/Piney Tract/SGL 330 (MZ), Kahle Lake (KL).

**Blue-winged Teal** are seen less than regularly in migration in *Clarion*. Two were on Redbank Creek in New Bethlehem 9/10 (J&AK), during their

typical migration period. At KL, a female **Surf Scoter** was first seen 11/14 (GE, JS), again 11/16 (RN, CW), and remained through the rest of the season. At the same location, a less common **Black Scoter** joined the Surf 11/22, and continued through the end of the season as well (GE, JS).

**Northern Harriers** utilize the many grasslands in southern *Clarion* and their numbers vary from year to year. This season there were reports from several areas. At CV strips site, 2 were present 8/16 (GK, MAK), and one was at MZ 10/10 (RK). Birds remained through the mild fall season with 3 on Rankin Rd near CV 11/11 (MM, CW) and one bird at the same location 11/25 (CW). Two individuals were noted near Longpoint outside of Rimersburg 11/24 (MM), and 2 were near KL 11/30 (MM). **Bald Eagles** have been more frequently reported over the past several years, and this season was no exception. With improvements in the trail systems along the major waterways in the county, this will likely continue as more people have access to appropriate eagle habitat. Along the Redbank Valley Trail on the southern *Clarion* border, sightings were reported in several areas 9/10-11/11 (J&AK, RH, MH, FM).

Shorebirds continue to be one of the least reported families of birds for *Clarion*. The only two species reported for fall were 3 **Solitary Sandpipers** on the edges of the Allegheny River at Foxburg 8/8 (MM, CW) and 2 **Spotted Sandpipers** along Redbank Creek in New Bethlehem 8/20 (MM).

**Short-eared Owls** were first noted back in their usual location on Rankin Rd. near CV 11/2 when 3 birds were present at dusk (CW). One (only) was noted in this same location 11/24, also at dusk (DD, CW). One of the most interesting reports for the season was that of a **Merlin** at MZ 8/1 and again in the same location 8/8 (MW). On this latter date, a single bird was also seen at Foxburg along the Allegheny River (MM, CW). These early dates perhaps indicate this species requires more effort to locate as a possible breeder in the county, given excellent habitat available here and the recent documented expansion of its breeding range in Pennsylvania.

At SGL 63 near Shippensburg, 2 **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were seen 9/13 (MM, RN, CW), and 2 were also seen at a property near CV 9/18 (CW). This species is a fairly regularly reported migrant in fall but not often with two individuals present. An area that has been recently improved in *Clarion* is the Redbank Valley Trail at Lawsonham near Rimersburg all the way to the Allegheny River at Redbank. This area should prove to be an outstanding birding site. A walk along here late in the season 11/27 produced up 2 lingering **Winter Wrens**, one of which was singing along a steep ravine (CW). There are pockets of promising habitat here that may provide breeding habitat for this species.

The third week of September is usually the prime time to listen for migrating thrushes in the pre-dawn hours. This year had several days which provided good weather and listening opportunities. Near CV on the morning of 9/18 before dawn, approximately 300 calls were heard over 20 minutes, mostly **Swainson's Thrush**, but also **Gray-cheeked Thrush** and **Wood Thrush** (CW). At the same location 9/21, a larger flight was heard over a 35 minute period that totaled 1000-1100 calls (CW). This flight was heavily made up of Swainson's, but increasing numbers of Gray-cheeked were heard as well as Wood Thrush.

Several warblers deserve mention, the first of these being **Cape May Warbler**. At a property near CV, up to 6 birds were seen daily between 9/5-9/12 (CW). At this same location, 3 **Bay-breasted Warbler** were present 9/12, and 5 birds were seen at SGL 63 as well. This species is not usually reported in these numbers in fall, but this was a day following a heavy nocturnal flight (noted on radar) until changing weather conditions overnight likely forced down many birds, resulting in a small fallout with many species of passerines reported. At SGL 63 on this same day 3 **Blackpoll Warblers** were seen (CW), as well as a **Connecticut Warbler** (MW), not a species that is reported yearly. A single **Wilson's Warbler** was seen near CV 9/5 and 9/7 (CW).

Reports of **Rusty Blackbird** have decreased over the past ten years, and this season saw only one report: 2 birds near CV 10/4 along a small wooded stream (CW). **Purple Finches** continued to be regular at a location near Rimersburg where they have been nesting, and were reported from Aug through 11/7 with numbers of up to 8 birds (MM). Very unusual was a single female **Red Crossbill** found by a feeder watcher in Strattanville. The bird was first seen 11/29 at a sunflower feeder and remained through the end of the month, with excellent documentation photos taken (SH).

Observers: **Carole Winslow, 159 Moggey Rd, Sligo, PA 16255, (814) 745-3818, cjnal@windstream.net**, Donald DeWolf, Gary Edwards, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, Shari Hindman, John and Avis Keener, Mary Alice Koeneke, Glenn Koppel, Rob Krauss, Florence McGuire, Mark Moore, Richard Nugent, Jerry Stanley, Mike Weible.

**Clearfield County**  
No compiler.

## Clinton County

Locations: Central Mountain High School (CMHS), Woolrich (WR).

Several **Soras** were reported at the CMHS wetlands 9/12-13 (CCH). An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen on a snag in WR 8/18 (CCH). Some interesting warblers and a vireo passed through WR in migration during the period: a **Philadelphia Vireo** 9/12, a **Mourning Warbler** on 9/4, and an **Orange-crowned Warbler** on 9/24 (CCH). Obviously a result of the unusually late and lingering mild weather, a single **Pine Warbler** was reported in WR 11/30 (CCH). At least 2 **Lincoln's Sparrows** were observed at the CMHS wetlands 10/10-11 (m.ob.). Also there from 10/10 through at least 10/14 were up to 3 **Nelson's Sparrows** (m.ob.). A **Rusty Blackbird** was at the CMHS wetlands 10/11 (BC, WL).

Observers: **Wayne Laubscher, 749 E. Croak Hollow Road, Lock Haven, PA 17745, (570) 748-7511, wnlubscher@comcast.net**, Bill Chambers, Charles and Carol Hildebrand.

## Columbia County

No compiler.

## Crawford County

Locations: Conneaut Marsh-McMichael Road (MMR), Pymatuning-Causeway (PC), Pymatuning-Fish Hatchery (PFH), Pymatuning-Hartstown Project (PHP), Pymatuning-Miller Ponds (PMP), Pymatuning-Spillway (PSP), Tamarack Lake (TL), Woodcock Lake (WL).

The first half of the fall season was notable for a variety of unusual species of geese in *Crawford*. A single **Greater White-fronted Goose**, a relatively rare bird for *Crawford*, was found at PHP 9/27 (MJ). Two **Snow Geese** were observed in the Pymatuning area 10/31 (SC). A single **Brant**, an especially notable bird for *Crawford*, was observed at PHP 9/27 (MJ), at PHP 10/4 (RH, KP, TN, SC, EM, MB, MP), at PHP 10/5 (RN), and at PMP 10/7 (MV, MAK, GK). Two **Cackling Geese** were observed in the Pymatuning area 10/31 (SC).

Notable counts of 150 **Tundra Swan** were made at PSP 11/14 (BB) and 180 were observed at the Pymatuning Nature Center 11/14 (BB). A great count of 1453 **Wood Duck** was tallied at PHP 9/19 during the Blair Bridge Duck Count (AM). A nice count of 127 **Gadwall** was made at PFH 10/16 (MV). Three early **American Wigeons** were observed in the Pymatuning area 9/27 (MJ). A high count of 51 **American Wigeon** was made at PHP 10/5 (MV). A somewhat late **Blue-winged Teal** was at PFH 11/1 (RN). A nice count of 50 **Northern Shovelers** were observed at PFH 10/8 (RL, IF). An early **Northern Pintail** was at WL 8/31 (RL). A somewhat early **Redhead** was at PMP 10/16 (MV). Multiple sightings of **Ring-necked Duck** occurred in early October, including 4 at PHP 10/5 (MV, CN) and 2 at PHP 10/7 (MAK, GK). Also somewhat early was a single **Lesser Scaup** at PMP 10/16 (MV). A conservative estimate of 100 **Hooded Mergansers** were at PHP 11/1 (RN). **Common Mergansers** were found in good numbers this fall in *Crawford*. Good counts included 170 at PFH 10/21 (RL) and 128 at PFH 10/23 (BG). A nice tally of 75 **Red-breasted Mergansers** was made at PFH 11/10 (CN).

Two **Red-throated Loons** were at Pymatuning-Jamestown Campground 11/7 (JB). Expected numbers of **Common Loons** were observed this fall topped by 15 at PC 10/31 (RL, IF). **Horned Grebes** were found in small numbers. Observations included a single at Pymatuning-Nature Center 9/13 (RL, IF), 3 at Pymatuning-Jamestown Campground 10/18 (RL, IF), 2 at PC 11/21 (SC), and one at WL 11/22 (TN). **Double-crested Cormorants** moved through in expected numbers this fall. A good count of 248 was made in the Pymatuning area 10/8 (RL, IF).

**Great Egrets** are an expected but still notable bird in *Crawford* in the fall. Nice counts included 8 at PFH 8/19 (DK, RN) and 8 at PFH 9/7 (RL). Several lingered beyond expected departure dates, including singles in the Pymatuning area 10/24 (RS), at PFH 11/1 (RN), and at PFH 11/3 (KSJ, KM, BG, DF). Five **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were at PFH during the Blair Bridge Duck Count 9/19 (AM). Single birds were seen at Pymatuning-Nature Center 8/7 (RL) and at PFH 10/31 (RL).

**Sharp-shinned Hawks** are expected in *Crawford* but still notable in the fall. All sightings were of a single individual: at WL 9/14 (TN, KP), Geneva Marsh 9/20 (RL), and State Game Lands 277 on 9/23 (BS). An early **Rough-legged Hawk** was found in the Pymatuning area 10/24 (RS).

Excellent counts of 6 **Virginia Rails** and 14 **Soras** were made at MMR 9/20 (RL). Good counts of **Common Gallinules** included 7 seen at Geneva Marsh 8/15 (RL) and 6 seen at Geneva Marsh 10/8 (RL). **Sandhill Crane** is

now an expected bird in *Crawford* in the fall, but were observed in higher than normal numbers in the Pymatuning area. These included observations of 67 in the Pymatuning area 10/30 (GM), a conservative count of 124 in the Pymatuning area 10/31 (SC), 45 on Shadeland Road 11/1 (CN), and 44 at PMP 11/15 (TN, KP). Two individuals were also observed at WL 9/20, a new location (RH, KP).

Some of the best sightings this fall in *Crawford* were of shorebirds. A single **Black-bellied Plover** was at PFH 8/12 (RH, TN, KP) and another was at WL 9/20 (RL). **American Golden-Plovers** included 2 at WL 9/5 (RL, IF), one at WL 9/11 (TN, KP) and 2 at Pymatuning-Wilson Road 10/5 (RN). A late **Solitary Sandpiper** was at Geneva Marsh 10/8 (RL, IF). A late **Greater Yellowlegs** was at the Pymatuning-Railroad Grade 11/25 (GK, MAK). A good count of 20 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at PC 10/21 (RL, IF). A single was at Pymatuning-Railroad Grade 11/25 with the Greater Yellowlegs, also late (GK, MAK). Three **Sanderlings**, a good bird for *Crawford*, were at WL 9/20 (RL, IF). Expected numbers of **Least Sandpiper** were observed during the fall season, with a high count of 30 at PMP 9/7 (RL). **White-rumped Sandpipers** were found on multiple occasions. Observations included one at WL 8/1 (RL), one at PMP 8/20 (KA), one bird at TL 9/7 (RL), 2 at PHP 10/5 (MV), and one at PC 10/21 (RL). **Baird's Sandpiper** was also observed on multiple occasions, including one at TL 8/7 (RH) and 8/18 (TN, KP), one at PMP 8/18 (RL, SC), 8/19 (DK, RN) and 8/20 (RH, MV), and one at WL 8/31 (RL). Good counts of **Pectoral Sandpiper** included 8 in the Pymatuning area 10/11 (RH, TN) and 10 at the PC 10/21 (RL, IF). A nice count of 100 **Dunlin** was made at the PC 10/21 (RL, IF). **Stilt Sandpipers** included one at PMP 8/18 (SC), 8/19 (RH) and 8/20 (KA), 4 at WL 9/11 (TN, KP), and one at TL 10/8 (RL). **Short-billed Dowitcher** were notably absent this fall season, with the only observation a single bird at PC 10/21 (RL, IF). Observations of **Long-billed Dowitcher**, a great bird for the county, included 3 at PC 10/15 (RL) and 2 at PHP 10/30 (GM). A great count of 26 **Wilson's Snipe** was made at PMP 8/20 (MV, RH). Sightings of **Wilson's Phalarope** included a one at PMP 9/20 (RL, IF) and 10/26 (RL). The highlight of the season was a single **Red-necked Phalarope** observed at PMP 8/18 (SC), 8/19 (KA, KP) and 8/20 (MV, RH).

Very rare for *Crawford*, a single immature **Great Black-backed Gull** was at the PSP 8/7 (RL). A **Common Tern** was at TL 8/12 (RL).

**Great Horned Owls** included one at TL 10/20 (KP), 2 in Meadville 10/26 (RH, KP), and one in Meadville 10/30 (RH). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl**, a good bird for the county, was observed in the Meadville area 11/26 (BB). A somewhat late **Common Nighthawk** was observed at Geneva Marsh 9/20 (RL, IF). **Red-headed Woodpecker** is expected, but is notable in some areas of *Crawford*. A good count of 4 was made at Pymatuning-Tuttle Beach, an increasingly reliable location for them (DK, RVN). **Merlins**, a notable bird that is occurring with increasing frequency, were observed on multiple occasions. Sightings included one in the Meadville area 8/19 (RH), 8/29 (RH), and 9/10 (AJ), one on Tower Road 9/18 (CN), and one in Linesville 10/8 (RL). A **Peregrine Falcon** was at PSP 11/21 (AW).

Uncommon here, a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at Erie National Wildlife Refuge 8/31 (RL). A single late **Eastern Phoebe** was found at the Pymatuning Nature Center 11/29 (SC, DF, ML, SM, KS, RS, KM). A late **Great Crested Flycatcher** was at Conneaut Marsh 9/21 (m.ob.), and a somewhat late **Eastern Kingbird** was at Geneva Marsh 9/13 (RL).

**Northern Shrikes**, an expected but still notable bird in *Crawford*, were observed in two locations. The first was found in the Erie National Wildlife Refuge-Seneca Division, where observations were made 11/4 (RS), 11/6 (RH, TN), 11/7 (RN), all early dates, as well as 11/14 (RS, SC) and 11/15 (RS). A second bird was found at Erie National Wildlife Refuge 11/8 (CN). **Philadelphia Vireos** were found in multiple locations 9/20: one at WL (RH, KP) and 2 at Conneaut Marsh (RL, IF). A very late **Red-eyed Vireo** at the Pymatuning Nature Center 11/29 was a totally unexpected find (SC, DF, ML, SM, KS, RS, KM). **Common Raven** sightings are notable in *Crawford*, particularly the western half of the county. Observations included one at WL 10/6 (TN), one at Pymatuning-Jamestown Campground 11/7 (JB), and one at PFH 11/29 (SC, DF, ML, SM, KS, RS, KM).

Sightings of **Winter Wren** included one at PMP 10/18 (SC) and one at the Meadville Greendale Cemetery Ravine 10/29 (TN, KP). A **Northern Mockingbird** was at the Pymatuning-Nature Center 8/7 (RL) and another was at WL 9/7 (RN, DK). A large mixed blackbird flock which contained an estimated 1000 **European Starlings** was seen in the Pymatuning area 10/30 (GM). **American Pipit** was observed in a few nice sized flocks this fall. Observations included 7 at PHP 10/4 (SC), 10 at Pymatuning-Wilson Road 10/4 (TN, KP) and 18 at Pymatuning-Teakettle Road 10/18 (CN). **Snow Buntings** included one at PSP 11/14 (BB), 2 at PC 11/14 (SG), a nice sized flock of 15 at PC 11/21 (SC), and one at PMP 11/21 (SC).

Observations of fall warblers were down this season both in numbers and variety. A single **Northern Waterthrush** was observed at PSP 8/29 (MV) and another was at the Meadville-Ernest Bike Trail 9/5 (KP).

Multiple early sightings of **Dark-eyed Junco** included a single bird

seen at Richmond Road 8/10 (RS), 3 birds seen at the Meadville-Greendale Cemetery 9/13 (TN, KP) and 5 birds seen at the Meadville-Greendale Cemetery (KP). The early date of these birds is notable, however at least some of these birds likely represent the small number that are year-long residents in the county rather than early migrants.

A count of 5485 **Red-winged Blackbirds** was made at Custards Marsh 8/18 as part of an early fall blackbird survey, a lower count than average (RL, IF). An estimate of 7000 birds were seen in the Pymatuning area as part of a large blackbird flock 10/30 (GM). **Rusty Blackbird** is an expected bird in the fall but were observed in below average numbers this year, with a high count of just 8 birds at Pymatuning-Teakettle Road 10/31 (SC). A good count of 2000 **Common Grackles** were among the mixed blackbird flock in the Pymatuning area 10/30 (GM).

Five **Purple Finches** were observed in Meadville 9/13 (KP) and 4 were at WL 9/27 (TN, KP). **Pine Siskins** included 12 at MMR 10/15 (RL) and one in Meadville 10/21 (RL).

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### Cumberland County

Locations: Camp Michaux (CM), Michaux State Forest (MSF), Mountain Road Marsh (MRM), Propagation Pond Area (PPA), Pine Grove Furnace State Park (PGFSP), State Game Lands 169 (SGL 169), State Game Land 230 (SGL 230).

August and September were hot and dry and provided very little in the way of shorebird habitat, since *Cumberland* is mostly dependent on water collecting in low lying fields to provide suitable habitat. Still, there were a few species that showed up at the ponds at Huntsdale and on Stoughstown Rd., which dried up appreciably. October and November remained warm but provided much more in the way of precipitation.

Waterfowl of interest were few. There was one **Greater White-fronted Goose** at Laughlin Mill, Newville 11/12 (VG, BF, LF, CC), the fourth known record for the county. There was also one **Greater Scaup** reported, notably at one of the ponds at the new Key Logistics Park on Rte. 233 south of Newville. These ponds provide new habitat not only for waterfowl but perhaps for shorebirds as well. The **Pied-billed Grebe** that has been a year round resident of the Big Spring has now been there for three years.

Shorebirds of interest included one quite early **White-rumped Sandpiper** at Stoughstown Pond 8/9 (VG). This species usually found until later in the season. Another was reported at the Propagation Ponds Area of SGL 169 on 8/30 (BF, LF), and still another at the MRM of SGL 169 on 9/3 (VG). A **Baird's Sandpiper** was at Stoughstown Rd. 9/19 (VG, et al.).

A **Long-eared Owl** was heard at King's Gap Environmental Center 11/23 (EG), a new location for the species.

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at a clear cut with many snags located next to the power line cut on Ridge Rd., MSF 8/29 (VG, AM, KK). Ridge Rd. has historically been a good location to find this species, though normally at a burn area about a mile east of this location. Perhaps this will be just as good if not a better location, at least for the next several years. One other was at the PPA of SGL 169 on 8/23 (BF, LF). One **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at the old Burn Area of Ridge Rd., MSF 9/4 (VG) and another at SGL 230 on 9/5 (AM, RK). A very late **Least Flycatcher** was reported at SGL 169 on 11/11 (VG, BO). Single **Philadelphia Vireos** were at CM 8/26 (VG), at PGFSP 9/5 (DD), at SGL 230 on 9/5 (RK, AM), and at Strome's Hollow 9/26 (VG), and 2 were at Elk Hill Road 9/11 (VG).

**Cliff Swallows** were not seen in large this period. Six reported in Newville 8/22 and 3 were at Cabin Road of SGL 169 on 9/6 (VG). The only report of **Bank Swallow** was 3 at PGFSP 9/6 (DD). A very late **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was seen at Huntsdale Hidden Pond 11/27 (VG). A **Marsh Wren** was heard at SGL 169 Mountain Road Marsh 8/31 (VG). The only **Swainson's Thrushes** reported were 2 at SGL 230 on 9/13 (RK, AM).

One **Lawrence's Warbler** was seen at the PPA of SGL 169 on 8/29 (VG, BO). This was the third or fourth report of this species in *Cumberland County* by Ramsay Koury and Cameron Rutt, there have been at least two other reported sightings of this hybrid with one of them being at SGL 169.

These two previous reports were both in May as was a third sighting at Lamb's Gap, but it was uncertain if the Lamb's Gap bird was in *Perry* or *Cumberland*. Lawrence's Warblers are of course the less common of the two Blue-winged / Golden-winged hybrids. A short, concise discussion of the genetics of this closely related pair can be found at the following link. <<https://braddockbaybirdobservatory.wordpress.com/2013/06/02/comparing-our-blue-winged-golden-winged-and-brewsters-warblers-warming-genetics-included/>>. The only other warblers of note was one **Orange-crowned Warbler** SGL 169 on 9/28 (VG) and one **Connecticut Warbler** at Cabin Road SGL 169 on 9/18 (VG).

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### Dauphin County

No compiler.

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### Delaware County

Locations: Crum Creek Reservoir, Crum Woods, Darlington Tract, Delaware River (DR), Earles Lake, Hildacy Farm Preserve, John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge (JHNWR), Newlin Grist Mill, Ridley Creek State Park (RCSP), Rose Tree Park Hawk Watch (RTPHW), Springton Reservoir (SR), Thornbury Township Trail, Wawa Preserve, The Willows (WILL)

*Delaware's* fall migration included 186 species and boasted multiple exceptional finds. This season was highlighted by the county's first fall record and fourth overall of **Anhinga**. Also, the **Gull-billed Tern** at JHNWR represented the *Delaware's* second ever record. Lastly, a **Northern Goshawk** was observed on the same day as a **Golden Eagle**, which made multiple appearances this season.

One **Snow Goose** was observed at JHNWR 10/11 (AG). Four **Cackling Geese** were photographed among a flock of Canada Geese at WILL 10/27 (KG). **Tundra Swans** were only observed from mid- to late Nov with the majority of sightings from DR. A high total of 96 were observed under the Commodore Barry Bridge 11/29 (AG). Also notable were the 2 birds flying over RTPHW 11/15 (CR, SJ, et al.). **Gadwall** were observed only in Nov, with 2 on SR 11/16 (DB, AB) and 2 on Earle's Lake 11/27 (MM). **Blue-winged Teal** found only at JHNWR with 4 on 8/19 (DH) and one 9/7 (MW). An unusual find in *Delaware*, one **American Black Duck x Mallard** was photographed at JHNWR among a group of Mallards 11/17 (BH). **Northern Pintail** were observed throughout the season, but the highest total was 30 at JHNWR 10/29 (DB). A casual visitor to the county, a female **Black Scoter** was observed among a flock of **Bufflehead** and **Ring-necked Duck** on SR 11/18 (DB, AB). An irregular winter visitor, one **Long-tailed Duck** was observed among **Ruddy Ducks** at SR 11/6 (AG).

**Wild Turkeys** were found only in Oct, which included 4 birds at JHNWR 10/1 (DO) and one at Hildacy Farm Preserve 10/7 (DB). **Red-throated Loons** were observed twice: one at SR 11/17 (DB, AB) and 3 flying south over RTPHW 10/4 (CP).

Undoubtedly the most exciting observation of the season was the **Anhinga** that spent the months of Aug, Sep, and Oct near JHNWR (m.ob.). First observed 8/23, this bird made almost daily appearances flying over both the *Delaware* and *Philadelphia* sides of JHNWR. There are three previous records for *Delaware*, all from the spring season. Herons were much in evidence at JHNWR in the month of Aug. A **Least Bittern** was observed in the rice fields at JHNWR 8/10 (DO). Fairly common in the county, a total of 2 **Snowy Egrets** were there 8/10-19 (DH, DO). A juvenile **Little Blue Heron** was observed 8/2 (AG, DO). The most exceptional heron for the season was the **Tricolored Heron** observed flying to its nightly roost from nearby *Philadelphia* into *Delaware* 8/10 (TF, AG).

The RTPHW had another successful season with a grand total of 3195 individual birds, down from the 2014 season total of 4636 individual birds. Although the individual number of birds was lower, the season was marked by two sightings of **Golden Eagle**, one immature 10/17 (HM, et al.) and another 10/22 (MM). A private residence in Swarthmore was treated to a sighting of an immature **Golden Eagle** with a group of **Turkey Vultures** and a **Northern Goshawk** on the same afternoon 11/8 (DE).

JHNWR was a major destination for shorebirds this season. A regular uncommon fall migrant, one **American Golden-Plover** was photographed as it flew in from nearby *Philadelphia* 9/13 (DO). A total of 4 **Semipalmated Plovers** were observed 8/10-29 (DE, AG, DH, DO). Three late **Lesser Yellowlegs** were found 11/1 (GA). A high total of 4 **Pectoral Sandpipers** were observed 8/2-19 (AG, DH). Up to 4 **Western Sandpipers** were

observed by kayak 8/19-29 (DE, AG, DH). An **American Woodcock** at the Thornbury Township Trail 9/6 (JM) was the only one found this season.

**Bonaparte's Gulls** were found only on the DR this season with a high total of 61 between 11/12-29 (AG). An exceptional find, two birders kayaking on Darby Creek at JHNWR observed 2 **Gull-billed Terns** 8/19-22 (DE, DH). The only previous record of this species in *Delaware* was a group of 3 seen flying over Darby Creek at JHNWR in August 1992.

An occasional migrant to *Delaware*, a **Red-headed Woodpecker** was observed in the Glenloch Neighborhood Development in the vicinity of Glen Riddle 9/22-10/14 (AG, KJ, SJ, NP).

Single **Least Flycatchers** were observed at Crum Woods 8/22 (DE) and WILL 9/4-9/8 (KG). Of the six vireo species observed this season, highlights included single **Yellow-throated Vireos** at RCSP 9/15-16 (AG, NK) and single **Philadelphia Vireos** in Edgemont 9/5 (NK), at Glen Providence Park 9/21 (ph. SG), and one late bird at the Darlington Tract 10/13 (AG). **Common Ravens** continued their presence in *Delaware* with single birds observed over RTPHW 9/17-10/6 and 2 flying over 10/16 (m.ob.). Another was heard at the Darlington Tract 11/29 (DE).

A high total of 10 **Bank Swallow** were at JHNWR 8/3-19 (RE, DH), and one was at Crum Creek Reservoir 8/3 (AG). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** at RCSP 11/23 (WK) was the only one of the season. **Swainson's Thrushes** were represented by singles at Smedley Park 9/19 (TB) and at the Newlin Grist Mill 10/10 (JS). The only **American Pipit** was a flyover at RTPHW 10/23 (AG, et al.).

Birders in *Delaware* were treated to 25 different species of warbler. A **Blue-winged Warbler** was observed at Crum Woods 8/23 (DE). The only **Tennessee Warbler** this season was a single in Edgemont 9/5 (NK). A **Hooded Warbler** was observed at the Bridle Trail at RCSP 8/29 (DB, BL). A **Bay-breasted Warbler** was at the Thornbury Township Trail 9/6 (JM). Lastly a late **Wilson's Warbler** was at Wawa Preserve 10/15 (AG).

A species that once bred in the county, one immature **Blue Grosbeak** at the RTPHW 9/23 (HM, NP, et al.) was the only one reported in *Delaware* this season. Another former resident of *Delaware*, an **Eastern Meadowlark** was observed at RTPHW (AG et al.) and at Ellis Preserve (PT), both 10/23.

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### Elk County

Locations: Allegheny NF-Buzzard Swamp (BS), Allegheny NF-Little Drummer Trail (LDT), Allegheny NF-Loetta Recreation Area (LRA), Allegheny NF-Twin Lakes Recreation Area (TL), Clarion River at Belltown (CRB), East Branch Lake (EBL), Elk County Visitor's Center (EVCV), Jones Township (JT), Rasselas Marsh (RM), SGL 311-Winslow Hill (WH), West Creek Wetland Learning Center (WCW).

Waterfowl this season, other than **Canada Goose** and **Mallard**, were limited. Two **Wood Ducks** were at RM 8/17, and 3 were at JT 9/26 (BB). **American Black Ducks** were in good numbers at RM with 6 on 8/15 and 7 on 8/17 (BB). An impressive 25 **Common Mergansers** were at CRB 9/24 (DHo), and another was at EBL 10/29 (DHi). **Ruffed Grouse** was well represented throughout the season at JT with a maximum count of 6 on 10/29 (BB). A **Ruffed Grouse** was also at LDT 9/6 (BB). A **Common Loon** was at EBL 11/30 (BB). The only **Pied-billed Grebe** was at RM 10/29 (DHi). Single **Double-crested Cormorants** were at EBL 8/16-17, and again 9/5 (BB). **Great Blue Herons** were seen during the first half of the season at CRB, LDT, and TL (BB, DHo). Two **Green Herons** were present at LDT 8/23 (BB), and one was at BS 9/5 (TR).

**Turkey Vultures** remained until mid-October, when the last 2 were seen at St Marys Airport 10/11 (LS). The nesting **Ospreys** at EBL stayed until 9/6 (BB). One **Osprey** was seen at BS 9/5 as well (TR). Single **Northern Harriers** were at RM 8/17 (BB) and 10/29 (DHi). Two **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were at JT, one 9/26 and another 10/29 (BB). Only one **Cooper's Hawk** was reported, at JT 8/7 (BB). Single **Bald Eagles** were spotted at three locations this season, JT 8/14, CRB 9/24, and EBL 10/3 (BB, DHo). **Red-shouldered Hawks** were present at RM 8/17, JT 8/22, and LDT 9/24 (BB, AG). The last **Broad-winged Hawk** was at JT 9/7 (BB).

Due to the dry weather in August and September, water levels at EBL were lower which opened more mudflats which attracted good numbers of shorebirds. One **Semipalmated Plover** was at EBL 8/8 (BB). **Killdeer** were

at multiple locations throughout *Elk* during the season (m.ob.). **Spotted Sandpipers** were at EBL until 9/25, and the maximum count there was 5 on 8/14 (BB). One was also at TL 8/23 (BB). **Solitary Sandpipers** were fairly common through late August, with up to 3 at EBL 8/14-23 (BB). Two were at TL 8/23 (BB) as well. Two **Greater Yellowlegs** were at RM 8/15 (BB). Three **Least Sandpipers** were seen and heard at EBL 8/9 (BB). The only gull was a **Ring-billed Gull** at EBL 8/23 (BB).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were numerous at a number of locations (BB), but only one **Black-billed Cuckoo** was heard calling at TL 8/29 (BB). A **Great Horned Owl** was heard at JT 10/28 and again 11/29 (BB). Two **Barred Owls** were also heard calling at JT 8/16, a location where they are frequent (BB). A lone **Common Nighthawk** was at RM 8/17 (BB). The only **Chimney Swifts** were 4 at RM 8/15 (BB). On 8/9, a **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was observed drinking sap from an American Beech tree that had recently been tapped by a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**. Speaking of which, **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were widely reported up to 9/26, when the last one was at JT (BB). **American Kestrels** were at JT 8/24 and BS 9/5 (BB, TR). A surprising find was a **Merlin** at JT 10/29 (BB).

