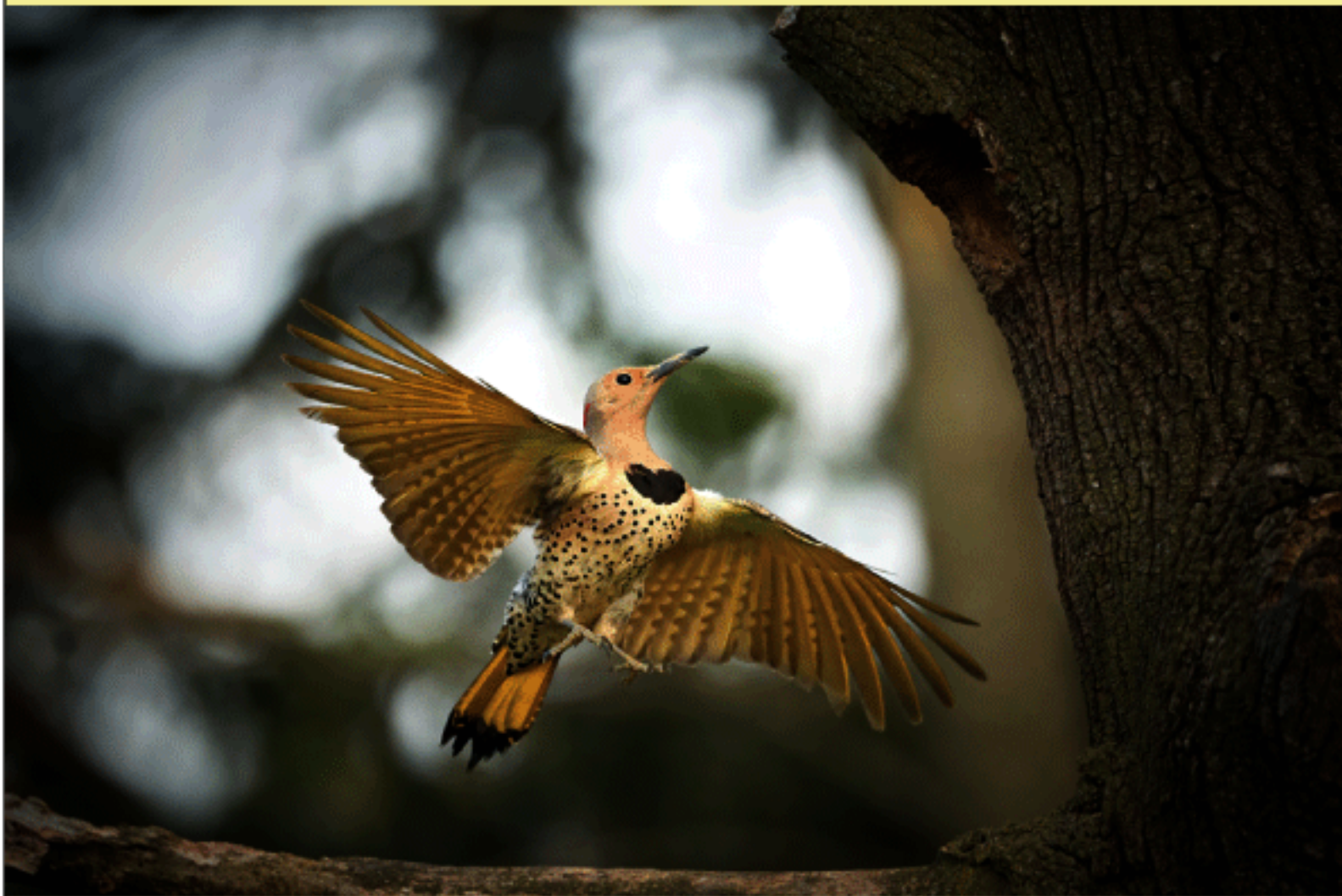


# PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS



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Cover: Female Northern Flicker returning to nest cavity containing chicks at Lancaster, Lancaster 30 May. (Jeffrey Kauffman)

**In this issue.....**

**COVID-19 continued.** The pandemic goes on as these words are written in early October, re-gaining ground as a large part of the population, including leadership in Washington and many state capitals, choose ignorance and/or arrogance over science.

However, I will leave politics be, and focus briefly on a possible positive from the mess - more people paying attention to birds (and Nature in general). In social media, people I have never heard of are posting bird reports, and eBird volume seems to grow daily. In addition to simply unveiling the on goings of the natural world to people seeking something besides COVID news and acrimony between opposing political views and the laying-more-bare than any time for decades of the racism that pervades our culture – we might hope that this movement to Nature will bring more people to include conservation issues in their calculations of which politician for whom they will vote, in support for conservation organizations, and in the daily routines of their lives.

I am certain that in January, college student and *Bucks* resident Paul Heveran did not expect to spend the spring doing an intensive migration survey from his backyard. But with COVID, Paul (who is, by the way, the *Bucks* compiler for this publication) came home from school and made good use of his time, documenting an amazing number and array of birds that visited his yard or, at least, flew northbound overhead. Read Paul’s account and see his results in his article beginning on page 74.

**Rare birds!** Words to stir the imagination of any birder worth his or her salt. Given COVID considerations, most birders have probably canceled or postponed trips that may have provided an opportunity to find birds new to them. But, of course, “new birds”, including occasionally amazing rarities, sometimes come to us.

Dan Brauning, our summer season editor and key figure in both of Pennsylvania’s Breeding Bird Atlases, not to mention long-time non-game specialist for the Pennsylvania Game Commission, has thought about rarities; and, in particular, about the likelihood of any individual megararity that strays into Pennsylvania actually coming to the attention of the birding community (think White-winged Tern or Roseate Spoonbill). Dan doesn’t claim to have the answer, but his examination of the

question is certainly interesting and thought-provoking, starting on page 66.

**Weather, climate, and birds.** As probably everyone reading this knows, weather and climate are not the same thing. *Weather* happens every day, and every day is different. *Climate* is daily weather averaged over a long time. The long view now is that climate is warming and that the changes are affecting bird populations and will do so more severely in coming decades.

But, of course, birds are also affected by brief weather events that momentarily contradict the climate trend; in particular, unusual cold weather that lasts for a day or two or maybe several, conditions that still occur often even if at decreasing frequency as the planet warms.

In the worst of such events, the results may be drastic on a local level. This happened in Pennsylvania in May of 2020 when freezing temperatures and snow struck well after the usual end of winter conditions, at a time when insectivorous birds had returned in number. In his essay in this issue, Gene Wilhelm describes his experience from the brutal day of 9 May in northwestern Pennsylvania, and recalls a similar occurrence a couple decades ago. We wonder how many swallows and orioles and warblers did not survive that day. It’s Nature, and maybe it’s better we don’t know the real death toll. (Such an event apparently explains the initially mysterious deaths of untold thousands, perhaps tens or hundreds of thousands, of birds in New Mexico early this past fall – likely caused by a very large and very sudden temperature drop and snow at a time when southbound birds normally have no problem finding abundant insects to fuel their journey).

**Compiler News**

We have new compilers in two counties beginning with this issue. **Dan Richards** takes over for Tom Glover in *Jefferson*. Dan lives in northwestern *Clearfield* right next door to *Jefferson*. **Rob Dickerson** will succeed Jon Kauffman in *Mifflin*. Rob is a Lewistown resident and of course also the photo editor for our journal. Thanks to Tom and Jon for their contributions! I also note that this is the last season for Vern Gauthier in *Cumberland*.

The following counties need a compiler: *Bradford*, *Fulton*, *Luzerne*, and *McKean*. Contact the editor.

**County compilers:** **Phil Keener** (Adams, York), **Mike Fialkovich** (Allegheny, Fayette), **Marjorie Van Tassel** (Armstrong), **Geoff Malosh** (Beaver, Lawrence, Washington), **Laura and Mike Jackson** (Bedford), **Rudy Keller** and **Matt Wlasniewski** (Berks), **John Carter** (Blair), **Paul Heveran** (Bucks), **Oscar Miller** (Butler), **Dave Gobert** (Cambria), **Mark Johnson** (Cameron), **Billy Weber** (Carbon), **Nan Butkovich** (Centre), **Holly Merker** (Chester), **Carole Winslow** (Clarion), **Diane Bierly** (Clearfield), **Wayne Laubscher** (Clinton), **Andy Keister** (Columbia, Northumberland), **Rob Hodgson** (Crawford), **Vern Gauthier** (Cumberland), **Sandy Lockerman** (Dauphin), **Sheryl Johnson** (Delaware), **Carol Light** (Elk, Forest), **Jerry McWilliams** (Erie), **Bill Oyler** (Franklin), **Marjorie Howard** (Greene), **Greg Grove** (Huntingdon, Juniata), **Margaret Higbee** (Indiana), **Dan Richards** (Jefferson), **Chad Kauffman** (Juniata), **Ryan Johnson** (Lackawanna), **Zach Millen** (Lancaster), **Tim Becker** (Lebanon), **Bill Etter** (Lehigh), **Bobby Brown** (Lycoming), **Glenn Koppel** (Mercer), **Rob Dickerson** (Mifflin), **Brian Hardiman** (Monroe), **Brian Henderson** (Montgomery), **Evan Houston** (Montour), **Michael Schall** (Northampton, Pike), **Holger Pflicke** (Philadelphia), **Robert Snyder** (Potter, Tioga), **Dave Rieger** (Schuylkill), **Jeff Payne** (Somerset), **Rob Megraw** (Sullivan), **Evan Mann** (Susquehanna), **Joe Gyekis** (Snyder, Union), **Gary Edwards** and **Russ States** (Venango), **Scott Stoleson** (Warren), **Josh Jones** (Wayne), **Tom Kuehl** (Westmoreland), **Joe DeMarco** (Wyoming).

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# Patterns and Probability of Detecting Pennsylvania's Birds of Note

## Dan Brauning and Isis Lawson, Pennsylvania Game Commission

We are fascinated by rarity. Whether birding in a local patch, tracking birds on our county list, or chasing birds across the country, we consciously or subconsciously anticipate and are motivated to find a new bird, something unexpected, and maybe even something rare.

This article describes patterns in the reporting of unexpected birds in Pennsylvania in order to better understand when and where these species occur and how well we know the birds around us. The observations focused on here come from eBird and the birds in county Local Notes reports that were summarized in "Birds of Note" (BON), published quarterly in this journal. These include birds deemed to be out of season or species highlighted as notable during any season of the year. The purpose of this article is to examine our ability to detect birds to better understand the factors affecting how many birds we miss.

Fundamentally, the question behind this article is "detectability", or, humans' ability to detect a bird that is present. This subject has great implications for analyzing and interpreting data from standardized surveys and includes a long literature focused on survey methods (e.g., Ralph et al. 1995). A bird's detectability has implications for birding as well as standardized surveys, including discovery of rare birds. The implications may include, "How many rarities are being overlooked?" Questions also naturally arise when a rare bird is detected, like "How did it get here?" For very rare birds, we might ask "Was it assisted?" and by extension, "Is it countable?" A question of curiosity includes, "Is this the same individual that was seen elsewhere?" A comment on the Snail Kite cover photo of Fall 2019 issue of *Pennsylvania Birds* illustrates these questions: "never seen thereafter; closest reports are from over 500 miles to the south" (Vara, 2019). Billy Weber's "Strangers from afar" article in the July 2020 issue highlights this curiosity as well. Our article touches on these natural inquiries and focuses on two primary questions: Why are more uncommon birds reported in some counties than others and how effective are we at detecting the rarest of species?

A simple example of these two topics (and part of the nexus of this paper) was the group of 5 American White Pelicans observed during summer 2019. That Summary of the Season (Brauning 2019) speculated that the group noted on 6/4 over Haverford College, re-observed the next morning 8 miles south at Governor Printz Park, and reported later nearby in New Jersey, were all the same individuals. We presume that they came from Bombay Hook, Delaware, where a larger group had been seen before and after this foray. White pelicans are rare in the mid-Atlantic states and are quite visible (detectable), so it seems reasonable to assume that these same individuals were traced between these locations. Expensive telemetry equipment normally is necessary to track individuals across a similar set of locations., but a group of five large, distinctive, and rare birds (highly detectable pelicans) were observed at a succession of locations across a corner of Pennsylvania with many birders. These observations illustrate much about detectability, suggesting that the birding community has reached an extraordinary capacity to following the movements of some individual birds. But somehow, they initially arrived over Haverford College undetected.

### METHODS

We now live in an era of "big data." Massive quantities of data are assembled for almost everything and that information is more accessible than ever before. Ornithology is a data-rich field, providing a better understanding of populations than is available for most other animal groups. Other ecologists envy ornithology for its vast data sets, which include eBird and local bird records. Pennsylvania's birds have been documented seasonally at a county level since the inception of *Pennsylvania Birds*' publication in 1987

and are summarized in Local Notes and BON. These bird data have been provided by you, the birding public, compiled by seasonal editors, and organized as a freely available dataset by Frank Haas. And with eBird we are talking about truly "big data," with over a hundred-thousand checklists in Pennsylvania annually. We evaluated patterns of uncommon birds' detection from these two data sets.

The BON data are extraordinary, totaling more than 15,000 observations of uncommon birds, including documentation of extraordinary rarities, such as the Black-backed Oriole. These observations provide a window into the temporal and spatial distributions of uncommon species in Pennsylvania. While BON have been reported from every county, they are not uniformly distributed across the state. We focus on patterns in the BON at a county level to consider geographic factors that might explain the frequency with which unusual species are reported in Pennsylvania. And, to evaluate the observations of the state's rarest birds reported since about 2005, we searched eBird for sightings in temporal (days between observations) and spatial (distance between observations) proximity to Pennsylvania's records. Based on sightings of these rarities, we considered patterns of detecting individual birds not likely to be mistaken for others of their kind as a proxy to tracking individuals so that we can ask: "How good are we at detecting these rare birds?"

To select data, we used the numerical abundance classes defined by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (PORC, Merker et al. 2018). BON include species representing the full range of abundance codes, from 1 (common) to 6 (accidental). We also adopted the American Birding Association's national rarity classes (1 = common) to 5 (rare) to further focus on species not often seen regionally. Species classified into PORC classes 3-6 (casual to accidental) are referred to here as "Unusual" birds and evaluated with linear regression and correlations. Since the number of records of accidental species is small, by definition, (accidentals are generally defined as fewer than five modern records) we describe these anecdotally to illustrate what seem to be patterns in reobservations of these individuals.

### RESULTS

About 378 species of birds were reported among the nearly 15,000 BON records reported from 1986 through 2016, including 119 as PORC class 1 species, 65 species in class 2, 36 in class 3, 17 in class 4, 61 in class 5, and 78 in class 6. Observations were reported from every county, although counties that have not consistently had compilers are understandably under-reported. The widely reported growth in birding's popularity is illustrated in the number of BON (in all categories) reported over the years. The total number of BON grew from 377 in 1990 to about 800 observations in 2016 with an average annual increase of 4% since 1990, even while some of these species were declining. Nearly 40% of the annual number of BON records were found from August to November. Spring provides the next largest group, with a little over a quarter of annual reports. A more precise assessment of seasonal patterns of rarity could be provided by summarizing eBird observations to target months or weeks in which rare birds are most frequently reported, but that is beyond our purpose. However, if you are interested in finding rare birds, fall is the season!

The geographic pattern in the detection of BON is noteworthy. The number of BON species or reports within a county is not primarily a factor its size, indicating that detections of BON are not distributed evenly across the landscape (Figure 1, PA map, by Dr. Andy Wilson). We would expect that rare bird detection is also a matter of the availability of habitats to attract these birds and that the county's geographic position affects the source or concentration of rarities. Not surprisingly, *Bucks* proximity to the Atlantic Ocean,



makes it accessible to birds straying from the coast or blown in by hurricanes. Similarly, *Erie* attracts unusual birds because of its unique Great Lakes shoreline at a corner of the state. These counties do report more BON than most. The Susquehanna River is clearly a funnel for water-associated rarities and *Lancaster* birders are there to scoop up sightings moving along the river. Distinct habitats such as the lake shore of *Erie* are a valuable part of attracting Unusual species, but the pattern of detecting these species across the rest of the state is influenced by other factors as well.

The strongest pattern statewide in the number of Unusual species as well as the number of such bird records, is the number of people living within those counties ( $t=6.3$ ,  $p<0.01$ , Figure 2) (Figure 2. Number of species of Birds of Note between 2000 and 2019 by county). The number of Unusual bird species, and number of those reports increased with the size in the county's population, up to a point. Since the number of PSO members is also very strongly correlated with the human population at the county level, we can conclude that the number of BON reported in a county is most strongly influenced by the number of birders in that county. This suggests the obvious point that it takes birders to detect uncommon species, but also that a lot of Unusual birds are missed in sparsely populated counties just from the lack of birders, not because those counties lack interesting birding locations! And there are limits to rarity detection: *Allegheny* and *Philadelphia*, the state's most populous counties, drop below the projected line of Unusual bird reports based on the number of birders (note Figure 2). Those urbanized landscapes don't support the number of Unusual birds that birders are available to detect, even though Philadelphia is at a key "corner" position in the state and close to the coast, a source of Unusual birds.