Numbers of flycatchers seemed to be fairly high this fall, with some unusual species that are not normally reported in *Elk*. An exciting find was an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at WCW 8/22 (BB). The only **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was one at ECVC 9/24 (AG). An amazing surprise was a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, which sang once, at JT 9/26 (BB). Uncommon in the county, a single **Acadian Flycatcher** was at TL 8/23 (BB). **Least Flycatchers** included one at RM 8/15 (BB) and WH 8/19 (JF), as well as 2 at RM 8/17 (BB). The last **Eastern Phoebe** was one at CRB 9/24 (DHo), and the highest count was 12 at RM 8/15 (BB). Single **Great Crested Flycatchers** were at two locations, SGL 25 on 8/22 and LDT 9/6 (BB). The only **Eastern Kingbird** report was a count of 8 at RM 8/15 (BB). **Blue-headed Vireos** were present up to 9/26 at JT (BB). A single **Warbling Vireo** was at RM 8/15 (BB). The last **Red-eyed Vireos** were 3 at LRA 9/24 (DHo). The top count for **Common Raven** was 6 at JT 8/17 (BB). One **Tree Swallow** was at JT 8/9 (BB). **Barn** and **Cliff Swallows** were common throughout August. The last remaining **Barn Swallows** were 2 JT 8/24, and the high count was 28 at RM 8/15 (BB). Six **Cliff Swallows** stayed until 8/17 at RM, and the high count was 15 at RM 8/15 (BB). Uncommon in *Elk*, **Tufted Titmouse** was reported from two locations: 2 at RM 8/15 and 3 there 8/17 (BB), and 2 at WCW 8/22 (BB). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were at JT throughout the season, with a high count of 5 on 8/22, and again 9/26 (BB). **Brown Creepers** were at LDT and JT throughout the season (AG, BB). One **House Wren** was at CRB 9/24 (DHo), one was at RM 8/15, and 5 were at the same location 8/17 (BB). Another southern species rarely seen in *Elk*, **Carolina Wren** was seen in Jay Twp. 9/24 (DHo). **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were seen in various locations throughout the season (m.ob.). **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was also well represented with 2 at LRA 9/24 (DHo), 6 at JT 10/3, one at JT 10/29 (BB), and 2 at ESP 10/29 (DHi).

Every species of likely thrush was seen in *Elk* this season. **Eastern Bluebirds** were at JT, RM, and WH with the high count of 4 at RM 8/15 (BB) and at WH 9/24 (AG). A single **Veery** was along the LDT 9/6 (BB). The most unexpected thrush though was a **Gray-cheeked Thrush** at LDT 9/24 (AG). **Swainson's Thrush** numbers seemed to be low this season in *Elk* with singles seen at JT 9/6 (BB) and at LRA 9/24 (AG). *Elk's* most common speckled thrush, the **Hermit Thrush**, was last seen at JT 10/3 (BB). The high count was 12 at JT 8/7 and 8/9 (BB). **Gray Catbird** was last seen at JT 9/26 (BB). The only report of **Brown Thrasher** was 3 at RM 8/17 (BB).

Warblers were well represented this season with 21 species seen. The last **Ovenbird** was at LRA 9/24 (DHo). One **Northern Waterthrush** was at TL 8/29 (BB). A single **Blue-winged Warbler** was at RM 8/15 (BB). **Black-and-white Warbler** was at LRA 9/24 (DHo). Two **Tennessee Warblers** were at LRA 9/24 (DHo). **Nashville Warbler** was at TL 8/29 (BB). The last **Common Yellowthroats** were 2 at JT 9/26 (BB). An **American Redstart** was at TL 8/23 (BB). **Cape May Warblers** seemed to have an influx into *Elk* this season, with one at TL 8/29 and 4 at LDT 9/6 (BB). A single **Northern Parula** was at LDT 9/24 (AG). **Magnolia Warblers** were at three locations this season, 2 at TL 8/29, one at LDT 9/6, and up to 4 at JT through 9/26 (BB). The only **Bay-breasted Warbler** was at LRA 9/24 (DHo). For being a common breeder in *Elk*, it was a surprise that only one **Blackburnian Warbler** was reported at TL 8/23 (BB). **Yellow Warblers** were seen at RM 8/15, and again 8/17 (BB). **Chestnut-sided Warblers** were at JT and TL throughout Aug (BB). **Blackpoll Warblers** were 2 at ECVC 9/24 (AG), 4 at JT 9/26, and 3 at JT 10/3 (BB). **Black-throated Blue Warblers** were at multiple locations, with a high count of 9 at SGL 25 on 8/22 (BB). The only **Pine Warblers** were 2 at JT 9/26 (BB). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were observed numerous times at ECVC, JT, and LRA until early Oct (AG, BB, DHo). Perhaps the most abundant breeding warblers in *Elk*, last **Black-throated Green Warblers** were 5 at JT 10/3 (BB).

The first **American Tree Sparrows** were 2 at JT 11/29, and 3 were also at JT 11/30 (BB). Last **Chipping Sparrows** were 8 at JT (BB). **Field**

**Sparrows** were 2 at RM 8/17, and one at WCW 8/22 (BB). The only sighting of **Fox Sparrow** this season was an awesome count of 12 at JT 10/29 (BB). A pair of **Dark-eyed Juncos** made a late season nesting attempt in early August (BB). The nest was located in a bank and contained three young. It is unclear what happened to the young—only four days after the birds hatched, they were nowhere to be seen. Possibly the nest succumbed to predation. A lone **White-crowned Sparrow** was at ESP 10/29 (DHi). **White-throated Sparrows** were reported from Dents Run, ECVC, JT, and RM beginning 9/24 (m.ob.). A single **Savannah Sparrow** was along the railroad tracks at RM 8/17 (BB). Reports of **Swamp Sparrow** were from RM and WCW during August, with one singing until 8/17 at RM (BB). The last report for **Eastern Towhees** was 2 at JT 9/25 (BB).

**Scarlet Tanagers** were at JT, RM, and TL, with the last one at JT 9/5 (BB). The high count for **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was 4 at TL 8/23 (BB). The final report of **Indigo Bunting** was 2 late migrants at LRA 9/24 (DHo). **Boblinks** were 4 and 6 RM on 8/15 and 8/17, respectively (BB). A good count of 45 **Red-winged Blackbirds** was made at ECVC 8/2 (BB). A surprising 2 **Eastern Meadowlarks** at Dents Run 10/16 were late and the only ones of the season. **Common Grackles** were seen up to 8/22 when 4 were at WCW (BB). The only **Brown-headed Cowbird** was one at WH 8/2 (AB). The observer noted that this cowbird was foraging with **Chipping Sparrows**, which were likely its parents. Single **Baltimore Orioles**, which were all males, were seen at RM 8/15 and 8/17, and also at SGL 25 on 8/22 (BB). Finches were scarce this season, with only **Purple Finch** and **American Goldfinch** reported. **Purple Finches** included one at RM 8/15, 3 at TL, and up to 2 at JT starting 8/22 (BB).

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## Erie County

It was generally a cool wet fall season with Lake Erie water levels higher than normal, though the lake did recede by about a foot during the early part of the fall season. The higher lake levels may have accounted for the lower than usual number of shorebirds reported. The only northern finches in the region were Pine Siskins in October into early November, but most were gone by the end of the reporting period. The following birds of note were recorded from Presque Isle State Park unless noted otherwise.

A single white **Snow Goose** passed the Waterbird Count (WC) at Sunset Point 11/18 (JM), and 75 white **Snow Geese** were observed overhead in Union City 11/21 (DP). Three more white **Snow Geese** passed the WC on 11/22 (JM). A single **Cackling Goose** was spotted at the Fairview Business Park 10/7 (MV). There was a good movement of **Tundra Swans** observed at the WC 11/22 when an estimated 750 were tabulated (JM). Other large concentrations of swans were reported on Edinboro Lake and Eaton Reservoir during the same period (m.ob.) A **Long-tailed Duck** at 9/4-19 at Gull Point was believed to be injured (RD). The **Red-throated Loon** spotted from Sunset Point during the WC 9/20 was record early for the county (JM). The 1400 **Common Loons** counted during the WC 10/31 was a high count (JM). A season total of at least 13 **Red-necked Grebes** were counted, mostly during the WC from 10/14 through the period (JM). An **American Bittern** was at Gull Point 10/25 (MD).

**American Golden-Plovers** were reported mainly from Gull Point 9/5-10/18 (RD). A **Western Sandpiper** at Gull Point 9/13-19 was a rare find (CE, RD). Single **White-rumped Sandpipers** were reported 9/12-11/9 at Gull Point (RD). The only report of **Stilt Sandpiper** was one at Gull Point 9/13-19 (CE, RD). The only **Little Gulls** reported were single adults all during the WC 10/21, 10/24, and 10/29 (JM). Though we missed the massive movement of **Franklin's Gulls** reported elsewhere, 3 were in Presque Isle Bay off Vista 2 on 11/14 (AP, JM, DS). Single **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were at Gull Point 9/14 (RS), at the north pier 11/12 (AL), and at Gull Point 11/25 (MV). Always a thrill to see, 2 **Parasitic Jaegers** were spotted moving past Sunset Point during the WC, one 10/29 (JM) and the other 10/30 (JM, GM).

The only **Snowy Owl** of the season was a one-day wonder at Gull Point 11/24 (RD, JM). **Short-eared Owls** included one 10/24, one 11/6, and 2 on 11/19 (RD), all at Gull Point. A single **White-eyed Vireo** was a rare fall sighting in Erie 9/22 (NA). Twelve **Tree Swallows** flew past Sunset Point during the WC 11/18 set a record late in the county (JM). **Lapland Longspurs** were reported from Gull Point and Sunset Point at the WC 10/12-11/25 (RD, GM, JM, MV). Two **Orange-crowned Warblers** were on Gull Point Trail 10/11 (TL) and another was in a backyard in Erie 10/17-18 (NA). A single **Common Redpoll** was along Fisher Drive 11/15 (TL).

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### Fayette County

Location: Greenlick Run Lake (GRL).

Mild fall weather resulted in few reports of waterfowl and no significant fallouts. Some late shorebirds were reported at GRL, where the water level was low and mudflats were exposed at the shallow end of the lake.

Six **Tundra Swans** at GRL 11/8 (MJ) and 30 there 11/30 (JHa) were the only reports. Five **American Wigeon**, an **American Black Duck**, 10 **Bufflehead** and a **Hooded Merganser** were at GRL 11/8 (MJ). A nice count of 23 **Blue-winged Teal** was made there 10/13 (MJ). **Common Mergansers** were noted along the Youghioghny River between Dawson and Layton 8/9 (TK, JK), and 2 were at GRL 10/24 along with a **Gadwall** (MJ). Eleven **Ruddy Ducks** were at GRL 10/13 along with 9 **Pied-billed Grebes** (MD). Birds at the lake 11/29 include 8 **Redhead**, 50 **Bufflehead**, 21 **Hooded Mergansers**, 2 **Red-breasted Mergansers**, 5 **Common Loons** and a **Double-crested Cormorant** (EC).

A rather late **Green Heron** was at GRL 10/11 (MJ) and 10/14 (CH). The only **Osprey** reported was on the Youghioghny River 8/29 (TK, JK). There were mudflats at the shallow marshy end of GRL this fall. Although *Fayette* does not attract many shorebirds there were a few interesting birds. All shorebird reports are from the lake. Max count of **Killdeer** was 20 on 10/11 (MJ). Up to 3 late **Solitary Sandpipers** were there 10/11-13 (MJ, MF, MD). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** and a **Wilson's Snipe** were there 10/24 (MJ). Two **White-rumped Sandpipers** were a rare find 10/11 (MJ); one remained 10/13 (MD). A **Forster's Tern** was at Dunlap Creek Park 9/13 (MJ).

Summer residents were reported in the early part of the season. Two **Eastern Wood-Pewees** were found along the Youghioghny River 8/29 (TK, JK). **Willow Flycatcher**, **Eastern Phoebe** and **Eastern Kingbird** were at Jacob's Creek Wetlands along with a **White-eyed Vireo** 8/8 (BMu, JHa).

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### Forest County

Locations: Allegheny National Forest (ANF), Beaver Meadows (BM), Buzzard Swamp (BS), Marienville, (MA), Tionesta (TI).

There was an abundance of sightings this reporting, with some of the more notable species **American Bittern**, **Virginia Rail**, **Semipalmated Sandpiper**, and **Merlin**.

Flocks of **Snow Geese** were observed 11/7 and 11/9 near MA (JS). The best location for waterfowl in *Forest* is BS, where **Blue-winged Teal**, **Northern Shoveler**, and **Hooded Merganser** were spotted 9/24 (DH). **Green-winged Teal** were at BM 9/24 (DH).

An **American Bittern** was at BS 9/24 (DH). This was an unusual sighting for *Forest*, although BS does have good habitat for the species. A **Great Egret** was at BS 9/24 (DH). Two **Northern Harriers** were at BS 9/24 (DH), where one immature was spotted 10/28 (DH). **Bald Eagles** were reported along the Allegheny R., Tionesta Creek, and at Buzzard Swamp.

A **Virginia Rail** responded to a recording and was briefly observed at BS 9/24 (DH). Shorebirds are seldom found in *Forest*, thus the following were noteworthy. A **Solitary Sandpiper**, 2 **Least Sandpipers**, and a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** were at the gravel bars on the Allegheny River boat launch near the Fish Hatchery 8/16 (SD). Three **Lesser Yellowlegs** and 4 **Wilson's Snipe** were at BS 9/24 (DH).

Two **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** at BS 9/24 provided the only record of this species (DH). An **Eastern Screech-Owl** was heard 8/17 and 9/6 near TI (FM). **Barred Owls** were present at several locations. Twenty **Common Nighthawks** were spotted in flight near TI 9/4 (FM, JM). The last **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** came to a feeder near TI 9/24 (FM).

Two uncommon migrants, a **Merlin** and an **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, were noted at BS 9/24 (DH). Another good find was a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** banded at an ANF station 8/28 (SS, NW, FM, JM). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was present at an ANF banding station 9/10 (m.ob.) and another was at BS 9/24 (DH). There were multiple records of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** but not after 9/24. There were several observations of **Brown Creeper** throughout the reporting period. The last record of **Winter**

**Wren** made was near MA 10/1 (JS).

A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was a good find at BS 9/27 (GE, RS). There were several sightings of **Swainson's Thrush** and **Hermit Thrush**; late date for both species was 10/14 at an ANF banding station (SS, FM, JM).

**Black-and-White Warblers** were near TI 9/11 and 9/25 (FM), and 9/24 at BS (DH). There were several reports of **Tennessee Warblers**; the high count of eight was tallied on the late date of 9/25 at an ANF banding station (JB, SS, et al.). The last **Nashville Warbler** was near TI 10/4 (FM). The last **Hooded Warbler**, **American Redstart**, **Cape May Warbler**, **Northern Parula**, and **Magnolia Warbler** were tallied at an ANF banding station 9/25 (JB, SS, et al.). **Bay-breasted Warblers** were near TI 9/23 (FM) and at BS 9/24 (DH). The last **Blackburnian Warbler** was near Bobbs' Creek 9/28 (JS). There were several sightings of **Blackpoll Warbler** the last week of September; the latest was 9/27 near TI. The last **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was near Mayburg 9/25 (JS). Four **Palm Warblers** were at BS 9/24 (DH). Several **Pine Warblers** were seen during the last week of September, with the last on ANF Forest Road 180d 9/27. The last report of **Yellow-rumped Warblers** was 11/2, when three were at Lighthouse Island, TI (FM). **Prairie Warblers** were noted near Mayburg 9/24 and 9/25 (JS). **Black-throated Green Warbler** records were abundant; the last was 10/6 near TI (FM). **Canada Warbler** was last observed at an ANF banding station 8/28 (SS, NW, FM, JM). The last **Wilson's Warbler** was found at BS 9/24 (DH).

Late date for **Scarlet Tanager** as well as **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was 9/27 along Tionesta Creek Road (GE, RS). A single **Fox Sparrow** was present near TI 11/10-23, and a single **White-crowned Sparrow** was present 10/4-12 (FM, JM). **White-throated Sparrows** were reported 9/24-11/14 from various locations. An uncommon migrant, a **Lincoln's Sparrow** was along Tionesta Creek Road near Jughandle 9/27 (GE, RS), and 2 were at BS 9/24 (DH).

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### Franklin County

Locations: Bender's Pond (BP), Caledonia State Park (CP), Creekside Trail (CT), Greencastle Reservoir (GR), Keefer Road Pond (KF), Kriner Rd. Holding Pond (KR), Long Lane Pond, (LL), Mt. Brook Pond (MB), Shady Grove Area (SG), Zullinger Feeder (ZF).

**Canada Geese** continued to dominate the ponds this fall. A few **Cackling Geese** made appearances at GR 10/1 and KF 9/22 (CG). Only a few **Snow Geese** were reported, at GR, KF, and KR during Oct. **Wood Ducks** were at GR 10/10 (DG). **Gadwall**, **Northern Pintail**, **Bufflehead**, and **Ruddy Duck** were sighted at GR, KF, LL and MB 10/8-11/12 (CG, DG). Large numbers of **Wild Turkeys** were seen again in fields between Greencastle and Zullinger (DG).

Quite unusual for their number were the 50 **Great Egrets** (and 8 **Great Blue Herons**) near Parnell Fisheries south of Fort Loudon 8/22 (BO). **Bald Eagles** continued at various locations in the county. **Peregrine Falcons** were near KR 11/1 (CB) and GR 10/9 (CG).

A good variety of shorebirds were reported but numbers of many were very low. Many of the small streams with muddy areas were dry or overgrown. **Semipalmated Plovers**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Solitary Sandpipers**, **Spotted Sandpiper**, an uncommon **Sanderling**, **Least Sandpiper**, a lone **Baird's Sandpiper** were at BP 8/26 (BO) and **Pectoral Sandpipers** were reported at BP, GR, KF, KR and a farm pond. A juv. **Ruff** was an excellent find at GR 9/25-26 (CG, DG, BO, m.ob.). **American Woodcocks** arrived in the Still House Hollow Area 11/3 and were still displaying 11/21 (BK). A **Red-necked Phalarope** was at KR 10/3 (CG).

Two **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at GR 11/12 (CG). **Eurasian Collared-Doves** continued to gather in large numbers (30-90) at GR during Sep and Oct (CG, DG). Flocks of up to 101 **Common Nighthawks** were noted 8/15-31 at CP (DC, BO). **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were at feeders in SG until 10/5 (DG). A total of 237 **Tree Swallows** were at GR 9/21 (CG).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher**, **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, **Blue-headed Vireo** and **Red-eyed Vireo** were observed CD and CT 8/18-31, and a **Blue-headed Vireo** was still at CT 11/1 (DC). Two **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were noted in Bear Valley 11/7 (CB). A good variety of warblers species were reported but in varying numbers: **Blue-winged Warbler**, **Tennessee Warbler**, **Nashville Warbler**, **Yellow Warbler**, **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Cape May Warbler**, **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, **Black-throated Green**

**Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Hooded Warbler, and Canada Warbler** were reported 8/15-9/14 CP, CT and various other areas. A good number of **Scarlet Tanagers** were reported in CD and the Stillhouse Hollow Road area 8/15-9/6 (DC, BO, CB).

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### Fulton County

Locations: Cowan's Gap State Park (CGSP), German Lane (GL), Haines-Seville Wetlands Restoration Area (HSWRA), Needmore (NEED), Tuscarora Summit "The Pulpit" Hawkwatch (TS).

All waterfowl reports this season were made at CGSP. **Buffleheads** were seen numerous times in the second half of Nov (BO, MW, DW, KK). Five **Hooded Mergansers** were there 11/23 (MW, DW), and two **Common Goldeneye**, infrequently reported here, were noted 11/29 (KK). **Pied-billed Grebes** were present only on 10/3 (CK) and 10/4 (J&SD). Five species were noted 11/14: 6 **Gadwalls**, 8 **Ring-necked Ducks**, 14 **Bufflehead**, 8 **Hooded Mergansers**, and **Mallards** (BO).

Away from TS, the only **Osprey** was at CGSP 9/19 (MW, DW). Reports of **Bald Eagle** reports away from TS were solid: 9/7 at GL (MW), 9/14 at CGSP (DHo), 9/20 at NEED (AE), and 12/6 at GL (DW). The December record may have been an indication of at least one wintering individual in the county again this year.

Shorebirds at CGSP included **Spotted Sandpiper** 9/14 (DHo) and 10/14 (J&SD) and a **Least Sandpiper** 9/14 (DHo). Rare in fall, a **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at GL 9/1 (MW). The 5 **Great Horned Owls** at the Hill Farm in NEED 9/20 could have been a family unit (AE). At the southern edge of the county, birding forays at GL included searches for migrant **Common Nighthawks** (MW, DW). These efforts resulted in the only ones reported for the season: 5 on 8/29, 2 on 8/30, 3 on 8/31, 3 on 9/21, one 9/22, and 6 on 9/28.

An infrequently noted **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was discovered at CGSP 9/28 (AG). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was at CGSP 9/14 (DHo). A **Fish Crow** at the Turnpike Plaza 9/11 (DK, RH, MH) was unusual that far north. Some good local daily high counts included 3 **House Wrens** at HSWRA 9/27 (MD), 20 **Brown-crowned Kinglets** in CGSP 10/4 (J&SD), and a flock of 60 **Cedar Waxwings** at GL 11/2 (MW).

Reports of fall warblers this period were the most in recent memory (DS). An outing at CGSP 9/14 netted 15 warbler species including **Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Blackburnian** and 2 **Cape May** (DHo) and another outing the same day at Tower Rd. totaled nine warbler species including **Nashville, Wilson's, and Blackburnian** (DHo). A good late September push of six warbler species at CGSP 9/23 included 2 **Tennessee, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll**, and **Blackburnian** (MW, DW). A **Louisiana Waterthrush** was well documented at the Hill Farm in NEED in late Aug (ph. CH). The mixed forest surrounding GL attracted **Cape May Warblers** 9/7, 9/12, 9/22, 10/7, and 10/8 (DW, MW). An uncommon fall county migrant, a single **Canada Warbler** foraged along GL 9/8 (MW). GL was a rest stop for **Northern Parula** 9/19 (DW) and 9/24 (MW). Besides **Yellow-rumped**, the only other warblers noted in Oct were **Magnolia** and **Blackpoll Warblers** at GL 10/2 (MW).

The lone winter finch was a single **Purple Finch** at CGSP 11/29 (KK).

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### Greene County

Locations: Claylick (CL), East View (EV), Franklin Twp. (FT), Jackson Twp. (JT), Kern Farm (KF), Last Chance Ranch (LCR), Morgan Twp. (MT), Sycamore (SY).

A flock of **Snow Goose** was heard over SY 11/23 (JC, AC, TC). Also there 11/30 were flyover **Tundra Swans** (JC, AC, TC). **Wood Ducks** were

last reported at EV 11/9 (MH). A pair of **Bufflehead** was at a farm pond in Wayne Twp. 11/11 (TC). A **Blue-winged Teal** was at Lake Wilma in Wayne Twp. 9/26 (MJ). **Ring-necked Pheasant** was seen in a yard in SY 11/19 (JC). A lone **Pied-billed Grebe** was at SGL 223 on 10/23 and a lone **Double-crested Cormorant** was there 10/1 (DH).

Three **Black Vultures** were seen in JT 9/16 (RL, BD). Up to 28 **Turkey Vultures** fed on a deer carcass at CL 11/14-16 (LA). An **Osprey** was heard along the creek at SGL 223 on 8/18 (DH). **Bald Eagle** was reported at the Bell Farm in MT 8/22 (CDB, JWo), in Morris Twp. 11/2 (CA), at CL 10/30 (CW *fide* RA), an adult & immature in JT 9/12 (BD, RL), at SGL 223 on 11/22 (DH), and in Morgan Twp. 11/22 (AC, JC). **Red-shouldered Hawk** and **Broad-winged Hawk** were found at SGL 223 on 10/1 (DH). A mostly white **Red-tailed Hawk** was spotted in Center Twp. 11/5 (CDB). A high flying **Golden Eagle** sailed north to south over LCR 8/31 (MLP).

**Killdeer** were last noted in EV 10/6 (MH). **Greater Yellowlegs** and **Least Sandpiper** were at FT 9/30 (DH) and **Solitary Sandpiper** there 10/13 (MJ). **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was last reported in EV 9/10 (MH). Groups of over 50 **Mourning Doves** were at KF 8/14 and at CL 10/15 (LA). **Great Horned Owls** were heard calling back and forth at CL 11/25 (LA). A dozen **Common Nighthawks** were seen in Freeport Twp. 8/29 (JeW), and a loose flock of approximately 15 was seen heading southerly direction over LCR 8/31 (MLP). **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was last reported 10/23 at CL (LA). **Red-headed Woodpecker** was last seen in Morris Twp. 11/22 (CA), and **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was first seen at SY 10/26 (JC).

An **Acadian Flycatcher** heard at EV 8/24 was the last for the season (MH). Last **Eastern Phoebe** was also there 10/14 (MH). EV had the last reported **White-eyed Vireo** 10/4, **Yellow-throated Vireo** 9/25, and **Red-eyed Vireo** 9/18 (MH). A **Warbling Vireo** was last heard at Kern Farm in MT 9/7 (KK). In Whiteley Twp., 22 **Purple Martins** were seen 8/2 (MH, CN). The last **Barn Swallow** was at SGL 223 on 10/9 (DH).

A **Brown Creeper** was at CL 11/10 (LA). Last **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was in JT 9/12 (RL). **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was in EV 10/14 (MH) and **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was last reported in JT 10/7 (BD, RL). Young **Eastern Bluebirds** fledged 8/5 at SY (JC). A **Swainson's Thrush** was in EV 10/3. EV was also the location of the last **Wood Thrush** 9/26, **Gray Catbird** 11/3, **Brown Thrasher** 9/17, and **Cedar Waxwing** 11/6 (MH).

A **Worm-eating Warbler** was in Cumberland Twp. 8/2 (PC). The last **Louisiana Waterthrush** was in EV 9/10 (MH). JT was the location of the last reported **Blue-winged Warbler** 9/4, **Blackburnian Warbler** 9/27, and **Prairie Warbler** 9/2 (RL, BD). Ryerson S.P. held the last **Tennessee Warbler** and **Bay-breasted Warbler** 9/30 (DH). **Palm Warbler** 10/23 and **Magnolia Warbler** 10/1 were last reported at SGL 223 (DH). **Northern Parula** and **Black-throated Green Warbler** were last found in Center Twp. 10/2 (DH). **Yellow-rumped Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler** 10/21 and **Yellow-throated Warbler** 9/7 were last sighted in EV (MH).

The last **Chipping Sparrow** was at EV 10/26 (MH). At SGL 223, **Lincoln's Sparrow** was found 10/1 and **Swamp Sparrow** 10/23 (DH). First **White-throated Sparrow** appeared at EV 10/5 (MH), and the first **Dark-eyed Junco** was at JT 10/8 (RL).

**Scarlet Tanager** was last noted at Ryerson S.P. 9/30 (DH), and JT was the site of the last **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** 9/20 (RL) and **Indigo Bunting** 9/30 (DH). **Rusty Blackbird** was at EV 11/9, which was also the site of the last **Red-winged Blackbird** 10/21 and last **Common Grackle** 11/3 (MH). Last **Baltimore Oriole** was in Center Twp. 8/19 (DH). **Pine Siskin** was heard at CL 11/14 (DA, CA).

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### Huntingdon County

Locations: Cornprobt Mills (CM), Ennisville (ENN), Huntingdon (HU), Juniata River (JR), Lake Perez (LP), Marklesburg waterfowl area (MAR), Old Crow wetland (OC), Pennsylvania Furnace Rd (PF), Raystown Lake (RL), Shaver's Creek Environmental Center (SCEC), Stone Creek Ridge (SCR), Stone Mt. hawk watch (SMHW), Stone Valley (SV).

Counts of waterfowl in fall are usually low in *Huntingdon*. Despite its large size, the mostly deep waters of RL (the largest lake entirely enclosed within the borders of Pennsylvania) attract relatively few surface feeders, and even most divers occur only in modest numbers. Elsewhere, duck hunting and kayaking may prevent significant congregations on the JR. The

largest autumn numbers of water-related birds occur not on water but in flight over SMHW. The high count of **Tundra Swans** there was 562 on 11/22; triple-digit counts also occurred 11/14 and 11/20 (NB, BM, JK, DK). A **Cackling Goose** was photographed among a flock of **Canada Geese** over the watch 11/14 (NB). Continuing with data from SMHW, the high count of **Common Loons** was 221 on 10/30 (JK, NB) and 100 **Double-crested Cormorants** were recorded 11/7 (NB, BC, GD). A **Trumpeter Swan** was at MAR 10/23 (ZA). These big birds, though still rare, are no longer a surprise here. Fifteen **Common Mergansers**, a nesting species in *Huntingdon*, on the JR at HU provided a good early-autumn count 9/14 (CM).

Numerous flocks of **Wild Turkeys** on SCR, usually a few dozen or more, were evidence of a good breeding season and good survival of young birds (GG, DG, LG). An **American Bittern** at LP 11/10 was very late (JK).

A record high 460 hours were logged at SMHW (GG, NB, JK, DK, TK, BM, RC, JB, DW, JS). Both eagles far surpassed previous seasonal highs (since 1995); 149 **Bald Eagles** and 171 **Golden Eagles** were tallied, numbers only partly accounted for by the high observation effort. A one-day record of 30 Golden Eagles occurred 11/20. The **Broad-winged Hawk** total of 2335 was third best ever. By contrast, **Red-shouldered** and **Red-tailed Hawks** set new lows, with 35 and 477, respectively. It seems that these two hardy buteos may increasingly be staying on northern territories, allowing year-round defense of their nesting grounds. **American Kestrels** had been trending upward at SMHW in recent years, an encouraging sign for a species declining in the eastern U.S. But this year, despite the record high hours, kestrels fell by over 50% from 2013 and 2014, perhaps related to losses during the harsh winter of 2014-15. After trending downward for many years, **Northern Harriers** finally had a good season—the total of 61 being the highest since 2007, though still below the 20-year average. An early **Rough-legged Hawk** was recorded 10/30. Away from SMHW, another Rough-leg was found at OC 11/11 (RL).

Shorebirds, as usual, were difficult to find. The best assemblage was at PF where one **Black-bellied Plover**, 4 **American Golden-Plovers**, and 3 **Semipalmated Plovers** were found 9/10, with the latter two species present several days (JK, m.ob.). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** was there 9/14 (BC). Terns are also rare in the county in fall; the only report was of a **Forster's Tern** at LR 8/21 (JD).

**Common Nighthawks** move through during a brief window in late Aug. The high counts were 45 at ENN 8/30 (DW) and 25 at HU 8/28 (LG). A late nighthawk was seen over HU 9/15 (GD).

Three **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were reported, a typical fall number: singles at SMHW 9/3 (JK, DW) and in SV and on SCR, both 9/7 (GG, DG, LG, AC). Two **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were well described at OC 8/25 (ZA). Additional birds were at Scec 9/20 (DW) and Whipple Dam S.P. 9/26 (JP). Usually, Trail's Flycatchers cannot be identified to species in the fall; however an **Alder Flycatcher** was identified by call at MAR 9/16 (GD, ZA). A late **Eastern Phoebe** was at CM 11/1 (GG). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was photographed at SMHW on the very late date of 10/31 (NB). **Marsh Wrens** are found almost annually in the fall. Two were at MAR 9/16 (GD, ZA) and at least one, possibly two, frequented OC during Oct (m.ob.), with one found there on the late date of 11/2 (RL, GG).

At least 26 warbler species were reported. **Cape May Warblers** were particularly more evident than usual, highlighted by 6 at Greenwood Furnace S.P. 9/20 (JP). A **Mourning Warbler** at RL 9/19 was notable (ZA).

A **Nelson's Sparrow** was at OC 10/5 (GG), providing the fourth county record, all since 2012 and all at this modest-sized but easily accessible wetland just outside the town of *Huntingdon*. There were 2 reports of **Clay-colored Sparrow**, another rarity in that tribe. Two were well described at MAR 10/15 (ZA) and one was at OC 10/26 (GG).

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## Indiana County

Locations: Blue Spruce County Park (BS), Blacklick Valley Natural Area (BVNA), Lewisville (LV), Shelocta (SH), Yellow Creek State Park (YC).

YC's **Canada Goose** flock had built to 432 by 10/16 (LC). The first flock of 42 **Tundra Swans** flew over YC 11/7 (MH, RH, et al.) during a joint 3RBC-TBC outing; high count at YC was 48 on both 11/10 (TG, MH, RH) and 11/14 (TA), and 80 flew over BS 11/14 (SD, RW).

All ducks were reported from YC unless otherwise noted. It was a very poor waterfowl migration at YC, and the majority of high counts were much lower than last year's maxima. The high **Wood Duck** count of 77 was made

8/4 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK); last were 42 on 10/13 (LC, TG, MH, RH). First 3 **Gadwalls** arrived 10/20 (LC); maxima were 7 at YC 10/27 (LC, PF, TG, MH, RH, DK, GL, JS), 6 at Timber Lake 11/6 (CL, GL), and 8 at YC 11/19 (LC), down from a high of 124 at YC last year. Arrival date for **American Wigeon** was 9/29 (LC, PF, TG, MH, RH, DK, GL) and the last 4 were spotted 11/14 (TA); a small pond near Elders Ridge hosted 6 on 10/20 and 11/4 (MVT). First **American Black Duck** was sighted 10/3 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH); the top count of a mere 10 was obtained 11/29 (TR). The maximum **Mallard** tally was 62 on 10/13 (LC, TG, MH, RH). First 12 **Blue-winged Teal** arrived 8/25 (WA, LC, SD, TG, DK, RN, DS); numbers built to 43 on 9/29 (LC, PF, et al.); last observed were 5 on 10/21 (AK, JK). The first 4 **Northern Shovelers** arrived 8/25 (WA, LC, et al.). A **Northern Pintail** appeared 9/29 (LC, PF, et al.); a flock of 30 flew past the beach 10/28 (MH, RH); last were 14 on 11/7 (3RBC, TBC). YC hosted the first 4 **Green-winged Teal** 9/8 (TB, LC, MD, TG, DK, MH, RH, DM); 34 was the high 10/3 (TG). **Canvasbacks** were noted on only three dates: 2 on 10/16 (LC), 12 on 11/14 (TA), and one 11/17 (PF, TG, MH, RH). **Redheads** were first spotted 11/7 (3RBC, TBC); the best tally of 22 was noted 11/14 (SR). **Ring-necked Duck** maximum was 46 on 11/10 (MH, RH). Four **Lesser Scaup** arrived 10/28 (MH, RH) but peak counts did not exceed single digits. A female **Black Scoter** appeared on the lake 11/24 (LC, PF, TG, MH, RH, DK) and lingered into the winter period. A single **Long-tailed Duck** was first noted at YC 11/3 (LC, PF, TG, MH, RH, DK, RN); by 11/10 (TG, MH, RH) 3 were present. First 4 **Buffleheads** were found 10/31 (LC, TG, MH, RH, JS); high of 58 occurred 11/19 (LC). Three **Common Goldeneyes** were a nice surprise 11/24 (LC, PF, et al.); one lingered through 11/29 (TR). Six **Hooded Mergansers** were listed 11/17 (TG) and 11/29 (TR). Seven **Common Mergansers** 11/14 (SR) were the only ones reported. **Ruddy Ducks** arrived 9/26 (TG); numbers peaked at 509 on 11/3 (LC, et al.).

**Ruffed Grouse** were reported at only three locations this season, one to 2 at Nolo on three dates (AB, DB), one at YC on two dates (m.ob.), and another along Aultman's Run 10/19 (MH, RH). Three **Common Loons** appeared at YC 9/29 (LC, PF, et al.); single birds were spotted on seven dates thereafter. YC's first 2 **Pied-billed Grebes** arrived 8/4 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK); numbers spiked to 62 on 10/22 (LC). Up to 8 **Double-crested Cormorants** visited YC between 9/1 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) and 11/19 (LC); 4 were a nice addition to a yard list near SH 10/4 (MH). A **Great Egret** near Elders Ridge 8/1 (MVT) and one at YC 9/13 (SG) were the only two reports. Last **Green Heron** was at YC 9/29 (LC, PF, et al.). A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was a great find at YC 10/5 (TG).

Single **Black Vultures** were seen 8/21 both at Nolo (GL) and near LV (MC), and another was near LV 10/6 (MC). There are only four prior records of Black Vulture in *Indiana*. Last **Turkey Vulture** was observed near SH 11/6 (MH). Migrating **Osprey** included one to 3 birds at YC between 8/4 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) and 11/7 (3RBC, TBC). One to 3 **Bald Eagles** were listed at YC on eleven dates between 9/1 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) and 11/24 (LC, PF, et al.) including both adult and immature birds; three sightings of single immatures occurred 8/2 and 9/8-9 (MC) near LV. One was spotted 8/4 (JJ) n. of IN; an adult eagle flew over BS 10/2 (MH, RH); other sightings included singles at Nolo 10/21 (GL), in Creekside 11/5 (CL), and in IN 11/18 (DB). Single **Northern Harriers** visited YC 9/29 (LC, PF, et al.) and 10/27 (LC, PF, TG, et al.); 2 were near West Lebanon 10/24 (MVT). **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were at nine locations this quarter; **Cooper's Hawks**, at eight. Last **Broad-winged Hawk** was listed 9/15 (TB, SG, MVT) at BS.

A **Sora** walking near the edge of the marsh vegetation was a fine find 9/29 (LC, PF, et al.). The first 9 **American Coots** arrived 9/15 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK, DM) at YC; top counts of 732 and 729 were obtained 11/7 (3RBC, TBC) and 11/10 (TG, MH, RH), respectively.

Low water levels provided extensive mudflat habitat at YC this fall. All shorebird reports are at YC. Single **Black-bellied Plovers** were sighted on five dates between 9/15 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK, DM) and 10/28 (MH, RH). **Semipalmated Plovers** continued through 10/22 (LC) at YC with high tally of 5 on 8/11 (TB, LC, TG, MH, RH). Exactly 100 **Killdeer** were counted 10/27 (LC, PF, TG, et al.); one lingered until 11/14 (TA). Last **Spotted Sandpiper** and **Solitary Sandpiper** were found 10/6 (LC, EC, SD, PF, TG, MH, RH, KJ, DK, MVT) and 10/13 (LC, TG, MH, RH), respectively. First 2 **Greater Yellowlegs** arrived 8/1 (MH, RH) and were listed on 21 other dates through 11/3 (LC, et al.); top counts were 6 on 8/11 (MH, RH) and 10/27 (LC, PF, TG et al.). One to 3 **Lesser Yellowlegs** visited YC through 9/19 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH); on 9/29 (LC, PF, et al.), 15 were tallied, and a late individual was reported near Elders Ridge 10/20 (MVT). First 14 **Dunlin** arrived 10/22 (LC); high count was 19 on 10/27 (LC, PF, TG, et al.) and a singleton remained at YC 10/31 (LC, TG, MH, RH, JS). A **Baird's Sandpiper** found 8/25 (WA, LC, et al.) was still on the mud in Little Yellow Cove 8/28 (MH, RH). **Least Sandpipers** were found on almost all visits to YC through 10/15 (LC); 11 was the high tally 8/14 (JH). First **Pectoral Sandpipers** arrived 8/1 (MH, RH); high counts were 10 on 9/29 (LC, PF, et al.) and 20 on 10/27 (LC, PF, TG et al.); 3 on 10/31 were last 10/31 (LC, TG,

MH, RH, JS). Reported on nine dates, 2 to 5 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** moved through YC between 8/17 (MD) and 9/8 (TB, LC et al.). **Wilson's Snipe** continued at YC through 11/3 (LC, et al.) with top counts of 12 on 10/22 (LC) and 9 on 10/27 (LC, PF, TG, et al.). An **American Woodcock** was flushed at BS 10/28 (MH, RH) and another was found at YC 9/1 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK).

Four **Bonaparte's Gulls** appeared at YC 11/14 (SR). Up to 3 **Ring-billed Gulls** were reported at YC on only six dates this fall. Two **Forster's Terns** 8/11 (TB, LC, TG, MH, RH) were the only ones noted.

Martin Rd. yielded the last **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** 9/21 (MH, RH) and a yard near LV, the last **Black-billed Cuckoo** 8/21 (MC). IUP campus yielded the only **Great Horned Owl** 9/20 (JT). **Barred Owls** were calling near Nolo through 10/26 (AB, DB) with as many as 4 heard 8/12 (AB). A single **Common Nighthawk** flying over a yard near SH 9/28 (MH, RH) was the only one listed. An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was heard near LV 8/8 (MC). An estimated 400 **Chimney Swifts** circling over the IN post office 9/28 (SD) was noteworthy. Two **Chimney Swifts** and 2 **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were last observed near LV 10/10 (MC) and 10/4 (MC), respectively. A **Red-headed Woodpecker** was noted at the park office 10/31 (LC, TG, MH, RH, JS). BS produced the first migrant **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** sighting 9/14 (TB, RN); singletons were at Nolo (GL) and at IUP (JT) 9/28; another visited a yard in IN 10/5-6 (JP). Nolo seems to be a staging area for **Northern Flickers** with a high tally of 25 all visible at one time 9/28 (GL); the same thing occurred the past two years with counted at Nolo on both 10/2/2013 and 9/25/2014. A **Merlin** was a good find on the IUP campus 8/25 and 10/2 (JT). YC yielded two Merlin reports, one 10/6 (LC, EC, et al.) and one 11/3 (LC, et al.), as well as a **Peregrine Falcon** 8/4 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK). Another Peregrine visited the IUP campus 10/9 (JT).

The last **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was spotted near LV 9/30 (MC). BS continues to be the hotspot for migrant **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** with sightings on nine dates between 8/31 (MH, RH) and 9/26 (MH, RH); 2 were present 9/5 (LC, MH, RH, DK, FM, JM, JT, RW, EY) and 9/7 (TB, SG, MH, RH). BS also produced the last **Acadian Flycatcher** 9/16 (TB, MH, RH). A **Willow Flycatcher** was last observed at YC 8/16 (MVT) and at IUP 9/8 (JT). A **Least Flycatcher** lingered at BS 9/16 (TB, MH, RH). Last **Eastern Phoebe**s were 2 at BS (JP) and one on the IUP campus (JT), both 10/24, and one at YC 10/31 (LC, TG, MH, RH, JS). YC hosted the last **Great Crested Flycatcher** and **Eastern Kingbird** 9/3 (CB, MH, ML).

Last vireo dates included 9/30 (MC) near LV for **White-eyed Vireo**, 9/8 (TG) at YC for **Yellow-throated Vireo**, 10/25 (MH, RH) at BS for **Blue-headed**, 9/14 (TB, RN) at BS for **Warbling Vireo**, and 9/30 (MC) near LV for **Red-eyed Vireo**. Reports included four **Philadelphia Vireo** sightings all at BS between 9/15 (TB, SG) and 9/26 (TB, MH, RH). Last swallow dates were 8/27 (MC) near LV for 2 **Northern Rough-winged Swallows**, 10/13 (TG) at YC for one **Tree Swallow**, 9/3 (CB, MH, ML) at YC for one **Bank Swallow**, and 10/13 (LC, TG, MH, RH) at YC for 4 **Barn Swallows**.

Reports of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** at YC included one on both 9/13 (SG) and 10/13 (LC, TG, MH, RH) and 2 on 10/31 (LC, TG, MH, RH, JS); near SH single birds were reported 10/27, 10/31, and 11/11 (MH, RH). Last 2 **House Wrens** were at BS 10/2 (MH, RH). **Winter Wrens**, found only at BS, were reported between 9/15 (TB, SG, MVT) and 10/17 (MH, RH, JP, MP). Last **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** were 2 near LV 9/18 (MC) and one on the IUP campus 9/22 (JT). First migrant **Golden-crowned Kinglet** arrived near LV 10/1 (MC). BS yielded the first **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** 9/26 (TB, MH, RH) and the last 2 were near LV 10/29 (MC).

**Veeries** moved through the county between 8/28 (MH, RH) when the first was noted at BS, and 9/22 (LC, SD, PF, TG, DK, GS) when one appeared at YC. Single **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** on the IUP campus 9/22 (JT) and near SH 9/24 (MH) were the only ones reported. BS yielded one or 2 **Swainson's Thrushes** 8/28-9/26 (MH, RH); one visited IUP 9/10 and 10/2 (JT). A **Hermit Thrush** in IN 8/26 (JP) was the lone report. The last reported **Wood Thrush** was at BS 9/26 (KD, BG, DK, RN, KSJ). YC produced a late **Gray Catbird** 11/24 (LC, DC, EC, PF, TG, MH, RH, DK, JS) and a yard near SH, the last **Brown Thrasher** 10/11 (MH). **American Pipits** visited YC between 10/6 (LC, EC, et al.) and 10/31 (LC, TG, MH, RH, JS), with the high tally of 87 on 10/27 (LC, PF, TG, et al.). On 10/31 the pipits above were accompanied by 5 **Snow Buntings**.

Once again BS was the hotspot for fall warblers. IUP yielded the last **Ovenbird** 10/4 (JT). A **Northern Waterthrush** lingered at BS from 9/4 (MH, RH) through 9/14 (TB, RN). A **Golden-winged Warbler** was observed at BS 9/4 (MH, RH) and photographed 9/11 (TB). BS yielded the last **Blue-winged Warbler** 9/10 (TB). The last **Black-and-white Warbler** was at BS 9/30 (MH, RH). **Tennessee Warblers** moved through the county between 8/25 (TG) and 10/12 (MH, RH), with as many as 10 at BS on 9/26 (RN). **Nashville Warbler** had arrived at BS by 8/28 (MH, RH); a singleton near SH 10/9 (MH) was last. A **Connecticut Warbler** was a great find at BS 9/26 (SG) and 10/5 (MH, RH). A **Mourning Warbler** visited a yard near LV 8/15 (MC). Last dates included 10/11 (MH) for **Common Yellowthroat** near SH,

9/26 (TG) for **Hooded Warbler** at YC, and 10/5 (MH, RH) for **American Redstart** at BS. **Cape May Warblers** moved through the county between 8/28 (MH, RH) and 10/4 (MH); high count of only 4 occurred at YC 9/26 (TJ). Last **Northern Parula** was at IN 10/2 (JP) and the last **Magnolia Warbler**, near SH 10/9 (MH). **Bay-breasted Warblers** visited *Indiana* between 8/28 (MH, RH) and 9/26 (KD, SG, BG, DK, MH, RH, RN, KSJ) with high count of a mere 4 at BS 9/9 (MH, RH). Last **Blackburnian Warblers** were single birds noted 9/14 (TB, RN) at BS and 9/15 (LC, TG, et al.) at YC, and the last **Yellow Warbler** was at IN 8/16 (JP). Single **Chestnut-sided Warblers** lingered 9/26, both at YC (TJ) and at BS (KD, DK, RN). **Blackpoll Warblers** moved through the county between 9/10 (JT) and 10/6 (LC, EC et al.). Migrant **Black-throated Blue Warblers** were found at four locations between 8/31 (MH, RH) and 10/6 (MH, RH); 3 were tallied at BS 9/9 (MH, RH). One to 3 **Palm Warblers** passed through the county between 9/10 (JT) and 10/13 (LC, TG, MH, RH). Last **Pine Warbler** remained at YC 9/22 (LC, SD, PF, TG, DK, GS). First **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was sighted 9/23 (MC) near LV where numbers peaked at 13 on 10/14 (MC); BS's high was 15 on 10/17 (JP). A **Prairie Warbler** on the IUP campus 8/28 (JT) was the only one noted. The last **Black-throated Green Warbler** appeared 10/5 (MH, RH) at BS, which had held 10 on 9/13 (TB, RN). Single **Canada Warblers** were noted at BS 9/7 (TB, SG, MH, RH) and 9/14 (TB, RN); the only other one seen this fall was near LV 9/18 (MC). Single **Wilson's Warblers** were listed on six dates between 8/31 (MH, RH) and 9/24 (MH) at four locations: BS, YC, Waterworks Conservation Area, and near SH.

**Eastern Towhees** had moved on by 10/26 (MC) when the last 3 were listed near LV. Arrival date for the first 10 **American Tree Sparrows** was 11/24 (LC, DC, et al.) at YC. Last **Chipping Sparrow** was near LV 10/29 (MC). A late **Field Sparrow** was at BS 11/2 (MH, RH). A **Savannah Sparrow** put in an appearance at YC 8/20 (PF), the lone report. A very late **Henslow's Sparrow** was an unusual find on the IUP campus 10/14 (JT); the previous latest date had been 10/3/1997 at Gipsy when one was spotted by Harvey and Shirley Spindle. **Fox Sparrows** were found at four locations with the first 2 arrivals at the Waterworks Conservation Area 10/26 (MH, RH); one lingered near LV through 11/21 (MC). It was an unusually good fall for **Lincoln's Sparrows**. BS hosted single Lincoln's Sparrows 10/5 and 10/17 (MH, RH), one was spotted at IUP 10/7 and 10/14 (JT), and 2 were observed along the Ghost Town Trail 10/10 (TB, MH, RH). The first 11 **White-throated Sparrows** arrived at BS 10/2 (MH, RH), and the season's first two **White-crowned Sparrows** were sighted at IUP 10/9 (JT). **Dark-eyed Juncos** first appeared at BS 10/2 (MH, RH).

IUP yielded the last **Scarlet Tanager** 10/4 (JT) and BS, the last **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** 9/26 (SG, MH, RH). An **Indigo Bunting** was also last seen at BS 10/2 (MH, RH). Three **Red-winged Blackbirds** remained at YC 11/10 (TG, MH, RH). All reports of **Rusty Blackbirds** mentioned only one or 2; YC, which is usually the best location for them, hosted only 2 on 10/27 (LC, PF, TG et al) and one 11/17 (PF, TG, MH, RH). The only other date Rusties were mentioned was 11/17, when one was near LV (MC) and 2 were near SH (MH, RH). Last **Baltimore Oriole** was noted near LV 9/17 (MC). The LV area hosted 2 **Pine Siskins** 8/3 and 8/6 and 3 on 10/22 (MC).

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#### Jefferson County

Locations: Ames Road (AR), Cherry Run Road (CR), Fordham Lake (FL), Gateway Lodge (GL), Interstate 80, mile marker 91 (I80-91), Kyle Lake (KL), Kramer Road (KR), Moore Bridge Road (MB), Moore Road (MR), Mahoning Shadow Trail (MS), Pine Creek (PK), Punxsutawney (PX), Red Bank Valley Trail (RB), Ringgold (RG), Sandy Ridge Road (SR), State Route 1004 (SR1004).

The high count of 91 **Canada Geese** was made at FL 10/24 (SD, TG). Two **Green-winged Teal** were \ at FL 10/24 (SD, TG), and 3 **Buffleheads** were at FL 11/22 (AK, JK). Two **Hooded Mergansers** were at FL 11/22 (AK, JK) and 16 **Common Mergansers** were there 10/24 (SD, TG).

A count of 3 **Ring-necked Pheasants** was seen on PC 11/1 (TS). The high count of 7 **Pied-billed Grebes** was noted at KL 10/9 (AK, JK). The last

**Double Crested Cormorant** was at KL 8/29 (AK, JK). A **Great Egret** was at FL 9/13 (AK, JK). Only one **Green Heron** was reported for the period: on the MS 9/13 (AK, JK).

The last three **Turkey Vultures** were at SGL 31 on 9/6 (MD). The only **Osprey** was on FL 11/17 (AK, JK). First **Northern Harrier** was on CR 11/8 (AK, JK). **Bald Eagles** were noted on three different dates, one on RB 8/25, 2 on AR 10/1, and one on the RB 11/12 (all AK, JK). The resident MS nesting **Bald Eagles** were not seen since the nest was damaged by a storm in May. A **Broad-winged Hawk** was seen at I80-91 8/30 (AKe).

Two **Killdeer** were on the MS 9/11 (AK, JK), and two **Solitary Sandpipers** were also noted on the MS 9/13 (AK, JK). A **Spotted Sandpiper** was on the RB 8/28 (AK, JK). An interesting late sighting was 3 **Greater Yellowlegs** at FL 10/24 (SD, TG).

The MS produced one **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** and 2 **Black-billed Cuckoos** 8/30 (JD). Three **Eastern Screech-Owls** were at RG 10/29 (AK, JK). Three **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were in RG 8/23 (AK, JK), and one was noted on the MS 9/11 (AK, JK). The most interesting find for the period was a **Rufous Hummingbird** first noted 8/2 on MB north of Brookville (VM). The bird was not known by the birding community until mid-Oct, and was then banded 10/17 and identified as a first year male. It was seen by many until its departure 11/8. Another interesting find was a **Red-headed Woodpecker** on the MS 10/11 (AK, JK).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** on SR1004 was a good find 8/31 (AKe). A high count of 16 **Eastern Kingbirds** was made in RG 8/10 (AK, JK). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were seen on three different occasions on the RB: 2 on 10/4, one 10/8 and one 11/15 (all AK, JK). The first two **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were on the RB 10/4 (AK, JK), and the first **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was on the MS 10/11 (AK, JK). The last **Gray Catbird** was also on the RB 10/4 (AK, JK). A late **Northern Mockingbird** was in RG 11/8 (AK, JK). Quite nice were 13 **American Pipits** on KR 11/27 (TS).

There were sixteen species of warblers reported. The last **Ovenbird** was on the MS 9/20 (AK, JK). One **Blue-winged Warbler** and a **Black-and-white Warbler** were on the MS 8/16 (AK, JK). Another **Black-and-white Warbler** was at the GL 8/31 (AKe). The only reported **Hooded Warbler** was on the MS 9/13 (AK, JK), and the last **American Redstart** was on the MS 9/20 (AK, JK). The only **Cape May Warbler** was in SGL31 9/6 (MD). **Northern Parulas** included one in RG 8/10 and one on the MS 9/13 (both AK, JK). Sightings at SGL 31 on 9/6 (MD) included 3 **Magnolia Warblers**, 2 **Bay-breasted Warblers**, one **Blackburnian Warbler**, and one **Blackpoll Warbler**. **Chestnut-sided Warblers** were found twice: one on the MS 8/16 (AK, JK) and 2 at SGL 31 on 9/6 (MD). **Black-throated Blue Warblers** were noted three times: one on the MS 9/11, one on the MS 9/20, and one on the RB 10/4 (all AK, JK). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were noted twice: 6 on MR 10/8 (AK, JK) and one on the MS 10/12 (AK, JK). **Black-throated Green Warblers** were also found twice: 2 in SGL31 9/6 (MD) and one on the MS 9/11 (AK, JK).

The last 4 noted **Chipping Sparrows** were on the RB 10/4 (AK, JK). Two **White-crowned Sparrows** on MB 11/5 (AKe) were the only ones reported. Three **Savannah Sparrows** and one **Swamp Sparrow** were on the MS 10/12 (AK, JK). **Dark-eyed Juncos** are found throughout the year in the northern forested part of the County, but in the southern part they disappear during the warmer months. The first found in the south this season was in PX 10/21 (TG).

The season's last **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was on the MS 9/13 (AK, JK), and the last **Indigo Bunting** was on the MS 8/30 (JD). Only two **Eastern Meadowlarks** were noted for the period, in RG 8/10 (AK, JK). Four **Rusty Blackbirds** were a welcome find on the MS 10/31 (AK, JK). Four **Pine Siskins** were in RG 11/15 (AK, JK).

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### Juniata County

Locations: Miffintown River Access (MRA).

A total of 116 species were reported on eBird this season. Two **Black Terns** were spotted over the Juniata River at MRA 8/19 (CK, AT). A **Northern Shrike** was found on an Amish farm in Old Port 10/28 (*fide* AT).

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### Lackawanna County

No compiler.

### Lancaster County

Locations: Conewago Recreation Trail and Wetlands (CRTW), Chestnut Grove Natural Area (CGNA), Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (MCWMA), Muddy Run (MR), Northern Lancaster County Game and Fish Protective Association (NLGFFPA), Octoraro Reservoir (OR), Susquehanna River (SR), Susquehanna River, Conejohela Flats (SRCF), Susquehanna River, Peach Bottom (SRPB), Susquehannock State Park (SSP), Woods Edge Park (WE).

What an awesome season! Highlights included **Cackling Goose, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Marbled Godwit, Ruff, Franklin's Gull, Laughing Gull, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Rufous Hummingbird, Alder Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Marsh Wren, and Dickcissel.**

A **Cackling Goose** was at MCWMA 10/18-25 (ZM, m.ob.). A **Tundra Swan** continued at MCWMA 8/16-10/21 (BC, m.ob.). One was at CGNA 10/30 (ME) and 40 were at MCWMA 11/20 (JT). A blue morph **Snow Goose** was at MCWMA 11/20 (JT). Fifteen **Wood Ducks** were at CGNA 9/9 (BH), 17 were at Riverfront Park 9/23 (MM), and 4 were at MCWMA 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). An **American Wigeon** was at CGNA 9/19 (LB) and up to 4 were at MCWMA 9/26-11/18 (ME, BH, LB, FB). Five **American Black Ducks** were at MCWMA 9/26 (ME). A high count of 40 was made at MCWMA 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). Four **Gadwalls** were at MCWMA 11/27 (DB). Two to four **Northern Shovelers** were at MCWMA 9/26-11/27 (ME, BC, m.ob.). Four **Northern Pintails** were at MCWMA 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). That number grew to six by 11/20 (JT). A **Green-winged Teal** was at a farm pond near East Petersburg 9/18 (SS), and a single was at MCWMA 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). Three **Ring-necked Ducks** appeared at MCWMA 10/2, and increased to 25 by 11/27 (VG, m.ob.). A **Lesser Scaup** was at MCWMA 11/20 (JT). Two **Buffleheads** were at MCWMA 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). By 11/20 there were 10 there (JT). The season closed with over 300 on the SR 11/29 (ME). A **Common Goldeneye** was there as well 11/18-27 (BH, LB, FB, DB). Two **White-winged Scoters** were at MCWMA 11/11 (ZM, BC, TNII). A **Long-tailed Duck** was at MCWMA 11/10-11 (BC, TNII). Two or 3 **Hooded Mergansers** was at MCWMA 11/20-27 (JT, DB). Eight **Common Mergansers** were at Pumping Station Road 9/19 (DHi, BA), and there were as many as 24 at MCWMA 10/18-11/27 (ZM, m.ob.). Three early **Red-breasted Mergansers** were at MCWMA 10/10 (TNII, BC, VP), which were joined by a fourth 10/11 (JF). A male **Ruddy Duck** was on the SRCF 9/20 (ME, LB). Eleven were at MCWMA 10/10 (BC), but by 11/18 the numbers had decreased to only three there (BH, LB, FB).

A **Northern Bobwhite** was in the Ephrata farmlands area 8/8 (SRe). One **Ring-necked Pheasant** was at MCWMA 10/14 (BH), and one was at OR 11/11 (MM, BH, FB).

Three **Red-throated Loons** were on the SR 11/29 (ME) with one remaining the next day (CM). At least a dozen **Common Loons** were on the SR 11/29 (ME). First **Pied-billed Grebes** were 2 at MCWMA 10/10 (BC). A **Horned Grebe** was at MCWMA 10/10-20 (VP, TNII, BC, m.ob.), and 8 were on the SR 11/29 (ME). Two **Double-crested Cormorants** were on the SR at CGNA (BH). Top count was 150 on the SRPB 10/20 (BS), and one was at MCWMA 11/27 (DB). Two **Great Egrets** were still at MCWMA 10/14 (BH). A **Little Blue Heron** was at MCWMA 8/1 (VP), one continued on the SRCF 8/2 (DH), and yet another was on the CRTW 8/2-7 (LC, DHi, TNII). Last **Green Heron** was at MCWMA 10/25 (WD). An immature **Black-crowned Night-heron** was at MCWMA 11/1-8 (ME, JF, m.ob.).

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** were noted at SGL 156 on 9/16 (SR), CRTW 11/5 (BH), and OR 11/11 (MM, BH, FB). There were 30 **Bald Eagles** on the SRCF 8/15 (ML, LB). Some of them were playing by pouncing on short logs or snail shells. An **Osprey** was at MCWMA 10/10-19 (BC, DB). A **Northern Harrier** was at the Lancaster Airport 8/4 (GS). Others were one at the CGNA 8/30 (DK) and one at MCWMA 10/10-11/20 (BC, BH, JT). A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was at the CGNA 8/23-9/9 (ZM, ZA, BH). A juvenile **Broad-winged Hawk** was on Pumping Station Road 9/2 (SR).