Four counties report more Unusual birds than their modest population sizes would predict: *Bucks*, *Erie*, and *Lancaster*, followed closely by *Berks* (which is buoyed by more "Accidental" records than any county). In these counties, a small group of birders apparently contribute disproportionately to rare bird reports. Sometimes just one active birder consistently detected many rare birds over many years. Are they just "lucky"? You might have to ask them. More likely, they have honed their skills and are attentive to the possibilities of rare bird potentials. It's a state of mind. So, in these counties, a few people make a difference in documenting rare birds.

The birding community's public presence also contributes to BON reports, turning casual birders into a source of rare birds that are documented by qualified birders. Many examples of such reports underly many of the state's rarest discoveries, and modern social media and technology help get sightings of rare birds to those who can identify them. This expands the pool of observers that contribute to the detection of rare birds. So, the detection of rarities is primarily a matter of birders being present, attentive, and actively engaged with the community, and a few can make a difference!

Our second analysis is focused on birders' ability to detect the rarest birds. Using eBird, we compiled 98 observations of 46 species of accepted Pennsylvania records classed Accidental (numeric abundance #6) from 2005 to 2019. These include the headline-making rarities that listers drop everything to chase: Black-backed Oriole and Rock Wren among them. Some of the species are nationally rare (Corn Crake), while others are just unexpected in Pennsylvania and seasonally common elsewhere in the country (e.g., Green-tailed Towhee). Rarity is relative to the locality. Most of these birds were observed for only 1 or 2 days, although a few stayed for longer periods. From a practical standpoint, the conclusion may be: if you hear about an accidental record, you better move fast. A few lingered, like the Green-tailed Towhee that wintered in Berks (Note in Table 1: GTTO, Berks 2011) or the Black-backed Oriole that remained from February to March (BBOR, Berks 2017).

Most Accidentals don't arrive as the result of some major weather event, like a hurricane. Birds associated with hurricanes are more likely classified as "Casual" (Class 5) because of the repeated nature of such events. Accidental records generally show up at

unlikely locations and generally for no apparent reason. But each species has its own story, resulting in fascinating anecdotes and making it challenging to generalize. We focused on species so rare that we can assume that re-sightings at a different location was the same individual (like the pelicans), so that these observations may serve as a model for thinking about our ability to detect individual birds.

However, 20 instances of Accidental bird reports involve a species whose range is close to Pennsylvania during the period in which Pennsylvania's observation occurred. These include Brown Booby, Northern Gannet, Brown Pelican, Clapper Rail, Leach's Storm-Petrel, Saltmarsh Sparrow, and Seaside Sparrow, all of which occur regularly along the Atlantic Coast. Since our proximity to a larger population of that species makes it implausible to infer that other records were reobservations to Pennsylvania's Accidental record, these were excluded from this analysis. A few species are believed to annually move over Pennsylvania in migration, even though they are rarely reported (e.g., Kirtland's Warbler). So, these likewise were not considered as part of this analysis.

The core group of Accidental records that remained consisted of 78 observations of 38 species (Table 1). Of these, there were eBird observations simultaneously (or likely at the same time) within the state or in a nearby state for 18 Pennsylvania records, so those were clearly not re-observations of Pennsylvania's sighting, and are labelled as such in the table. Some of these, such as Tufted Duck and Ash-throated Flycatcher, are reported frequently enough in surrounding states, that their Accidental status in Pennsylvania seems to reflect under-reporting here. In other cases, the series of observations are insufficient to determine if a sequential of sightings are should be treated as separate individuals (e.g., SBGU, Erie and Northampton, 2017).

Of the remaining 60 Accidental records, more than half (37/60) the species was observed within a month (before or after) but not reported simultaneously, within a few hundred miles, and is therefore considered re-sighted ("Y" or "?" for re-sighted in the table). Here, we assert that these could be reobservations of the same individual that showed up unexpectedly in Pennsylvania. Individual variability in plumage, sex, or molt can support or refute this assertion, but without those features (and without researching every case) we consider the extreme rarity of these species seen as likely re-observations of the same individual in a different location, under the most generous assumption that the birders detected that rare individual in more than one place. It's a big assumption that seems reasonable given the infrequency of the species' occurrence. But, it is a remarkable thought: across the thousands of square miles of habitat that birds can hide and more thousands of birders to detect



**Green-tailed Towhee**, Blue Marsh (*Berks*), 1/25/2012 (Pat Williams)

is remarkable, particularly species that are not as obvious as white pelicans!

Details of the Black-backed Oriole (BBOR), a bird short-distant migrant native to central Mexico, provide an example. An adult BBOR was seen at a private residence in Berks, Pennsylvania from January 31, 2016 through April 2, 2017, with regular visitation to a feeding station. The sighting was accepted by PORC as well as at the national level (ABA Rarity Code 5). When a BBOR was reported in Connecticut and then a few weeks later in May, 290 miles away (Massachusetts Avian Records Committee 2020), also at a feeding station, it seemed safe to assume that it is the same individual that had been seen in Pennsylvania. No BBOR had ever been reported in the Eastern United States before or since. How it got to Pennsylvania without being observed remains a mystery. Had it visit other feeding stations unreported?

A sequence of observations of Calliope Hummingbird provides another example. Observed for a week (through the morning of November 9, 2012) in Chester County, it appeared on an eBird checklist at 1:30 that day in the state of Delaware, then a week later in Maryland, and finally 2 weeks later in Lancaster County where it stayed for a week (CAHU, Lancaster 2012). A cursory review of the photos suggest that this sequence of observations was the same individual observed at 4 locations in 3 states over about a month. Curiously, Calliope Hummingbirds were seen in Bloomington, Indiana (overlapping with the Chester observation), Charlotte NC (before and after), and in Nashville, Tennessee (before and after)! Detailed evaluations on timing and plumage would be needed to assess these sightings. Since any hummingbird sighting during November and December in Pennsylvania or any of these states would be of interest, and they are detectable at feeders outside our windows, hummingbirds may be the model group for considering detectability of vagrant birds. Hummingbird feeders and eBird data provide a distinctive infrastructure for birds to be detected and reported! This might suggest that we have a better handle on winter hummingbirds than on other groups of vagrants, although the Bahama Woodstar noted below provides a counter example.

Another example is the distinctive and highly detectable White-winged Tern, observed in Tioga for 3 days (WWTE, Tioga 2017). One was seen briefly in Philadelphia 56 days later. Notably, no other reports of this species were reported to eBird that year anywhere in North America. It seems reasonable to assume that the Tioga and Philadelphia observations were the same individual. Of course, we have no idea where it was during the 56-day period between these sightings, how it got to Tioga in the first place, or where it went (if it survived) after leaving Philadelphia. Other similar examples, summarized in Table 1, provide insight into how well we are at detecting rare birds. These, and other Accidental bird records, suggest that at best, half of the cases of the proverbial needles in a haystack were re-observed at least once in a different location.

But for nearly half of Pennsylvania's Accidental records, no associated observations were reported anywhere near Pennsylvania within months of these reports, and most of these observations involve species that could not have completed movements from traditional ranges to Pennsylvania in a single flight. This includes species found at feeders (Bahama Woodstar, Lancaster 2013; Varied Bunting, Allegheny 2018), large, distinctive birds (Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Bucks 2014), as well as skulking species (MacGillivray's Warbler, Dauphin 2013) that briefly appeared in Pennsylvania, but for which no other observations are temporally or geographically connected to Pennsylvania's record. The closest Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (Crawford 2018) reported during the 2017-18 winter was in South Dakota over 1200 miles away! A lot of bird feeders were being watched between here and there, in which a report of this species would achieve notoriety. An Anna's Hummingbird sighting (York 2016) as well as the Bahama Woodstar counter the confidence suggested above by the Calliope reobservations. With lots of feeders in place, it is possible that these



**MacGillivray's Warbler**, Highspire Reservoir Park (*Dauphin*)  
11/24/2013 (David Yeany, II)

individuals were seen elsewhere and misidentified. Even so, they went undetected, and that's part of the lesson!

The European Robin (EURO, 2015 Bucks) and Varied Bunting provide dramatic cases. These species were not reported elsewhere in Eastern North America during the calendar year of Pennsylvania's observations. These rarities went completely under the birding radar in their journeys to and from Pennsylvania, despite the bunting's use of a feeding station where we make the case it becomes much more detectable. Some Accidental species include distinctively marked birds for which the original reports are



**Bahama Woodstar**, Denver (*Lancaster*), 4/23/2013 (Meredith Lombard)

sometimes misidentified, only to be confirmed by subsequent investigation. When a rarity is mistakenly reported for a common species that itself would be out of season, it's more likely to get attention and be documented, and then correctly identified for the rarity it really is. But if a rarity is mistakenly reported as a more common species within that species' normal seasonal range, it might never be reported. So, there is a bias toward rare species being reported when similar species are unusual, suggesting that even more birds go unreported!

## DISCUSSION

The re-observations of rarities provide a hint at routes used by rare birds to arrive here and give credit to the birding community for detecting these usual events. The birding community sometimes provides insights that mimic radio-telemetry, normally needed to track individual birds. But even the best cases of multiple detections were not sufficient to indicate how any of the state's Accidental birds got to Pennsylvania and for nearly half of these



records there were no clues at all about their movements to or from the state. Even giving the birding community the greatest possible credit, the majority of rare individuals found here went undetected in their movements to and from the state and for significant periods during that vagrancy. And the lack of additional observations provides almost no clue about the how these vagrants arrived so far from their native range.

The clear evidence, from BON in general and the Accidental records, in particular, is that the vast majority of individual rare birds go undetected. MacGillivray’s Warblers twice traveled for at least a month over a thousand miles from their breeding range or migratory routes to Pennsylvania without being detected along the way. Most vagrant individuals fit into this category. We miss a lot of birds. Even the large, distinctive Brown Booby was found and reported by non-birders more often than birders have seen the species here! We conclude that the vast majority of rare birds are not detected or at least not identified correctly and documented by the community of birders. This is not an indictment on the birding community, but rather an encouragement to recruit more birders into the fold. There are plenty of birds to document. Increased birding activity, matched with digital photography for documentation, and better sharing of information all combine to increase the number of birds (common and unusual) being detected and reported. Much remains to be learned about Pennsylvania’s birds. And we’re glad for it! As we appreciation the beauty and the diversity of bird life around us, our experience is enhanced by a sense of mystery and the surprise when we discover something unexpected. Birds continues to surprise us.

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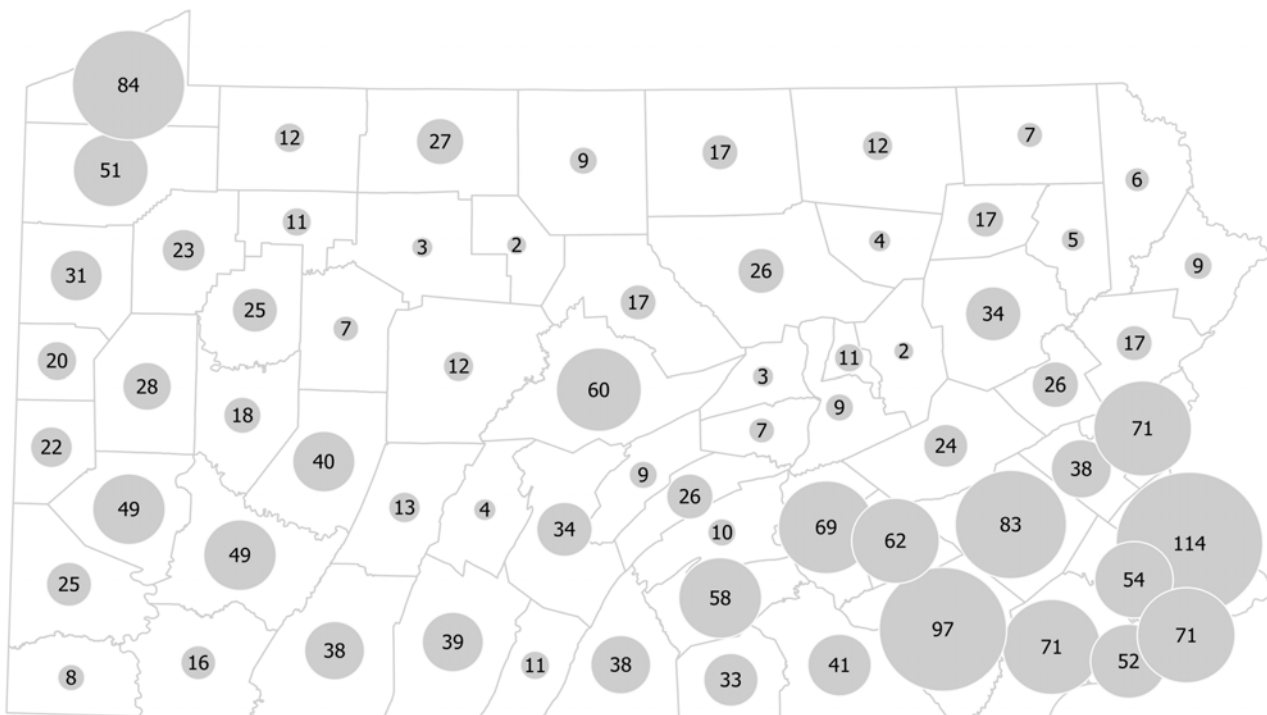


Figure 1

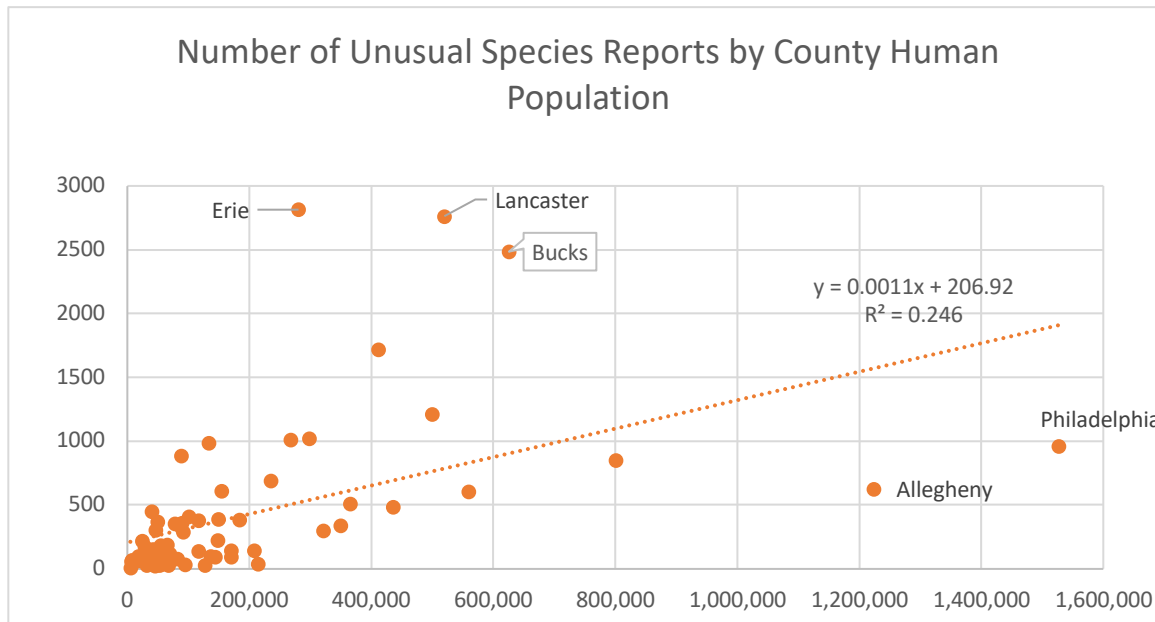


Figure 2

Table 1

Name	4-letter	County	1st Date Observed	Last Date Observed	Other Locs	Overlap	Relocation
Common Shelduck	COSH	Luzerne	9/16/17		NY, NH	N	Y
Tufted Duck	TUDU	Bucks	3/22/04	3/28/04	NY, CT	Y	N
Tufted Duck	TUDU	Chester	3/18/10	3/27/10	MA, NY, MD	Y	N
Western Grebe	WEGR	Erie	6/21/13	6/23/13	MA	N	N
Western Grebe	WEGR	Cumberland	2/14/09	2/21/09	NJ, NY	N	Y
Western Grebe	WEGR	Centre	5/10/11		OH, Ont	N	Y
Western Grebe	WEGR	Lebanon	11/4/12	11/16/12	MA	Y	N
Western Grebe	WEGR	Mercer	11/27/17			N	N
Anna's Hummingbird	ANHU	Berks	late Oct 2010	March 2011	MD	Y	N
Anna's Hummingbird	ANHU	York	11/4/16	11/14/16		N	N
Bahama Woodstar	BAWS	Lancaster	4/22/13	4/24/13		N	N
Black-chinned Hummingbird	BCHU	Bucks	11/10/12	11/10/12	SC, NC	N	N
Black-chinned Hummingbird	BCHU	Franklin	early Nov 2013	11/25/13	CT	N	Y
Black-chinned Hummingbird	BCHU	Lycoming	11/11/16	11/15/16	NJ	N	Y
Black-chinned Hummingbird	BCHU	Monroe	11/5/18	11/22/18	GA	N	N
Allen's Hummingbird	ALHU	Lancaster	12/12/09	12/28/09	OH	Y	N
Allen's Hummingbird	ALHU	Lancaster	11/7/10	11/13/10	VA, MA	N	Y
Allen's Hummingbird	ALHU	Bucks	11/12/12	1/8/13	MA	N	Y
Allen's Hummingbird	ALHU	Montgomery	10/7/12	12/3/12	Bucks	Y	N
Allen's Hummingbird	ALHU	Dauphin	10/1/18	11/23/2018+	MD	N	Y
Calliope Hummingbird	CAHU	Chester	10/16/12	11/11/12	Lanc, MD	N	Y
Calliope Hummingbird	CAHU	Lancaster	12/1/12	12/12/12	DE	N	Y
Calliope Hummingbird	CAHU	Montgomery	11/28/08	?	CT	N	Y
Calliope Hummingbird	CAHU	Montgomery	10/31/16	11/1/16	NJ	N	Y
Corn Crane	CORC	Wayne	1/1/16			N	N
Wilson's Plover	WIPL	Erie	5/26/15	5/26/15	Ontario	N	Y
Long-billed Murrelet	LBMU	Bucks	12/14/07	12/14/07		N	N