**Soras** at CGNA included one 8/23-30 (ZM, TNII, ME, ML), 3 from 8/29-9/6 (ML, DS), and one 9/9 (BH). A **Virginia Rail** was at the CGNA 8/22-9/9 (TNII, ME, ML, m.ob.), and 2 were at Riverfront Park 9/23 (MM). **American Coots** were at MCWMA beginning 10/14 (BH, DB).

A **Black-bellied Plover** was on the SRCF 9/14 (ME), 2 were on Colebrook Road 10/4 (SS), and one was on the SRPB 10/27 (BS). Up to 4 **American Golden-Plovers** were at the sod farm in Manheim 8/16-20 (ME, DH), 10 were on the SRCF 9/14 (ME), and one was at a farm pond near East Petersburg 9/18 (SS). Three **Semipalmated Plovers** were on the SRCF 9/14 (ME). Two were on Colebrook Road 10/4 (SS). Five **Killdeer**

were at MCWMA 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). Last **Greater Yellowlegs** was on the SRCF 11/14 (EW). Fifteen **Lesser Yellowlegs** were on the SRCF 9/14 (ME) and a late bird was at Turtle Pond 11/25 (FH, BHa). Several **Solitary Sandpipers** were at WE 8/18 (SS); last was one at the Alcoa Marsh 10/14 (DHi). An extremely late **Spotted Sandpiper** was at Riverfront Park 11/14 (EW). Up to 8 **Upland Sandpipers** were in the Ephrata farmlands area 8/1-14 (BC, m. ob.), up to 11 were at the Lancaster Airport 8/1-16 (VG, BO, ZM, LB, m.ob.), and one was at the sod farm in Manheim 8/22 (ML, FB). A **Marbled Godwit** was on the SRCF 8/21-28 (ME, ML, TNII, m.ob.). A female **Ruff** was at Riverfront Park 9/18 (TR). A **Ruddy Turnstone** was on the SRCF 8/20 (DH), and a **Sanderling** was there 9/14 (ME). A juvenile **Stilt Sandpiper** was on the SRCF 8/28 (ME), and 2 Stilts were on the SRCF 9/14 (ME). Eight **Dunlins** were on the SRPB 10/20 (BS), and 2 were on the SRPB 10/27 (BS). A total of 24 **Least Sandpipers** were on the SRCF 9/14 (ME); last was one on the CRTW 10/22 (DHi). **Baird's Sandpipers** included one at the SRCF 8/7-8 (ME, VP), 2 at the sod farm in Manheim 8/17 (TNII, ME), and 2 on the CRTW 9/15 (DHi). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at the SRCF 8/28-9/14 (ME). Last was one on the SRPB 10/27 (BS). Several **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were at WE 8/18 (SS), 8 were on the SRCF 9/14 (ME), and late one was on the SRCF 10/18 (ME). A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was at the sod farm in Manheim 8/22 (ML, FB). Two were there 9/1 (DH). A **Long-billed Dowitcher** was on the SRCF 9/14 (ME, m.ob.), and another was on the CRTW 10/21 (DHi). An **American Woodcock** was at MCWMA 10/10 (BC) and one was flushed from an Akron yard 10/24 (BC). A **Red-necked Phalarope** was at Prescott Rd. 10/3 (LB).

#### S.A.

A banded **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was spotted on the SRCF 8/7. It was reported to the Bird Banding Lab, which confirmed that the bird was banded on 31 January 2015 in Maranhao, Brazil. This bird flew some 5000 miles from the time it was banded.

A juvenile **Franklin's Gull** was at MCWMA 11/14 (BC), and an adult and a first winter bird were at OR 11/22 (TR). First **Bonaparte's Gull** was on the SRCF 8/11 (ME, ML). A nice count of 33 was made on the SR 11/29 (ME). A juvenile **Laughing Gull** was on the SRCF 8/22-23 (CC, MD, ME, ML, m.ob.). A **Herring Gull** was at MCWMA 10/10 (BC). A **Common Tern** was on the SRCF 8/11 (ME, ML).

A **Eurasian Collared-Dove** was at Willow Street 8/15 (BS). A **Common Nighthawk** was feeding with **Tree Swallows** at Riverfront Park 10/6 (ME), and one was there 10/12 (TNII, VP, ME). Up to 4 **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were at Peach Bottom 10/1-16 (BS). An adult female **Rufous Hummingbird** was banded at a home in Quarryville 11/25. The bird had been at this location 10/15-11/30 (SW, m. obs.). A **Red-headed Woodpecker** was at SGL 220 10/7 (LG), one was in the Hickory/Sportsman Road area 10/23-11/16 (BC, VP, TNII), and 2 were on Long Lane 10/23-11/24 (AH). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was at MCWMA 10/10-11/18 (BC, BH, LB, FB), and 3 were at the OR 11/11 (MM, BH, FB). A **Merlin** was at Riverfront Park 8/15 (TNII), one was on Umbletown Road 9/12-10/1 (PF, CC), and one was at Turtle Pond 11/25 (FH, BHa).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at MCWMA 9/14 (BC). A late **Eastern Phoebe** was at a farm in Lancaster 11/11 (DS). An **Eastern Kingbird** was at CGNA 9/7-9 (PB, LB, m.ob.), and 5 were at MCWMA 9/12-14 (BC). An **Alder Flycatcher** continued at MCWMA 8/1 (JFi, LB). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at SGL 156 on 9/16 (SR), and one was at the Strasburg Community Park 9/16 (TR). SGL 156 held up to 20 **Red-eyed Vireos** 9/5-16 (SR). Last **Blue-headed Vireo** was at Noel Dorwart Park 10/17 (JS).

**Common Raven** was frequently reported: one at SGL 156 from 8/16-11/29 (ME, m.ob.), 2 along the ridge at Peach Bottom 9/3 (BS), one calling bird over a yard in Gap 9/18 (CC), one over an Akron home 9/26 (ZM), one calling at Susquehannock State Park 10/6 (TA), one at CGNA 10/11-11/15 (ML, m.ob.), 5 at Safe Harbor and one at MCWMA 11/8 (ME), 2 at SH 11/4, and 2 at MCWMA 11/21 (TNII, ME). Two **Purple Martins** were at CGNA 9/9 (BH). Seventy **Tree Swallows** were at MCWMA 10/10 (BC), and a late bird was at a farm in Lancaster 11/11 (DS). Five late **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were at the Bainbridge Islands 10/18 (ME, EW, ML). On the same date, 2 were at Chickies Rock County Park (ML). Four **Bank Swallows** were at the Bainbridge Islands 10/1 (ME, TNII), and an even later bird was there 10/18 (ME, EW, ML). Last **Barn Swallow** was at the Bainbridge Islands 10/18 (ME, EW, ML).

A **Brown Creeper** was at MCWMA 10/10 (BC), and 2 were there 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). Last **House Wren** was at Farming Field in Willow Street 10/20 (WY). A **Marsh Wren** was at Riverfront Park 10/6 (ME), and one was on the Bainbridge Islands 10/18 (ME, EW, ML). A **Winter Wren** was at a home in Gap 11/17 (PF), and another was at MCWMA 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was at SGL 156 on 9/5 (LB, SR, BH), and one

was at MCWMA 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). Last **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was at Silver Mine Park 9/23 (AW). Four **Veeries** were at Pumping Station Road 9/2 (SR) and one was calling on SGL 156 on 9/5 (SR). Two **Swainson's Thrushes** were at the powerline, west of Pinch Road 9/16 (RM), and 2 were at MCWMA 10/10 (BC). A **Hermit Thrush** was at SGL 156 on 9/16 (FB, SR, LB), one was at the OR 11/11 (MM, BH, FB), and one was feeding on Honeysuckle berries along Laurel Road 11/18 (SS). Last **Gray Catbird** was along Laurel Road 11/22 (SS). An **American Pipit** flew over the SRCF 8/19 (DH), and one was at MCWMA 9/16 (CW).

One **Orange-crowned Warbler** was in the Speedwell Forge area 9/12 (WD). A **Nashville Warbler** was on SGL 156 on 9/5 (SR). Two **Northern Parulas** were on SGL 156 on 9/5 (SR), and one was there 9/16 (SR). A **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was on Pumping Station Road 8/28 (SS). An outstanding total of 18 were on SGL 156 on 9/5 (SR), where the species was confirmed as a breeder. A late **Magnolia Warbler** was at St. Mary's Cemetery 10/17 (BM), and a very late **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was on Pumping Station Road 10/25 (JL). Two **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were in a yard in Gap 10/1 (PF) were first. A total of 25 **Black-throated Green Warblers** were on SGL 156 on 9/5 (SR) and a late one was at Noel Dorwart Park 10/15 (SM). A **Blackburnian Warbler** was on SGL 156 on 9/5 (SR). **Palm Warblers** were recorded at Riverfront Park 9/23 (MM), 4 were in Gap 10/5 (PF), and 2 were at MCWMA 10/10-14 (BC, BH). A **Prothonotary Warbler** was on the SRCF 9/5 (EW). A **Connecticut Warbler** was at SGL 220 on 9/23 (BC), and perhaps the same bird was calling there 9/27 (BC, EW). Another was at Noel Dorwart Park 10/6 (SM). A **Mourning Warbler** was at SGL 156 on 9/1 (BC). Last **Common Yellowthroat** was at Noel Dorwart Park 10/27 (SM). **Canada Warbler** included singles on Pumping Station Road 9/2 (SR), at SGL 156 on 9/5 (SR), and in the Speedwell Forge Area 9/12 (WD).

A **Vesper Sparrow** was at SSP 8/2-7 (TA, LB), one was at MR 8/6 (TA), and one was on Umbletown Road in Gap 10/21 (PF). Two **Nelson's Sparrows** were on the Bainbridge islands 9/30 (DH, VP). Five were there 10/1 (ME, TNII). Two were at CGNA 10/7 (VP, DH). Three **Fox Sparrows** were at the OR 11/11 (MM, BH, FB), one was along Laurel Road 11/18-22 feeding on honeysuckle berries (SS), and another was at MCWMA 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at MCWMA 10/14 (BH) and another was at the Hickory/Sportsman Road area 11/18 (BC). At least 35 **White-throated Sparrows** had gathered at MCMWA by 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). A **White-crowned Sparrow** was at SGL 220 on 10/7 (LG), one was at MCWMA 10/10 (BC), and one was at OR 11/11 (MM, BH, FB). An early **Dark-eyed Junco** was at St. Mary's/Lancaster Cemetery 9/28 (BM).

A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was still at NLCGFFA 10/11 (EW). Three **Blue Grosbeaks** were at CGNA 9/9 (BH) and one was there 10/7-9 (ML, LB). Three **Indigo Buntings** were still at MCWMA 10/10 (BC). A **Dickcissel** was singing at the CRTW 8/17 (LB), and a female was at CGNA 9/9 (LB, BH, PH, PF). A female **Orchard Oriole** was at CGNA 8/23-9/7 (ZM, ZA, LB, & PB). Twenty **Bobolinks** were at CGNA 9/9 (BH), and 7 were still there 10/11 (ML) with one remaining to 10/21 (ML). A flock of 2000 **Common Grackles** was at SGL 156 on 9/5 (SR).

**Purple Finch** was recorded at Riverfront Park 9/23 (MM). Approximately 10 were on Seglock Road 11/1 (SS), and 10 were at MCWMA 11/18 (BH, LB, FB). Two **Pine Siskins** were at MCWMA 10/7 (MT), 3 were on Umbletown Road 10/23 (PF), and 10 were on Seglock Road 11/1 (SS).

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#### Lawrence County

Locations: Black Swamp (BS), Copper Road Marsh (CRM), Volant Strip Mines (VSM), Vosler Road, Washington Twp. (VR), Wampum-New Galilee Road Marsh (WNGM).

A very nice count of 138 **Wood Ducks** at CRM 10/2 (MV) was made easy to get exactly right by a passing **Bald Eagle** that flushed the birds and

got them to gather together right in front of the observer. Two **Gadwall** at BS 10/16 (MJ) and a **Northern Shoveler** there 9/20 (MJ) represented the only reports of either species. **American Black Ducks** were hard to come by; reports were limited to one at BS 9/20 (MJ) and 8 at CRM 10/31 (MD). **Blue-winged Teal** were sporadically reported 9/18-10/4 (all MV). Three **Northern Pintails** were at CRM 10/31 (MD). Thirteen **Green-winged Teal** at BS 9/7 (ST, AK) was a nice total for the date. CRM held good numbers of them in Oct, including 22 on 10/2 (MV) and 50 on 10/31 (MD, PL). Besides 3 **Hooded Mergansers** at CRM 10/31 (MD, PL) and 21 **Common Mergansers** at the Glacial Sands gravel pond on Rte. 108 on 10/4 (MJ), bay and sea ducks were completely absent.

As usual **Ring-necked Pheasants** were reported regularly around BS (m.ob.). A **Double-crested Cormorant** at BS 9/26 (MJ) was unusual for the location. A **Great Egret** at BS 9/18 (MV, ST, AK) was the only one reported. **Osprey** breeds in the county; last was one at BS 9/27. Besides the bird that flushed the Wood Ducks on 10/3, the only other **Bald Eagle** reported was another (or the same) at CRM 10/31 (MD). **Northern Harriers** continued their strong presence at VSM through the season (m.ob.).

A **Virginia Rail** at BS 9/18 (ST) was a nice find. **Sora** is a little more common there; one was located at the swamp 8/8 this season (AH, PM). **Common Gallinules** were reported at both BS (AH, PM) and WNGM in Aug (MV, GM). **Sandhill Cranes** are still the main reason birders visit *Lawrence*. A nice early season total of 16 was made on Lake Rd., Washington Twp. 8/23 (MV), and the top count was 26 at BS 10/29 (RN).

The VR pond was the main attractor for shorebirds this season. The top highlights there were one **American Golden-Plover** 9/18 (MV) and one juvenile **Stilt Sandpiper** 9/5 (MV). The pond also held top counts of **Killdeer**: 97 on 9/25 (MV) and 81 on 10/23 (MV). Reports of **Greater Yellowlegs** were of 2 at Nashua Rd., Pulaski Twp. 9/7 (RW) and one at VR 10/23 (MV), and **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at Nashua Rd. 9/7 (RW) and at BS 9/20-27 (MJ, et al.). Small numbers of **Solitary Sandpipers** (up to 3) were seen at four locations through 9/18 (m.ob.). **Pectoral Sandpiper** was noted at Nashua Rd. 9/7 (RW) and VR 9/25 and 10/23 (MV). Another highlight was a juvenile **Long-billed Dowitcher** at BS 9/18-20 (MV), arriving right around the beginning of that species' typical migration window in this region. Two **Ring-billed Gulls** were at CRM 10/31 (MD).

The only report of **Short-eared Owl** at their VSM/BS wintering grounds was a single bird there 11/9 (RN, DK). Two **Common Nighthawks** were over BS 9/18 (ST, AK). **American Kestrels** were noted frequently throughout the county and season. A **Merlin** was at Harlansburg 10/4 (AP).

As is typical, aside from grassland sparrows, passerines were barely reported. Indeed, just six species of warbler were reported for the entire season, stark evidence of how far *Lawrence's* woodlots are from birders' minds. **Purple Martin** and **Bank Swallow** noted at BS 8/8 (AH, PM), and 6 more **Bank Swallows** were at VSM 8/16 (GK, MAK). Sixteen **American Pipits** were at CRM 10/2 (MV). **Palm Warblers** included 3 at BS 9/29 (ST) and 2 at VSM 10/4 (AP). Last **Henslow's Sparrows** were reported at VSM 8/16 (GK, MAK). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at 9/29 (ST). A flock of 20 **Rusty Blackbirds** was noted at the West Park Nature Center 10/31 (MD, PL). Nice blackbird flocks included 200 **Common Grackles** at BS 9/18 (ST, AK) and 64 **Brown-headed Cowbirds** at VR 9/5 (MV).

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## Lebanon County

Locations: Camp Shand Powerline (CSP), Fort Indiantown Gap (FIG), Fox and Prescott Rd. (FP), Governor Dick Park (GDP), Lion's Lake (LL), Marquette Lake (ML), Memorial Lake State Park (MLSP), Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (MC), Quittapahilla Wetlands Preserve (QW), Reistville and Prescott Rd. Ponds (RPP), Second Mountain Hawkwatch (2Mtn), Spring Hill Acres (SHA), Swatara State Park (SSP).

Seven *flavirostris* **Greater White-fronted Geese** were a great find at LL 11/14 (TN). One remained there 11/15 (R&PP). The seven, a mix of two adults and five juveniles, were present again at LL 11/23-25 (TB, AW, FH, RCM, m.ob.). They are accidental here in November. A **Cackling Goose** was at LL 11/15-16 (R&PP, RCM), and again on 11/27 (TB, NM). Two **swan sp.** were at RPP 9/11 (RCM). Accidental in Sep were a **Tundra Swan** at RPP 9/13 (TN) and a fly-over there 9/29 (RCM). Up to nine **Blue-winged Teal** were at FP 9/3-10/15 (RCM, DB, TN, TB, SS, m.ob.), and 9 more were at MC 9/28 (RCM). Twenty-two **Northern Shovelers** provided a

good count at FP 9/11 (RCM, TB).

Ten **Ruffed Grouse** flushed along Goldmine Rd, in SGL 211 on 11/23 (IG), when the observer stopped to inspect a road killed grouse. Together with the fresh road kill, this provided a new county high count of 11.

An adult **Northern Goshawk** was a nice find at SGL 145 on 10/30 (SH, RCM, m.ob.). Forty-seven **Broad-winged Hawks**, with 22 in one kettle, were a nice tally at SGL 145 on 9/25 (SH, RCM, m.ob.). An adult **Golden Eagle** was an unusual sight at GDP 10/30 (RCM).

Two **Virginia Rails**, an adult and juvenile, provided a first county breeding record at FIG 8/12 (IG). A freshly killed **Virginia Rail** was found along the road in Colebrook 9/29 (DO *fide* SH). A **Sora** was at QW 9/11 (TB, TN). Accidental in October was a **Sora** at FP 10/1 (AK). Four **Sandhill Cranes** flew high over 2Mtn 9/21 (IG, AKO).

Up to five **American Golden-Plovers** were at FP 9/4-9 (TB, KB, GR, TN, RCM, m.ob.), and one was found there 9/20 (SS). A **Semipalmated Plover** was at FP 8/11-12 (TB, SW, RCM). Four were at QW 8/11 (TB, TK), with one there 8/15 (R&PP). Rare in early August were single **Greater Yellowlegs** seen at Reistville 8/6 (RCM), and QW 8/12 (RCM). A **Willet** (with an injured leg) provided a third county record at FP 10/11-16 (SS, TN, JF, RCM, IG, m.ob.). A juvenile **Western Sandpiper** was at RPP 9/29 (RCM). The only **White-rumped Sandpiper** of the season was at FP 10/12 (BC, JF). Two **Dunlins** were at FP 10/12-13 (LB, BC, RCM, SS). A juvenile **Red-necked Phalarope** provided a tenth county record at FP 10/1-3 (AK, ME, TN, TB, IG, m.ob.). Eight immature Lesser **Black-backed Gulls** were reported from LL 11/16 (RCM).

S.A.

A heavily spotted **Snowy Owl** was seen at the east end of Lebanon City, on the roof of the Home Depot at around 4:30 PM on 10/24 (BS, DB, J&KL, FH, MS). It was reportedly seen as early as 16:00 by the employees of Home Depot. It was last seen departing from the roof of the adjacent Dunham's store at 21:30 (SW, JD). It was the first **Snowy Owl** reported this fall south of the St. Lawrence, followed by eBird observations the next day in Illinois and Nova Scotia, and one on Cape Cod 10/27 (*fide* FH). This represented the 16th record for the county and a new early date.

A **Common Nighthawk** was seen near Grantville 8/24 (TB), and 2 were there 9/7 (TB, KB). Five were flying over Annville 8/25 (TN), and one was over Halfway Dr. 9/3 (TK). Up to three **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were calling at dawn on 2Mtn 9/11-14 (TB). An estimated 250 **Chimney Swifts** funneled into a chimney in Annville at sunset 10/6 (TN). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were found with regularity at FIG 8/21-10/20 (IG, TN, FH). Five were seen caching acorns in dead oaks at FIG 9/29 (IG). Within FIG, **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were reported at ML 8/21 (SW) and 9/5 (TB). One was also reported at Camp Strauss 9/22 (TK), and a juvenile at 2Mtn 9/22 (MC, m.ob.). Up to two immature **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were found at a home near Schaefferstown 8/24-9/17 (DB, FB, RCM). A **Merlin** was chasing shorebirds at FP 9/4 (TN, JF), and seen at nearby RPP 10/3 (BC, JF). In the same general area, A **Merlin** was feeding in a tree along Cherry Ln. on 9/5, 9/28, and 10/5 (SS). A **Merlin** was also seen along Goldmine Rd 11/25 (AL). Two **Peregrine Falcons** were fairly early at 2Mtn 8/23 (DS, m.ob.). Another was at MC 8/31 (RCM), and an immature was fairly late at 2Mtn 11/21 (SC, RCM, m.ob.).

Single **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were found at MC 8/24 (RCM); at FIG 9/16 (IG, TN); and at SGL 145 on 9/18 (RCM, EH). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at the Iron Valley Golf Course in Cornwall on a new county early date 8/16 (AA). One was also found at the CSP 8/26 (TB). A **Least Flycatcher** was at SSP 9/1 (TN), and 2 there 10/1 (AK) set a new county late date. **Least Flycatchers** were also found at 2Mtn 9/3 (SW), and at SGL 145 on 9/25 (SH, RCM, m.ob.). Single **Philadelphia Vireos** were seen at SSP 9/15 (TN) and 9/18 (JD, TB); and at 2Mtn 9/17 (IG). Uncommon away from 2Mtn were two **Common Ravens** at SGL 145 on 9/11 (SH, RCM, m.ob.). Seventeen **Common Ravens** were reported at 2Mtn 11/9 (DS, m.ob.). **Purple Martins** were sighted at 2Mtn 9/26 (RCM, m.ob.) and 9/27 (MC). Twenty-three **Bank Swallows** provided an excellent count at Fox Rd, 8/6 (RCM). A **Winter Wren** was at CSP 10/10 (JH). A **Marsh Wren** provided a tenth county record at QW 9/18 (TB).

A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** flight call was heard at SSP 9/17 (IG, JD). Atop 2Mtn at dawn, three **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were heard 9/12 (TB). Many **Swainson's Thrushes** were also heard in migration at 2Mtn 9/11-12 (TB). Four **Swainson's Thrushes** were found on a new county early date at GDP 8/14 (SH, RCM, m.ob.). A cold weather **Catbird** was a nice find at LL 11/17 (AL), and again on 11/27 (ZM). An **American Pipit** provided a new county early date and first record for Aug at QW 8/18 (TN). Six **American Pipits** were at FP 10/12 (BC, JH, DH). A good count of 325 **Cedar**

**Waxwings** was made at SGL 145 on 10/30 (SH, RCM, m.ob.).

A **Cape May Warbler** was at SSP on a new early date 8/27 (TB), and 2 were at FIG 8/28 (IG, RP). The Box Car Rocks area of SGL 211 is often a good location for **Cape May Warblers**. Six were there 8/31 (TN). Three **Bay-breasted Warblers** were at SHA 8/31 (JH). Single **Bay-breasted Warblers** were at SSP 9/11 (TN), and along Iron Valley Dr. 10/4 (JF). A **Cerulean Warbler** was a nice fall find at SSP 8/27 (TN). A **Connecticut Warbler** was at the lower end of SSP 9/15 (TN), and an adult was in the mid-section of SSP 9/18 (TB, SR, SRa). A first-year **Connecticut Warbler** was in a tree line bordering a goldenrod field at SSP 9/21-26 (IG, JD, SR, MD, ZM). Two first-year **Connecticut Warblers** were there 9/23 (TB), which tied the county high count. This was the third consecutive fall that this specific location has hosted this species. A **Connecticut Warbler** was found at Lenni Lenape Park 9/24 (TK). A **Mourning Warbler** was at SHA 9/13 (JH). The only **Wilson's Warbler** of the fall was at FIG 9/16 (IG, TN).

A **Fox Sparrow** was at MLSP 11/2 and 11/5 (TN), and one was at MC 11/4 (AH). Up to 3 **Lincoln's Sparrows** were at SSP 9/18-10/1 (TB, JD, SR, MD, AK). Others included two at SGL 80 on 9/23 (TB), two at FIG 9/29 (IG), and one at CSP 10/10 (JH). Three **Blue Grosbeaks** were at FIG 8/21 (IG), and one was there 8/28 (IG, RP). Forty-eight **Bobolinks** in 14 flocks flew from *Lebanon* into *Lancaster* at MC 8/31 (RCM).

**Purple Finches** were thinly reported, with three at FIG 11/18 (DM), and one near Grantville 11/25 (TB, KB). Two **Pine Siskins** were in a weedy field near Quentin on a new county early date 9/17 (MD). A **Pine Siskin** was at SHA 10/17 (JH). Two **Pine Siskins** were reported at FIG 11/18 (DM), and one at LL 11/27 (ZM).

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### Lehigh County

Locations: Bake Oven Knob Hawk Watch (BOK), Fogelsville Quarry (FQ).

The total number of species reported this season was 183. Average mean temperatures from Allentown were above the 30-year norm across the season (+5.8° F in September and +5.3° F in November). Precipitation was below norm in every month of the reporting period, resulting in an uncharacteristically warm and dry fall season devoid of unusual weather events, as well as of suitable shorebird habitat. This report includes information posted to the PABIRDS listserv and to eBird. Notes and totals from the 55th hawk watching season at Bake Oven Knob were gleaned, in part, from the HMANA Hawk Watching Exchange listserv, as reported by the official BOK counter and compiler (KF and BH, respectively). Additional BOK reports came from individual observers. BOK totals are unofficial, final results are published in a separate article in this issue *Pennsylvania Birds*.

**Snow Geese** did not arrive in significant numbers by the end of Nov, so the only reports were of single tag-along birds with flocks of **Canada Geese**. There were two reports of **Cackling Goose**, from Fogelsville Quarry 11/26, and New Tripoli 11/29 (FD, JH). A **Tundra Swan** was seen daily 11/20-30 at FQ. Six **Gadwalls** were at FQ 11/14. The annual wintering **American Wigeon** pair arrived at Dorney Pond by 10/29. **American Black Ducks** were not reported wintering at Dorney Pond this fall, but two were at FQ 11/14 (KD). The only **Blue-winged Teal** reported was at Nestle Way in Upper Macungie 8/29 (JH). **Northern Shoveler** can be hard to find in the county, so three reports were more than hoped for; max count was 5 at Nestle Way 9/7. A **Black Scoter** at Leaser Lake was a great county bird for many observers 11/19-21 (FD, m.ob.), though it proved to be hard to find at times for some chasers.

Single **Ruffed Grouse** were at Bake Oven Knob 9/25 and 11/1 (KF, EB). A somewhat late **Double-crested Cormorant** was at FQ 11/1 (CH). **Common Loons** were recorded as flyovers only, mainly from BOK. Seasonal totals at BOK included 308 **Osprey**, 264 **Bald Eagles**, 2354 **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, 14 **Northern Goshawks**, 116 **Red-shouldered Hawks**, 5021 **Broad-winged Hawks**, 1105 **Red-tailed Hawks**, 86 **Golden Eagles**, and 40 **Peregrine Falcons**. The peak Broad-winged passage was 9/17 and 9/18, with 1237 and 1026 birds respectively. In total, 11,168

raptors were tallied migrating past BOK this season.

The only shorebird of note was a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** at Leaser Lake 8/11 (FD). Conditions in the county were unfavorable for shorebird viewing this season, resulting in just seven of the most common species reported. **Lesser Black-backed Gull** arrived 10/31 at Lake Muhlenberg and Dorney Pond (JF, JH). A **Great Black-backed Gull** was notable at Leaser Lake 10/10 (FD, CH). Terns are a real prize in *Lehigh*, so 2 **Black Terns** at Nestle Way 8/21 and 2 **Forster's Terns** at Leaser Lake 8/10 were both quite notable (FD).

A female **Rufous Hummingbird** came to a feeder at Best Station 10/16-21 (JG), where it was trapped and banded 10/20 (SW). Selasphorus hummingbirds have now been noted in the county in eight of the past nine fall seasons. **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were at BOK 8/17 and 8/30 (CHU, JH) and at Trexler Nature Preserve 9/11 (CH). **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was reported twice 8/1 and 9/3, and **Least Flycatcher** four times 8/12-9/24 (FD, CH, m.ob.). **Philadelphia Vireo** was noted four times 9/13-19 (m.ob.). A flock of 25 **Common Ravens** at BOK 10/21 (KF) must have been an impressive sight! A **Cliff Swallow** mentioned in the daily notes for BOK 11/13 would be a new regional late date by almost one month, leaving one to wonder if this might have actually been something more unusual. A **Marsh Wren** was a nice find at Leaser Lake 8/14 (FD). Two **Gray Catbirds** at Walking Purchase Park 11/28 were late seasonal outliers by five weeks (JH). A **Snow Bunting** graced the BOK hawk watch 11/12 (KF). Of the 26 warbler species reported this season, the only unusual reports were of **Connecticut Warblers** 8/28 at Jordan Creek Parkway (JH) and 9/13 at Leaser Lake (FD). The only report of **Rusty Blackbird** was a small flock of 11 at Leaser Lake 10/26 (KD). There were a half dozen reports of **Purple Finch** 10/4-11/28, with a max of six 11/15 (JF, m.obs.). **Red Crossbill** was reported twice from Leaser Lake, first 2 on 10/31 followed by 4 on 12/25; both were brief but well described encounters (CH, FD).

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### Luzerne County

Locations: Beech Mountain Lakes (BML), Forty Fort Rec Fields (FFRF), Frances Slocum State Park (FSSP), Harveys Lake (HL), Nescopeck State Park (NSP), Plymouth Flats (PF), Ricketts Glen State Park (RGSP), Susquehanna River (SR), Wilkes-Barre (WB).

The fall birding season began in Aug with some exciting sightings, most of which were from PF. These included a *Luzerne* first, several county rarities, and a handful of other irregular species. For the second straight year, Aug and Sep were drier than average, and Sep started with extremely high temperatures that dried out shorebird hotspots, and temporarily halted migration. Oct's weather was relatively average, but a warm and dry Nov with frequent south winds kept bodies of water north of Pennsylvania unfrozen throughout the month, keeping most waterfowl north of the state.