Snowy Plover	SNPL	Erie	6/3/12	6/4/12	OH	N	Y
Snowy Plover	SNPL	Erie	7/1/14	7/4/14		N	N
Slaty-backed Gull	SBGU	Bucks	12/21/07	12/23/07	NY	?	?
Slaty-backed Gull	SBGU	Bucks	1/16/08	1/16/08		N	N
Slaty-backed Gull	SBGU	Erie	1/28/17	2/26/17	NY	N	Y
Slaty-backed Gull	SBGU	Northampton	1/31/17	1/31/17	Erie	?	?
Kelp Gull	KEGU	Allegheny	1/17/15	1/18/15	WV	N	Y
White-winged Tern	WWTE	Tioga	8/10/17	8/13/17	Phil	N	Y
White-winged Tern	WWTE	Philadelphia	10/8/17	10/9/17	Tioga	N	Y
Herland (Trinidad) Petrel	HEPE	Blair	11/3/12			N	N
Magnificent Frigatebird	MAFR	Berks	9/20/08	9/20/08	PA	N	Y
Magnificent Frigatebird	MAFR	Montgomery	9/20/08	9/20/08	PA	N	Y
Roseate Spoonbill	ROSP	Cumberland	7/17/17	9/30/17	NJ, VA	N	Y
Roseate Spoonbill	ROSP	Lancaster	7/15/17	7/16/17		N	Y
Roseate Spoonbill	ROSP	Lancaster	7/14/18		NJ	Y	N
Roseate Spoonbill	ROSP	Lancaster	8/23/18	10/12/18	NJ	Y	N
Snail Kite	SNKI	Erie	10/22/19		SC	N	?
Crested Caracara	CRCA	Washington	9/12/14	9/13/2014	WV	N	Y
Crested Caracara	CRCA	Berks	12/26/14	12/28/14	NJ	?	?
Ash-throated Flycatcher	ATFL	Lancaster	12/21/06	1/14/07	NJ	Y	N
Ash-throated Flycatcher	ATFL	Lebanon	11/20/09	11/28/09	NJ, DE	N	Y
Ash-throated Flycatcher	ATFL	Cumberland	1/4/12	1/5/12	NJ	N	Y
Ash-throated Flycatcher	ATFL	Philadelphia	1/9/16	1/10/16	NJ/MD	N	?
Ash-throated Flycatcher	ATFL	Montgomery	12/17/17	1/14/18	DC	N	?
Gray Kingbird	GRAK	Chester	12/12/04	12/20/04		N	N
Fork-tailed Flycatcher	FTFL	Bucks	6/4/06	6/5/06		N	N
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	PSFL	Cumberland	11/18/12	11/25/12		N	N
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	PSFL	Berks	12/20/15	1/5/16	NY	N	Y
Rock Wren	ROWR	Montgomery	10/2/18	10/12/18	KY	N	?
European Robin	EURO	Bucks	2/21/15	3/7/15		N	N
Northern Wheatear	NOWH	Clinton	3/1/08			N	N
Northern Wheatear	NOWH	Bucks	10/4/09		CT	Y	N
Northern Wheatear	NOWH	Lebanon	10/7/11	10/10/11	NY	Y	N
Northern Wheatear	NOWH	Berks	10/4/12		MD, NJ	N	Y
Redwing	REDW	Bucks	2/5/05		Newf	N	Y
Gray-Crowned Rosy-Finch	GCRF	Crawford	2/1/18	2/24/18	SD	N	N
Lesser Goldfinch	LEGO	Franklin	4/9/12	4/9/12		N	N
Green-tailed Towhee	GTTO	Berks	11/20/11	4/2/12		Y	N
Green-tailed Towhee	GTTO	Montgomery	11/11/19	12/21/19		Y	N
Black-backed Oriole	BBOR	Berks	1/26/17	4/9/17	MA	N	Y
Scott's Oriole	SCOR	Cumberland	2/19/07	4/8/07	KY	Y	N
Shiny Cowbird	SHCO	Adams	6/2/13		NC	N	Y
MacGillivray's Warbler	MGWA	Berks	12/18/04	12/20/04		N	N
MacGillivray's Warbler	MGWA	Dauphin	11/22/13	12/9/13	MA	N	N
Townsend's Warbler	TOWA	Delaware/Phil	11/20/10	11/21/10	NH	N	Y
Townsend's Warbler	TOWA	Cumberland	1/1/12	3/22/12	MA	Y	N
Townsend's Warbler	TOWA	Lehigh	9/15/18	9/15/18	NJ	N	N
Townsend's Warbler	TOWA	Columbia	1/3/17	2/15/17	NJ	N	Y
Lazuli Bunting	LAZB	Montgomery	3/4/07	4/10/07	MA/IL	N	Y
Lazuli Bunting	LAZB	Columbia	1/29/09	2/8/09		N	N
Varied Bunting	VABU	Allegheny	5/5/18	5/7/18		N	N

## Great Avian Depression II

### Gene Wilhelm

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The Bartramian Audubon Society's annual Big Day for Birds (also called "World Migratory Bird Day" by other birding organizations) celebrated its 25th consecutive year Saturday, 9 May 2020. Starting at 0500 hrs and ending at 2000 hrs, 26 field teams of 39 citizen scientists covered Butler, Lawrence, Mercer, and Venango Counties with the combined goal of having fun challenging the 8 May 1996 record of 190 species for the four counties, yet continue collecting field data that can provide indications of how a variety of mixed natural and human actions affect bird abundance year to year in western Pennsylvania. Likewise, 11 dedicated feeder-watchers supplemented their valuable avian data to this special annual ornithological event.

The weather at 0500 hrs was 100% overcast with a low ceiling of 500 feet, 25 degrees F temperature, 98% relative humidity, and 20 mph NW wind. Western Pennsylvania was already under the influence of a consecutive two-day low pressure trough and a weather advisory of a "fast-moving cold front" covering our area the morning of 9 May. Birding started the day with single Eastern Screech, Great Horned, and Barred Owls using a few quick hoots in Poplar Forest, Slippery Rock Borough, as if they sensed what horrible weather was fast approaching. About 0600 hrs. Wolf Creek Narrows, a birding hot spot migration trap just three miles west of Slippery Rock, was the first site checked for migrants. Instantly vireo call-note chatter came from the trees on either side of the creek. More daylight allowed eventual identification of six vireo species within a quarter mile of the creek bridge. In fact, the vireos were part of a mini-fallout with Veery, Wood Thrush, and Fox, Lincoln's, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows traveling silently together along the creek edges, but no dependable warblers.

Celery Swamp (SGL 151) harbored at least a few vocal wetland species, first a Sandhill Crane trumping from the backside of the wetland where a crane couple has nested successfully for many years. Perhaps this vibrant repetitious call stimulated other marsh occupants to join in this early morning exercise, such as Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser (from a duck box no less), Pied-billed Grebe, Virginia Rail, and Sora. Unfortunately, these sounds were the last and only avian music experienced for the day.

Rain started gently about 0800 hrs allowing a farm pond check known for its spring and fall shore bird gatherings. Because of the instantaneous change in weather, an appreciable number of water-oriented species were there: 6 Sandhill Cranes took flight from an adjoining grain field, no doubt non-breeders, last-year juveniles forced out of family ties by the parents. Such younger birds roam farm grain fields until allowed to rejoin this year's families in late summer. The pond produced Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers, and two Wilson's Snipe hiding in the dense, tall, green pond-edge vegetation. Two pairs of Canada Geese and a single female Mallard were nesting nearby while a third pair of geese had already produced seven goslings. Apparently the weather was too nasty for the youngsters who simply snuggled under the parents' bodies for protection against the ever colder rain/snow precipitation mix and vicious NW wind.

Arriving 0830 hrs at the south entrance of Moraine State Park and its Pleasant Valley road circle, the car was suddenly pandered by fierce NW wind, accompanied by a gigantic horizontal snow mini-blizzard, and dense fog. Visibility was zero with temperature plummeting to 25 degrees F and lasting for an hour. After a pause of 40 minutes, a second white-out returned. Snow about one-inch deep covered the grass, trees, shrubs, and park structures. This time, however, visibility improved three miles in length of the lake and shore to shore across Lake Arthur. Instantaneously, thousands of swallows migrated over white waves and surface water seeking insects above and on the water. These swallows were coming from

the east, flying the three-mile length of Lake Arthur, and not returning. Suddenly, again, another vicious third snowstorm hit but this time lasted for less than an hour. Nevertheless, the blitz caught thousands of swallows in dense fog. Birds landed on black-top roads, gravel parking lots, boat ramps, roofs of the many park structures, tables, benches, but avoided snow-covered grass and other natural vegetation. By 1445 hrs the weather improved considerably, with NW wind dying to 25 mph, clouds breaking occasionally for sunshine, and temperature reaching 38 degrees F. Snow melted and the great number of swallows and few Chimney Swifts disappeared by the end of the afternoon. Not only did late day birding improve here in Butler County but in the other three counties as well until 1700 hrs. or so.

A similar weather phenomenon happened 11 May 1996 but different from the 9 May 2020 event in a few important manners. Western Pennsylvania was under the influence of a low pressure trough since 9 May 1996, blocked by a stationary NW cold front north of I-80. Strong SE to SW winds, maximum daily temperatures in the mid-80 degrees F range, and many violent thunderstorms 9 May and 10 May forced wave after wave of migrants into our region where the birds stalled, awaiting favorable weather conditions for continuing their northern sojourn. The strongest nocturnal spring migration over Slippery Rock occurred late night 9 May and early 10 May 1996. In fact, call notes of vireos, thrushes, tanagers, grosbeaks, orioles, sparrows, and warblers were readily identified. Spring 1996 vegetation was a week to ten days ahead of 2020 that allowed more insects to be available to abundant insectivorous birds. In other words, millions of birds were stopped "cold" in their migration in western Pennsylvania, having only so much food before starvation would set in. On the other hand, 2020 avian spring migrants were on average ten days to a month late, thanks to the sea-saw cold, wet weather. The month of April broke many minimum temperature records thereby stalling most natural vegetation to commence its life cycle. For example, black locust trees and three species of milkweed were at least a month late in Slippery Rock. So called "winter birds," like the 6 Snow Buntings and 3 American Tree Sparrows, are extreme examples, since both species breed in Arctic North America and have a long way to travel. Although the 2020 survey did well in recording 147 species and 7148 individuals, some species like Common Loon and Double-crested Cormorant peaked here in record migration numbers the first week of May.

On the other hand, Cedar Waxwing, most flycatchers, vireos, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and warblers were scarce (only 20 out of 35 possible warbler species were recorded 9 May). The exception was the 272 Yellow-rumped Warblers, the instigator species of the migrant warbler group. At this writing, (third week of June), neither hummingbirds and vireos nor bobolinks and meadowlarks returned to their favorite breeding habitats in Slippery Rock Borough.

Accurate counting of swallows and Chimney Swifts was impossible but having the birds migrating only in one direction (east to west) and not returning helped considerably. All numbers are estimates.

In conclusion, the 9 May 2020 Big Day developed the worse weather in nearly a quarter century of surveys, influencing not only numbers of migrant species and individuals but also stressing local Neotropical breeding species. Vireos, thrushes, orioles, tanagers, grosbeaks, and warblers have declined drastically in the past 30 years or disappeared altogether in the BAS' four-county area. The avian extinction process can be slow but the 9 May 2020 event is a grim reminder of the quickness, power, control, and unpredictability of nature. In just a few hours of one day 24 years apart, weather determined the outcome between life and death for

millions of Nontropical spring migrants in a four-county region of western Pennsylvania and beyond. The 9 May 2020 Big Day was, indeed, a second “great avian depression,” losing half of the birds in that time. Scientists have suggested that extinction begins with loss in abundance of individuals in even once-common to numerous species (i.e., Passenger Pigeon), and functional changes of ecosystems. Recent ornithological research findings indicate net loss approaching 3 billion birds or 29% of 1970 abundance, already vanished. This loss of bird abundance signals an urgent need to address threats to avert future bird collapse the quicker the better (Rosenberg et al, 2019, p.120).

**References**

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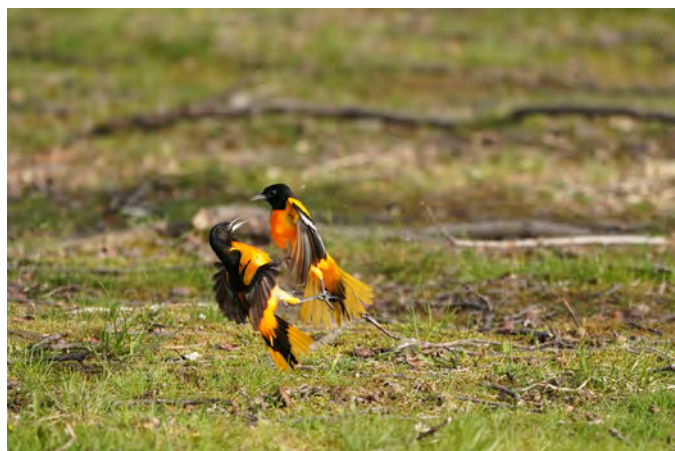
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SWALLOW SPECIES	Year 2020	Year 1996
Purple Martin	350+	26
Tree Swallow	5,000+	10,000+
N. Rough-winged Swallow	750+	1,500+
Bank Swallow	500+	1,000+
Cliff Swallow	1,000+	500+
Barn Swallow	5,000+	10,000+
<b>TOTAL SWALLOWS</b>	<b>12,600+</b>	<b>23,026+</b>
Chimney Swift	250+	None
<b>TOTAL SPECIES</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>190</b>
<b>TOTAL INDIVIDUALS</b>	<b>19,748</b>	<b>28,720</b>



This **Virginia Rail** at Two Mile Run County Park, Venango 10 May survived the cold and snow of the previous day. (Meg Kolodick)



These two feuding **Baltimore Orioles** were at Moraine SP, Butler 5 May; hopefully they made through the extreme cold that followed a few days later. (Martin Carlin)

## 25 Years Ago in *Pennsylvania Birds*



### Volume 8, No. 2.

Ed Kwater described the first (and only, so far) record of Ross’s Gull in York County.

Keith Russell described the status of Clapper Rail in Pennsylvania.

Rick Wiltraut described the courtship display of the Yellow-crowned Night-Heron.

Rare bird reports included Anhinga, Mississippi Kite, Black Rail, Black-necked Stilt, Ruff, Kirtland’s Warbler, LeConte’s Sparrow, and Lark Sparrow.

This issue can be read at [pabirds.org](http://pabirds.org).

# Home Hawkwatching and Much More: Quarantine Spring Birding

Paul Heveran

COVID-19: As did just about everything else, birding changed in March 2020.