HL generally becomes a waterfowl hotspot by the end of Nov, but this fall the lake was devoid of bird activity for the most part. One notable exception to this was an observation of 6 **Brant** 10/9 (RK), the first for the county in several years. Another scarce migrant, a single **Gadwall** was reported 10/14 from Ross Twp. (BM, RM). Two **Northern Shovelers** at BML 10/17 represented a first for the species at that location (JD). Another **Northern Shoveler** was present 10/4 at the "Bon-Ton Pond" in Wyoming (JS). Diving ducks, which are typically easy to find, were also more scarce than normal this fall. A highlight was 4 **Common Goldeneyes** at FSSP 11/14, a rare species for the location (BT). Each fall a sizable raft of **Ruddy Ducks** congregates at BML. This year an impressive high count of 174 was recorded 11/1 (JD). Small numbers of the more common ducks were reported around *Luzerne* throughout the period, but not a single scap or scoter among them.

An odd report, which almost certainly referred to recently released birds, was a male and female **Northern Bobwhite** at FSSP 9/6 (JH). It is however, important to monitor this species considering the recent implementation of a reintroduction program in neighboring New Jersey, and plans for reintroduction in Pennsylvania.

A very unexpected sighting from the scrub oak barrens on a ridge top in Laurel Run, was a diminutive **Least Bittern** 9/11 (RK) miles from water perched in a shrub. This represented one of only a few records for *Luzerne*. Continuing the trend from the summer season, waders were abundant at PF through Sep. The highest counts of both **Great Blue Herons** and **Great Egrets** were around 40 birds each in the beginning of Sep. The juvenile **Little Blue Heron** originally found in Jul continued until at least 8/11 (JD,

JH, RK, SG). A **Glossy Ibis** at PF 8/22-9/11 (JoG, JeG) was the first for the location in 15 years according to eBird data. The only raptor of note was a juvenile **Northern Harrier** at PF from 8/5 through much of the period (JD).

Twelve species of shorebirds were observed, all of them at PF. The only **Semipalmated Plover** was seen 8/21-25 (JD). The shorebird highlight of the fall was the county's first **Willet**, at PF throughout the day 8/11 but not thereafter (JD, JH, SG, RK). This bird was the expected western subspecies, as the eastern subspecies rarely leaves its Atlantic coastal enclaves even as it migrates south. A **Baird's Sandpiper** was another one day wonder at PF 8/25 (JD, RK). **Pectoral Sandpiper**, sometimes difficult to find in the county, was observed on multiple occasions from both PF and FFRF. Rounding out the shorebird observations was a late **Short-billed Dowitcher** at PF 10/9 (RK). Gulls are relatively scarce in the county, with the only noteworthy report this season a single **Bonaparte's Gull** at BML 11/12 (JD). The only terns of the period were 2 **Caspian Terns** migrating past FFRF 8/6 (JD).

The lack of **Common Nighthawks** during the breeding season was concerning, but over 50 were observed migrating at the Wyoming Valley Airport in Forty Fort 9/4 (JS). Perhaps the most improbable sighting of the period was an adult male **Rufous Hummingbird** photographed in a private yard in Mountaintop 8/1 (BZ). Attempts to band the bird were unsuccessful as it only remained for one day. This property previously hosted a **Rufous Hummingbird** that was banded several years ago. The **Red-headed Woodpecker** at BML from the summer season was last heard 8/16 (JD).

The only report of **Olive-sided Flycatcher** for the period was from NSP 8/19 (JD), a reliable location for this species in the fall. A less reliable species, **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was also at NSP 9/4 (JD). The first **Northern Shrike** reported in *Luzerne* in almost three years came was noted in the village of Upper Lehigh in Butler Twp. 11/13 (JL). The only location to host **Philadelphia Vireo** this fall was NSP 9/8-16 (JD).

A **Barn Swallow** at PF 10/11 probably established a new late date for the county, at least according to eBird data (JD). A mild November paved the way for some late records, including a **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** at the Susquehanna Wetlands in Salem Twp. 11/16 (JD) and a **Gray Catbird** that first showed up at FSSP 11/26 (BT). More seasonable was the only **Gray-cheeked Thrush** of the fall, at NSP 10/1 (JD).

As was the case with many other uncommon migrants, nearly all of the irregular warblers seen during the fall season were recorded from NSP. Always difficult to find in *Luzerne*, a **Golden-winged Warbler** at NSP 9/3 was an exciting discovery (JD). **Blue-winged Warbler** breeds in the county, but is not found regularly during fall migration. One was at NSP 8/19 (JD). A **Mourning Warbler** was at NSP 8/29 (JD).

The top sparrow for the season was a **Clay-colored Sparrow** at PF 10/9 (RK). **Vesper Sparrows** were observed on several occasions in Oct at PF and FFRF (RK, JS). **White-crowned**, **Lincoln's**, and **Savannah Sparrows** were observed regularly from both of these locations as well (m.ob.). The only report of **Rusty Blackbirds** was a small flock of 15 at the Susquehanna Wetlands in Salem Township 11/15 (JH).

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### **Lycoming County**

Locations: Mill Hill Road (MMR), Market Street Bridge (MSB), Mill Street (MS), Pine Creek (PC), Route 15 overlook (R15O), State Game Lands 252 (SGL 252), Susquehanna River West Branch (SR), Susquehanna River Walk at Williamsport (SRW), White Deer Hawk Watch (WDHW), Williamsport (WP), Williamsport Water Company (WWC).

The only report of **Tundra Swan** was 17 passing over the ridge 11/14 (BB, DvB). A **Brant** was found below the Market Street Bridge 10/1 (MD, JK). But waterfowl were notably scarce this fall. The only report of **Long-tailed Duck** was of 12 at RVL 11/12 (DvB). A total of 13 **Great Egrets** were counted this season.

The inquiring mind of one observer (DB) helped flush out two more bird stories this season which had been previously overlooked, and in such disparate arenas as shorebirds and raptors. Both were happening under our noses, right in the valley of the SR.

The first highlight of the fall has been largely overlooked but was looming over the valley for years. Previous attempts at hawk watching from points around the WDHW had mixed success, but the most obvious site, the Route 15 overlook, provides a view of the valley and the notch in the ridge. The fall **Broad-winged Hawk** migration demonstrated that southbound raptors could be seen there when large kettles were observed: over 100 on

9/13 (BB, DvB), over 400 on 9/16, and 626 in 3.5 hours 9/17 (DvB). With this, the R15O was christened a hawk-watch! A variety of other raptors were seen after Broadwings moved through, until an early **Golden Eagle** was photographed flying over the SRW 10/17 (DvB) and then 2 that day were seen from the R15O (DvB, EH, MD). Other scattered reports Golden Eagle included one from MS 10/21 (DvB), one from Muncy 10/25 (AK), but regular counts continued at R15O with a peak of 8 on 10/23, and continued with 5 on 11/14 and 6 on 11/20 (DvB, BB). This was clearly more Golden Eagles than previously reported in the county. R15O provided a variety of other raptors and other birds during its 2-month fling.

Shorebirds are traditionally not widely reported in *Lycoming*. The occasional migrant had generally been associated with severe weather events until the extraordinary 2014 season led to the discovery of a few sites at which shorebirds stopped for brief periods. This year, those sites were checked more frequently, to good effect. This was kicked off by flock of 4 **Least Sandpipers** at SRW 8/9 (BB), and subsequent sightings of up to 5 there or at MS until a single bird was seen 9/17 (EH). A highlight was a **Willet** at MS 8/13-15 (BB) that was seen by many. A **Semipalmated Plover** was in small mudflats above the dam at the SRW 9/5-8 (DvB). A basic plumage **Black-bellied Plover** was found in the islands below the dam from the SRW 9/13 (MD). It was relocated at MS the next day (BB) where it lingered to 9/21 (BB). **Solitary Sandpiper** (which is annually reported) was at the SRW 8/16 (EH) and MS 8/17 (BB, DvB), and the only **Pectoral Sandpiper** of the season was in the pools of the mulch pile just north of Walmart 9/22-25 (BB, AK). Single **Wilson Snipes** were found 9/5 at the MBL (DvB) and 10/8 and 10/31 at MS (DvB, BB). The greatest diversity in a single day was probably 9/6 when **Least** and **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Lesser Yellowlegs** and **Killdeer** were all at MS (BB, DvB). The only **Caspian Tern** was a single bird on the SR at Linden 9/5 (NF).

MHR, the traditional site for **Short-eared Owl**, was occupied by 4 birds 11/9 (BB), but that count grew to an unprecedented 8 owls 11/19 (DvB, BB). An elusive **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was along Sulphur Spring Rd. 11/16 (BB, DvB). **Common Nighthawk** migration peaked with at least 20 seen from the SRW 8/31 (DvB, BB). Among the non-raptors seen at the R15O was a **Red-headed Woodpecker** 9/18 (DvB) apparently in migration; the only other report was at the Nippenose Elementary School 8/22 (AK), near where they probably nest. The saga continued with the **Peregrine Falcons** at the MSB, where a new male was spotted in late Aug (MD, DvB, JY).

A lone **White-eyed Vireo** was at GP 9/4 (LS). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was at WWC 9/23 (AK) and another was on the Golden Eagle Trail 9/27 (TFj). Growing confidence by observers (not changed bird populations) has increased the number of **Gray-checked Thrush**, **Swainson's Thrush**, **Veery**, and **Wood Thrush** flight-calls reported this fall, including on the night of 9/16 at MS (DvB) and SGL 252 (AK). Three **Snow Buntings** were found at the south boat launch at RVL 10/31 (DvB), right on schedule for their typical migration but without any sign of their namesake this season.

The only **Orange-crowned Warbler** was along Susque Rd. 10/10 along with other warblers including **Palm Warbler** and **Cape May Warbler** (DH). A scarce bird in the county, 2 **Vesper Sparrows** were found in migration 10/20 at MS (DvB).

After previous winters of massive influx, almost daily sightings of **Pine Siskin** at the R15O from 10/23 through 11/7 (m.ob.) suggested a repeat performance may have been impending heading into the winter season.

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### **McKean County**

No compiler.

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### **Mercer County**

Locations: Buhl Park (BP), East Zahnizer Rd. (EZR), Lake Wilhelm (LW), Sandy Lake (SL), Skunk Run Rd. (SRRD), Shenango River Res. (SRR), Shenango Wildlife Area (SWA), West Run Rd. (WRR), Williamson Rd. (WR).

A major movement of **Tundra Swans** and **Common Loons** was noted 11/14, when between 08:00 and 10:00 over 250 swans and 87 loons were counted over WR (NT). A **Cackling Goose** was also reported 11/14 with a flock of migrant **Canada Geese** (NT). No major movements of ducks were noted and most species were found in small numbers. Single **Gadwall** were at SRR 10/7 (GM) and 4 were at LW 11/20 (SS, NT). A flock of 31

**Blue-winged Teal** were at the same location 9/30-10/16 (m.ob.). Single **Redhead** 11/29 (SS) and **Lesser Scaup** 11/20 (SS, NT) were at LW. Four **Buffleheads** were at SRR 11/6 (NT) and 35 were counted at LW 11/29 (SS). **Common Mergansers** were reported at SRR 10/3 (NT) and a **Red-breasted Merganser** was at LW 11/6 (NT). **Hooded Mergansers** were at SRR 11/6 (NT) and at LW 11/29 (SS). Expected nearly annually, a **Red-throated Loon** was at LW 11/15 (SS). **Pied-billed Grebe** and **Horned Grebe** were both seen at SL 11/16 (NT).

Unexpected was an **American Bittern** at SRR 8/23 (JK). **Turkey Vultures** were last noted at WR 11/7 (NT). A **Golden Eagle** was observed cruising low above SRR 10/25 (SS). **Sandhill Cranes** could be found almost daily in the Lake Latonka area to 11/18 (m.ob.).

The lake level at SRR had dropped well below summer pool by the end of September, exposing excellent shorebird habitat along WRR. The ponds at the SWA also produced a nice variety of shorebirds in August, though most of the same species were also found later at WRR. All the shorebird sightings are from SRR unless otherwise noted. One or 2 **Black-bellied Plovers** were found 9/30-10/23 (GM, NT) and an **American Golden-Plover** was reported 9/27 and 10/7 (GM). **Semipalmated Plovers** were seen 8/1-10/16 with a high of 3 on 10/6 (SS, NT). High counts of **Killdeer** included 185 on 9/27 (GM) and 175 on 10/3 (NT). **Spotted Sandpiper** were present 8/1-11/7, and 8 were found at LW (SS). Top counts of **Lesser Yellowlegs** at SRR were 87 on 9/27 (GM), apparently a record high count at SRR, and 31 on 9/30 (NT). The last one was still lingering 11/6. Nice were up to 7 **Stilt Sandpipers** 9/27-30 (GM, NT). **Dunlin** were reported 10/16-11/12 with a high of 5 on 11/6 (NT). A **Baird's Sandpiper** was at the SWA 8/24 (NT). **Least Sandpipers** were noted 8/1-11/2 (NT). The most notable event of the shorebird season was the high numbers of **White-rumped Sandpipers** at SRR. A group of up to 28 were seen 10/4 (SS, MD) and a high of 38 were counted 10/7 (GM), the latter another record high count for SRR. The last sighting was 10/16 when 3 were found (NT). **Pectoral Sandpipers** were present 8/2-10/16 (SS, NT) and **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were found 8/1-9/30 (SS, NT). An **American Woodcock** was at SRRD 8/23-9/12 (NT).

First **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at SRR 11/12 and were also at LW and SL 11/20 (NT, SS). A **Caspian Tern** was at SRR 8/9 (SS). An outstanding find and the first in recent years was a **Black Tern** at the SWA 8/5 (SS).

**Yellow-bellied Cuckoo** were found 8/9 and 9/17 at SRRD (NT) and a **Black-bellied Cuckoo** was heard at the SWA 8/15 (SS). The number of **cuckoos** this fall was lower than recent years. An **Eastern Screech-Owl** was at WR 8/11-28 (NT) and both **Great Horned Owl** and **Barred Owl** could be heard on most nights through the season at WRR (NT). The number of migrant **Common Nighthawk** observed was lower than most recent years. They were noted 8/16-28 mostly as singles, but a high of 3 was counted 8/16 (NT). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were found at EZR through the period (NT, ST), and were also at BP 8/1-9/15. Several immatures were also there in September (SS). Two **Merlins** were at SRR 9/30 and one was at WR 10/6 (NT). Two **Peregrine Falcons**, an adult and immature, marauded along the shorebird flats at SSR and were seen periodically from 9/30-10/22 (NT, SS).

A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** in worn plumage was found at Poole Rd. 9/4 (NT) and single birds were noted at BP 9/5-10 (SS). **Least Flycatcher** was last seen 9/28 at SRRD (NT). The six expected **Vireos** were reported. A **White-eyed Vireo** was heard at the SWA 8/31 (NT, ST). **Blue-headed Vireo** were noted 9/21 at BP (SS) and 10/1 at SRRD (NT). **Philadelphia Vireo** were at SRRD 9/12-25 (NT) and at BP 9/15 (SS).

**Tree Swallows** were present to 10/7 at Pennsy Swamp and **Barn Swallows** were last reported at SRR 9/30 (NT). Rarely seen during migration, a **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was found at SRRD 9/11 (NT). A **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was at SRR 10/1 (SS) and **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** were at SRR 9/21-11/2 (NT, SS). Mostly heard during nocturnal flights, **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were noted 9/10-18 and **Swainson's Thrush** were found 8/31-10/5 (NT). **Hermit Thrushes** were at both WR (NT) and SRR (SS) on 10/4. A lingering **Gray Catbird** was at WR 11/1 (NT) and a **Snow Bunting** was heard at EZR 11/14 (NT, ST).

A total of 26 species of warbler were reported, which was about normal. A **Northern Waterthrush** was at SRRD 9/19 (NT). This species is seldom found in fall especially after mid-Aug. The only **Blue-winged Warbler** was one at SRRD 9/9 (NT). **Orange-crowned Warblers** were found in higher numbers than usual—a total of 4 were reported for the season with 3 at WR 10/2-10/13 and 10/20 (NT) and one at SRR 10/5 (SS). **Connecticut Warblers** included one at SRRD 9/16 and one at WR 9/20; the latter allowed an excellent view as it perched on an exposed branch for several minutes before flying into dense underbrush (NT). Single **Mourning Warblers** were at SRRD and SRR 9/5-10/5 (NT, SS). **Bay-breasted Warblers** were at SRRD 9/6-25 (NT). Unexpected was a **Yellow Warbler** at WR 9/12 (NT). **Blackpoll Warblers** were fewer than in recent years, noted 9/9-10/6 at SRRD (NT). **Palm Warblers** were reported 9/6-10/10 at

various locations in the county and a “**Yellow**” **Palm Warbler** was at SRR 10/14 (SS), possibly only the second or third record of this subspecies for the county. A **Pine Warbler** was at SRR 9/18 (SS) and 2 were at Poole Rd. 10/2 (NT). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were reported 9/25-10/21 (m.ob.) and **Canada Warbler**, uncommon in fall, was reported 9/6-17 (NT).

An **American Tree Sparrow** was heard at Fredonic Rd. 10/26 (NT) and **Fox Sparrows** were first reported 10/21 at SRR (SS). **Lincoln's Sparrows** moved through the county 9/13-10/15 (NT). First **White-crowned Sparrows** appeared 10/1 at WR (NT). The first **Dark-eyed Junco** was at WR 10/2 (NT). Five **Rusty Blackbirds** appeared at SRR 10/3; they were seen at various locations in small numbers through the rest of the period (NT). The only **Orchard Oriole** was one at Donation Rd. 8/4 (NT). Last **Baltimore Oriole** was at WR 9/9 (NT). A **Purple Finch** was at a feeder at WR 11/23 (NT), and **Pine Siskins** were also at WR 10/17-11/10 (NT).

Observers: **Neil Troyer, 876 Williamson Road, Mercer, PA 16137**, Michael David, John Kolodziejki, Geoff Malosh, Steve Sanford, Samuel Troyer.

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### Mifflin County

Locations: Belleville (BV) Jack's Mt. Hawk Watch (JMHW) Licking Creek Rd (LCR) Victory Park (VP)

This season 552 hours of observation were logged at JMHW, surpassing the previous high of 485 hours in 2014. **Bald Eagles** were once again above average with a season count of 114. Other highlights included a new season high of 148 **Golden Eagles**, surpassing the previous high of 141 individuals in 2014. The first **Golden Eagle** of the season was observed 9/24 and the high day count was 18 on 10/30. The total **Broad-winged Hawk** count was 3465, with a high of 965 on 9/19. **Northern Harrier** season total was 56, well above the 10 year average of 30. **Ospreys** had a good flight with 59 for the season and the last on 11/5 (RS, DS, et al.).

A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was noted at the JMHW 9/3 (JK), and 2 **Black-billed Cuckoos** were found in two separate locations on LCR 8/16 (JD). A **Common Nighthawk** and a high count of 92 **Chimney Swifts** were at JMHW 9/17 (JK). The last **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** for the fall was in Milroy 10/4 (RD). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were at multiple locations including Quarry Lane 8/2 (JK) and Old 3 Cent Lane 8/24 (RD).

A **Winter Wren** was noted on JMHW 10/15 (JK) and at VP 11/25 (RD). Very few warblers were reported. Highlights included 3 **Palm Warblers** in BV 9/27 (JZ), **Yellow-throated Warbler** on LCR 8/16 (JD) and 2 **Canada Warblers** on JMHW 9/3 (JK). The season's first **Pine Siskins** were a count of 25 on JMHW 10/22 (JK).

Observers: **Jon Kauffman, 3400 Discovery Road, Petersburg, PA 16669, jvk5019@gmail.com**, Rob Dickerson, Jim Dunn, Ron Singer, Darrell Smith, Jay Zook.

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### Monroe County

Locations: Kettle Creek Environmental Education Center (KCEEC), Lynchwood Lake (LL), Pocono Summit Lake (PSL).

The period started off with an August on the dry side, followed by temperatures exceeding 90°F for several days in early September, and finished with a mild October and November. A rare to uncommon migrant, the single **Red-throated Loon** on the Delaware River at Shawnee 11/20 was an exciting and surprising find by a KCEEC birding group (BH, BJ), while the **Common Loon** on PSL 11/13 was more expected (BJ). Also at PSL 11/13 was a single **Horned Grebe** (BJ). A high count of 78 **Wood Ducks** was reported from a lake in Cherry Valley 11/7 (BJ), and the 6 **Redheads** on PSL 11/13-20 was also a nice count for this species (BJ). High counts for **Ruddy Duck** included 33 on PSL and 41 on Mountain Springs Lake 11/13 (BJ).

While enjoying the Red-throated Loon at Shawnee, the KCEEC group was “wowed” by an immature **Bald Eagle** making repeated dives on a small flock of **Common Mergansers** on the Delaware River 11/20 (BH). After several passes, the eagle would rest in a nearby tree before resuming its attack. After numerous unsuccessful attempts, the eagle eventually drifted off. A **Merlin** on 8/26 and **Peregrine Falcon** on 8/18 were reported from LL (BJ), likely attracted by the shorebird activity at this location. One **Greater Yellowlegs** and 3 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were found at LL 8/18, and a high count of 6 **Spotted Sandpipers** was there 8/26 (BJ). Also found in the LL area were 3 **Least Sandpipers** 8/26 (BJ), as well as one lingering at a Mt. Airy pond until the somewhat late date of 10/6 (DA, SK, BJ). The first

**Pectoral Sandpipers** of the season were 2 at LL 8/3 (BJ). Project Owlnet was held at KCEEC for the first time, and totals for the Oct-Nov season included 65 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** caught and banded, plus two foreign recaptures whose origin of banding is not yet known (DS).

A series of interesting **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** observations was made (RW). First was one in a gray birch tree in the observer's Saylorburg yard 8/30. Another **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was located in the same gray birch tree on the evening of 9/8 which went to roost in an eastern red-cedar. Early the next morning the flycatcher was seen again in the same gray birch, and was last seen in the yard the following day 9/10. A single **American Pipit** was a bit early in the Pocono Manor area 9/15 (BJ), and during the week of 8/24 a Saylorburg yard held a nice collection of warblers including: **Blue-winged, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Prairie, Bay-breasted, Black-and-white, American Redstart, Ovenbird, and Canada** (RW).

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## Montgomery County

Locations: Dixon Meadow Preserve (DMP), East Norriton (ENO), Evansburg S.P. (ESP), Fort Washington S.P. (FWSP), Green Lane Park (GLP), Norristown Farm Park (NFP), Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust (PERT), Valley Forge National Historical Park (VFNHP).

The autumn of 2015 was generally warm, and unmarred by hurricanes or other major weather events. That latter half, in particular, was unusually temperate: November was Pennsylvania's second warmest in recorded history. Low rainfall in the front half of the season allowed for good mudflats at GLP. In total, 226 species were noted in *Montgomery* during fall 2015, above average for the past few years.

A pair of **Greater White-fronted Geese** made an appearance at GLP 11/27 (KC, GF). Reports of **Snow Goose** were few, perhaps due to the balmy Nov weather. Apart from a flyover flock of 35 at Red Hill 11/18 (AC), the only other **Snow Geese** mentioned were no more than 2 at GLP 10/17-11/8 (JF, m.ob.). Single **Cackling Geese** were noted three times at GLP (m.ob.), and a pair of **Cacklers** was there 11/14 (WBH).

An early **American Wigeon** was at GLP 9/27 (KR). Early **American Black Ducks** were also observed fairly regularly in Aug at GLP, starting with one 8/7 (BS). A group of four **Black Ducks** was reported 8/21 (ML). On the other end of the season, late **Blue-winged Teals**, both adult males, curiously, were spotted at GLP 11/18 (AMC) and at a roadside pond in Pottsgrove from 11/5 through the end of the period (NF, SS). Good numbers of **Northern Shoveler** were present at GLP throughout fall, with a high of 56 on 10/21 (KC). A single **Northern Pintail** showed up at GLP 8/27 and lingered through Oct (KC, ML, m.ob.). A **Green-winged Teal** at GLP 8/9 (PD, WBH) was less early than the Pintail, but still early. A group of 8 **Redhead** was at GLP 11/15 (m.ob.). A female-type **Greater Scaup** camped out at Skymount Lake, in the Unami Creek Valley, 10/26-11/18 (SGo, m.ob.). A drake **Greater Scaup** was seen at GLP 11/30 (KC). A slightly early **Lesser Scaup** was at GLP 10/9-10 (GF, m.ob.). A first-year female **White-winged Scoter** was noted at GLP 11/30 (KC). One or two **Black Scoters** were at GLP 11/18-19 (MA, ML). Single **Long-tailed Ducks** were spied at GLP 11/14 (GF, SF, et al.) and 11/22 (m.ob.). An unexpectedly high number, 108 **Buffleheads** were tallied at GLP 11/22 (KC, GF). A drake **Common Goldeneye** was found among the GLP Buffleheads 11/14 (WBH, m.ob.). The following day, 11/15, 5 **Goldeneye** were present at this location (ML). A female **Hooded Merganser** present at GLP's Knight Lake 8/22 through at least 10/20 was so early it may have bred locally (WBH, m.ob.). There were two sightings of female **Red-breasted Mergansers** on a rainy 11/19: one at Loch Aish Reservoir in Ambler (AA) and 2 at GLP (ML).

As usual, nearly all sightings of **Wild Turkey** were concentrated at PERT and the greater ESP area, with a high of 16 at ESP 8/4 (WBH) and 8/19 (BHI). Away from the traditional locations, the only reported turkeys were 5 in Schwenksville 10/19 (MC) and one at Red Hill 10/21 (AC).

A **Red-throated Loon** stayed at GLP 11/18-21 (ML, m.ob.). Though there were several flyover **Common Loons** at FWSP and Haverford College in Oct (m.ob.), the only one actually viewed on water was, shockingly, not at GLP, but on the Schuylkill River at Upper Schuylkill Valley Park 11/29 (SW). Two **Horned Grebes** were at GLP 11/18 (MA, ML). A male **Anhinga** was reported flying north over the FWSP hawk watch 9/13 (RC, AF, no doc.). No further details were provided, unfortunately.

An **American Bittern** allowed itself to be seen at GLP 10/21-23 (AU, m.ob.). Scarce in *Montgomery* in recent years, a **Snowy Egret** took up

residence for nearly a month at GLP 9/10-10/3 (AG, m.ob.). An imm. **Little Blue Heron** made a one-day appearance at GLP 8/9 (GF, m.ob.). A second **Little Blue** was found on Perkiomen Creek at the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove 8/23 (EP, et al.). Another unexpected creek-find for the period was a **Black-crowned Night-Heron** on the west branch of the Perkiomen near Bally 8/6 (MA). This species was also detected at DMP 8/6 (PBU) and GLP 8/9-12 (GF, m.ob.). Though these were all good birds, the **Wader of the Year** award easily went to an adult **White Ibis** at GLP, found during a group nature walk 10/17 (KC, m.ob.). It remained until 10/21, giving just about every birder in the vicinity a chance to see it, the first adult **White Ibis** for *Montgomery*. The only prior **White Ibis** on record in the county was an immature in Narberth/Wynnwood, way back in 1977.

Downtown Norristown continued to be a hotspot for large numbers of **Black Vulture**: 135 were counted at Norristown Riverfront Park 8/29 (WBH, SK). The period's high count for **Turkey Vultures**, 261, was tallied at FWSP's Militia Hill Hawk Watch 10/24 (RC, SG). Hawk watch counters were on duty daily from 9/1-10/31. Other noteworthy high counts from Militia Hill for the period include: 26 **Osprey** 9/20 (SG, MM), 5 **Northern Harriers** 10/24 (SG), 70 **Sharp-shinned Hawks** 9/26 (AB, MM), 12 **Cooper's Hawks** 10/24 (RC, SG) and 14 **Bald Eagles** 9/20 (SG, MM). A very late **Osprey** was photographed at GLP 11/29 (JF *vide* KC). Six **Golden Eagles** were reported from the hawk watch at FWSP in Oct (RC, SG), including 2 on 10/24 (RC). There were several sightings of **Mississippi Kites** in central *Montgomery* this season. An adult was reported from a convenience store parking lot in Fort Washington 9/13 (SG, no doc.). Another adult kite was seen from Militia Hill 9/16 (RC, CD, JuF, doc. submitted). A third adult was photographed over a West Norriton yard 9/21 (KG, AU, doc. submitted). There was a fourth report as well, from FWSP 9/16, of an immature bird, but no details were provided (CD, MM, no doc.). **Broad-winged Hawk** numbers at most area hawk watch sites were down in 2015. The FWSP big day for the period was 9/20, when 2333 were tallied (SG, MM). Regrettably, 9/20 was the only day when more than 250 **Broad-wings** were counted. Early **Broad-wing** sightings included one at ESP, where they are possible breeders, and a flyover at ENO, both 8/4 (both WBH). A well-described adult **Swainson's Hawk** was spotted from the hawk watch at FWSP 10/23 (PBU, AF, et al., no doc.). Hatfield's impressive, near-white **Red-tailed Hawk** was noted again a few times in late Nov (RN, SGO).

Three **Soras** were present at a wetland in Lower Moreland 9/6-7 (PD). The ponds at DMP hosted up to 3 **Soras** 9/6-18 (KJ, m.ob.), and another was at PERT 10/4 (PD). For a bird commonly associated with wetlands, it is interesting how regularly **Soras** show up in PERT's tall grass meadows. An **American Coot** at Skymount Lake 8/20 (PB) was potentially an oversummering bird, previously noted there in Jun. It remained at the lake through at least 9/27 (m.ob.). A bugling flyover **Sandhill Crane** was a nice surprise over suburban Cheltenham 11/15 (RI, vr.).

The ample mudflats that formed over the summer at GLP's Church Road continued into the first half of the fall season, and attracted a good assortment of migrating shorebirds. Seventeen species of shorebirds were noted at this location during the reporting period. All shorebird sightings below are for GLP unless noted otherwise. One of the more interesting species that showed up was **Black-bellied Plover**. A single **Black-bellied Plover** strafed the mudflats as a calling flyby 8/10 (PB, PD, WBH). A single immature plover was observed, on and off, 9/20-10/3 (BS, m.ob.). "It" may have been three different birds. Fourteen **Semipalmated Plovers** were counted 8/30 (TN), 67 **Killdeer** 9/4 (RK) and 50 **Lesser Yellowlegs** 9/30 (GF), all high counts for the period. An uncooperative **Upland Sandpiper** revealed itself a few times at DMP 8/25 (WBH). Three **Stilt Sandpipers** 8/10 (AM, m.ob) turned to 17 the following day (KR). After a break, one to 3 **Stilt Sands** were observed consistently 9/1-28 (m.ob.). A **Sanderling** was at GLP for a few hours 9/12 (KR, m.ob.). One **Baird's Sandpiper** was found 8/29 (JG, JeG, m.ob). Another **Baird's** was noted 9/4, along with 247 **Least Sandpipers** (RK). **White-rumped Sandpiper** was one of the better peeps to make an appearance at GLP in fall 2015. Four of them were seen 8/20 (PB), and up to 3 were present most days from then until 9/7 (m.ob.). A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** drove observers into a frenzy 8/30 (SK, m.ob.). **Pectoral Sandpipers** were observed consistently 8/11-9/20 (m.ob.), with a high count of 9 on 9/5 (SK). A full month later, 6 more **Pectorals** appeared, 10/20-21 (SGo, m.ob.). **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was a regular at the flats during the first half of the season, noted almost daily until 9/7 (m.ob.). An estimated 30 were reported 8/12 (BS). One, and sometimes two, **Short-billed Dowitchers** were another longer-staying shorebird, present 8/26-9/6 (RH, m.ob.). Nine **American Woodcocks** were counted during an early morning walk at PERT 10/18 (PD). One final shorebird highlight at GLP was a **Red-necked Phalarope** 9/13 (JF, GF, m.ob). Many of these species (**Baird's, Buff-breasted, Stilt Sandpiper, Sanderling** and **Black-bellied Plover**) had not been reported in *Montgomery* since 2010, the last "good mud year" at GLP prior to 2015.