Throughout the spring of 2020, however, Pennsylvania birders still found ways to enjoy the annual wave of migrants that washes over and through our region. For those stuck at home and unable to travel, all was not lost. Many turned year listing into yard listing, perhaps for the first time. Regular backyard outings yielded all manner of migration spectacles and unexpected visitors! What follows is one such account, from my Montgomery County backyard in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Although I began my watches before the pandemic, it soon became clear that backyard birding was here to stay. Travel restrictions and stay-at-home orders cropped up, and my beloved local Green Lane Park was closed to the public in March. I've watched migrating birds from the yard plenty of times before, but almost always in the fall. I was unsure of what to expect, but eager to see whatever I could.

My yard is situated in a residential neighborhood near the top of a small rise, 400-500ft above sea level, between the hills of Berks County and the Delaware Valley. Over 25 miles northwest lies the Kittatinny Ridge and 20+ miles east flows the Delaware River, both well-known corridors for migrating birds. Perhaps most importantly, Green Lane Reservoir is not quite 2 miles southwest and runs roughly south to north. Starting in late February, my hawkwatching efforts ran through the end of May. I was out early most mornings to look for passerines and other migrants, too. As the spring wore on, I went back out again at sunset to look for evening migrants.

January and February provided little incentive to go out in the cold, with very little in the way of passerines and waterfowl. Blackbirds were the main attraction, with Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, and Common Grackle combining for a total of at least 1727 migrants by the end of February. A hawkwatch on February 23 was seasonably warm but very slow, yielding just one Bald Eagle, one Red-tailed Hawk and four Ring-billed Gulls.

March 8 brought a southerly wind component, and flocks of geese, gulls, and a few raptors. The year's only Lesser Black-backed Gull flew over on this day. The next morning, 2,500+ Canada and Snow Geese were accompanied by two Wilson's Snipe and a Rusty Blackbird! Both were unexpected and new yard birds. Three more Rustys flew over March 10, as well as four Wood Ducks, five Mallards, the season's first Great Blue Heron, and the only Peregrine Falcon of the spring.



Osprey - 5 May 2020 - (Paul Heveran)

A long stretch of marginal migration conditions followed, bringing small numbers of common migrants (especially American Robins). The dam broke on March 20, when southwest winds brought 169 raptors in just over 2 hours! One other small pulse of raptors passed before the end of the month, but drizzle and east wind dampened the migration towards the end; nevertheless, March turned out to have the highest monthly total of non-raptors (7340).

April began cold and quiet, with nothing notable until the 5th. This was the first day of Common Loon passage, with 17 flying over throughout the day. Fourteen Double-crested Cormorants and four Great Blue Herons were on the move, as well as several passerines on the ground (the only Tufted Titmouse of the year!) and a high count of five Rusty Blackbirds. An afternoon assortment of 19 raptors included the season's first Merlin. Decent conditions continued through the 7th, when six Northern Harriers and the first Broad-winged Hawk highlighted a 44-raptor day. Northern Flickers featured prominently in the morning counts, as well as a Northern Mockingbird that headed northeast surprisingly high up.

April 12 brought the next wave of migrants, including Palm Warbler, Purple Martin, and Barn Swallow. A total of 89 raptors were seen on the 12th, along with plenty of water birds. The next day was warm and unsettled, but a brief break in storms yielded a new set of migrants, whisked along by the wind; one each of Chimney Swift and Great Egret made for a good day. The morning of the 16th was quiet, but did bring a delightful duo of Savannah Sparrows (photo).

April 19th was a gloriously wonderful day spent hawkwatching with the family. No fewer than 378 raptors wheeled high overhead as the afternoon wore on. Two days later I experienced a great morning migration, headlined by an astounding 86 Common Loons and 159 Double-crested Cormorants. Many cormorants were very low, no doubt leaving Green Lane Reservoir for parts north. Broad-winged Hawks (53) popped up all around the neighborhood in small groups and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (3) fluttered over in their comical style.



Double-crested Cormorants - 3 May 2020 - (Paul Heveran)

I didn't have to wait long for the next great raptor day. Although April 23 was mostly cloudy, 233 raptors passed with much the same variety and numbers as before. A male Pine Warbler provided a great diversion and was a new yard bird as well. Saturday the 25th brought the last good raptor day of the month and a new yard bird in a cute Bank Swallow. The 28th was cool temperature-wise and featured a light flight with two highlights. An



apparently healthy Snow Goose really surprised me as it flew northeast with a Canada Goose, and six of the season's seven American Pipits put in an appearance. The real star rose at 8:19 that night, when an American Bittern sped past in the distance for my Pennsylvania lifer!

**Table 1 2020 Home Hawkwatching Results**

Species	Season Total	High Count	High Count Date
Black Vulture	2	2	3/20
Turkey Vulture	203	137	3/20
Osprey	72	16	4/25
Northern Harrier	24	8	4/12
Sharp-shinned Hawk	120	24	4/12
Cooper's Hawk	23	4	4/19
Bald Eagle	30	19	5/10
Red-shouldered Hawk	21	5	4/12
Broad-winged Hawk	641	308	4/19
Red-tailed Hawk	21	4	3/20
American Kestrel	62	10	4/25
Merlin	12	3	4/19, 4/25
Peregrine Falcon	1	1	3/10
Unidentified Accipiter	21	5	4/12, 4/19
Unidentified Buteo	14	3	3/20
Unidentified Falcon	5	1	5 dates, 4/7-5/3
Unidentified Raptor	23	8	4/19

The hot streak continued on the next morning, as Neotropical arrivals really began to come through. These included four Eastern Kingbirds, one Bobolink, three Baltimore Orioles, one Yellow Warbler, 81 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 63 warbler sp., one Scarlet Tanager, and one Indigo Bunting. On the next day, April 30, I got yet another yard lifer with a low Northern Waterthrush flyover. Although the non-raptor total for April was just 1961, the variety was very good and some of the raptor flights were really memorable.

Amid a good Yellow-rumped Warbler (32) flight on **May 1**, a late Horned Lark provided interest as well as an Orchard Oriole and a good early movement of Blue Jays. May 3 dawned cloudy and calm, but it was an entertaining morning. Things started off with a distant Wild Turkey gobbling, quite rare from the yard. Shorebirds were apparent, something I didn't expect! Five Solitary Sandpipers and a Greater Yellowlegs were fascinating, while jays (39) and kingbirds (6) ramped up their movements. The more colorful icterids were on full display, with six Bobolinks, four Orchard Orioles, and ten Baltimore Orioles. A Cliff Swallow appeared late morning, as well as another Solitary Sandpiper and a few raptors.

Northwest winds on May 5 slowed the migration, but 4 Cliff Swallows were a good total for this uncommon Montgomery migrant. A juvenile Herring Gull that evening was very late for the county, too. A cool and misty May 8 brought birds down, including two new yard birds - Yellow-throated Vireo and Nashville Warbler. A White-crowned Sparrow arrived, too, and stayed for several days.

Bird behavior was fascinating to observe on May 10, as temperatures dipped to a very rare low of 36 degrees F for the date. A kingbird began eating holly berries and a Common Yellowthroat flew in and landed right next to me. Other new birds included a Tennessee and a yard lifer Blue-headed Vireo. The afternoon session warmed up nicely, and a county record 19 Bald Eagles sailed northward in an impressive display! Two Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and a Cape May Warbler joined the cast.

Gloomy weather greeted me on the next morning, with bouts of rain and a few migrants in dry spells. New year birds were Green Heron and a Northern Parula (new for the yard), while four more Solitary Sandpipers were nice. I was back at it on the 14th, a cold morning but a good one. A Belted Kingfisher was surprising, and Cedar Waxwings (109) were on the move, along with a grounded American Redstart and a good flight of 14 kingbirds. One of my favorite migrants, a Common Nighthawk, cruised by in the evening.



**Common Nighthawk - 16 May 2020 - (Paul Heveran)**

The morning of the 15th was probably the best in terms of sheer spring migrant volume. Eastern Kingbird (16), Blue Jay (54), Cedar Waxwing (146), and Indigo Bunting (16, new county record) were the more easily identified passerines. Thirty-one warblers passed unidentified, along with 58 other passerines. The highlight in the trees was an absolutely stunning Bay-breasted Warbler, a new yard bird! Common Nighthawks were good in the evening, with 16 by sunset.

**Table 2 Notable Migrant High Counts**

Species	Season Total	High Count	High Count Date
Common Nighthawk	168	61	5/25
Common Loon	191	86	4/21
Double-crested Cormorant	588	159	4/21
Eastern Kingbird	52	16	5/15
Blue Jay	147	54	5/15
Cedar Waxwing	512	146	5/15
Baltimore Oriole	28	10	5/3
Yellow-rumped Warbler	229	81	4/29
Indigo Bunting	47	16	5/15

Blackpoll Warblers showed up on the 16th amid a huge flight of 71 warblers, often in pairs or small groups. Nighthawks nearly reached their peak season total with an exciting 57 through the afternoon and evening. Things really quieted down for a while afterwards, with days on end of just a few nighthawks and an odd Horned Lark that sang multiple times over a nearby cornfield. On May 25, 61 nighthawks sailed high overhead for a new Montgomery spring record! A Red-eyed Vireo on the morning of the 26th was a new bird for the yard year list. The ever-trusty Green

Lane Reservoir delivered in a huge way when I spotted a flock of about 35 shorebirds circling out towards the southwest on 5/27. They turned right for me and eventually passed close enough to identify them as Black-bellied Plovers, a real yard treat indeed!

June is often considered the end of migration; however, I did observe migrants in a very special way at the beginning of the month. June 2 brought a trim Blackpoll Warbler to the backyard spruces for a minute before it continued on. A flock of about 50 shorebirds passed incredibly far to the west. June 4 was the last day I really detected migration, but it was a classic. Amid broiling thunderclouds, I began seeing flocks of Delaware Bay shorebirds fighting northeast at tremendous altitudes. As the storms advanced, some flocks flew straight into the wind and rain while others changed course to the east. I was chased inside by frequent lightning, but the birds continued passing by. During the very heaviest rain, a flock of chunky shorebirds that might have been Red Knots zoomed right over the neighborhood less than 100 ft. up! By the time all was said and done, I estimated roughly 4200 shorebirds passing on the evening, and I later discovered that folks at the reservoir confirmed many flocks as Semipalmated Sandpipers and Ruddy Turnstones. It really was a spectacular sight, even when I couldn't identify the birds myself.

All in all, I spent over 135 hours of morning counts and afternoon hawk-watches, plus more time on certain later spring evenings. The final raptor count was 1295, right near totals for several sites statewide that received more coverage. The final non-raptor count was 17,416 and was comprised of 78 species. Resident birds brought the total species number to 111.

Each new morning brought a sense of excitement, since I never knew what was on the horizon! I did often consult the BirdCast website, birdcast.info, the night before. This was not always an accurate predictor of morning flight but often gave a good indication of the general flight volume. As expected, mornings with south or southwest winds were always the best, especially when early clouds broke to reveal bits of sun and blue sky for optimal spotting.

This fall and beyond, if you aren't able or just aren't comfortable with birding out in the field, pull out a lawn chair and enjoy your yard! Even if you can't identify half of what you're seeing, you'll be shocked by what you can still catch flying overhead or stopping for a rest. As you get out more, your skills will improve just by repetition and exposure. Just remember, birding can be done almost anywhere and anytime!

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**Table 3 Notable Unexpected Migrants**

Species	Season Total	High Count	High Count Date
Black-bellied Plover	35	35	5/27
Wilson's Snipe	2	2	3/9
Solitary Sandpiper	14	6	5/3
Greater Yellowlegs	1	1	5/3
American Bittern	1	1	4/28
Bank Swallow	14	4	5/1, 5/14
Cliff Swallow	6	4	5/5
American Pipit	7	6	4/28
Rusty Blackbird	20	5	4/5



**Savannah Sparrow 16 April 2020 - (Paul Heveran)**



**Pine Warbler - 23 April 2020 - (Paul Heveran)**



**White-crowned Sparrow - 10 May 2020 - (Paul Heveran)**

# Pennsylvania Raptor Migration Summary - Spring 2020

David R. Barber

The 2020 Spring count season started with warmer and wetter than average conditions with some sites noting Turkey Vultures already present in late February. These warm conditions gave way to a cooler and wetter than average Spring. Despite the wet conditions, early and late season migrants produced some record breaking counts in eastern and western Pennsylvania, while counts of early and late season migrants lagged at central Pennsylvania watch sites.

## Migration Summary

Eight Pennsylvania Spring watch sites recorded an above-average 38,354 total hawks in 1832 hours during 311 days of counting between 15 February and 6 June for a rate of 21 per hour (Table 1). Spring count hours were 31% above the average annual effort of 1396 hours. Total spring raptors were 46% above the ten-year average of 26,219, primarily driven by an increase in counts of Turkey Vultures and Broad-winged Hawks. The Turkey Vulture total, 19,443, was 26% above the ten-year average of 15,383, and Broad-winged Hawks, totaling 13,113, were 128% above the ten-year average of 5743. However, they were not the only species to enjoy above average counts - Black Vulture, Bald Eagle, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon all had counts at least 40% above their ten-year averages (Table 1).

Five species had counts below their 10-year averages; Northern Harriers, Golden Eagles, and Red-tailed Hawks were 22%, 19%, and 9% below their 10-year averages, respectively. Only two Northern Goshawks were recorded, below their average of 6.5 and no Rough-legged Hawks were recorded this spring (Table 1). All of these species, with the exception of Golden Eagles, had below average counts in the fall of 2019. However, the above average count of Golden Eagles in Fall 2019 was boosted by the new Bald Eagle Mt. watch site, without which Golden Eagle totals would have been below average.

## Site Highlights

**Allegheny Front (Somerset/Bedford)** - Allegheny counters tallied 955 hawks in 344 hours on 61 days from 2/15 to 5/7, a rate of 2.8 hawks per hour (Table 1). The overall count was 14% below the ten-year average, with counts of accipiters notably low - Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks were 34% and 35% below average and there were no Northern Goshawks counted this spring (Table 1). The Red-tailed Hawk total of 144 was the third lowest in the 21-year history of the count and was 38% below the ten-year average of 234. Counts of both Osprey

(87) and Golden Eagle (89) were above their ten-year averages of 68.7 and 69.7, respectively (Table 1). A one-day record of seven Peregrine Falcons was recorded 4/29. Although not an abundant migrant, the total count of 12 Peregrines was well above the average of 3.5. April 29 was also the high day for the season with 192 raptors tallied, including 51 Ospreys, the third highest one-day count, 15 Bald Eagles, 26 Sharp-shinned Hawks, and 67 Broad-winged Hawks.

**Delaware Nature Society Kite Watch at Bucktoe Preserve (Chester)** - The fourth year for this late spring watch for kites and shorebirds. Counters tallied 24 hawks in 142 hours on 21 days from 5/17 to 6/6, a rate of 0.2 hawks per hour (Table 1). A high of 9 raptors were tallied 5/29 - one Osprey and 8 Mississippi Kites. Mississippi Kites also were seen 5/19 and 5/31. Overall, a record number of 10 Mississippi Kites was tallied this year at Bucktoe, the only watch site in Pennsylvania to record this species as a migrant.

**Hawk Mountain (Berks/Schuylkill)** - Hawk Mountain counters recorded 1269 hawks in 301 hours on 43 days from 4/1 to 5/15, a rate of 4.2 hawks per hour. Total raptors were 30% above the ten-year average with notably high counts of Turkey Vulture and Broad-winged Hawk. The Turkey Vulture count of 139 was the highest season-long count and 174% above average while the Broad-winged Hawk count of 739 was the second highest ever and 84% above the ten-year average. Counts of both Sharp-shinned Hawks (58) and Red-tailed Hawks (80) were below the ten-year averages of 88.9 and 88.5, respectively. A season high 33 Turkey Vultures, 3 Red-shouldered Hawks, and 14 Red-tailed Hawks were tallied on 4/1 (Table 2). Light NW winds on 5/1 produced the high count of the season with 392 raptors, including season highs of 9 Black Vultures and 359 Broad-winged Hawks, along with 7 Ospreys and 5 Bald Eagles (Table 2). An adult Mississippi Kite was seen flying SW on 5/12 and was not counted.

**Jack's Mountain (Mifflin)** - Jack's Mountain hawk watchers counted 68 raptors in 45 hours over 8 days from 3/2 to 5/19, a rate of 1.5 birds per hour (Table 1). A season high 17 raptors were counted 5/1, including 6 Bald Eagles, one Sharp-shinned Hawk, one Northern Goshawk, 7 Broad-winged Hawks, one Red-tailed Hawk, and one Merlin.