An adult **Bonaparte's Gull**, still looking sharp in full-hooded alternate

plumage, was at GLP 8/9 (KC, KR, et al., ph.) This may have represented the first Aug record for *Montgomery*. The date of 11/13 will forever live as the day a record-setting push of **Franklin's Gulls** moved across the northeastern U.S., with scores of them counted at coastal sites and many inland birds. The following day, 11/14, a Saturday, will be remembered (at least by those of us who were trapped indoors 11/13) as the disappointing dud of a day during which a few Franklin's popped up here and there, but that never approached the heights of its predecessor. Thankfully, one Franklin's Gull was spotted this day, 11/14, on the water at GLP (KR, ph.). This gull was the first of its species noted in *Montgomery*. The first **Lesser Black-backed Gull** of the season showed up at GLP 9/20 (KC), early compared to previous years. **Caspian Terns** were a regular presence at GLP in the first half of the season, remaining until 9/1, persistently, with a high of 9 on 8/21 (m.ob). Six more Caspian's showed up 9/12 (SK, m.ob.), but did not stick around. A **Forster's Tern** and a **Black Tern** were seen together at GLP 8/19 (KR, m.ob.).

As has been the case for the past few years, **Common Nighthawks** lingered very late in 2015. There were at least 11 reports of this species beyond the first week of Oct from locations spread across the county (m.ob.). Most of these were noted in ones and twos, but one group in Wynnewood 10/8 contained 13 nighthawks (KJo). A pair of nighthawks viewed at PERT 10/27 (AnM) were quite late. A few **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** lingered at feeders into the second week of Oct as well (m.ob.), but there were no reports of any especially late-staying individuals in 2015. A single western hummer, a **Rufous Hummingbird**, was reported. First detected at an undisclosed Willow Grove residence 11/22, it was banded and determined to be an immature female 11/30 (SL). Several **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were observed this season. There was a striking adult at ESP 9/5 (SF, et al.), one at VFNHP 9/12 (SG) and flyover juveniles at FWSP 10/9 (RC, MR) and 10/25 (RC). Seasonal high counts of falcons from FWSP's Militia Hill Hawk Watch included 19 **American Kestrels** 9/26 (AB, MM) and 5 **Merlins** (SG). **Peregrine Falcon** was widely reported.

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was spied at Haverford College 10/20 (SJ, et al.). Single **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were reported at the former Ashbourne Country Club 8/14 (PD) and Skymount Park 9/20 (SK). A late **Acadian Flycatcher** was calling at ESP 9/19 (WBH, vr.). One oddity about the mild Nov is that it didn't seem to boost numbers of half-hardies. Only one particularly late **Eastern Phoebe** was found, for example. It was at PERT 11/18 (HB). The most intriguing (but, ultimately, frustrating) flycatcher find of the season was a reasonably well-described, non-vocal Myiarchus at West Mill Creek Park in Gladwyne 11/14 (MW, no doc.). It was initially reported as a **Great Crested Flycatcher**, but the observer did not realize the vagrant possibilities for the date and later admitted it could have been a western species. Efforts to refine this bird proved futile. Twenty-five **Eastern Kingbirds** were noted staging at GLP 8/10 (PD). A **Blue-headed Vireo** was seen at Lorimer Park 11/17, a few weeks late (LA, JS). At least four different **Philadelphia Vireos** were reported in Sep-Oct (m.ob.).

Abnormally large crow flocks for the period included 400 **American Crows** in Red Hill 11/12 (AC), 250 **Fish Crows** at Graterford 8/10 (PB) and 50 Fish Crows over ENO 8/5 (WBH). **Common Raven** continues its drive to live up to the "common" in its name, with at least 21 reports of up to 4 individuals each from all over the county (m.ob.). Twenty-five **Bank Swallows** were observed at GLP 8/29 (GF, WBH, SK). An even bigger group of **Barn Swallows**, 100, was also espied at GLP that same day (GF). One late **Barn Swallow** was seen at GLP 10/6 (GF). **Cliff Swallows** have been tough to find in *Montgomery* lately; was at GLP 9/13 (AM). Fall 2015 saw no push of **Black-capped Chickadees** or **Red-breasted Nuthatches** into *Montgomery*. Only two Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported: one at Shortridge Memorial Park in Lower Merion 10/21 (GG), and one at GLP 10/24 (PB). There were zero confirmed sightings of Black-capped.

A **Sedge Wren** was discovered skulking in the bluestem at PERT 10/18 (PD, vt.). Unlike the previous two autumns, no late Sedge Wren breeding activity was observed at PERT in 2015. It was a good season for **Marsh Wrens**, with single individuals noted on multiple dates at DMP (m.ob), PERT (PD), GLP (MA) and NFP (WBH). All told, it's likely at least 8-9 Marsh Wrens were found by *Montgomery* birders. A month-late **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** at NFP 10/23 may have established a new record late date for the county (WBH, vt.). Twenty **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were reported on a very active morning in a temporarily abandoned housing development in Abington 10/15 (LW).

An estimated 30 **Veeries** flew over PERT in the early morning 9/5 (PD). A late **Wood Thrush** was found in ENO 10/16 (WBH). The only late **Gray Catbird** for the season was at ESP 11/8 (SF, et al.), another anecdotal example of how mild temperatures didn't seem to impact sightings of half-hardy birds. During the crop harvest, NFP is a good place to find **American Pipits**. At least 22 were there 10/27 (WBH). Roughly 105 **Cedar Waxwings** were at FWSP 11/8 (AA).

Thirty-one warbler species were reported in autumn 2015. Thirty of

them were seen alive. A **Northern Waterthrush** in Rydal 10/15 (LW) was the latest ever for the county in eBird. Three **Golden-winged Warblers** were reported: males at PERT 8/16 (GB) and 8/22 (SG), and a female at FWSP 8/28 (PB). A week-late **Black-and-white Warbler** made an appearance for a bird walk at NFP 10/17 (WBH, et al.). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was seen at PERT 10/25 (PD). The dead bird mentioned at the outset of this family's summary was a **Connecticut Warbler** found underneath a window in Bala Cynwyd 9/18 (MCo). It was, sadly, the only report of this species in the county this season. **Mourning Warblers** were at FWSP 8/28 (AnM) and Ashbourne Country Club 9/29 (PD), both alive and well. **Hooded Warblers** are a tougher warbler in *Montgomery* for unknown reasons, and only three were reported: a male in ENO 8/27-31 (WBH), and birds at VFNHP 9/14 (SG) and PERT 9/19 (PD), a typical showing. Some neighboring counties were invaded by large groups of **Cape May Warblers** this season, but this phenomenon did not seem to manifest itself too strongly in *Montgomery*, save for a single report of 5 at Shortridge Memorial Park 10/14 (JW). All other Cape May reports were of single birds only (m.ob.). A late **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was at PERT 11/1 (AnM). Forty **Palm Warblers** were noted in Abington 10/15 (LW). Two early **Pine Warblers** at VFNHP 8/22 (SG) may have bred there. This possibility will need to be investigated more thoroughly in 2016. A pair of late Pines was photographed at Peter Wentz Farmstead 11/29 (EF). An extremely early **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was seen at GLP 8/14 (GF). **Black-throated Green Warblers** seemed to linger a bit later than usual in 2015. The latest noted was in ENO 10/21 (WBH). A new *Montgomery* eBird record date was set 8/2 by an early **Canada Warbler** in Elkins Park (PD).

A **Grasshopper Sparrow** at DMP 8/2 lent further support to the idea that this species may breed at this location (WBH, ph.). As many as 4 Grasshopper Sparrows were sighted at their known breeding territory by Graterford Prison in early Aug (m.ob.). A migrant Grasshopper Sparrow, or perhaps two, was seen at roughly the same spot in NFP 8/27 (KR) and 9/2 (PB). The top sparrow of the season was a **Henslow's Sparrow** at PERT 10/11 (PD, vt.). Curiously, this was the second individual of this species the observer has found at this location in recent years. The same scrubby property in Abington that produced other large quantities of birds 10/15 also delivered 65 **Chipping Sparrows** on this date (LW). **Vesper Sparrows** were noted at five locations in Oct (m.ob), including one report of 6 birds at PERT 10/25 (PD). Four **Lincoln's Sparrows** were found at two locations on the morning of 10/18, at PERT (SK, SP) and Willow Lake Farm in Ambler (WBH). **Swamp Sparrow** numbers were very robust in the meadows of PERT, with 40 individuals reported on three different dates in mid-Oct (PD).

Though there were surprisingly few reports of **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** (m.ob), two **Blue Grosbeaks** were sighted. A male Blue Grosbeak was at Graterford 8/4 (WBH). An agitated female was seen carrying food at Heuser Park in King of Prussia 8/23 (WBH, SG). Food carrying was also noted at this location in mid-Jul, which may have indicated a second nesting or, less likely, multiple pairs. **Indigo Buntings** continued at NFP through the late date of 10/21 (WBH). Two **Dickcissels** were an unexpected find at NFP 8/27 (WBH, PB). Another Dickcissel was noted at NFP 10/31 (SG). The only other report of this species came in the form of nocturnal flight calls heard over Elkins Park 9/15 (PD).

A **Bobolink** loitered until 10/18 at PERT (PD). This location also proved to be the host of the season's high count of the species, 90 on 9/5 (PD). Notable **Rusty Blackbird** reports included 12 at NFP 10/24 (ML) and 11 at a Fort Washington wetland 11/22 (DB). Large numbers, for this county, of **Brown-headed Cowbirds** joined a mixed flock of other blackbirds and **European Starlings** at GLP in Aug (m.ob). Five hundred cowbirds were estimated present 8/12 (BS) and 8/31 (RM).

**Purple Finches** undertook a weak irruption south in fall 2015. There were a decent number of reports of up to 3 birds after mid-Oct (m.ob), but no large flocks were mentioned, nor did they seem to become regular fixtures at any feeders. **Pine Siskins'** irruption was an even more overwhelming one. A single siskin at PERT 10/17 was the first to be reported of a handful of them. As with Purple Finches, large flocks were not reported. High numbers of **American Goldfinches** were noted regularly at a nyjer feeder buffet at the edge of ESP, including 106 on 11/4 (EF).

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McGarry, Anna Mindel (AnM), August Mirabella, Marlene Morano, Russ Neiger, Ted Nichols II, Edie Pamum, Samuel Perloff, Kenneth Rieker, Mike Rosengarten, Jennifer Sherwood, Scott Stollery, Brandon Swayser, Anthony Uhrich, Marshall Walthew, Jason Weckstein, Linda Widdop, Sue Wimble.

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### Montour County

No compiler.

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### Northampton County

Locations: Little Gap Hawk Watch (LGHW), Martins Creek Environmental Preserve (MCEP), Monacacy Nature Center (MNC), Nazareth Quarry (NQ).

There were 10 **Mute Swans** at Echo Lake 11/29 (MSa, RS). The only report of **Gadwall** was a male at MCEP 10/28 (MSa, MS, CCS). **American Wigeon** was found at several sites including NQ 11/10 (MSa), Echo Lake 11/29 (MSa, RS) and the Sandts Eddy boat launch 11/29 (SF). A **Northern Shoveler** was at Canal St. Park 9/20 (DT). There were 5 **Greater Scaup** at MCEP 10/28 (MSa) and a **Lesser Scaup** was at NQ 11/17 (BE). A female **Red-breasted Merganser** was seen at Martins Creek Quarry 11/12 (MSa). On 11/23, a **Red-throated Loon** and 23 **Common Loons** flew south over the LGHW (MSa, MS, CCS).

At the LGHW 8/29, a female type **Anhinga** was spotted high in a cloud circling over the gap (MS). It was seen by another observer as well (CCS) before it continued south over the Lehigh Valley. The LGHW had a below average year with a total count of 12,526. New annual records were set for **Golden Eagle** (115) and **Peregrine Falcon** (61). There were also an impressive 277 **Bald Eagles** counted. Noticeably below average were **Osprey** and **Red-tailed Hawk** though this does not mean either species is doing poorly. Away from the ridge, 916 **Broad-winged Hawks** were seen at the Koch Property 9/22 (AK).

Only seven species of shorebirds were reported. Lack of quality habitat was the likely reason. The only highlight was 2 **American Golden-Plovers** on Silver Crest Rd. 10/25 (MS, CCS, MSa, and RS). Gulls had a better showing with an **Iceland Gull**, 10 **Great Black-backed Gulls** and 20 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** at Grand Central Landfill 11/29 (MSa, RS). At NQ, there were good numbers of **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** with 57 on 11/17 (BE) and 45 on 11/25 (TW). The plowed fields on Van Buren Rd. attracted 6 **Great Black-backed Gulls** and 38 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** 11/12 (MSa). Eight **Common Nighthawks** were over Newburg 9/1 (TK) and 4 were over Brodhead Rd. in Bethlehem 9/5 (TE).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** was observed at MNC 8/16 (LF) and at Jacobsburg SP 9/1 (MSa). Birders found **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** on SGL 168 off Clearfield Rd. 8/17 (TF), the LGHW 8/31 (MS) and at Jacobsburg SP 9/3 (RW). Somewhat late migrating was a **Willow Flycatcher** 9/19 on Cigar Rd., Northampton (BE) and an **Eastern Kingbird** at MNC 10/5 (DG). A late **White-eyed Vireo** was at MNC 9/29 (LF). **Philadelphia Vireo** was found at multiple locations 9/1-29 with a high of 4 on National Park Rd. 9/18 (MSa). Some late season swallows included a **Bank Swallow** with 200 **Tree Swallows** at MCEP by the boat launch 10/3 (MSa) and a **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** on the Lehigh River in Bethlehem 10/20 (TW). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was scarce this fall with one reported on National Park Rd. 8/28 (MSa). A great find at Minsi Lake was 2 **Marsh Wrens** in the cattails 10/6 (MSa). Birders listening to nocturnal flight calls 9/18-24 in Washington Twp. heard several **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** and up to 40 **Swainson's Thrush** (MSa, IG). A **Gray Catbird** was at MNC 11/14-17 (LF). On 10/25 there were 18 **American Pipits** at Minsi Lake (MSa, RS) and 7 **American Pipits** at Silver Crest Rd. (MS, CCS). Six **Snow Buntings** flew past the LGHW 11/17 (MSa).

A total of 29 species of warbler observed during the period. A **Golden-winged Warbler** was at Housenick Memorial Park 8/16 (MC) and at MNC 8/19 (LF). An early **Bay-breasted Warbler** was seen at Little Gap 8/22 (MS). **Connecticut Warbler**, normally a tough-to-find skulker, was seen with some frequency. Sightings were made at LGHW 9/19 and 9/26 (MS), at MCEP 9/23, at MNC 9/25, and at the Koch Property 9/25-27 (SK, JF, JH). **Mourning Warbler** was in E. Allen Twp. 8/28 (DW) and on National Park Rd. 8/31 (MSa). There was a late **Wilson's Warbler** at MNC 10/14 (LF).

Two **Dickcissels** were in the upper fields at the Koch Property 9/22-24 (AK, HB, FV, MSa) and again 10/14 (AK).

Winter finches were observed as flyby migrants at the LGHW and were also noted at a few feeders. **Red Crossbills** were heard and seen at the LGHW 11/1-9 (MS, CCS, MSa) with a high of 22 on 11/2 (CCS). Those identified by sight were dull yellowish female type birds. **Purple Finches** showed up at feeders on Cigar Rd., Northampton 11/19 (BE) and at the Koch Property 10/25 (SK). **Common Redpolls** flew past the LGHW in a few small flocks in late Oct and early Nov (MS, CCS, MSa) and one was at

a feeder in Plainfield Twp. 10/31 (KS). A high count of 17 **Pine Siskins** flew past the LGHW 11/2 (CCS). Three **Pine Siskins** were seen at Housenick Memorial Park 11/14 (JM) and 12 were in a woodlot in Seemsville 10/24 (MS).

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### Northumberland County

No compiler.

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### Perry County

Locations: Little Buffalo State Park (LBSP), Laurel Run Road (LRR), Millerstown Community Area Park (MCAP), Waggoner's Gap (WG)

There was no notable waterfowl reported for time season. An **American Bittern** was located at Muddy Run Marsh just east of Loysville 10/23 (DH). A great find in shorebird poor **Perry** was a **Willet** on the west shore of the Susquehanna River in Marysville 8/23 (IG, TN, MD). **Red-headed Woodpecker** was noted at the Millerstown boat launch 9/24 (JT) and one was at WG 11/8 (CK).

There were three reports of **Philadelphia Vireo**, one at LRR 9/7 (AM, TN, VG), another at SGL 170 on 9/12 (RK, AM) and one at MCAP 9/19 (DH). A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was at Miller's Gap 9/12 (RK), and **Swainson's Thrush** was reported at that location on five different occasions 9/19-10/4 (RK, TC, JC). The only report of **Snow Bunting** was one flyover at WG 11/9 (DH). Warblers of note included two reports of **Golden-winged Warbler**, assumed to be migrants, with an adult male at LRR 8/28 (VG) and one at Miller's Gap 9/19 (RK), one **Orange-crowned Warbler** at LBSP 10/23 (DH), and one **Wilson's Warbler** at MCAP 9/19 (DH). Mourning Warbler and Connecticut Warbler were not reported during the period. The only **Fox Sparrow** was one that set down at WG 11/25 (KJ). One **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at MCAP 9/19 (DH) and two others were at LBSP 10/23 (DH). The only **Rusty Blackbirds** were 7 at the Tressler Game and Bird Sanctuary in New Bloomfield. There were only a few scattered reports of **Purple Finch** and **Pine Siskin** to lead off what was forecasted to be a non-invasion year for both species.

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### Philadelphia County

Locations: Bartram's Garden (BG), Benjamin Rush State Park (BRSP), Carpenter's Woods (CW), Delaware River (DR), Fairmount Park (FP), Franklin D. Roosevelt Park (FDR), Glenn Foerd Mansion (GF), John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum (TI), Morris Arboretum (MA), Naval Business Center aka Navy Yard (NBC), Northeast Water Pollution Control Plant (NEWPCP), Pennypack Environmental Center (PEC), Pennypack on the Delaware Park (POD), Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education (SCEE), Schuylkill River (SR), Southampton Woods Rd. (SHW), Wissahickon Creek (WC).

Moderate temperatures and the lack of rainfall provided extensive mudflats at TI, which attracted waders in good numbers and for long periods. Notable for the season were seven species of unexpected shorebirds, **Gull-billed Tern** at TI, and a **Eurasian Wigeon** at FDR. Passerine migration was steady, but modest with most daily reports of only 10 or fewer neotropical migrants. This quote from an eBird list 10/3 says it all: "It was the best warbler day of the fall" (AR). The observer was referring to 11 warbler species totaling 108 birds of which 60 were **Yellow-rumped Warblers** and 20 were **Palm Warblers**.

Most exciting, however, was the second documented **Anhinga** since the 5/30/2015 flyover at TI. This Anhinga also was found soaring over TI 8/12 (DA, AMi, ph.) but was not sighted again until 8/23 (MDeI, SD). After another absence the Anhinga reappeared 9/18 again soaring over TI, but for

the first time it dropped low over Darby Creek before appearing to head to a roost (BK). This was the first hint that the bird was roosting nearby. From 9/23-10/23 the Anhinga was seen up to several times a day always soaring overhead and finally was found roosting across Darby Creek in the willows alongside the Sun Oil tank farm ponds of Delaware. The bird had a regular routine of early morning flights, from which schedule it occasionally departed, but more frequently appeared right on time to the delight of hundreds of observers.

A **Brant** was on the impoundment at TI 10/1-5 (DO, ph.) and at NBC 10/2 (GA) while a pair flew past the Betsy Ross Bridge 10/10 (TB). **Mute Swans** were unusually abundant from 10/21 with a high count of 19 at TI 10/25 (JM); 11 remained until 11/22. Four **Tundra Swans** joined the Mute Swan 11/24 (DW). Waterfowl movement along the DR was robust, with a constantly changing mix of species and some uncommon species at FDR. The three most abundant ducks found almost daily at TI and FDR were 250 **Northern Shoveler**, with slightly fewer **Northern Pintail** whose number peaked in early Nov., and of course up to 300 **Green-winged Teal** which arrived in early Aug. with stragglers lingering into Jan. Up to 85 **Gadwall** and 65 **American Wigeon** were on the small spring-fed ponds next to the FDR golf course where a male **Eurasian Wigeon** was found 11/17 (BH, video) and remained throughout the season. Among the wigeon through 11/14 was a "Storm Wigeon," the white-cheeked variant popular with duck hunters and taxidermists but unknown to most birders, which also captured in video (BH). The once huge rafts of **American Black Duck** are reduced to several dozen as has been repeatedly mentioned. **Blue-winged Teal** were present for the entire period with many days where 50-100 could be seen. Late arriving divers 11/9 were 4 **Lesser Scaup** at NBC which 260 **Ruddy Ducks** and 25 **Bufflehead** (GA). **Ring-necked Duck** were last to arrive 11/29 (TFR). The unexpected **White-winged Scoter** which summered on the DR on the New Jersey side was last seen flying south from the Betsy Ross Bridge 9/5 (TB). A **Hooded Merganser** 10/27 was an early arrival at TI (DO) but a female **Common Merganser** at TI 9/27 was more unexpected (ph. PB). A **Pied-billed Grebe** diving at TI 8/26 preceded the several of its kind usually found at TI and FDR throughout the season. The lone **Horned Grebe** was also noted at TI 10/25 (JM).

**American Bittern** briefly visited TI 8/2 and 8/27 (FW, DA) and another was easily seen 10/15-11/15 (MDel, LR). One or possibly two **Least Bittern** nests were active with 7 bitterns of unknown ages 7/31 (PB). Many weeks of low water and stranded fish attracted an abundance of herons and egrets, including the now uncommon **Cattle Egret** 8/1 (JH) and 8/3 (BS). **Little Blue Herons** were present 8/23 (MDel) to 10/9 and **Snowy Egrets** present to 10/23 saw high counts on 9/1 of 8 and 10, respectively (AG). A **Tricolored Heron** that appeared 7/30 was joined by second bird 8/3-12 (m.ob, ph.). Once it was common to see 16 **Green Heron** at TI, but loss of habitat now makes 16 adults and juveniles 8/13 a high count for the season (DA, JJ). The juvenile **White Ibis** discovered 7/31 departed 8/1 (m.ob., ph.). One **Glossy Ibis** fed at the impoundment 8/13-9/4 (m.ob., ph.) and 5 Glossy Ibis flew over 9/7 (HB). Raptor migration was unremarkable except for a rare dark-morph **Broad-winged Hawk** soaring over TI 8/30 (SF, CF, EF, ph.).

Probably only a single **Virginia Rail** was present almost daily at TI 8/9 (FW) to 9/13 (MDeA) at the end of a heavily trafficked boardwalk, but up to 4 **Sora** foraged in the same area as they did last fall. A **Common Gallinule** was found 9/20 (AR, ph.) and a juvenile bird was well documented 10/6-15 (PB). A **Sandhill Crane** sailed over Tookany Creek in *Montgomery* 11/17 straight into northwest Philly (RI, video, recording).

Hundreds of shorebirds congregated on the mudflats which emerged in the TI impoundment, which produced all the reports mentioned here. An adult and a juvenile **American Golden-Plover**, less than annual, were seen 9/6-13 (MDel, AR, ph.). **Semipalmated Plovers** were present 8/1-9/18 with a high count of 25 on 8/17 (MS). Four **Willetts** were seen and heard 8/14 (LS) and 9 Willetts flew around the impoundment also calling 11/8 (BS). Neither report of Willet specified which subspecies. Along with dozen **Greater Yellowlegs** and two dozen **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Solitary Sandpiper**, though less numerous, could be found 8/1-10/18. **Stilt Sandpipers** were intermittent from 8/15-9/11 and reached a high of seven 9/10 (DA). An **Upland Sandpiper**, once common at Philadelphia International Airport in season, was found during a one day respite 9/8 (DR, m.ob., ph.). Four **Hudsonian Godwits** in mostly basic plumage circled the impoundment 10/5 much to the delight of the finder (DH) and remained overnight for many viewers the next day (m.ob, ph.). A **Marbled Godwit** 9/11-23 was another stunning find (DB, m.ob., ph.). Among the waves of migrating shorebirds were more than 1000 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** 8/15 (AB) and 200 **Least Sandpiper** 9/2 (GA) with up to 6 **Western Sandpiper** seen 8/30 (FW). Only one or 2 **White-rumped Sandpipers** could be seen 8/14-17 but after a month's absence two were found 10/6 (GA, DO, ph.). Dozens of **Pectoral Sandpiper** migrated through 8/3-10/17 with up to 12 reported 9/2-5 (m.ob.). In spite of wind and rain a **Wilson's phalarope** was photographed 9/10 (DA) before moving on.

Among the many **Forster's Tern** and **Caspian Tern** seen along the DR and at TI, 5 **Gull-billed Tern** were videoed (AMcG) 8/8 with one remaining 8/9 (AR, ph). Though conditions seemed favorable for a good flight, just one **Black Tern** was reported 8/19 (FW).

Two **Chimney Swifts** 11/5 (GA) set a new late record for *Philadelphia*. The 10/11 Big Sit at TI was attended by more than 50 birders and produced 72 species including one "gorgeous" **Red-headed Woodpecker** seen from the observation platform (AG, DB, ph.).

**Least Flycatcher** has a strong affinity for the northeastern section of the county, where one was at POD 8/16 and 2 were at SHW 9/15 (FW). October was the month for **Blue-headed Vireo** at multiple locations, but 7 together in FP 10/18 (IN) was exceptional. A **Philadelphia Vireo** was well photographed at TI 9/23-26 (TFe, AR) and another was at the FP Horticultural Center 9/8 (DA). **Common Raven** sightings are increasing at the NEWTP where a pair made a failed attempt to nest in 2014. Presumably that pair continued to be reported in the area, and at TI 9/26 a pair sitting together near the Philadelphia International Airport (BH, DF), technically inside Delaware, were often flying across Interstate I-95 into TI. Several **Eastern Bluebird** nest box trails were productive, including one at Andorra Natural Area where 25 bluebirds were seen 10/31 (TC). But these nest boxes aren't the source of bluebirds seen at TI where 12 were noted 11/8 (AR). Andorra Natural Area has many small fruiting crab apple trees which attracted 200 **Cedar Waxwing** 11/19 (TC).

Always among the last to depart in fall, 2 **Ovenbirds** foraged in the small green spaces of Temple University 11/8 (DE, ME) and on the marble floor in the payment kiosk of the Art Museum 11/29 (CM, ph.). Hard-to-find warblers were missed as expected, but Hooded Warbler, Kentucky Warbler and Mourning Warblers were also missed and only 3 **Prairie Warblers**, a nearby breeder, were reported. However, numerous **Northern Waterthrushes** were present 8/7-10/10 including six at the Art Museum Water Works 8/10 (DE, ME, ph.). Three **Tennessee Warblers** were at BG 9/15 (DA) and 6 were in low bushes at TI 10/6 (EP, m.ob.). Three locations reported **Connecticut Warblers**: BG 9/13 (MH), SHW 9/14 (FW), and TI 10/16 (JH, DO). **Cape May Warblers** passed through TI 10/3-16 with four sighted at TI 10/5 (TFe) and 2-3 remaining for several days. In CW 9/23 a group found and photographed 5 Cape May Warblers (KRus, et al.).

Wintering **American Tree Sparrow** arrived at Lardner's Point 11/15 (MDel) and only three others were reported from TI. **Clay-colored Sparrow** was only found at BG 9/15-17 (DA, MH). A **Vesper Sparrow** was at BG 9/7 (TC) and another was photographed in the "brown fields" at Cumberland St. near the DR 10/18 (AR) along with 3 **Eastern Meadowlark** and 6 **Bobolink**. Bobolink use open areas along the DR, but most sightings come from TI where flocks up to 50 could be found foraging for wild rice in the first week of September. From 9/25-10/18 up to 3 **Lincoln's Sparrows** were at TI, at PEC and even at Temple University 10/12 (KRak). **Rusty Blackbirds** were only seen at TI from their arrival 10/6 until a flock of 49 birds appeared 11/1 (GA) after which some remained, but most moved on.

The hoped for winter irruption visitors either stayed north or appeared briefly and left. Red-breasted Nuthatch and Black-capped Chickadee were not reported, but **Purple Finch** and **Pine Siskin** put in single brief appearances and moved elsewhere.

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### **Pike County**

The information in this report was derived from data entered in ebird. Birders reported 112 species during the period. On 10/10, 2 **Mute Swans** were seen on the Delaware River in the northern tier area (PG). At Pecks Pond, a nice fallout of 40 **American Black Ducks**, 23 **Ring-necked Ducks**, 6 **Green-winged Teal** and a **Pied-billed Grebe** was observed 11/9 (CB). There were one or 2 **Great Egrets** at the Bushkill Access of the Delaware River 8/23-24 (SS, NF). This location had a **Solitary Sandpiper** 8/12 (KW). A **Least Sandpiper** was at Lake Wallenpaupack 8/17 (DM, TC). An

**American Woodcock** was located at Pecks Pond 11/10 (CB). A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at the Pocono Environmental Education Center 9/19 (TC). Another good find at the Bushkill Access site was a **Peregrine Falcon** 8/23 (SS, NF).

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### Potter County

No compiler.

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### Schuylkill County

Locations: Air Products Wildlife Sanctuary (APWS), Hawk Mountain Sanctuary North Lookout (HMS), Landingville Dam (LVD), Lebanon Reservoir (LR), Locust Lake State Park (LLSP), Sweet Arrow Lake (SAL), Swatara State Park (SSP), Tuscarora State Park (TSP), West Deerview Drive (WDD).