**Presque Isle (Erie)** - Presque Isle counters tallied 30,937 hawks in 183 hours in 52 days from 2/22 to 5/29, a rate of 169 hawks per

hour (Table 1). The total count was 40% above the ten-year average, boosted by above average counts of Turkey Vulture (17,779) and Broad-winged Hawk (10,441). Bald Eagle, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon also were above average (Table 1). Northern Harriers, Cooper's Hawks, and Red-tailed Hawks had below average counts and no Rough-legged Hawks were recorded for the first time in the count's 13-year history (Table 1). A five-day period between 3/25 and 3/29 produced 12,995 Turkey Vultures with a peak of 5505 on 3/26 (Table 2), and an astonishing 3165 counted between 11:00 and 12:00 EST on 3/29. A four-hour window of good weather with warm south-southwest winds produced a surge of 4185 Broad-winged Hawks on 4/30 (Table 2); an extraordinary Broad-wing day considering the ten-year average seasonal count is 4088. A single-day record of 74 Bald Eagles was set 5/24, smashing the old record of 49 and setting a new season total record of 419. On 4/27, counters spotted a Short-eared Owl, the only owl recorded migrating at a Pennsylvania watch site.

**Summit Mountain (Fayette)** - Only the third year of this western Pennsylvania count, Summit Mountain counters recorded an impressive 798 hawks in 20 hours on 4 days from 3/16 to 4/29, a rate of 39.4 hawks per hour (Table 1). The highest one-day count occurred 4/29 with 765 raptors including 43 Ospreys, 7 Bald Eagles, 32 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 599 Broad-winged Hawks, one Golden Eagle, and 3 American Kestrels.

**The Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County's Hawk Watch at Bucktoe Creek Preserve (Chester)** - Bucktoe Creek Preserve counters recorded 2591 hawks in 381 hours on 61 days from 3/1 to 4/30, a rate of 6.8 hawks per hour (Table 1). The Turkey Vulture total of 1282 was much higher than the previous two years with a steady flight through the first half of April, peaking 3/18 with 95 Turkey Vultures (Table 2). A high of 189 raptors were counted 3/30, which included season highs of 45 Black Vultures, 5 Northern Harriers, and 27 Ospreys. The high Broad-winged Hawk count occurred 4/22 with 122 passing over the hawk watch in groups of 2 and 3.

**Tussey Mountain (Centre)** - Tussey Mountain counters tallied 1712 hawks in 416 hours on 61 days from 2/23 to 4/29, a rate of 4.1 hawks per hour (Table 1). The total count was 15% below the ten-year average. Sharp-shinned Hawks, Cooper's Hawks, and Red-tailed Hawks were all



below their ten-year averages. The Golden Eagle count of 130 was below the average of 178, and the second lowest season total (Table 1). Counts of Ospreys (119) and Bald Eagles (91) both were above their ten-year averages of 95.8 and 57.4, respectively (Table 1). The Table 1 high count of 19 Golden Eagles was recorded 3/12. Mid-April saw an increase in Broad-winged Hawk flights with three days of 100+ Broad-wings, including a peak of 161 on 4/23 (Table 2). Moderate SE winds on 4/29, the last day of the count, produced a season high flight of 239 raptors that included 57 Ospreys, a single-day high of 26 Bald Eagles, and season high counts of Sharp-shinned Hawk (50), American Kestrel (10), and Merlin (5).

**Conclusions**

The Covid-19 pandemic did not deter sites from staffing their lookouts this Spring, as most sites had effort similar to

previous years. Several sites were closed to the public and thus had far fewer visitors than previous years. Species counts mirrored those found in Fall 2019 with below average counts at most sites for Sharp-shinned, Cooper’s, and Red-tailed Hawks and, for the first time, no Rough-legged Hawks were counted this spring. With a warmer and wetter than average winter, food availability may have been high and species may not have been forced to migrate. A closer look at Christmas Bird Count results could shed some light on whether this could be the case. Above average Osprey and American Kestrel flights are encouraging as both these species have shown long-term declines at eastern watch sites. Counts of Bald Eagles set a new record of 689 eagles counted, shattering last year’s record of 483. Who would have thought in 2000, when only 40 Bald Eagles were recorded, that Pennsylvania watch sites would record 17 times that many only 20 years later?

**Acknowledgements**

Thank you to the site compilers for providing insight and access to their data, particularly Nick Bolgiano and Bob Stewart. Data were downloaded from [www.hawkcount.org](http://www.hawkcount.org) (accessed June 2020) a site managed by Jason Sodergren, HMANA database manager and the Hawk Migration Association of North America. Regional weather information was gathered from the Northeast Regional Climate Center at Cornell University.

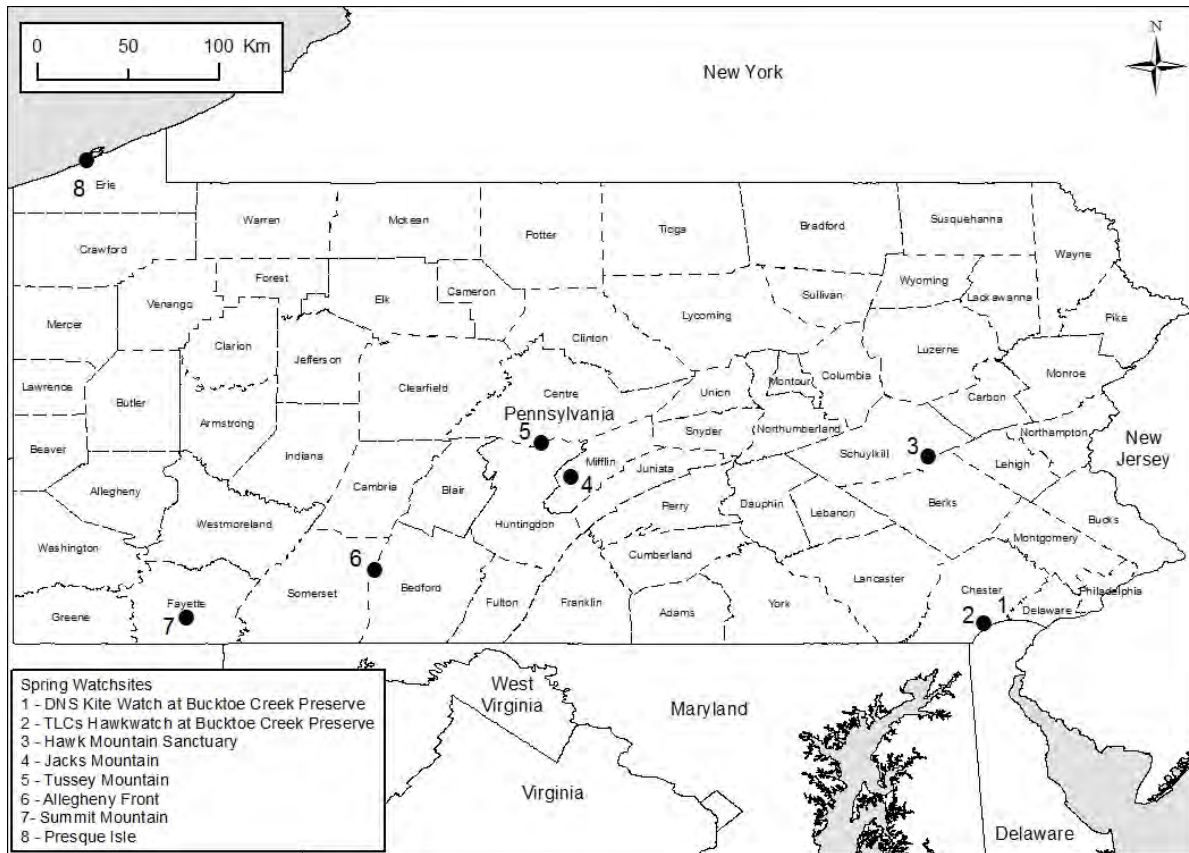
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**Table 2. Peak count dates for Turkey Vulture and Broad-winged Hawk at selected Pennsylvania watch sites.**

Site	Turkey Vulture		Broad-winged Hawk	
	Peak Count	Date	Peak Count	Date
Allegheny Front	28	3/29	134	4/23
Hawk Mountain*	33	4/1	359	5/1
Presque Isle	5505	3/26	4185	4/30
TLC at Bucktoe	95	3/18	112	4/22
Tussey Mountain	12	3/24	161	4/23

\* Site begins count in April





**Table 1. Spring 2020 count results for Pennsylvania watchsites.**

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

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	MIKI	Unid	Total
February	11	56.75	0	8	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	29	0	5	0	0	0	0	4	51
March	25	145.25	10	105	3	8	3	20	19	0	7	0	96	0	81	4	0	3	0	7	366
April	20	114	0	4	77	18	6	41	9	0	4	299	19	0	1	0	4	9	0	21	512
May	5	28	0	0	7	2	1	3	0	0	2	8	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>955</b>
Total per hr			0.03	0.34	0.25	0.08	0.04	0.19	0.08	0.00	0.04	0.89	0.42	0.00	0.26	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.10	2.78
% of flight			1.0	12.3	9.1	3.0	1.4	6.7	3.0	0.0	1.4	32.1	15.1	0.0	9.3	0.4	0.4	1.3	0.0	3.5	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	56.6	351.1	10.5	168.9	68.7	21.3	13.2	96.8	44.5	3.5	27.6	290.7	233.7	0.5	69.7	14.2	3.7	3.5	0.0	40.6	1111.6

**DELAWARE NATURE SOCIETY KITE WATCH AT BUCKTOE PRESERVE (Chester) - Larry Lewis, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	MIKI	Unid	Total	
May	15	105.75	0	0	10	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	22
June	6	36	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>141.75</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>
Total per hr			0.00	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.17
% of flight			0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	41.7	0.0	100.0
Average last 10 yrs																						

**HAWK MOUNTAIN (Berks/Schuylkill) - Lansothung Lotha and David Barber, compilers**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	MIKI	Unid	Total
April	28	193.8	3	131	34	35	17	41	22	0	10	347	68	0	3	18	6	2	0	27	764
May	15	107.2	9	8	28	13	1	17	12	0	1	392	12	0	0	7	2	0	0	0	505
<b>Total</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>301.0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1269</b>
Total per hr			0.04	0.46	0.21	0.16	0.06	0.19	0.11	0.00	0.04	2.46	0.27	0.00	0.01	0.08	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.09	4.22
% of flight			0.9	11.0	4.9	3.8	1.4	4.6	2.7	0.0	0.9	58.2	6.3	0.0	0.2	2.0	0.6	0.2	0.0	2.1	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	42.0	251.0	38.4	50.8	74.3	39.7	22.7	88.9	37.6	0.5	9.3	402.4	88.5	0.3	2.4	22.3	5.9	2.2	0.2	88.6	973.0

**JACKS MOUNTAIN (Mifflin) - Darrell Smith, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	MIKI	Unid	Total
March	5	26	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	18	0	3	1	1	0	0	2	30
April	2	11.5	0	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	6	7	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	21
May	1	7	0	0	0	6	0	1	0	1	0	7	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>44.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>68</b>
Total per hr			0.00	0.00	0.04	0.18	0.02	0.09	0.00	0.02	0.04	0.29	0.58	0.00	0.11	0.02	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.07	1.53
% of flight			0.0	0.0	2.9	11.8	1.5	5.9	0.0	1.5	2.9	19.1	38.2	0.0	7.4	1.5	2.9	0.0	0.0	4.4	100.0
Average last 10 yrs																					

**PRESQUE ISLE (Erie) - Jerry McWilliams, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	MIKI	Unid	Total
February	3	7	0	34	0	7	1	1	0	0	1	0	20	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	65
March	16	58	0	13592	1	56	17	58	29	1	196	0	267	0	0	75	10	5	0	38	14345
April	18	51.75	0	1536	34	100	25	569	14	0	10	6012	107	0	0	209	10	12	0	15	8654
May	15	66.25	0	2617	58	256	6	342	3	0	1	4429	86	0	1	61	4	2	0	7	7873
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17779</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>10441</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>30937</b>
Total per hr			0.00	97.15	0.51	2.29	0.27	5.30	0.25	0.01	1.14	57.05	2.62	0.00	0.01	1.89	0.13	0.11	0.00	0.33	169.05
% of flight			0.0	57.5	0.3	1.4	0.2	3.1	0.1	0.0	0.7	33.7	1.6	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	58	201	1	14787	90	182	82	947	70	1	218	4088	590	16	2	335	15	9	0	40	21429

**SUMMIT MOUNTAIN (Fayette) - Peter Everett Livengood, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	MIKI	Unid	Total
March	2	6.5	0	24	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	33
April	2	13.75	0	9	43	11	2	38	4	0	0	637	8	0	2	3	2	1	0	5	765
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20.25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>798</b>
Total per hr			0.00	1.63	2.12	0.74	0.10	1.88	0.25	0.00	0.00	31.46	0.54	0.00	0.15	0.15	0.10	0.05	0.00	0.25	39.41
% of flight			0.0	4.1	5.4	1.9	0.3	4.8	0.6	0.0	0.0	79.8	1.4	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.6	100.0
Average last 10 yrs																					

**TLC's S. CHESTER COUNTY HAWKWATCH AT STATELINE WOODS PRESERVE (Chester) - Larry Lewis, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	MIKI	Unid	Total
March	31	200	207	838	53	47	7	57	34	0	59	0	123	0	0	12	9	0	0	0	1446
April	30	181	119	444	74	30	10	67	31	0	8	270	51	0	0	40	1	0	0	0	1145
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>1282</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2591</b>
Total per hr			0.86	3.36	0.33	0.20	0.04	0.33	0.17	0.00	0.18	0.71	0.46	0.00	0.00	0.14	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.80
% of flight			12.6	49.5	4.9	3.0	0.7	4.8	2.5	0.0	2.6	10.4	6.7	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Average last 10 yrs																					

**TUSSEY MOUNTAIN (Centre) - Nick Bolgiano, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	MIKI	Unid	Total
February	6	39.8	0	7	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	23
March	28	187.5	0	55	5	40	4	47	13	0	27	0	176	0	117	23	3	0	0	22	532
April	27	189	0	21	114	51	13	91	8	0	10	705	73	0	10	30	5	0	0	26	1157
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>416.3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1712</b>
Total per hr			0.00	0.20	0.29	0.22	0.04	0.33	0.05	0.00	0.11	1.69	0.61	0.00	0.31	0.13	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.12	4.11
% of flight			0.0	4.8	7.0	5.3	1.0	8.1	1.2	0.0	2.6	41.2	14.8	0.0	7.6	3.1	0.5	0.0	0.0	2.9	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	56.2	403.9	18.0	183.7	95.8	57.4	24.5	178.3	37.2	1.1	44.3	784.2	326.1	2.9	178.3	69.9	6.1	2.0	0.0	28.1	2011.2

**2020 TOTALS FOR ALL WATCHSITES**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	MIKI	Unid	Total*, **
February	20	103.55	0	49	0	8	4	2	1	0	8	0	53	0	8	0	0	1	0	5	139
March	107	623.25	217	14614	62	156	32	183	96	1	291	0	683	0	202	115	23	8	0	69	16752
April	127	754.8	122	2145	378	246	73	849	88	0	42	8276	333	0	18	300	28	24	0	95	13018
May	51	314.2	9	2625	103	277	8	364	15	1	4	4837	99	0	3	68	7	2	10	8	8443
June	6	36	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>1831.8</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>19433</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>1398</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>13113</b>	<b>1168</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>38354</b>
Total per hr.			0.2	10.6	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.8	0.1	0.0	0.2	7.2	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	20.9
% of flight			0.9	50.7	1.4	1.8	0.3	3.6	0.5	0.0	0.9	34.2	3.0	0.0	0.6	1.3	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.5	100.0
Average last 10 yrs.	<b>242.4</b>	<b>1395.5</b>	<b>101.4</b>	<b>15383</b>	<b>370.4</b>	<b>327.8</b>	<b>140.3</b>	<b>1357</b>	<b>208.0</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>309.4</b>	<b>5743</b>	<b>1280</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>283.7</b>	<b>421.8</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>204.6</b>	<b>26219</b>

## BOOK REVIEW

### Gene Wilhelm

**BIRDS IN WINTER: Surviving the Most Challenging Season** by Roger F. Pasquier, illustrations by Margaret La Farge, contents include introduction, acknowledgments, ten chapters, bibliography, index, 6 ½ x 9 ½ in., 304 pp., published by Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2019, \$29.95, hardback.

#### *Inupiat Winter*

"The snowy owl is *our* constant companion on the vast, open tundra, even in the long, dark, and bitter cold winter, and warns my people of danger. The jaeger, who lives mostly at sea, tells *my people* that when he returns to the tundra in great numbers, many little brother lemmings will soon follow. Brother raven is noted for his intelligence and cunningness and for those reasons is *our* messenger between sea and land spirits and *our people*."

.... Peter, *Inupiat Guide*

The *Inupiat* (the name means "people of the icy coast") are a fitting example of human adaptation to one of the harshest environments on Earth. In less than four months these primal people experience four seasons with the remaining eight months in winter.