The use of eBird was invaluable for compiling this fall narrative, and everyone who posted *Schuylkill* sightings to eBird has been included as observers. The list of observers is significantly longer this season than it is for other seasonal reports due to the popularity of Hawk Mountain, where many birders come in the fall to see the hawk migration. Since North Lookout is in *Schuylkill*, the data obtained at this location were used in compiling this narrative. Sightings at that location not attributed to a single individual have been noted as Hawk Mountain Data (HMD).

It was apparent that the county continues to have excellent coverage along its southern border. Regular monitoring of SSP (BR), LVD (BJ), SAL (DD, BR), WDD (DR), and HMS (HMD, m.ob.) provided a fairly comprehensive picture of birds passing through. Combined with regular postings from other sites such as APWS, TSP, Kelayres Reclamation Minelands (JoD, JD) and LLSP (TB) to the north and various sites in between (DK, SW), the data are extensive. The non-raptor data generated by the many observers at HMS, led predominately by Rudy Keller, provides insight into the migration season through *Schuylkill* of many songbirds.

With some exceptions, waterfowl species are generally limited in *Schuylkill*, especially in abundance and frequency. **Snow Geese** were only reported at HMS. The first bird flew by the lookout 10/1 (HMD), a little earlier than previous years. The geese were seen at the overlook on only a handful of days ending 11/28. Eleven **Tundra Swans** were seen at HMS 11/20 (KG). A very limited number of duck species were sighted. A small group of three **American Black Ducks** at APWS (JoD) were the only ones reported this fall in the county. Five **Green-winged Teals** and a single **Lesser Scaup** spent a day at LVD 11/16 (JD). **Buffleheads** were scarce being seen at only two locations this fall: 16 on 11/10 at LR (IG) and 11/9 and again 11/21 at SAL (BR). **Hooded Mergansers** were only noted at three locations, all in late Nov: 11/20 at APWS (JoD), 11/21 at SAL (BR), and 11/25 at TSP (JoD). The earliest **Common Merganser** was spotted at HMS 10/14 (KG). First bird noted on a lake was not until Nov, when they were reported at LR and SAL in the southwest (BR, IG). For the first time in several years, no reports of Ruddy Ducks were received. **Common Loons**, normally encountered on the local reservoirs, were absent this year during the period, except at HMS where they were seen between 10/1 and 11/28 with a high count of 117 on 11/14 (m.ob.). Only three reports of **Pied-billed Grebes** were received, all singles: SAL 11/6 and TSP 11/4 and 11/6 (JoD). **Great Egret**, an uncommon bird for the county, was reported at two locations: 8/21 and 8/24 at LVD (DR) and fly-bys at HMS 8/18 (RK) and 9/3 (PS). Rare in the county, an **American Bittern** was at SAL 10/8 (BR).

Since HMS data are published elsewhere, they will not be discussed here except to mention a few rare sightings. These were a **Swainson's Hawk** 10/4 and a **Mississippi Kite** 9/25 (HMD). Away from the Kittatinny Ridge, three **Northern Harriers** were reported: one at LLSP 11/3 (TB), another near Pitman 11/7 (TB) and one that spent at least a week near McKeesburg in mid-Nov (JM).

Shorebirds are not abundant in the county. A species not seen here for several years was **Semipalmated Plover**; this fall single birds were at LVD 8/11 and again 8/24 (DR). **Spotted Sandpiper** breeds locally but usually leaves by the end of August. This year one was reported at LLSP on a very late date of 10/8 (TB). **Solitary Sandpipers** pass through in Aug and Sep. This year they were seen at two locations: APWS 8/26 (JD, JoD) and LVD 8/11, 8/21 and 8/24 (DR). Only late **Greater Yellowlegs** was at SGL 106 on 10/3 (PS). The only **Lesser Yellowlegs** reported was at LVD 8/11 (DR). **Least Sandpipers**, the only "peep" typically seen here, moved through in

Aug and early Sep during which time it was reported on several dates at LVD (DH, DR). Nine **Short-billed Dowitchers**, very unusual for *Schuylkill*, were at LVD 8/11 after heavy rains the night before (DR).

Any reports of gulls are significant. **Ringed-billed Gulls** were reported in two locations, both in the southeastern corner. A single bird was at Hawk Mountain Acoopian Center 9/13 (PS), followed by a number of reports from HMS 10/3-11/8 (m.ob.). Reports of **Herring Gull** were limited to 9/25 and 10/22, both at HMS (CW, SJ, HMD).

*Schuylkill* is home to one of the sites for on-going research of **Northern Saw-whet Owls**. This was the 19th year in the ongoing research project headed by Scott Weidensaul, which examines the movements of Saw-whets through Pennsylvania. This year's survey was at three locations including one in *Schuylkill* at Hidden Valley near Freidensburg. Saw-whet migration is cyclical, and although expectations were optimistic this year, the count was lower than predicted. The 75 banded this year in the county were still greater than the 65 banded in *Schuylkill* in 2013, but less than the 104 banded last year. Next year, expectations are for numbers similar to the 327 seen in 2012 (SW). In Wayne Township, a **Long-eared Owl** was heard responding to an audio-lure 11/22 in the area of an historic roost (SW). In late August, a leucistic **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** spent a few days coming to a feeder in the Middleport area (JP). A total of eight **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were observed passing HMS between 9/8 and 10/25 (HMD, DK); a bird normally hard to find in the county.

Also uncommon are **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers**, seen this fall at HMS 9/5 (RK) and SSP 9/9 (DH). For a second consecutive year, **Bank Swallows** amassed at LVD in late August in preparation for migration. This year a few hundred were seen over the lake 8/24 (DR). **American Pipits** are rarely reported in *Schuylkill* but were seen at two locations: singles at HMS 10/1 and 11/5 (HMD) and another single near Pitman 10/9 (TB). A single **Snow Bunting**, a bird seen in low numbers most years, was spotted this year at HMS 11/17 (AZ).

Twenty seven species of warblers, including both breeders and migrants, were observed, two fewer than last year. Overall sightings of passage migrants were on the low side, but the birds passed through with little deviation from the averages. A **Summer Tanager** was seen at HMS 9/15 (RK) a bird rarely seen in the county. After many years of no sightings, **Bobolinks** were seen three times 8/26-9/15 at HMS (RK, HMD).

Both crossbills were reported this year, after neither had been seen in the county for the past three years. **Red Crossbills** were seen at HMS from 10/25-11/8 (HMD). A single **White-winged Crossbill** passed HMS 11/3 (HMD). For a second consecutive year **Pine Siskins** were reported; this year they arrived 10/18 in fairly good numbers at several locations (m.ob.).

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### Snyder County

No report.

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### Somerset County

Locations: Berlin Area (BA), Hidden Acres Farm (HA), High Point Lake (HPL), Payne Property (PP), Somerset Lake (SL), Summit Mills (SM), Quemahoning Reservoir (QR).

A moderate flight of shorebirds was noted at Somerset Lake, despite smartweed and other vegetation having overtaken some of the mudflats.

Efforts are still underway to re-contour the lake bottom and initiate modest summer drawdowns to create suitable shorebird habitat. A total of 30 species of shorebirds have stopped at Somerset Lake since 2012. Support from the birding community will be essential to see this project through. Numbers of waterfowl were average, but passerine migration was good.

Resident **Canada Geese** are not frequently counted closely, but 141 were at SL 8/12 (AM) and 150 were present 8/22. The Pennsylvania Game Commission banded 40 **Mallards** and 112 **Wood Ducks** in the county in July and August (AM). A large flock of over 160 **Tundra Swans** was over PP 11/22 (JP). A **Gadwall** was SL 11/6 (DH), 6 were there 11/22, and 2 on 11/29 (AM). The only **American Wigeon** was near Shanksville 11/28 (AM). There were 10 **Blue-winged Teals** on the mud at SL 8/25 (JP) and 4 were still there 9/23 (DeH). Five **Northern Shovelers** were at SL 11/15 (JH). A pair of **Northern Pintails** was seen from 11/6 (DH) to 11/22 (JP). A pair of **Green-winged Teal** was spotted 11/6 (DH). Warm weather in November resulted in a lack of divers. **Ring-necked Ducks** and **Greater and Lesser Scaup** were in small groups in late Nov. There was an immature **Surf Scoter** with Scaup at SL 11/22 (JP) and a **Long-tailed Duck** at QR 11/24 (AM). **Buffleheads** put in a bit better showing with 16 on 10/25, 10 on 11/7 and 30 on 11/22. **Hooded Mergansers** peaked at 7 on 11/22, **Common Mergansers** at 2 on 11/20, and **Red-breasted Mergansers** at just one 10/17 and 11/22. **Ruddy Ducks** were also barely represented by 2 at SL 10/3 (JP), one at SL 11/22 (JM, MM), and one HPL 11/21 (MJ).

Exciting was a flyover of 4 well-observed **Red-throated Loons** at PP 11/22 (JP), the 199th species for the yard. **Common Loons** peaked at 5 at SL 11/30 (AM). **Pied-billed Grebes** were sparse; one was at SL 11/18 (AM). **Double-crested Cormorants** were around in low numbers, with a high of 31 at SL 10/3 (AM). **Great Blue Heron** count peaked at 9 at SL 8/18 and a somewhat late **Green Heron** was there 9/23 (DeH). An **Osprey** was at SL 9/23 (AG). Numbers of **Bald Eagles** were good; they were noted frequently at SL, and 4 migrants were noted at PP 8/22-11/29 (JP). **Northern Goshawks** were spotted twice, near Somerset 10/26 (JP) and at SL 11/8 (AP, JP). A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was at SL 9/6 (JF). A nice surprise was a calling **Sora** at the Flight 93 Camelands 10/4 (JM, MM, CaP, JP). An **American Coot** was at HPL 11/24 (MJ).

Fifteen species of shorebirds were reported this period with the majority at SL. Single **Semipalmated Plovers** were present 8/18-9/11 (JP, DH). **Killdeer** peaked at 51 on 8/18 (JP) and a late bird was at HPL 11/29 (AL). **Spotted Sandpipers** were from 8/18 (JP) to 10/3 (JC). **Solitary Sandpipers** were seen 9/18 (JP) and 10/3 (JC). **Greater Yellowlegs** were only reported 9/4 (AM) and 9/20 (API). **Lesser Yellowlegs** were a bit more numerous from 8/18 (JP) to 9/29 (DH). One **Stilt Sandpiper** 9/17 was joined by another 9/18, offering nice comparisons to the **Lesser Yellowlegs** and **Solitary Sandpiper** feeding with them (JP). **Dunlin** appeared around their expected later dates, one 10/23 (ST) and 2 on 10/28 (JP). A **Baird's Sandpiper** was detected 8/31 (JP). Up to 20 **Least Sandpipers** were present 8/18-9/23 (JP, DeH). First **Pectoral Sandpipers** were 3 on 8/9 (AM) and last was a single 10/28 (JP). **Semipalmated Sandpipers** started with 6 on 8/18 (JP) and persisted at least until 9/23 (AJ). There were two **Western Sandpipers** 8/22 and a single 9/17 (JP). A **Wilson's Snipe** was there 10/23 (ST). **American Woodcock** were found in decent numbers, as evidenced by the 5 near Shanksville 11/28 (AM). Interesting were the two that hung out under the bushes around the house at PP during the dry period from 9/20 to early October.

A late **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was at SL 10/3 (JC). More timely was a nocturnal migrant **Black-billed Cuckoo** 8/6 (AMc). Four **Common Nighthawks** were feeding over SL 9/18 (JP). An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was at HA 8/28 (SD). **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** apparently had a good breeding season; over 10 were at PP 8/12 and 13 were seen the same day near Glencoe feeders. Two birds were late at PP 9/29. Always nice, a **Red-headed Woodpecker** was near Windber 8/15 (SD). A **Merlin** was at SL 9/23 (DeH).

Less routine flycatchers included an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at PP 8/23-24 (JP) and a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** at HA 9/3 (SD). HA provided both **White-eyed** and **Yellow-throated Vireos** 8/22 (SD). Notable for their number, flocks of 25 and 45 **Blue Jays** headed south over PP 10/5.

A **Purple Martin** at SL 8/20 (DH) was a good find. About 10 **Tree Swallows** were still migrating past PP 10/5 (JP). A **Cliff Swallow** was at SL 8/20 (AMc). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were scarce this season with reports from Laurel Mountain 8/22 (JM) and from PP 11/4 (AP, JP). **House Wrens** persisted until at least 10/5 at PP, when 3 were present (JP). **Winter Wrens** were spotted near Somerset 10/24 and 10/26 (JP). A **Blue gray Gnatcatcher** was tallied at HA 9/3 (SD). **Golden-crowned Kinglets** are breeders here, but their numbers increase during migration and some overwinter. **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** moved through in early Oct, including 4 at PP 10/2 (JP) and 2 at HA 10/12 (SD). At least 2 **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were mixed in with the **Swainson's Thrushes** during morning descent at PP 9/29 (JP). **Gray Catbirds** put in a strong showing at PP; 15

were tallied both 8/25 and 10/15 (JP). A few **Brown Thrashers** were still slinking around PP 10/5 (JP).

Twenty-four species of warblers plus **Yellow-breasted Chat** were reported for the period. **Ovenbird** was last seen at PP 9/25. A **Worm-eating Warbler** was at HA 9/3 (SD). **Black-and-white Warblers** were reported at both PP and HA. **Tennessee Warblers** were seen often from the early date of 8/22 at HA (SD) to at least 10/2 at PP. Almost missed for the season, an **Orange-crowned Warbler** finally appeared at PP 10/25 (JP). **Nashville Warblers** were at Laurel Mountain 8/22 (JMa) and 2 were at PP 9/19. A nice find was a **Mourning Warbler** at SL 9/23 (AJ). **Common Yellowthroats** were common throughout season with highs of 20 at PP 9/11, 9/22, and 10/5. A **Hooded Warbler** was reported at Laurel Mountain 8/22 (JMa). The only **American Redstart** reported was at PP 9/20. **Cape May Warblers** were common migrants at PP, with a few examples being 3 on 8/24, 10 on 9/19, and 6 on 9/22. A single **Northern Parula** was at PP 8/25. **Magnolia Warblers** at PP included 3 on 9/22 and one 10/2 (JP), and one was at SL 9/25 (MD). A **Bay-breasted Warbler** was at SL 9/3 (JF) and one was at PP 9/22. **Blackburnian Warblers** were on Laurel Mountain 8/22 (JMa) and at PP 9/19. **Yellow Warblers** were noted at SL 8/8 (SG) and 3 were at PP 8/12. Four **Chestnut-sided Warblers** at PP 8/25 dwindled to one by 9/11. **Blackpoll Warbler** was first noted at SL 9/3 (JF) and up to 8 were at PP 9/22. **Black-throated Blue Warblers** were noted at PP 8/12-9/25. Four **Palm Warblers** were at PP 9/11 and 2 were there 10/2, but HA had the latest 10/11 (SD). A **Pine Warbler** was reported 9/12 (AH). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were reported at SL to at least 10/23 (ST). **Black-throated Green Warblers** were abundant at PP, with a total of 49 seen 8/9-10/2. A **Wilson's Warbler** was at SL 9/3 (LF). The only **Yellow-breasted Chat** reported was at HA 8/22 (SD).

Top count of **Eastern Towhee** was 20 at PP 8/25. HA had a nice assortment of sparrows with 6 **Field Sparrows** 10/12, a **Grasshopper Sparrow** 8/1, and a **Henslow's Sparrow** 9/3 (SD). Four **Fox Sparrows** at PP 11/4 were followed by one at SL 11/15 (JH). Twenty **Song Sparrows** enjoyed the millet at PP 10/5. **Lincoln Sparrows** also were numerous with an all-time high of 13 at PP 10/5, and one was at SL 10/12 (LG). **Swamp Sparrows** were scarce at PP where the high count was just 2 on 10/5, but **White-throated Sparrows** were practically verminous with 80 present 10/28! Two **White-crowned Sparrows** were at SL 10/23 (ST). The first **Dark-eyed Juncos** at PP settled in 10/2. **Indigo Buntings** also enjoy the millet at PP with 40 on 9/11, 35 on 9/22, 25 on 9/25, and 3 on 10/2. A nice flock of 100 **Bobolinks** were at SL 9/25 (AJ). **Rusty Blackbirds** were seen near Somerset 10/26 and 14 were at SL 11/8 (AP, JP). The first **Pine Siskin** at PP 10/24 was followed by small flocks.

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#### Sullivan County

Locations: Dutch Mountain (DM), Cherry Township (CT), Eagles Mere Lake (EML), Estella (EST), Hunter's Lake (HL), Ricketts Glen State Park (RGSP), Shady Nook SGL 66 (SN), Splashdam Pond (SDP), Loyalsock State Forest (LSF).

As usual, reports for the county were sporadic. Most of the reports for the season were from August and September; later reports covered smaller areas and shorter timeframes. The weather remained generally seasonable without any major events. All reports are from the author except where noted.

The first flocks of south bound **Canada Geese** were seen on the last weekend of Sep. **Wood Ducks** were common through Sep. An **American Wigeon** and a **Northern Pintail** were at SDP 10/11 (DG). Three **Ring-necked Duck** were on EML 11/7. **Buffleheads** were reported in both Oct from SDP (DG) and Nov at HL (DG) and near Mildred.

Eight **Ring-necked Pheasants** were seen on the weekend of 11/6-7, two single birds and two groups of three. Both groups were right along the road feeding and acted very tame on approach. None of the birds was in close proximity to a SGL but potential sources of local stock are not known.

A **Common Loon** was on EML 11/28. **Pied-billed Grebes** were found at SDP and near Mildred several times during Sep. A **Double-crested Cormorant** was over SN 8/12 and another was at Lake Makoma 9/4 (SM).

Several **Ospreys** were reported during Aug and Sep, with multiple

sightings from SDP (DG, RM) and a report from the Hayfield at RGSP (JG). Five **Bald Eagles** were noted between 11/6-8 in the CT and SN areas. Another was reported from Estella (TR) as late as 11/29. **Northern Harrier** made several appearances in CT, at SDP, and two female or juveniles at the Hayfield RGSP (JG) on 9/5. A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was at SN 11/8. A **Golden Eagle** was reported at High Knob LSF 9/4 (SM).

**Sandhill Cranes** once again nested near Dushore. The two adults with one juvenile were seen there in early August (WE). A flock of seven cranes was seen and heard from the Old Home Place at SN 11/8. This flock circled in and landed a few miles northwest of there. A search of the area 11/9 quickly turned up the 3 local birds on Litzelman Rd. near their known nesting location, and presumably same flock of 7 from 11/8 were along Hunsinger Road in CT, bringing the total count to 10.

Lake Jean at RGSP was drained for repairs in the spring of 2015. The lake remained dry throughout the fall and was checked several times, but the only shorebirds were **Killdeer**. Two **Killdeer** were also in Estella 9/5 (TR). Six **Greater Yellowlegs** were at Shuman's Lake at SN 9/3-5 and one more was at the same location 9/11. Three **American Woodcocks** were at SDP 10/11 (DG), and a lone individual was on DM 11/7.

**Great Horned Owls** were heard on DM during Aug, Sep and Oct and one was at Lake Makoma 9/5 (SM). **Barred Owl** seemed almost common with reports from each month that included daytime observations at Shuman's Lake at SN 9/7, a single bird calling at High Knob LSF 10/7, and a bird heard at HL 11/22 (DG). One **Eastern Whip-poor-will** called at dusk at SDP 8/9. Woodpeckers peaked during Sep; reported were **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, **Downy**, **Hairy**, and **Pileated Woodpecker**, and **Northern Flicker** with high counts of 15 sapsuckers and 25 flickers over the last weekend in Sep. Numbers of **American Kestrel** were steady in Aug and Sep found primarily in the open areas of Colley and Cherry Townships. The high count was 8 from 9/3-5. A **Merlin** was seen at a beaver pond along Rte. 487 on 9/7, and another was at the Hayfields at RGSP 9/5 (JG).

**Eastern Phoebe** were also numerous during Sep with a high of 18 over the last weekend. One **Alder Flycatcher** was reported at the Hayfields at RGSP 8/23 (JG). **Least Flycatcher** was the only other Empidonax identified to species. One **Great Crested Flycatcher**, not common in the county, was at the Hayfields at RGSP 8/23 (JG). **Yellow-throated Vireos** were seen on DM 8/13 and SDP 9/7. Four **Warbling Vireos** were at Estella 9/5 (TR). One or 2 **Philadelphia Vireos** were found on DM 9/3-5. Another was at SDP 9/12. A **Fish Crow** was noted in Dushore during the second week in Aug (WE). A flock of 50 to 60 **Tree Swallows** was along Brunerdale Rd. near HL 9/26.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch** frequented a feeding station on DM during the second week of Aug. Two **Brown Creepers** were present on DM 11/28. A **Winter Wren** was at SDP 10/11 (DG). **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** were at the Hayfield at RGSP 8/23 (JG), SDP 8/30 (DG) and on DM 9/6. Nine **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were present over the last weekend in Sep across multiple locations. A **Hermit Thrush** was on DM 10/8. A single **Wood Thrush** was on DM 9/12.

Twenty-two species of warbler were reported, of which six are not breeders in the county. Uncommon here, a **Blue-winged Warbler** was on DM 8/14. **Tennessee Warblers** were found at DM, SN, and SDP on multiple dates in Sep, often with three or four individuals present. A lone **Cape May Warbler** was found at the Hayfield at RGSP 8/24 (JG). **Bay-breasted Warbler** individuals were seen on DM 9/7 and 9/12. Young **Blackburnian Warblers** were still begging food on DM 8/14. Two **Blackpoll Warblers** were seen in different locations on the last weekend of Sep. A total of 5 **Palm Warblers** were noted in Sep on DM and at SDP including a bird of the "Yellow" population at SDP 9/25. A crisp adult male **Wilson's Warbler** was at the Old Home Place SN 9/11, and an immature female was at the Hayfield at RGSP 9/5 (JG).

The first **American Tree Sparrow** was at SN 11/8. Good numbers of **Eastern Towhee** and **Chipping**, **Field**, **Song**, **Swamp**, and **White-throated Sparrows** were scattered across the county during Sep and were mostly gone afterwards. An individual **Fox Sparrow** was at the Old Home Place SN 11/8. This location again proved excellent for **Lincoln's Sparrow** over the last weekend in Sep with several birds over two days. An estimated 75 **Dark-eyed Juncos** were counted on the first weekend in Nov across the county. Thirteen **Bobolinks** were observed in a stand of corn at a SGL 66 food plot 9/3-5. Two **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported at the outlet pond of EML 9/4 (SM). Six **Pine Siskins** were feeding in a hemlock along Ogdonia Road near LSF 11/23 (DG). At least 3 **Purple Finches** and 5 **American Goldfinch** visited feeders on DM in late Nov.

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## Susquehanna County

Locations: Bear Swamp (BS), Lake Chrisann (LC), Kirchmeier Farm (KF), Lord Pond (LP), Manlove Farm, (MF), Ofalt Farm (OF), State Game Land 35 (SGL 35), Stearns Lake (SL), Quaker Lake, (QL), VanCott Farm (VCF).

This report is based solely on eBird data. A total 147 species and two additional taxa were reported during the period. From 1900 through 2015, 192 species have been reported to eBird for fall migration season.

**Canada Goose**, **Wood Duck**, **American Black Duck** and **Mallard** were reported widely throughout the fall. Eight other species of waterfowl were observed including a single **Gadwall** 11/3 at LC (JS). As many as 8 **Ruddy Ducks** and single **Pied-billed Grebe** were at QL in late Oct and again late Nov (EM, WS).

**Ring-necked Pheasant**, **Ruffed Grouse**, and **Wild Turkey** were reported as expected. **Great Blue Heron**, **Great Egret** and **Green Heron** were the only herons observed. Eight species of raptor included **Osprey**, **Northern Harrier**, **Sharp-shinned** and **Cooper's Hawks**, **Bald Eagle**, **Red-shouldered**, **Broad-winged** and **Red-tailed Hawks**.

Shorebirds were unremarkable with only four species reported. These included a **Solitary Sandpiper** at SL 8/11. Up to 6 **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at SL in mid-Nov (EB). **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was reported but Black-billed was not. One **Merlin** and two **American Kestrels** were at MF 9/5 (NB).

Flycatchers were represented by seven species which included only two Empidonax identified to species—**Alder** and **Least**. Of interest was an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at BS 8/21 (JF). Five species of vireo included a **Philadelphia Vireo** at SGL 35 on 9/17 (EM). Two **Fish Crows** were at SGL 35 on 8/15 (EM). **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was at SGL 35 on 9/24 (EM), and several **Swainson's Thrushes** were observed in northern *Susquehanna*.

Twenty-three species of warbler were reported from *Susquehanna* showing the county's potential for fall warblers. Northern Waterthrush was notable for its absence. Twenty-one species of buntings, finches and sparrows were reported; of note were 2 **Vesper Sparrows** at BS 8/21 (JF). Reports of blackbirds, orioles and their allies were as expected and included a single **Rusty Blackbird** at VCF 10/3 (NVC). A single **Pine Siskin** was at KF 10/8 (EM) and 14 were reported at VCF 10/25 (NVC).

Observers: **Rob Blye**, 300 Sanatoga Road, Pottstown, PA 19465, (610) 327-2010, rwblye@comcast.net, Dave Andre, Nick Bolgiano, Jim Borden, Edmund Burdick, James Feuerstein, Rich Fritsky, Deuane Hoffman, Evan Mann, Justin Mann, Kathie Jones, Allan Kresock, Bruce McNaught, Tom Norville, Win Shafer, Jerry Skinner, Joyce Stone (JST), Nancy VanCott, Nancy Woltrich.

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## Tioga County

No compiler.

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## Union County

No compiler.

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## Venango County

Locations: Allegheny River (AR), Buttermilk Hill Nature Sanctuary (BHNS), Justus Lake (JL), Kahle Lake (KL), Oil City Marina (OCM), Oil Creek SP (OCSP), Polk Wetlands (PW), Rhoades Farm near KL (RF).

The warmer than average temperatures throughout the period weren't productive for waterfowl, but a few good sightings contributed to the season's highlights. The species count for the period was 160, up from 154 last year. **Tundra Swan** migration began 8/4 and ended 11/22 when about 190 were reported at BHNS (KG, JS). The following early and late dates for ducks were recorded at KL, unless otherwise indicated: **Gadwall** 10/14 (JS) to 11/22 (GE, RS); **American Wigeon**, 9/21 (EA) to 11/13 (JS); **Blue-winged Teal** 9/23 at PW (DH); **Green-winged Teal** 9/21 at PW (DH) to 11/1 (JS); **Redhead** 11/1; **Ring-necked Duck** 11/1-30 (JS); **Lesser Scaup**, 10/14 (GE) 11/12 (JS); **Surf Scoter**, 11/12-30 (JS, KG, GE, RS); **Black Scoter** 11/22-30 (JS, KG, GE, RS). A few **Bufflehead**, **Common Goldeneye**, **Hooded Merganser**, **Common Merganser**, and **Ruddy Duck** also remained as of 11/30 along with **Common Loon**, **Pied-billed Grebe**, and **Horned Grebe**. **Double-crested Cormorant** was last seen on the AR 9/22 (MK, NK). **Great Egret** lingered at KL from 8/23 (GE) to 10/14 (JS, KG) and along the AR at Oil City 9/21-29 (RS).

The last **Turkey Vulture** was recorded 11/19 (GE). **Osprey** was present 8/26 (GE) to 9/23 (MK, NK). The first **Northern Harrier** of the fall was at RF 9/5 (GE). **Broad-winged Hawk** was not seen after 8/8 (KG, JS).

The only rail was a **Sora** at JL 9/16 (MW) and the only **American Coot** was at KL 8/20 (KG, JS).

Sightings of shorebirds continued to decrease, although more than 100 **Killdeer** were at RF 10/14-18 (GE). A **Spotted Sandpiper** at KL 9/18 (RS) and a **Least Sandpiper** at JL 9/1 (GE) both represented the only reports.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was last noted 9/9 at BHNS (KG, JS), and **Black-billed Cuckoo** was last seen also at BHNS 9/3 (KG, JS). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** responded to a taped call in OCSP 11/17 (GE, MH). The OCM **Common Nighthawk** Migration Count took place 8/17-9/17 and resulted in a disappointing total of 186, including only four birds sighted from 9/1-17. A **Merlin** was at the OCM 8/26 (MK, NK, JW).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was recorded 9/7-18, and **Philadelphia Vireo** 9/4-27 at BHNS (KG, JS). A **Marsh Wren** was at PW 9/23 (DH). **Golden-crowned Kinglet** arrived 10/1 and **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was recorded 9/21-11/4. A single **Lapland Longspur** was in a field at RF 10/8 (GE, RS). Fall warbler dates included **Tennessee Warbler** 9/1-10/12, **Orange-crowned Warbler** 10/6, **Nashville Warbler** 8/30-10/12, **Cape May Warbler** 9/2-10/7, **Blackpoll Warbler** 9/7-10/7, **Palm Warbler** 9/2-10/11, **Pine Warbler** 10/4-16, **Yellow-rumped Warbler** 9/9-10/24, and **Wilson's Warbler** 9/2-27.

**American Tree Sparrow** returned 11/10 (KG, JS), and the last **Chipping Sparrow** was 11/18 (MK, NK). **Fox Sparrow** moved through 10/10-11/14 (KG, JS), and **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at BHNS 9/22-10/7 (KG, JS). **White-crowned Sparrow** was present 10/7-11/2. **Rusty Blackbird** was at KL 11/14 (GE). A **Common Redpoll** visited BHNS for about ten minutes 11/23, and the first **Pine Siskin** was also there 10/7 (KG, JS).

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#### Warren County

No compiler.

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#### Washington County

Locations: Boone Res. (BR), Buffalo Creek IBA (BC), Canonsburg Lake (CL), Cross Creek County Park (CC), Greencove Wetlands (GCW), Mingo Creek County Park (MC), Peters Lake (PL), City of Washington (WASH), Washington Park (WP), Washington Park School Pond (WPSP), Washington Reservoir #4 (R4).

Most of the significant waterfowl reports came from a limited access location near Bentleyville. Sightings there included the county's top count of 200 **Canada Geese** 8/24 and again 11/29 (both RI). Large flocks of **Tundra Swans** there totaled 55 on 11/15 and 80 on 11/29 (both RI). Sightings 10/25 (FK) included 4 **Gadwall**, one **American Wigeon**, 2 **Northern Shovelers**, 2 **Lesser Scaup**, 15 **Ruddy Ducks**, and 200 **American Coot**. Two visits 11/15 and 11/29 found the following high counts: 10 **Gadwall**, 3 **American Wigeon**, 2 **Green-winged Teal**, 55 **Ring-necked Ducks**, 3 **Lesser Scaup**, 3 **Buffleheads**, 6 **Hooded Mergansers**, and 40 **Ruddy Ducks** (RI).