Point Barrow village, Alaska, is four miles south of the Barrow Spit, an ancient traditional waterbird hunting ground. For many generations hunters stretched long sinew nets between high driftwood poles to snare spring migrating loons, swans, geese, ducks, and shorebirds by the tens of thousands. After bleeding the birds, the hunters would place the game in pits chiseled deep into the permafrost for long-term refrigeration. Each family in the village had such a pit, and once filled, hunting ceased for another year.

But for the past decade or more, Alaska's permafrost is under assault from a warming climate, and it is happening faster than anticipated. Hillside slopes have liquefied, unleashing slides that end as muddy deltas in salmon (Arctic char) streams. As the Arctic Sea warms, marine bird and mammal die-offs are on the rise. Winter ice is on the decline, enabling storms to gain strength over water.

However, this accelerating melt is a global concern. Permafrost, which mostly lies in the northern reaches of the planet, is a vast carbon and methane storehouse of frozen plants and animals that releases greenhouse carbon dioxide and methane gases as they warm and decompose. Although fuel combustion is still the main source of greenhouse gas emissions driving climate change, the world's permafrost already releases up to 2.2 million metric tons each year. These emissions are expected to exceed those of the entire United States later this century.

Scientists are now noticing some striking changes in north-central Alaska landscapes: permafrost that a decade ago was covered with

spruce forests is now covered with lakes. By this century's end, even on Alaska's North Slope, the ground is predicted to thaw at least 65 feet deep down. In the past, permafrost regions, on balance, absorbed carbon dioxide and methane through summer plant growth, but now these same regions are a net contributor to greenhouse gas emissions as the permafrost thaw quickens. This summer's (2020) record heat around icy areas of the Northern Hemisphere has left a "deep wound" in the planet's cryosphere, according to the World Meteorological Organization. The WMO called the Arctic heating at twice the global warming average a "vicious circle" that influences warming elsewhere. The rapid decline of sea ice, in turn, contributes to more warming and so the circle continues, and the consequences do not stay in the Arctic. So what effects will these fast-changing landscapes have upon the millions of breeding birds?

Roger Pasquier's alerting book is used to respond to that compound complex ornithological-ecological question by presenting scores of current scientific facts and figures about birds that have been on Earth at least 155 million years, and have evolved and responded to the opportunities that these changing conditions have presented for survival and reproduction. During the last 1.8 million years there have been at least 22 major periods of glaciation that made the entire planet colder and drier. About 12,000 years ago, probably all birds had evolved their current form and annual life cycles. The seasonal changes at middle and higher latitudes that produce winter conditions directly affect about one-third of all 10,000 avian species on Earth. Migration has likely evolved into two forms: birds of families that originated at higher latitudes may have withdrawn toward the equator during the eras when colder conditions made their initial range uninhabitable. Or birds from families of tropical origin may have expanded during interglacial periods when warming opened new areas they could exploit, at least during months when food sources were abundant.

Migration to winter destinations today takes several forms: in some species part of the population may move while others within the breeding range remain through the winter. Among short-distance migrants, the entire population migrates usually less than 2,000 km. Long-distance migrants go much farther, sometimes traveling over oceans, deserts, or both. In mountainous regions, a short descent to lower elevations has the same result if climate conditions at different altitudes are significantly different. Still other birds are nomadic over winter depending on how long food supplies last in their breeding area. Lastly, some avian species of high latitudes are periodically irruptive, linked to the multiyear cycles of their food sources. Birders in Pennsylvania are familiar with all four types.

Migration in response to winter takes place in all hemispheres and involves both land birds and seabirds. These seasonal movements are the result of long-term evolution but birds do respond rapidly to changes in habitat and climate that make new areas attractive in winter. Range shifts can take place in decades or less, enabling us to witness directly how finely attuned birds are to local winter conditions and opportunities. Today scientists have the benefit of using rapidly advancing tools that enable them to mark and follow the movements of individual birds over the course of winter, revealing far more than was previously possible about how and where they spend that season. These techniques include *satellite tracking, light-level geolocators, and stable isotope analysis*. These technologies have begun to reveal avian daily and seasonal movements in detail never previously known, adding more to our understanding of behavior, ecology, and distribution, and enabling conservationists to develop better measures for species and critical sites.

Birds begin preparing for winter long before that season arrives. Three major activities may occupy them: molting, food storage among birds that will not migrate, and the actual departure of those that do. Most birds replace their entire plumage at least once a year; and year-round resident species maintain the same or a very similar plumage throughout the year. Many short-distance migrants also replace all their feathers once annually after breeding and complete their molt in less time than non-migrants. The greatest variety in molt schedules, however, is among long-distance migrants. Replacing feathers is a significant winter activity that can influence avian movement over the course of winter as well as local shifts in habitat choices and diet.

*Birds in Winter* is the first book devoted to the ecology and behavior of birds during this most challenging season. During winter some birds are already pairing for the following breeding season, so health through winter contributes to nesting success. Because most migratory birds spend far longer on their wintering than on their breeding grounds, their conservation depends substantially on what happens to wintering habits. Roger Pasquier methodically builds scientific process steps through the minds of birds, so to speak, from how they prepare for winter ranges and habitat selections in migration, spatial and social organization, survival, the winter day, anticipating spring, departure, conservation, and climate change.

The conservation biologist Edward O. Wilson (world renowned expert) has helped popularize the useful acronym HIPPO for the major factors, in order of impact, challenging the preservation of biological diversity: habitat loss, invasive species, pollution, population growth, and overharvest. This sequence does

not necessarily match in priority the phenomena experienced by birds in winter, but it is a useful framework for categorizing what they encounter. The complex interplay of these five factors in the breeding range, on migration, and during winter, requires that each species and discrete population be studied individually to determine causes of decline and appropriate conservation measures. There is still too little data for many species and regions from which to draw conclusions other than many birds are exposed to distinctive threats during winter.

For birds living in a seasonal environment, conservation requires an understanding of when during the annual cycle – whether it is spent in one place or ranges across continents – birds are vulnerable to population losses such as being exposed to distinctive threats during winter. Habitat loss is overwhelmingly the leading cause of bird declines around the world. The highly compressed ranges of birds wintering in the Neotropics, (for some species as little as one-tenth of their breeding range), means that loss of habitat there has a greater impact than comparable losses in North America. Coffee and cacao, when grown under shade trees, can support many migrants through the winter, although few birds are understory and true forest specialists. Mexican grasslands, winter home for many species of the Great Plains, become useless to birds when converted to row crops. Restoring grasslands and rotating cattle so the land is not overgrazed provides good necessary habitat. The loss of wetlands, especially the most extremely productive estuaries where large numbers of shorebirds concentrate on migration, is the most severe threat. Rice fields, salt ponds, and fish ponds can provide alternative habitats for some species. Waterfowl have also declined all over the world from loss of wetlands.

Invasive species compound habitat loss when nonnative plants choke out natural vegetation and animals from elsewhere compete or directly consume wintering birds.

Of all invasive species, house cats (including feral ones) are the most destructive, killing an estimated 1.3-4.0 billion birds annually in the United States alone. Birds may be especially vulnerable in winter when amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals on which cats also prey are less available. Pollutants such as pesticides, oil, aquatic and marine debris (especially plastics) can travel far from their source and, if consumed, moved up the food chain-food web thereby affecting sequence of birds and other life. Wetlands probably receive and absorb more pollutants than any other habitat, exposing wintering

birds from Whooping Crane to waterfowl and shorebirds, to endocrine disrupters, neurotoxins, and other chemicals that result in abnormal behavior and reduced survival. Many pesticides now banned in the U.S. and other developed countries are still widely used in tropical regions where many birds winter. Birds that concentrate at the edges of agricultural areas are especially vulnerable. Residue of spills from oil wells and ships at sea remains for decades. It can coat feathers or be ingested either directly or through food that wintering seabirds consume. Similarly, seabirds mistake pieces of plastic and other debris for food and may choke or starve as their stomach fill with it. Finally, waterfowl consume lead shot in wetlands and on agriculture lands which can sicken and kill them.

The global growth of the human population, with increasing requirements for food, other resources, and space; and production of more forms of debris, is ultimately responsible for all the conservation issues that affect birds and natural ecosystems. The increase of leisure and affluence is sending more people to recreation sites that until recently were undisturbed habitats of wintering birds. Demand for more energy has led to the construction of wind turbines and oil and gas rigs at sea and on terrestrial habitats where birds have no experience with tall vertical structures and how to avoid them. Finally, some birds are overharvested, either through deliberate hunting of wintering waterfowl or incidentally as by-catch in various types of oceanic fishing gear from nets to long-lines of baited hooks that especially attract variable albatrosses, shearwaters, petrels, and alcid. Impacts of climate change have already affected the distributions and populations of birds, and these are likely to increase as changes in temperature, rainfall, ocean currents, and other factors accelerate in this century. Since each element of every ecosystem will respond differently, new communities will be formed that may be more advantageous or challenging for their members. Migratory species, which depend on more sites over the course of the year, will be exposed to more changes, but their mobility may enable them to adapt while species of limited distribution may be squeezed into a shrinking range of suitable habitat.

The world is now undergoing a global modification that affects every ecosystem and all its inhabitants, even those remote from the sources of the problem. Atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide and methane excel natural levels of the last 650,000 years. In fact, the Earth's climate warmed by 0.3-0.6 degrees C,

surface sea temperatures are now, on average, 0.3 degrees C higher, and seas have risen an average 10-20 cm. Global warming is altering the nature of winter itself and birds are responding. In addition to evolving new migratory timetables and winter ranges, some birds have also shown physical responses to climate change. More than 100 species in eastern North America now weigh less on average than a few decades ago. Smaller body size is associated with warmer temperatures. Sexual selection as well as survival pressure may also influence the rapid evolution of new traits fostered by changing winter climate, since this is the season when many species molt into the plumage they will display during the following breeding season.

In conclusion, current prediction of future rates of climate change impacts, including greater temperature increases at high latitudes, shrinkage of sea ice, sea-level rise, increase in hot extremes, heat waves, heavy precipitation, and droughts with precipitation generally decreasing in most subtropical land regions can be linked to potential avian extinction rates.

Tropical birds are most vulnerable but some analyses pinpoint the risks birds face in each season, especially identifying loss of winter habitat. The projected decrease in rainfall in subtropical regions will have widespread effects on bird wintering at these latitudes. Sea-level rise will reduce coastal estuaries and wetlands on which waterfowl and shorebirds depend. Warmer sea-surface temperatures change the distribution and reduce the productivity of the food change on which seabirds depend. Research from high latitudes in all oceans has illustrated that changes in winter production have more impact on seabird's survival than summer changes. In addition, the anticipated increase in extreme events such as hurricanes, winter storms, floods, droughts, and massive forest fires, will affect the winter range and survival of many species.

This phenomenal book will be a foundational scientific publication long into the future. Comfortable to read, filled with elegant black and white line drawings by artist Margaret La Farge, it is a trove of up to date climatic, ornithological, and ecological data that should be of vital use to students, scientists, conservationists, and birders alike. It is definitely one of the 'top ten' natural history books of the decade.

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## Summary of the Season: Spring 2020

Mike Fialkovich

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Identical weather conditions were noted from a number of counties that included a mild and dry April with a very cold first week of May, including some snow! The lack of rain during the waterfowl migration limited fallouts, so the migration for that group was lackluster, but not without some highlights.

Compilers noted the cold seemed to subdue the number of migrants detected; however, that small price was rewarded afterwards when milder temperatures later in May brought a flood of migrants. Many county reports included notes of a very good migration with a number of notable birds and a good variety of rare migrants.

County compilers have been increasingly reporting species detected by nocturnal flight call recorders or motus towers. These devices will likely increase the frequency of detection of species that are considered uncommon or rare migrants in the commonwealth that go unnoticed as they pass over during migration. The data collected by these devices are providing insight that was impossible from on-the-ground searches by birders and researchers. These new methods of detection will supplement in-the-field searches, not just for rare species but for regular migrants as well. The motus wildlife tracking website ([Motus.org](http://Motus.org)) shows just over 60 towers currently in the state.

**Ross's Goose** and **Greater White-fronted Goose** were each reported in three counties, half of the number compared to last year. Two counties reporting Greater White-fronted were away from the expected southeast. The **Pink-footed Goose** continued from February, switching between *Lancaster* and *Lebanon* during the season, and remained to late March. First documented in the state in 2007, there are now around a dozen records for this species. **Cackling Geese** were found in seven counties including a first for *Fayette*. **Mute Swans** continue to be most numerous in *Adams*, *Berks*, and *Bucks*. **Trumpeter Swans** were in 13 counties. There has been an increase in occurrence of reports over the last five years or more. A late **Tundra Swan** was in *Allegheny* in May.

A late **Gadwall** lingered in *Allegheny* to early May and a late **Ruddy Duck** was in *Cumberland* until late May. **Eurasian Wigeon** was only reported in two counties - *Chester* and *Lebanon*. The overwintering **Harlequin Duck** in *Centre* remained to mid-April. **Black Scoters** were only found in three counties, including a first for *Cumberland*. **White-winged** and **Surf Scoters** were both reported in 12 counties.

Compilers are noting **Ruffed Grouse** observations to track the hopeful return of

our state bird to higher numbers after many years of decline. Reports came from 15 counties.

**Red-necked Grebes** were in ten counties, a good showing for a non-invasion year. **Eared Grebes** were in *Centre* and *Indiana* providing the fifth and third records, respectively.

A **White-winged Dove** spent three days in mid-March in *Lehigh*. **Eurasian Collard-Doves** were in five counties including the usual locations in *Berks*, *Cumberland*, and *Franklin*. This species continues to be rather sedentary, unlike when it colonized the U.S. years ago, at least in the east. A dove photographed in *Centre* was reported as either an **African Collard** or **Eurasian Collard-Dove**. Although no details were included I suspect the uncertainty was due to less than optimal views.

One notable nightjar missing was the **Chuck-wills-widow** in *Cumberland*. After five consecutive years it was not detected this spring and I'm sure was missed by birders in that area. **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were found in 22 counties.

There were two reports of **King Rail**, both from *Delaware*. A **Clapper Rail** was photographed in *Philadelphia*. One was flushed unintentionally and the other was detected by a nocturnal recording device. **Common Gallinules** were in 22 counties and **Sandhill Cranes** in 24.

Shorebirds were well represented this spring with a number of notable migrants. **American Avocets** were in four counties with a double digit count in *Lycoming*. **American Oystercatcher** was in *Delaware* on two separate dates; whether the same bird is unknown. That area has had several reports in recent years. **Upland Sandpipers** were in six counties; surprisingly *Clarion*, a regular breeding location in the past, was not one of the six. **Whimbrel** was reported from *Chester* and *Erie* in impressive triple digit numbers. A **Hudsonian Godwit** was a great find in *Delaware* and a **Marbled Godwit** was in *Centre*. **Ruddy Turnstones** were in five counties, all away from the expected Lake Erie shore. Rare in spring, **Stilt Sandpipers** were in *Bucks* and *Crawford*. Like the turnstone, all **Sanderlings** were in counties away from Lake Erie this spring. **Dunlins** were found in 17 counties.

Another spring rarity, **Baird's Sandpiper** was in *Berks* and *Crawford*; especially unusual for spring was the total of four in *Berks*. The most uncommon (but regular) peep passing through the state in spring, **White-rumped Sandpipers** were in 12 counties. Staying with the theme of rare spring migrant shorebirds, a **Buff-breasted**

**Sandpiper** in *Bucks* provided an extremely rare spring record for the state. **Short-billed Dowitchers** were in 13 counties, three less than last spring. It was another good spring for **Willetts** with reports in eight counties. Four different sightings came from *Erie* and three of those were of double digit totals. Three sightings came from *Franklin* and two of those were double digit figures. *Fayette* recorded a first county record and *Lawrence* the third. All three phalaropes were found. **Wilson's Phalarope** was in six counties, **Red-necked Phalarope** in eight, and the season's sole **Red Phalarope** was in *Lycoming*, a first for that county.

**Black-headed Gull** was reported in *Bucks* and along the Susquehanna in *Dauphin* where usually found in spring. **Little Gull** was also along the Susquehanna in *Dauphin*, as usual, as well as in four other counties, but with the surprising exception of *Erie*. **Laughing Gulls** were in *Bucks* where expected in spring and singles were in *Erie* on two days in May. Wintering white-winged gulls are always still present in the early part of the spring reporting season. Single **Iceland Gulls** were in *Bucks*, *Chester*, and *Delaware*; and several were in *Erie*. **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were in eight counties with hundreds in *Bucks*. A late bird was in *Allegheny* in May and five was a good count for *Mercer*. **Glaucous Gulls** were in only four counties. **Great Black-backed Gulls** were in *Berks*, *Carbon*, and *Fayette*, a rarity in the latter.

This was the spring for rare terns in the state and *Delaware* was the location! Four **Least Terns** and two **Gull-billed Terns** were at the same site in late May and if that weren't enough, a **Royal Tern** was at another location in that county. **Black Terns** were in 14 counties.

**Red-throated Loons** were in 15 counties. One or possibly two **Pacific Loons** were in *Lycoming*; ten days passed between sightings. A small fallout of **Common Loons** was noted in *Lancaster*. **Great Cormorants** were in the expected counties of *Bucks* and *Delaware*; one in *Lancaster* was a rare visitor.

Both Pelicans were recorded this spring. Three **American White Pelicans** were in *Lancaster* and a **Brown Pelican** that provided a first county record for *Centre* flew off after it was discovered and was never relocated.

Egrets, herons, etc. were well represented this year. **American Bitterns** were in 23 counties and **Least Bitterns** in 16. Single **Cattle Egrets** were in *Berks* and *Lebanon* and two were in *Lancaster*. **Snowy Egrets** were found in five counties including five in *Lancaster* for the season and a second county record in *Indiana*.

**Little Blue Herons** were only in *Bucks* and *Delaware*. The colony of **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** remains active in Harrisburg and the single bird returned to the **Black-crowned Night-Heron** colony in *Lancaster*. An amazing 14 **White Ibis** were observed in flight in *Delaware*. **Glossy Ibis** numbers were higher than usual. The high count was in *Bucks* and there was an uptick of numbers in *Chester*. Two dark ibis were left unidentified were in *Erie* and *Lancaster*.

**Black Vulture** sightings continue to expand across the state. A few were reported in *Bedford* where small numbers have been steady for several years. Reports from western counties included two in *Allegheny* (one with a red wing-tag and white numbering that read H73), one in *Crawford*, eight in *Fayette*, three in *Indiana*, one in *Warren*, and two or three in *Westmoreland*. The Ligonier area in *Westmoreland* has had regular sightings in recent years. Two were in *Clinton*, three reached *Susquehanna*, and one was a rare find in *Jefferson*.

One raptor for which you have to be in the right place at the right time is **Mississippi Kite**; found in six counties this spring. One in *Indiana* not only provided the second county record, but remained for several days, sailing over a residential area, providing an opportunity for many to add it to their state list. The homeowners discovered the adult bird perched in dead branches of a tree next to their! It returned to that perch repeatedly. Curious neighbors on the street learned about kites from the visiting birders. Bucktoe Creek Preserve in *Chester* remains the location where regular for the kites in spring - six was the highest single day count.

**Northern Goshawk** was observed in six counties and nesting continues in *Warren*. **Rough-legged Hawks** were only found in four counties. Some linger into March on their wintering grounds while others have started migrating, so their numbers vary during this season. **Golden Eagles** were in 16 counties. The expectation is the majority of observations were from hawk watch sites; however, just four of the 16 had reports from hawk watch sites - the remainder were fly overs except one that had overwintered at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area.

**Barn Owls** were only reported in four counties and just one was reported nesting. **Snowy Owls** were found in *Erie*, *Mercer*, and *Warren*. The reports were from March and April so they must have been birds on passage from unknown wintering locations. **Long-eared Owl** was only found in *Erie*, *Lawrence*, and *Mercer*. *Mercer* delivered this spring with reports from three different locations. **Short-eared Owls** were found in 12 counties. A wintering group in *Butler* remained to mid-March. Unfortunately, there were no reports of potential breeding despite some reports late in March.

**Northern Saw-whet Owls** were reported in eight counties, which is typical for the season. Over the past ten years they have been reported in less than ten counties during the spring. Possible breeding was noted in *Warren*.

**Red-headed Woodpeckers** were reported in 23 counties. We are remarkably consistent in the number of counties in which this species is reported during the season. An interesting sapsucker visited a feeder in *Chester* for a few days. The observer thought it could have been a **Red-naped Sapsucker**. The bird did indeed appear to be a Red-naped, but the possibility of a hybrid **Red-naped X Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** had to be considered. The bird was photographed extensively in an effort to capture every detail. Photos were sent to various experts in the west who have experience with Red-naped and hybrids. A mixture of evaluations was made for and against a pure Red-naped, but some also noted features indicating hybridization. Without a DNA analysis we will never know for certain. It's not often we receive significant woodpecker news.

**Merlins** were in 22 counties. The least common *Empid*, **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was in 13 counties. **Northern Shrikes** were reported from *Butler*, *Elk*, and *Warren*.

Following a poor winter for **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, it's not surprising migrants were only found in eight counties. **Marsh Wrens** were in 13 counties. **Migrant Sedge Wrens** were in *Cambria*, *Erie*, and *Mercer*; however, only on single days. **American Pipit** is one of several species that migrate out of the state in early spring and sometimes only makes a few of the county reports. This year, they were reported from 15 counties.

It was not a good winter for **Pine Siskin** so few spring reports were expected - single birds were found in four counties, and two were in *Crawford*. The majority of **Snow Buntings** migrate by the beginning of the reporting period; the only report came from *Crawford*. There were no reports of **Lapland Longspur**.

A number of notable sparrows visited the state this spring. **Clay-colored Sparrows** were mentioned in six counties, a good count. Unfortunately, they were not noted in *Clarion*, a former breeding location, for the third consecutive year. An interesting distinction regarding this year's birds, all but two were reported in either backyards or on college campuses. The **Lark Sparrow** that wintered in *Lancaster* remained to early March. **Henslow's Sparrows** were in five counties. A beautiful **LeConte's Sparrow** photographed nicely in *Berks* not only provided the second county record but the first May record in the state. The **Harris's Sparrow** that overwintered in *Bucks* remained well into the spring. A **Gambel's White-crowned**

**Sparrow** was photographed in a backyard in *Allegheny* and a **White-throated Sparrow X Dark-eyed Junco** that wintered in *Cumberland* was last observed April 1.

A **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was in *Elk* and a possible **Brewer's Blackbird** was in *Mercer*. A leucistic **Brown-headed Cowbird** was in *Erie*. **Rusty Blackbirds** were found in 23 counties.

**Lawrence's Warblers** were in three counties and **Brewster's Warblers** in 11. Both hybrids were in *Allegheny* and *Franklin*. **Golden-winged Warblers** were in 24 counties. **Prothonotary Warblers** continue to do well at their breeding sites and were reported in 18 counties. A **Swainson's Warbler** was the victim of a window strike in *Allegheny*. It was found alive, but stunned, and released in one of the city parks, away from buildings. **Orange-crowned Warblers** were in ten counties, a typical total for spring. The **Black-throated Gray Warbler** that wintered in *Lebanon* remained to the end of March.

**Summer Tanagers** made inroads into the state this spring with reports in 16 counties, the highest total published in this journal to date. Two each were in *Allegheny*, *Delaware*, and *Erie*; three were in *Lancaster*, and four in *Philadelphia*. Interestingly, the diet of single birds in *Allegheny* and *Delaware* included bee keeper's bees. Two immature male **Western Tanagers** were reported - one in *Chester* and one in *Lancaster*.

**Blue Grosbeaks** were in *Berks*, *Bucks*, *Delaware*, *Franklin*, *Huntington*, *Lebanon*, *Lehigh*, and *York*. A bird in *Tioga* was out range and was the second recorded in that county. **Painted Buntings** that wintered in *Allegheny* and *Lancaster* remained into April. One in *Erie* provided the third county record. **Dickcissel** was reported in six counties with multiple birds in *Cumberland*, *Franklin*, and *Lancaster*. Birds in *Allegheny* and *Lehigh* were detected by nocturnal flight call recorders.

Reports were submitted from 59 counties, three less than last year.

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## Birds of Note – March through May 2020

This report summarizes unexpected species reported in Pennsylvania for this period. As a general rule birds must have been recorded in five or fewer counties to qualify for inclusion here, but rare species recorded more frequently, or irregular species exhibiting an unusual seasonal occurrence, are also included. "Listserv" indicates records deemed credible which were gleaned from the PABIRDS listserv for counties with no reporting compiler. "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. The PORC Review List can be found at the PSO web site <<http://www.pabirds.org>>.

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

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

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

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

**Ross's Goose** – *Delaware*: one in Wallingford (Rob Fergus) and one in Swarthmore (Ezra Neat, Sam Neat) 3/26 that may have been the same bird, one over Barrett's Meadow 3/10 (Al Guarente); *Lancaster*: a few with Snow Geese the second week of March; *Lebanon*: one at Middle Creek WMA 3/24 (Jason Horn, Matthew Sabatine).

**Greater White-fronted Goose** – *Clearfield*: one at Platt Road Swamp 3/3 (Bill Mendat); *Lancaster*: two at Middle Creek WMA 3/6 (m.ob.); *Westmoreland*: one at Donegal Lake 3/20 (Emily B., Annie Lindsay).

**Pink-footed Goose\*** – *Lancaster*: continued from Feb at Middle Creek WMA and Wood's Edge Park to 3/25 (m.ob.), *doc previously submitted*; *Lebanon*: one at Middle Creek WMA 3/21-27 (John Strawser, Marion Schiefer, Justin Felty, Timothy Becker, Kathy Becker, Jonathan Heller, Pat Williams, Richard Williams, m.ob.), *doc previously submitted*.

**Cackling Goose** – *Berks*: one at Lake Ontelaunee Bailey's Creek 3/1 (Rudy Keller); *Dauphin*: one at Wildwood Lake 3/15 (Dan Keener); *Erie*: three at Fairview Business Park 3/9 (Katie Andersen); *Fayette*: one in Dunbar Twp. 4/25 (Matthew Juskowich), first county record; *Lancaster*: a few at Middle Creek WMA and Wood's Edge Park up to 3/24 (observers not listed); *Lawrence*: eight in Washington Twp. 3/7-10 (Mark Vass); *Warren*: one at Akeley Swamp 4/6 (observer not listed).

**Mute Swan** – *Adams*: found at five locations during the season; *Allegheny*: one at North Park 3/21 (Aidan Place); *Berks*: three immatures at Shartlesville 5/2-9 (observer not listed), six at Bernhart's Dam 5/28 (Jo Spilde); *Bucks*: seasonal high of seven at Penn-Warner Tract 5/18 (Andrew Harrington); *Crawford*: one at Geneva 5/19-21 (Mark Vass, Suzanne Winterberger); *Lebanon*: two at Mt. Pleasant Road 5/10-13 (Jonathan Heller, Timothy Becker, Kathy Becker, Nate McKelvie, Pat Williams, Richard Williams).

**Trumpeter Swan** – *Berks*: two at Shartlesville Farm Pond 5/17 (Kerry Grim); *Bucks*: two continued from winter at the Penn-Warner Tract, last reported 3/1 (Richard Smith); *Centre*: one at Muddy Paws Marsh 3/18-31 (Deb Rittelmann, et al.); *Chester*: two at Octoraro Reservoir 4/3-5/11 (Patrick Millar, m.ob.); *Clearfield*: one at Sunset Lake 3/25 (John Gaiter); *Crawford*: two 3/5-4/11 at Custards (m.ob.), four at Geneva 3/8 (Jim McConnor), one at the Ernst Bike Trail 3/30 (Bill Wilkinson), one at Erie NWR 4/19 and 4/25 (Rick Eakin, Elizabeth Nicholson, Ken Nicholson); *Cumberland*: pair nesting on Creekview Road (see *Cumberland* summary), one at the Big Spring Fish and Game Club the entire season; *Franklin*: one at Long Lane Pond 3/19 (Bill Oyler); *Lancaster*: one at Conewago Recreation Trail and Wetlands 4/11 (Derek Stoner), two at

Octoraro Reservoir 4/24-5/13 (Carlton Groff, m.ob.); *Lycoming*: one at Rose Valley Lake up to 3/15 (m.ob.); *Mercer*: one at Jamestown 4/8 (Kim Springer, Jim Springer); *Monroe*: two in the vicinity of Pocono Summit 3/9, 4/8, 5/1 and 5/28 (observers not listed); *Wyoming*: one at Nesbitt Road 4/22 (Jim Hoyson, Rick Koval), first county record.

**Eurasian Wigeon** – *Chester*: one in Honeybrook 3/26 (Laura Wagner), *no doc*; *Lebanon*: one at Middle Creek WMA 3/12-4/25 (Jonathan Heller, Jason Horn, Nate Felty, Justin Felty, Josh Houk, Zach Millen, Joe Wolf, m.ob.), *doc submitted*; *Luzerne*: one at Plymouth Flats 3/11-13 (Rick Koval, Michael Barney), *doc submitted*.

**Harlequin Duck\*** – *Centre*: one continued from the winter at Bald Eagle SP 3/10-4/18 (Bob Snyder, et al.), *doc previously submitted*.

**Black Scoter** – *Carbon*: two at Penn Forest Reservoir 4/18 (Rich Rehrig, Barry Reed); *Cumberland*: two at Rte. 533 Quarry in Shippensburg 4/19 (Bob Koontz, Chris Payne, Rebecca Perruci, Vern Gauthier, Bill Oyler, Scott Brookens), first county record; *Lebanon*: one at Memorial Lake SP 4/30-5/2 (Jonathan Heller, Timothy Becker, Kathy Becker, Ted Nichols, Mary Coomer, Nate McKelvie, m.ob.).

**Eared Grebe**\* – *Centre*: one at Bald Eagle SP 4/30-5/2 (Joe Verica, Robert Snyder, Carl Engstrom, Kurt Engstrom, et al.), *doc submitted*; *Indiana*: one at Yellow Creek SP 4/8 (Richard Love), *doc submitted*.

**White-winged Dove\*** – *Lehigh*: one in Lower Macungie 5/13-15 (Eddie Meckes), *doc submitted*.

**Eurasian Collared-Dove** – *Berks*: present entire season at Shartlesville, seven tallied at a farm 3/2 (Chris Della Penna, Joey Della Penna); *Cumberland*: present in northwestern part of the county during the season, up to two were west of Newville the entire season; *Franklin*: present in the Shady Grove/Greencastle area all season; *Lancaster*: one in a yard in Lancaster 4/11 (Paul Blank, m.ob.) and continuing in the area up to 5/2 (m.ob.); *York*: one at Codorus SP 4/5 (Henry McLin).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove/African Collared-Dove** – *Centre*: one in Port Matilda 4/11 (Mike Fleck), Identification to species not determined.

**King Rail\*** – *Delaware*: one at Fort Mifflin 5/1 (Jim McConnell), *no doc*, one recorded as a nocturnal flight call in Wallingford 5/29 (Rob Fergus), *no doc*.

**Clapper Rail\*** – *Philadelphia*: one at Delaware River Trail 4/19 (Adam Zahn, ph.), *accepted by PORC*.

**American Avocet** – *Centre*: eight at Nittany Farms Pond 4/18 (Julia Plummer, et al.); *Crawford*: one at Miller Ponds 5/30 (Ron Leberman); *Erie*: up to two at Edinboro Lake 4/20 and 4/30

(Jamie Hill); *Lycoming*: 13 at Williamsport Dam 4/18 (Maddi Dunlap, Jean Dalton, et al.).

**American Oystercatcher**\* – *Delaware*: one at Fort Mifflin 3/24 (Rob Fergus) and 3/29 (Al Guarente), *doc submitted*; *Philadelphia*: one at Philadelphia Naval Yard 3/29 (George Armistead, Liam Hart), *doc submitted*.

**Upland Sandpiper** – *Cambria*: one at Babcock Mine in mid-May (observers not listed); *Clearfield*: one on Sandy Ridge Road 5/24-25 (Nicholas Liadis, John Forcey); *Crawford*: present in Miller Ponds area 4/25 through season (m.ob.); *Delaware*: one recorded by nocturnal recording device over Wallingford 4/19 (Rob Fergus); *Indiana*: one near Conemaugh Dam 4/11 (Steve Manns) and one near Indiana 4/29 (Dennis Lauffer); *Lebanon*: one at Middle Creek WMA 5/14 (Jonathan Heller); *Philadelphia*: recorded by nocturnal recording device 4/18 (Rob Fergus) and 4/19 (Liam Hart).

**Whimbrel** – *Chester*: flock of 157 flew over Marsh Creek SP 5/23 (Holly Merker), 200 flew over Bucktoe Creek Preserve 5/23 (Larry Lewis) and 250 there 5/24 (Larry Lewis, Adam Bartles); *Erie*: migrating flock of 100 observed from the Presque Isle Hawkwatch 5/25 (Jennifer Ferrick, Russ States, Jerry McWilliams).

**Hudsonian Godwit** – *Delaware*: one at Fort Mifflin 5/28 (Rob Fergus), fourth county record.

**Marbled Godwit** – *Centre*: one at Bald Eagle SP 4/30, second county record (Carl Engstrom, et al.).

**Ruddy Turnstone** – *Delaware*: one at Fort Mifflin 5/27 (Jim McConnell); *Indiana*: one at Yellow Creek SP 5/13-15 (Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee); *Lancaster*: one at Conejohela Flats 5/21 (Bruce Carl) and singles at The Rocks on the Susquehanna 5/18 and 5/23 (Zach Millen, Larry Bernhardt, Bruce Carl); *Lawrence*: one at Shaner Road Marsh 5/13 (Martin Carlin, Glenn Koppel, Mary Alice Koeneke) and another there 5/31 (Michelle Kienholz); *Lebanon*: two at Elco Road Pond 5/17 (Frank Haas, Ted Nichols, Jonathan Heller, Mike Epler).