Elsewhere, 30 **Tundra Swans** flew over R4 late on 11/29 (RI). **Blue-winged Teal** were reported from four locations in Sep (m.ob.), and single **Green-winged Teal** and **Northern Shoveler** were at BR 9/10 (MJ). Four **Canvasbacks** at Charleroi 11/30 were rare for the fall period (RI), as were 24 **Red-breasted Mergansers** at R4 on 11/29 (RI). A male **Ruddy Duck** that lingered at CL to at least 5/28 this past spring may have been the same bird that was noted there again 8/13 and 9/7 (MJ). A flock of 12 ruddies was at CC 10/14 (MJ).

A flock of 19 **Common Loons** and one **Red-throated Loon** were located on R4 late 11/29 (RI), the latter representing the first ever for *Washington*. A few Commons remained the next day but the Red-throated had departed. First **Pied-billed Grebes** were 4 at Bentleyville 9/15 (RI). An early **Double-crested Cormorant** was located at BR 8/18-22 (MJ); later 11 appeared at Bentleyville 11/29 (RI). Quite unexpected both for the late date and the count, a flock of 7 **Great Egrets** dropped in at CC 10/31 (MJ). Even more unexpected was a juvenile **Black-crowned Night-Heron** at PL 11/14 (ph. DO), just the second for *Washington* (the previous was a bird at Lindenwood G.C. in Aug 1993) and among the latest fall records ever for southwestern Pennsylvania.

Both **Osprey** and **Bald Eagle** were noted variously around the county in Sep (Osprey) and later (Bald Eagle), mostly from BR and CL, but Osprey was also noted at CC and Lake Joann (m.ob.). **Northern Harrier** was noted

at Bentleyville 9/15 (RI), at the traditional location in Robinson Twp. 10/25 (TJ), and just outside CC 11/5 (RI, SG). A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was also at CC 11/5 (RI, SG). **Broad-winged Hawks** were found at MC 8/9-9/23 (FK, AK) and at PL 9/1 (GG).

Two **Soras** were at CL 9/1-7 (MJ), an unusual location for them, and 2 were at GCW 10/12 (ST, AK). Shorebirds were poor but a **Black-bellied Plover** at Bentleyville 10/5 (RI) was quite noteworthy. Top count of **Killdeer** was just 30 on 8/24 at Bentleyville (RI). A few **Solitary Sandpipers** were noted around the Peters Twp. lakes 9/8-19 (GG, RI). One or two **Least Sandpipers** at a few locations through 9/17 were the only other migrant shorebirds noted. Bentleyville held up to 18 **Ring-billed Gulls** in late Nov (RI); a **Herring Gull** and 4 more ring-bills were also at Charleroi 11/30 (RI).

As in nearby *Beaver*, the decline of **Black-billed Cuckoos** seems to continue unabated. There was just one report of Black-billed, a single bird at MC 9/15 (FK), against at least 18 sightings of **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** for the season. A late yellow-billed lingered at WP 10/6 (LC). Reports of **Common Nighthawk** included one at WP 8/28 (LC), 6 over PL 9/7 (GG), and about 70 migrating over WASH 9/11 (LC). A **Red-headed Woodpecker** was a nice find in WASH 9/25 (*vide* LC). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was noted five times from five different locations beginning 9/21 at WPSP (LC).

An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** held on at WPSP to 10/5 (LC). The only reliable report of the over-reported **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was one at CC 8/27 (RI). A **Great Crested Flycatcher**, often missed in fall, was at WPSP 9/9 (LC). Two **Blue-headed Vireos** were at WPSP 10/5 (LC). Reports of **Philadelphia Vireo** were all of singles at BC 9/14 (RI), WP 9/18 (RI), and WPSP 9/23 (LC). A late **Red-eyed Vireo** was at WP 10/6 (LC). **Common Ravens** continued to pop up randomly around *Washington*; this season included sightings at Houston 8/11 (RT) and 10/5 (FK), at PL 9/5 (GG), and off US Rte. 22/30 near Burgettstown 11/12 (CB).

**Brown Creeper** was listed at BC 10/12 (RI) and at MC 10/22 (FK). The only **Winter Wren** was at MC 10/10 (MD, MV). A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** at SGL 232 on 11/27 (RG) was probably setting up for the winter. Three sightings of **Gray-cheeked Thrush** were made at WPSP and WP 9/10-10/5 (LC). **Swainson's Thrush** was well reported 9/11-10/6 especially at WP (LC, RI). A **Hermit Thrush** was at WPSP 10/15 and one was at WP 11/17 (both LC). Twelve **American Pipits** were outside CC on Parkview Dr. 10/7 (RI).

It was a good season for warblers with good days in a few locations around the county, though most of the activity was at WP and WPSP. **Black-and-white** and **Tennessee Warblers** were both in good evidence, with about seven sightings of each (m.ob.). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at BC 10/12 (RI). Very nice was a **Connecticut Warbler** at WP 9/24 (LC). A late **Common Yellow throat** was still at Robinson Twp. 10/26 (AK, FK). Three reports of **Cape May Warbler** included one at WPSP 9/21 (LC), 2 at CC 10/7 (RI), and one at BC 10/12 (LC). There were at least 30 reports of **Magnolia Warbler** from at least 10 locations, the best season for them in recent memory. One was still at CC 10/7 (RI). **Bay-breasted**, **Blackburnian**, **Chestnut-sided**, and **Blackpoll Warblers** all had solid showings in Sep. Two **Black-throated Blue Warblers** were still in WASH 10/14 (RI). The only reports of **Palm Warbler** were 7 at CC 10/7 (RI) and 2 at MC 10/10 (MD, MV). Three **Black-throated Green Warblers** were still at WPSP 10/5 (LC). Three reports of **Wilson's Warbler** included singles at BC 9/14 (RI), at WP 9/15 (LC), and at WPSP 9/21 (LC).

The traditional grasslands in Robinson Twp. held **Grasshopper Sparrow** until 8/23 (RG) and **Henslow's Sparrow** until 8/7 (FK). Undoubtedly both species remained there past those dates but become hard to find after they stop singing. **Fox Sparrow** was noted at five locations 10/17-11/27 (m.ob.). Sparrows at GCW 10/18 (RG) included 28 **Song Sparrows**, 2 **Lincoln's Sparrows**, 15 **Swamp Sparrows**, and 4 **White-crowned Sparrows**. **Lincoln's Sparrow** was also noted at Houston 10/5 (FK) and at MC 10/10 (MD, MV).

A flock of 3500 **Red-winged Blackbirds** at GCW 10/12 (ST, AK) was impressive. Four **Rusty Blackbirds** at SGL 232 on 11/27 (RG) was the only report. **Purple Finch** was noted at feeders in Peters Twp. 10/15 (GG) and East Findlay Twp. 10/24 (PH). A **Pine Siskin** stopped at the same Peters Twp. feeder 11/24 (GG).

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#### Wayne County

No compiler.

## Westmoreland County

Locations: Beaver Run Reservoir at Rt. 380 Overlook (BRR), Ken Byerly Property, Delmont (BP), Cedar Creek County Park (CCCP), Conemaugh River Lake (CRL), Donegal Lake (DL), Ethel Springs Reservoir, a.k.a. Derry Lake (ESR), Kuehl Property, Murrysville (KP), Keystone State Park (KSP), Mammoth Park Lake (MPL), New Stanton (NS), Northmoreland Park (NMP), Powdermill Nature Reserve (PNR), Pleasant Valley Park (PVP), St. Vincent Lake/Wetland (SVW), Westmoreland Heritage Trail.

The warm weather made for low numbers and many missed waterfowl species this season. On 10/10 fourteen participants of the Westmoreland Bird & Nature Club conducted a Big Sit at KSP for the eighth consecutive year. As tallied by Dick Byers, the 48 species in 2015 broke the previous record of 46 from 2014, and the count total of 658 was second to the 728 count from 2014. Significant first records were Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Winter Wren and surprisingly, the first year for Dark-eyed Junco. The highest count for one species for the day was the 375 Cedar Waxwings.

One very high count for **Canada Goose** was reported during the season—350 at BRR 10/18 (KB). The season-high count for **Tundra Swans** was 37 at DL (AM) and there were 30 reported at ESR 11/21 (KJ). Several remarkably high counts for **Wood Duck** were made at WHT-BRR, including 40 on 10/18 and 42 on 10/25 (KB). There were 5 **American Wigeon** at SVW 11/9 (MJ). The only substantial count of **American Black Duck** was 13 at BRR 11/17 (DH). A significant count of 100 **Mallards** was tallied at SVW 10/18 (MJ). No Gadwall, Blue-winged Teal, or Northern Pintail were observed during the season, and the only report of **Northern Shoveler** was a hen photographed at SVL 10/18 (MJ). Top count of **Green-winged Teal** was 12 at CRL 11/16 (SR). No Canvasback, Redhead, Greater Scaup, or Lesser Scaup were reported, and although there were several reports for **Ring-necked Duck** they were all of just one bird. Conversely, there were many reports for **Bufflehead** including the high of 16 at BRR 11/29 (KB). On 11/8 there were 8 **Bufflehead** at NMP (MVT) and 5 were at Twin Lakes 11/20 (CK). **Hooded Mergansers** continue to be very reliable at BRR where several observations included a substantial count of 22 on 11/29 (KB). Unusual was a high count of 57 **Common Mergansers** were at BRR 10/20 (KB) and 36 were reported there on 11/17 (DH).

There were many reports of **Pied-billed Grebe** at BRR including high of 5 on 10/3 (KB). There were many reports at MPL as well, where the season high was 6 on 11/8 (MJ). The only **Horned Grebe** was at BRR 11/17 (DH). **Double-Crested Cormorants** were reported only at WHT-BRR 10/18, 10/25, and 10/30 (KB). A **Green Heron** was out of place perched on a powerline in NS 8/31 (MF).

Often found in the Ligonier area, 7 **Black Vultures** were reported at PNR 11/24 (AC) along with 16 **Turkey Vultures**. Two **Ospreys** were reported at KSP 8/9 (KB). One **Osprey** flew up the Youghiogheny River at CCCP 9/13 (MJ), and another was along Loyalhanna Creek near Kingston Dam 9/21 (JK). There were quite a few sightings of **Bald Eagle** during the season (m.ob.). Two **Red-shouldered Hawks** were at PNR 10/25 (BC). Five **Broad-winged Hawks** were reported near Stahlstown 9/13 (BV) during the peak of their migration through Pennsylvania.

One **Sora** was at DL 10/26 (DM). Three **American Coots** were at BRR 10/18 (KB) and 4 were at ESP 10/20 (MVT). A **Spotted Sandpiper** was at the WHT-BRR 10/4 (KB), and 3 **Solitary Sandpipers** were at MPL 8/16 (MJ). There were 3 **Greater Yellowlegs** at DL 10/29 (DM). Not often reported in *Westmoreland*, 3 **Dunlin** were at BRR 10/18 (KB). There were 4 **Least Sandpipers** at DL 9/29 (ST) and 2 were at MLP 10/24 (DM). Four **Wilson's Snipes** were at MPL 11/9 (MJ). Birding at dawn yielded 6 **American Woodcock** at PNR 10/25 (BC). The only **Herring Gull** was on Turner's Pond 11/7 (KB).

A **Great Horned Owl** and 4 **Barred Owls** were at PNR 10/24 (BC). **Barred Owls** continued at the KP with reports 8/10-9/26 many of which involved least two calling owls, which occasionally seemed to be prompted in daylight by the sounding of fire sirens. The high count among several reports of **Common Nighthawks** at BP was 23 on 9/4 (KB). Two **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were reported in Unity Twp. 11/8 (JE). Four **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were at WHT-BRR 10/6 (KB), and one was at PVP 10/3 (MD). A **Merlin** was at DL 10/26 (DM).

Rarely reported in *Westmoreland*, and **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was observed on the WHT-Delmont 8/19 (KB). Also on the WHT-Delmont was an **Alder Flycatcher** 8/7 (KB). There were 67 **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** captured at the PNR banding station during the season. Away from PNR they are not often reported, one **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** on the Wolf Rocks Trail 8/20 (ST) was notable. A **Blue-headed Vireo** at PVP 10/3 (MD) was one of several reports of singles of this species. There were 2 **Blue-headed Vireos** at PNR 9/17 (AC). A **White-eyed Vireo** was singing from a brushy area in New Stanton 8/31 (MF). Also rarely reported aside from captures at PNR, a **Philadelphia Vireo** was at the WHT-Delmont 9/7 and

again 9/20 (both KB).

**Common Ravens** continue to be sighted at lower elevation locations of *Westmoreland*; there were 2 flying through downtown Jeannette at 4th and Gaskill 11/11 (TK) and 3 were at WHT-BRR 11/24 (KB). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was at the wetland at Murrysville Park 11/18 (MVT). A **Brown Creeper** was at the KP 10/13 (JK), and they were also noted at WHT-Delmont with 2 on 11/5 (KB). WHT-Delmont was the site of the high count of several reports for **Winter Wren**, with 3 there 10/6 (KB). Three **Marsh Wrens** were captured at the PNR Banding Station, the only reports of this species for the season. There were 16 **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** tallied in Delmont 10/6 (KB).

A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was in Delmont 9/22 (KB) and at CCCP 9/23 (KSJ). As is the norm, **Swainson's Thrush** is lightly reported by field birders, but is captured in significant numbers at PNR, where 328 was the season count. A **Hermit Thrush** was at WHT-Delmont 10/8 (KB). A flock of around 50 **American Robins** raided the berry bushes at the KP on the morning of 9/26. Also at the KP 9/27, a **Veery** was with a flock of around a dozen **Cedar Waxwings** migrant warblers that included **American Redstart**, 2 **Magnolia Warblers** and one **Black-throated Green Warbler**. A flyover **American Pipit** was noted at NS 11/12 (MF). Near the BP a flock of 40 **Cedar Waxwings** were observed 8/17 (KB) and there were 42 at that same location 11/2 (KB). The largest flock was 100 at PVP 11/1 (MD).

Always captured in big numbers, there were 426 **Magnolia Warblers** tagged at the PNR banding station for the season. Other significant numbers of rare warbler species banded at PNR during the season included substantial counts of 24 **Connecticut Warblers**, 13 **Mourning Warblers** and 16 **Wilson Warblers**. Nearly daily outings (KB) for migrants in the Delmont-Trees' Mills area (and into the section of the Beaver Run Reservoir that is bisected by the newly extended Westmoreland Heritage Trail produced rare species such as 6 **Bay-breasted Warblers** 9/21 and several reports of 2 **Blackpoll Warblers** 9/14, 9/30, and 10/4. A **Northern Waterthrush** was at PNR 9/19 and 2 were there 9/20 (AC). A high-count of 10 **Tennessee Warblers** was tallied on the WHT-Delmont 9/22 (KB). One **Orange-crowned Warbler** was reported at PVP 10/21 (MD). All non-banding station reports for **Connecticut Warblers** were in the PNR area; these included 3 on 9/16 and 9/17 and 2 on 9/20 (all AC). A **Blackpoll Warbler** was at PNR 9/20 (AC). There were 2 **Wilson's Warblers** at PNR 9/16 (AC).

The first and only report of **American Tree Sparrow** this warm fall season was made at PNR 11/24 (AC). Three **Fox Sparrows** were at PVP 11/1 (ph. MD). **Lincoln's Sparrow** was not reported away from PNR, but 41 were captured there the season. Five **White-crowned Sparrows**, all immatures, were at DL 11/1 (AP).

A late **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was at a feeder in Stahlstown 10/28 (LH). A sizable flock of some 1000 **Red-winged Blackbirds** flew over a Stahlstown home 10/28 (DB). There were 4 **Rusty Blackbirds** reported from the WHT-BRR 11/5 and one 11/21 (KB). Of several reports of **Purple Finch** at PNR, the high was 5 on 10/23 (BC). For **Pine Siskins**, the high at PNR was 14 on 10/23 and 10/24 (BC). Away from PNR there was just a single report a **Pine Siskin**, at the BP 11/28 (KB).

Dawn bird walks on 10/24 and 10/25 at PNR (BC) provided significant reports for a number of species: 2 **Winter Wren** 10/25, 5 **Golden-crowned Kinglet** 10/25, 45 **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** 10/25, one **Orange-crowned Warbler** 10/24, 35 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** 10/24, 50 **Dark-eyed Juncos** 10/24, 32 **White-throated Sparrows** 10/25, 8 **Swamp Sparrows** 10/24, a remarkable 2200 **Common Grackles** 10/24, 2 **Purple Finches** 10/24 and 10/25, and 14 **Pine Siskin** 10/24.

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## Wyoming County

Locations: Beaumont (BT), Brown Hill (BH), Goeringer's Pond (GP), Jayne's Bend (JB), Lake Carey (LC), Miller Mountain (MM), Oxbow Lake (OL), Phelps Swamp (PS), Mary Robbins' Pond (MRP), Sharpe's Lake (SL), Sordoni's Farm (SF).

Besides species that were listed as at least possible breeders in *Wyoming* during the second Breeding Bird Atlas, both the number of migrant species (only 13) and the numbers of individuals were lower than usual. It seems as though migration is occurring later in the year than we've come to expect.

A single immature **Mute Swan** was at LC 11/19 (JD, AT, MR). The species is rare for *Wyoming* with the two most recent records in 2012 and 2013 both on residential ponds.

Three **Gadwall** were at MRP from about 11/7 to at least 11/14 (MR, JD). Four **American Wigeon** were recorded on the same pond on and off from mid-Oct through at least mid-Nov (MR). Wigeons visit this very small farm pond every year during spring and fall migration. **Green-winged Teal** were recorded at PS on several days: 9 on 10/18, 4 on 10/27, and 8 on 11/14 (all JD). A solitary **Lesser Scaup** visited GP 11/14 (JD), the scaup for the period. The landowner related that the bird had been there for a day or two, but could not recall any specifics. Several **Bufflehead** were at MRP 10/11 (MR), and they stayed only that day. Five Bufflehead were at OLP 10/27, 4 were at OL 11/14, and a single male was at SF 11/14 (all JD). **Ruddy Duck** was recorded only once: 3 at OL 10/27 (JD). A single **Double-crested Cormorant** was noted 10/17 while kayaking in the county (CS).

In the past 15 years, there have been 9 reports of the rare **Golden Eagle**. Most have been of birds in flight, and all have been presumed migrants, but there have been a few reports of Golden Eagles feeding on carrion. This fall, a local licensed falconer reported several of this majestic bird: 7 passing over his blind on MM 10/23, 4 from the same vantage 11/4, and one feeding on a deer carcass along the Susquehanna River just above the river bridge in Tunkhannock (all BA).

**Sandhill Crane** continued to be reported by residents near SL, the only place they are known to occur here, but without specifics, and visits to SL by birders have produced no records of the species.

A single **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was in Beaumont 10/21 (DPB), and another single was along Wilson Road near the northern border of the county 10/22 (JD). Two **Snow Buntings** made an appearance along Crow Hill Road in BT (MR). Finally, 8 **Pine Siskin** were at SGL 57 on 10/23 (EZ).

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## York County

Locations: Brunner Island (BI), Codorus State Park (CSP), Fairview Township (FTWP), Gifford Pinchot State Park (GPSP), High Point Scenic Vista and Recreation Area (HIGH), Hopewell Township Park (HTP), Lake Redman (LR), Rocky Ridge County Park (RRCP), State Game Lands # 242 (SGL), Sunnyside Road (SUNN). (Note: Hopewell Township Park (HTP) is a name change for the prior Althouse School Road (ALT) location; HTP will be used moving forward.)

An unseasonably warm fall with no major weather events produced an increased number of late migrants than is typical. Foremost among them was a **Marsh Wren** at SUNN 11/22-23 (SC, DC) that easily eclipsed the prior York late date of 11/7.

The species count of 176 was within the five year range. The waterfowl showing was on the low side with 20 species in numbers rather low for most of the group. **Mute Swan** remained resident at Spring Grove. A flock of 12 **Tundra Swan** was noted over FTWP 11/22 (DN). **Wood Duck** were reported at five sites with high counts of 32 at BI 9/9 (DN) and 26 at GPSP 10/28 (PK). **American Black Duck** was detected at LR 10/20 (CM) and 11/11 (DN), at GPSP 11/8 (DN), at Lake Lea 11/20 (KH), and at CSP 11/23 (KJ). The only report of **Redhead** came from Lake Lea 11/20 (KH). Typically scarce in fall, **Ring-necked Duck** was only found at two locations. **Buffleheads** were at CSP, GPSP, and LR 11/9-23 (m. ob.) with a nice count of 85 at GPSP 11/15 (DN).

**Ring-necked Pheasant** and **Wild Turkey** were more frequently reported than usual. Of the four pheasant reports, quintets were seen in FTWP 8/24 (BM) and CSP 11/16 (PM). Nine reports of turkeys were paced by 13 along Sam Hill Rd 11/25 (PM), 14 in Monaghan Twp. in Oct (JD), and 15 along Hoke Mill Rd. 10/25 (RS). **Great Egrets** continued to gravitate to LR as their favored post breeding dispersal site, but they were also found at nine other locations. LR held birds 8/1-11/11 with a high count of 17 birds 9/15-16 (RS). **Black-crowned Night Heron** was found at four locations with latest 9/28 (DN) at GPSP. The RRCP Hawkwatch had more coverage hours this year, which resulted in decent counts in Sep but slow days in Oct and Nov when coverage was available in those months. Peak **Osprey** count was 12 birds 9/17 (RP, KO). A **Northern Goshawk** passed by the lookout 11/11 (PK). The focus of the coverage at this site is the migration period of **Broad-winged Hawk**. This year's total was about 1800 birds with the peak period 9/16-19 (RP, KO, m.ob.) producing counts of 166, 396, 678, and 231,

respectively. As was noted at most Pennsylvania hawkwatch sites, Broad-winged counts were often difficult this season with frequent its cloudless, warm days producing very high flying and hard to detect birds. Undetected at the hawkwatch this season, a **Golden Eagle** was seen over Interstate 83 on 10/24 (CHI).

Shorebird habitat was very limited primarily as a result of good year-to-date rainfall. Of the nine species found, the better species were a pair of **White-rumped Sandpipers** at LR 8/18 (DN) and a **Pectoral Sandpiper** at BI 9/29 (LC). Single **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at BI 8/15 (LC), CSP 11/3 (PM), and GPSP 11/30 (DN). A high count of 50 **Herring Gulls** was made at Windsor Twp. 11/16 (CB). Six **Great Black-backed Gulls** were over Kline's Run Park 11/8 (CH). Duos of **Caspian Tern** were at LR 8/24 (LC) and Long Arm Reservoir 10/7 (AW).

Nine sites reported **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**; an observation at Glatfelter Station Rd 8/12 (CB) was interesting. A pair was spotted with one bird collecting sticks and carrying them to a nest about 45 feet up in a tree with vine growth in the nest area. The date was quite late for nest building, and literature suggests the nest height was also atypical, as the species is noted to build nests at a height of 20 feet or less. Whether this was an initial nest building effort or a replenishment of an existing nest for a possible second brood was open to question. **Common Nighthawks** were seen migrating 8/24-10/5 (WC, DN, RDS, DWe) at various locations. The RRCP hawkwatch coverage resulted in 17 nighthawks (m.ob.). A **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was lingering at Niles Rd. through 10/8 (CM). Some very nice counts of **Red-headed Woodpecker** were reported from two of the five locations where they were found. HTP held birds 8/1-10/25 (m. ob.) with a high count of nine birds 8/30 (DF). GPSP had reports 9/21-11/30 (m.ob.) with a high count of 12 birds 11/25 (DN). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was reported in good numbers as well. Five were at GPSP 11/1 (RK, AM), 6 were there 11/14-15 (DN) and 4 were at CSP 11/24 (PM). HTP provided a nice count of 7 **American Kestrels** 8/12 (DF). **Merlin** was only reported from the RRCP hawkwatch, 9/14, 10/7, and 11/11. In addition to **Peregrine Falcon** sightings at the hawkwatch, one was at BI 9/4 (LC), one was at LR 10/1 (CK, DN), and another was in York city 11/11 (AE).

A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at RRCP 8/28 (CB). **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at RRCP 8/31 (CB) and 9/3 (DWe), and one was also at GPSP 9/5 (DN). A **Least Flycatcher** was at FTWP 10/2 (DN). A **Great Crested Flycatcher** at CSP 9/28 (BB) was a bit tardy. Five sites reported **White-eyed Vireo** 8/9-9/22 (m.ob.). **Yellow-throated Vireo** was at RRCP 9/1-6 (CB, DN, DWe), at Lake Williams 9/8 (CK), and at GPSP 9/15-22 (DN, BR). **Blue-headed Vireos** were found at five sites with a nice count of 4 at SGL 10/15 (TC). **Warbling Vireo** was limited to two reports; 8/12 (CB) at Glatfelter Station Rd and up to 3 at LR 9/3-11 (CB, CM, DN). Three reports of **Philadelphia Vireo** spanned 8/26-9/17 (CB, DN, DWe).

**Common Ravens** were at GPSP 11/25-27 (DG) and they frequently flew back and forth at the RRCP Hawkwatch throughout the period (m. ob.). **Horned Larks** were limited to HTP, where up to 10 birds were noted 10/16 (KMK), and a single at HIGH 8/13 (DN, TN). Twenty **Tree Swallows** at GPSP 10/16 (GK) were late. Observers caught a fairly strong **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** migration 9/11-21. LR had 40 birds 9/11 (DN), BI provided 36 on 9/17 (WC, KR), and GPSP produced 50 on 9/21 (BR). Four **Bank Swallows** were at HIGH 8/13 (DN, TN) and a single was at Lauxmont Farm 8/22 (MD). Only one **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was reported, a single at LR 10/13 (RS). **Brown Creeper**, **Winter Wren**, and **Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglet** were strong with reports (m.ob.) from six to eight locations for each species. The highlight of this group, **Marsh Wren**, was first found 11/22 (SC) in the marsh area at SUNN and its vocalization was recorded. The bird was also found the next day (DC). Records indicate the last fall report for this species was 10/4/1996 at Gut Rd.

**Veery** were at RRCP 8/27-9/3 (CB, DWe) and a **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was at SGL 10/5 (TC). **Swainson's Thrush** were at RRCP 9/16 (DC) and 9/24 (LC) and two were at GPSP 10/16 (GK). Nice counts of **Hermit Thrush** numbered 7 at CSP 11/16 (PM) and 8 at GPSP 11/28 (DG). November **Gray Catbirds** included a trio at Lake Williams 11/11 (CK, DN) and a pair at CSP 11/24 (PM). **Brown Thrasher** also remained into November with singles at HTP 11/5 (JH) and in Hellam Twp. 11/24 (CB). **American Pipits** were limited to a pair at SUNN 11/26 (CB) and a single at LR 11/24 (RS). A nice count of 475 **Cedar Waxwings** was made at GPSP 11/1 (RK, AM).

The warbler flight was a bit lackluster with only 20 species reported and no fallouts. There were three reports each of **Tennessee Warbler** 9/1-10/5 (CB, TC) and **Nashville Warbler** 9/1-10/15 (CB, TC, DN, TN, BR, DWe). A **Prairie Warbler** was at HTP 9/13 (DF) and **Bay-breasted Warbler** was at LR 9/11 (DN) and GPSP 10/9 (DN). **Blackpoll Warblers** were at SUNN 10/15 (CB) and RRCP 10/16 (PK). **Canada Warbler** was found at Penn State York 8/28 (DWe) and RRCP 8/31 (CB).

**American Tree Sparrow** was not found until 11/22 (SC) when 10 appeared at SUNN. **Savannah Sparrows** were at HTP all period with a

high count of 6 on 10/25 (DF). Ski Rountop 8/9 (CH) was the only other site reporting a Savannah. **Grasshopper Sparrow** were at HTP from 8/1-9/6 with an 8/1 (DF) high count of 12 birds. A single was reported at HIGH 8/13 (DN, TN) and there was one in Dover Twp. 8/21 (DW). There were four sites reporting **Fox Sparrow** 10/26-11/26 (CB, PK, RK, AM). The only **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at SGL 10/5 (TC). Six sites held **Swamp Sparrow** 10/8-11/22 (m. ob.) with a high count of 6 at SGL 10/5 (TC). Of the reports of **White-crowned Sparrow**, one observation 11/22 (SC) noted a bird with characteristics of the Gambel's subspecies (no dark lores and broad supercilium, especially towards back of head). The observation included typical eastern birds, and differences were apparent. The challenge in clearly identifying an out of range Gambel's is aptly demonstrated in the PORC archives of a bird at Peace Valley Park, *Bucks* 10/15-16/2012, which contains opinions from experts who reviewed the photos and concluded that the bird was likely an "intergrade" category, and that there are a wide ("bewildering: may be a more appropriate term) variety of intergrades recorded. It appears this *York* bird may fall in that category as well (no photos, no doc. submitted).

There was good reporting of **Blue Grosbeak** with a bird at Native Lands Heritage Trail 8/13 (DN, TN), 2 at HTP 8/16-24 (DF), a single at RRCP 9/11 (CB, DN), and a single at BI 9/16 (DC). **Bobolinks** were found only at HTP 8/15-9/6 but included a nice count of 11 on 8/15 (DF). **Eastern Meadowlarks** were at HTP all period (m.ob.) with a high count of 21 on 8/15 (DF). HIGH was the only other site reporting meadowlark, 4 on 11/3 (DN). The only **Orchard Orioles** were a pair at LR 8/9 (MJ) and no **Baltimore Orioles** were found after 8/31.

There were four reports (CB, DC, MS, RS) of **Purple Finch** and only one report of **Pine Siskin**, a single at CSP 10/9 (AW). In this unseasonably warm, non-irruption season, **Evening Grosbeak** certainly wasn't on anyone's radar. Nevertheless, a half dozen were in low brush along a gas line right-of-way adjoining Codorus Furnace Rd. 10/18 (JDy).

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**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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## IN FOCUS



*White Ibis, Green Lane Park, Montgomery County. See p. 242.  
(Photo by George Franchois)*



*Hudsonian Godwits, John Heinz NWR, Philadelphia Co. See p. 244.  
(Photo by George Armistead)*



*Willet, Plymouth Flats, Luzerne County. See p. 239.  
(Photo by Jonathan DeBalko)*



*Gull-billed Tern, John Heinz NWR, Philadelphia County. See p. 244.  
(Photo by Annie Reeves)*



*Ruff, Greencastle Reservoir, Franklin County. See p. 232.  
(Photo by Geoff Malosh)*



*Rufous Hummingbird, Elverson, Chester County. See p. 226.  
(Photo by Holly Merker)*