**Stilt Sandpiper** – *Bucks*: one at Penn-Warner Tract 5/6 (Jim Hartley); *Crawford*: one at Geneva Marsh on McMichael Road 4/19 (Randy Stringer).

**Sanderling** – *Delaware*: eight at Fort Mifflin 5/22 (Jim McConnell, et al.); *Franklin*: one at Greencastle Reservoir 5/19-22 (Connor Gable, Bill Oyler, Bob Koontz, m.ob.); *Lancaster*: one at the Conejohela Flats 5/19 and 5/21 (Bruce Carl, Josh Schulz); *Washington*: one at Canonsburg Lake 5/2-4 (Matthew Juskowich).

**Baird's Sandpiper** – *Berks*: four at Hamburg Commerce Park 5/26 (Matt Wlasniewski), *no documentation*; *Crawford*: one at Miller Ponds 5/15-16 (Adam Erb, Claire Nicolls, Kendall Zook).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper** – *Bucks*: one at Penn-Warner Tract 5/18 (Jim Hartley, Devich Farbotnik, Andrew Harrington ph.), extremely rare in spring in the east.

**Willet** – *Cambria*: reported at Prince Gallitzin SP (no date or observer listed); *Crawford*: six at Jamestown 4/26 (Mark Hanneman); *Erie*: 44 at Presque Isle SP and 20 in Fairview Twp. 4/26 (Brian Pardini), four at Presque Isle 4/30 (Mary Birdsong), 22 at Fairview Business Park 5/3 (Bonnie Ginader); *Fayette*: four at Greenlick Run Lake 5/3 (Matthew Juskowich), first county record; *Franklin*: one at Antrim Commons Ponds 4/26 (Bill Oyler, Carl Garner, Bob Koontz), a flock of 47 circled over this location 5/6 (Carl Garner), 50 at Kriner Road Retention Ponds 5/6 (Carl Garner); *Huntington*: three at Raystown Lake 5/4 (Ken Tucker); *Juniata*: one in Oakland Mills 5/11 (Paul Troyer, Rob Dickerson, Chad Kauffman, Noah Kauffman, Jason Petersheim); *Lawrence*: nine at Shaner Road Marsh 4/26 (Glenn Koppel, Mary Alice Koeneke), third county record.

**Wilson's Phalarope** – *Allegheny*: one at Imperial 5/17 (Mark Vass); *Bucks*: one at Penn-Warner Tract 5/31 (Andrew Harrington); *Centre*: one along Tadpole Road 5/31 (Alan MacEachren); *Clinton*: one at South Avis 4/25-28 (observers not listed); *Lawrence*: one at Shaner Road 5/14 (Steve Sandford); *Lehigh*: one at Nestle Way 5/23 (Chris Hugosson, Jason Horn); *Washington*: one at Canonsburg Lake 5/22 (John Flannigan).

**Red-necked Phalarope** – *Berks*: one at School Road Farm Pond 4/30, 5/13-17 (Jane Wolfe, Matt Wlasniewski, Peter Wolfe, m.ob.); *Bucks*: three at Peace Valley Park 4/30-5/1 (Deborah Ihnat, m.ob.); *Butler*: one at small pond in industrial park in Cranberry 5/26 (Patrick Lister); *Carbon*: two at Beltzville SP 5/29 (Rich Rehrig, Barbara Rehrig, Ty Sharrow, Rick Wiltraut); *Clinton*: one at South Avis 5/29-31 (m.ob.); *Juniata*: one at Port Royal 5/22 (Chad Kauffman, Noah Kauffman); *Lycoming*: one at Rose Valley Lake 4/30-5/1 (Bobby Brown, Deb Brown, Bob Brown, et al.); *Philadelphia*: Two at Penn's Landing on Delaware River 5/28-29 (Brian Hart, m.ob.).

**Red Phalarope**\* – *Lycoming*: one at Rose Valley Lake 5/24-25 (Catie Harbach, et al.), second county record, *doc submitted*.

**Black-headed Gull**\* – *Bucks*: one at Penn-Warner Tract/Morrisville area 3/8-16 and 4/16, possibly same bird (m.ob.), *no doc*; *Dauphin*: one in Millersburg 3/27 (Scott Bills, Stephanie Bills), *no doc*, one on Susquehanna R. at Heritage Park 3/20 (Steve Schmit), *no doc*; *Philadelphia*: one at Pennypack on the Delaware 3/30 (George Armistead), *doc submitted*.

**Little Gull**\* – *Bucks*: one at Penn-Warner Tract 4/4, two there 4/13-18 (Devich Farbotnik, Jim Hartley), *no doc*; *Carbon*: one at Beltzville SP (Rich Rehrig), *no doc*; *Centre*: one at Bald Eagle SP 4/18 (Joe Verica, et al.), *doc submitted*; *Dauphin*: one at Fort Hunter 3/22 (Jason Horn), *no doc*, one at Middletown Union Canal 3/27 (Josh Lefever), *no doc*; *Lancaster*: two at Lake Clarke 3/24 (Jason Horn, Matt Sabatine), one there 3/26 (Meredith Lombard), and one there 5/8-23 (Zach Millen, et al.), *doc submitted*; *Wayne*: one at Lake Wallenpaupack 4/16-17 (Jonathan DeBalko, Chris Fisher), *doc submitted*.

**Laughing Gull** – *Bucks*: five at Penn-Warner Tract 3/28 (Devich Farbotnik) and 530 were there 5/2 (Andrew Harrington); *Erie*: one at Presque Isle SP 5/21 (Mary Birdsong) and 5/26 (observer not listed).

**Iceland Gull** – *Bucks*: one at Penn-Warner Tract 4/1-5/8 (Richard Smith, Andrew Harrington, Devich Farbotnik); *Chester*: one flew over Bucktoe Creek Preserve 3/29 (Larry Lewis); *Delaware*: one at Fort Mifflin 4/13 (Rob Fergus); *Erie*: a few at Presque Isle SP during the season.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** – *Allegheny*: one at Emsworth Dam 5/5 (Paul Brown); *Bucks*: high counts at Nockamixon SP include 461 on 3/14 (August Mirabella) and 410 on 4/11 (Kenneth Rieker); *Crawford*: one at Pymatuning Lake Dam 3/3 (Michael Williams), two there 3/7 (Thomas Nonnenmacher, Ken Pinnow, Michael Williams); *Delaware*: present at Fort Mifflin 3/28 (Jim McConnell), 3/29 (Zach Millen, Brian Quindlen) and 4/12 (Damon Orsetti) and one at Commodore Barry Bridge/Riverfront 4/13 (Rob Fergus); *Erie*: up to four at Presque Isle SP first week of March (Jerry McWilliams); *Lancaster*: two at Middle Creek WMA 3/23 (Bruce Carl), two at Conejohela Flats 4/30 (Rebecca Millen, Zach Millen, Ted Nichols); *Lebanon*: one on Mt. Pleasant Road 5/23-24 (Jonathan Heller, Timothy Becker, Kathy Becker, Steve Walthius, Brian Brown, Justin Felty, Jonathan DeBalko); *Lehigh*: one at Dorney Pond daily through 4/10; *Mercer*: present at Maurice Goddard SP 3/4 (Michael Williams) with a high count of five there 3/24 (Jim McConnor, Michael Williams).

**Glaucous Gull** – *Bucks*: one at Penn-Warner Tract 4/20-5/8 (Devich Farbotnik, Andrew Harrington); *Delaware*: one at Governor



Printz Park 4/19 (Robert Karchnyak); *Erie*: five at Presque Isle SP the first week of March (m.ob.); *Philadelphia*: Singles were at Delaware River Trail 3/29 and FDR Park 4/12 (George Armistead, Liam Hart).

**Great Black-backed Gull** – *Berks*: one at Blue Marsh Lake 3/4 (Rudy Keller); *Carbon*: one at Beltzville SP 3/30 (Rich Rehrig); *Fayette*: one at the Summit Mountain Hawkwatch 4/29 (Calvin Livengood).

**Least Tern\*** – *Delaware*: up to four at Fort Mifflin 5/25 (Rob Fergus) and 5/29 (Jason Horn), *no doc*.

**Gull-billed Tern\*** – *Delaware*: two at Fort Mifflin 5/28 (Rob Fergus), *no doc*.

**Royal Tern\*** – *Delaware*: one at Governor Printz Park 5/29 (Kenneth Rieker), *doc submitted*.

**Pacific Loon\*** – *Lycoming*: one at Rose Valley Lake 4/21 (Eric Hartshaw, et al.), *doc submitted*, one at the same location 4/30-5/1 (Bobby Brown, Deb Brown, Bob Brown, Norwood Frederick), *doc submitted*, first and second county records.

**Great Cormorant** – *Bucks*: present during season at four locations with a high of six at Mud Island 3/8 (August Mirabella); *Delaware*: present at Fort Mifflin 3/26 (Sam Neat), 3/30 (David Eberly, Al Guarente), and 4/4 (Debbie Beer, Adrian Binns), one at Governor Printz Park 4/1 (Damon Orsetti), and one at Hildacy Farm Preserve 5/6 (Debbie Beer); *Lancaster*: one at Peach Bottom 4/22 (Bob Schutsky).

**American White Pelican** – *Lancaster*: one at Conejohela Flats 5/18 (Bruce Carl), two near Falmouth 5/29 (Annette Mathes).

**Brown Pelican\*** – *Centre*: one at Muddy Paws Marsh 4/8 (John Stoltzfus, *fide* Wayne Laubscher), first county record, *no doc*.

**Snowy Egret** – *Bucks*: one at Quakertown Swamp 5/27 (Natalie Kita); *Erie*: one at Presque Isle SP 5/22-28 (Mary Birdsong); *Franklin*: one at Greencastle Reservoir 5/29 (Bill Oyler, Carl Garner, Bob Kochert); *Indiana*: one near Conemaugh Dam 5/18 (Tony Bruno), second county record; *Lancaster*: one at the Conejohela Flats 4/9 (Zach Millen), one at Octoraro Reservoir 5/1 (Carlton Groff, Holly Merker, Kevin Fryberger) followed by three there 5/23-25 (Melissa Gallardy, Ross Gallardy, Zach Millen, Brian Quindlen, m.ob.).

**Cattle Egret** – *Berks*: one in Fleetwood (Linford Weber), date not listed; *Lancaster*: two near Marietta 5/18 (Ed Chubb) and possibly the same one nearby 5/18 (Richard Williams, Patricia Williams); *Lebanon*: one at Balmer Farm Pond 5/6 (Frank Haas, Jonathan Heller).

**Little Blue Heron** – *Bucks*: one at Bradford Dam 4/23 (Gail Johnson); *Delaware*: one at John Heinz NWR 5/14 (Rob Fergus, Damon Orsetti), one at Fort Mifflin 5/25 (Rob Fergus).

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** – *Dauphin*: a high count of 11 in Harrisburg 4/15 (Bob Koontz); *Lancaster*: one first noted at the Black-crowned Night-Heron colony in Ephrata 3/30 (Bruce Carl); *York*: one at Jacobus, Lake Redman, and Lake Williams 4/18-25 (m.ob.), thought to be the same bird.

**White Ibis\*** – *Delaware*: 14 flew over Bryn Mawr 5/26 (Kevin Browngoehl), *no doc*.

**Glossy Ibis** – *Bucks*: five 4/9, two 4/18, eleven 5/2, one 5/23, and one 5/25 at Penn-Warner Tract (Jim Hartley, Devich Farbotnik, Andrew Harrington), 19 flew past Milford Twp. 5/30 (Devich Farbotnik); *Chester*: 32 in flight over Marsh Creek SP 4/5 (Larry Lewis), two at Great Marsh 4/11 (Mike Coulter), seven at Goat Hill Preserve 5/3 (Kevin Fryberger), nine at Marsh Creek SP 5/15 (Adam Bartles), eight in West Chester 5/15 (Brian Raicich), one at Marsh Creek SP 5/1 (Denic Hardtmann) and 5/3 (Larry Lewis); *Clinton*: three at Kettle Creek SP 4/29 (Sarah Lindgren); *Dauphin*: two at Wildwood Lake 4/29 (Rosemary Spreha), one at Highspire Reservoir 4/12 (Josh Lefever); *Delaware*: reported

from John Heinz NWR 5/11 (Damon Orsetti) and 5/14 (Rob Fergus, Damon Orsetti), and Fort Mifflin 4/21-5/29 (m.ob.). High counts include 26 on 5/22 (Al Guarente) and 27 on 5/13 (Rob Fergus); *Lancaster*: 17 at Conejohela Flats 4/30 (Rebecca Millen, Zach Millen), 23 at Octoraro Reservoir 5/23 (Zach Millen); *Lehigh*: three flew over Macungie 5/10 (Jeff Sitko); *Mercer*: one at Shenango Reservoir 5/14 (Jim Springer, Kim Springer); *Monroe*: one at Broadheadsville 5/13 (Paul Nale).

**White-faced Ibis\*** – *Northampton*: one in Easton 5/1 (Jon Mularczyk, Billy Weber, Devich Farbotnik, Matt Sabatine, Rick Wiltraut) *doc submitted*, 4th state record.

**Glossy/White-faced Ibis** – *Erie*: a dark ibis flew over the Erie Hawkwatch 5/14 (Jerry McWilliams, Russ States, Jennifer Ferrick); *Lancaster*: a dark ibis flew over Ephrata 5/10 (Eric Witmer).

**Mississippi Kite\*** – *Berks*: one at Hawk Mountain 5/17 (Laurie Goodrich, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Volunteers and Staff), *no doc*; *Bucks*: one in Bridgeton Twp. 5/17 (Frank Sencher, Jr., Peter Kwiatek), *no doc*; *Chester*: one near Malvern 5/10 (Zach Millen), one in Unionville 5/15 (Ellen Nunn, m.ob.), *no doc*, several at Bucktoe Creek Preserve starting 5/19 with a high of six 5/29 (Larry Lewis, m.ob.), *doc submitted*; *Delaware*: one flew over Wallingford (Damon Orsetti) and later over Haverford College 5/29 (Kristen Johnson, Sheryl Johnson), *no doc*; *Indiana*: one in Indiana 5/13-16 (Dominic Pumford, James Pumford, Joseph Pumford), second county record, *doc submitted*; *Lancaster*: one flew over Lancaster 4/30 (Derek Stoner), *no doc*; *Lehigh*: one over South Mountain 5/24 (Jason Horn), *no doc*; *Schuylkill*: one at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary 5/12 (David Barber), *doc submitted*.

**Northern Goshawk** – *Carbon*: one flew over Palmerton 3/19 (Danny Tyler); *Centre*: one flew over Julian 3/22 (Dan Ombalski), one in State College 4/1 (N. Scott Parkhill); *Elk*: one in East Branch Lake vicinity 3/23 (Brendyn Baptiste); *Indiana*: one at Yellow Creek SP 5/13 (Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee); *Monroe*: one in Kresgeville 3/14 (L. William Clark); *Warren*: multiple active nests in Allegheny NF (m.ob.).

**Rough-legged Hawk** – *Allegheny*: one at Wingfield Pines 3/22 (John Flannigan, Joe Papp); *Bradford*: single birds in two locations 3/3 and 3/27 (ebird); *Crawford*: one at Miller Ponds 3/1-7 (Mark Vass, m.ob.); *Erie*: one at Edinboro 3/5 (ebird), two in Erie 3/18 (ebird).

**Barn Owl** – *Centre*: one 3/9-27 and 5/2 near Spring Mills (Joe Gyekis, et al.), one near Millheim 3/24 (Jim Dunn); *Cumberland*: one in West Penn Twp. 4/1 (Tim Johnson); *Franklin*: nesting in the Edenville area (Bill Oyler); *Lancaster*: one heard at the northeast Lancaster Gamelands 3/14 (Bruce Carl).

**Snowy Owl** – *Erie*: one at Presque Isle SP 3/11 (Dean Zeller); *Mercer*: one photographed, location not listed (*fide* Ethan Kistler); *Warren*: one at Tidioute 4/5 (m.ob.).

**Long-eared Owl** – *Erie*: a total of seven at Presque Isle SP in March and April (Roger Donn); *Lawrence*: one in Black Swamp area 3/10-14 (Michael Williams); *Mercer*: one at Shenango Reservoir 3/1 (Mimi Hoffmaster, Steve Sandford), one at Pennsy Swamp 3/9-14 (Michael Williams) and two at Jamestown 3/1-4/5 (Michael Williams).

**Red-naped X Yellow-bellied Sapsucker\*** – *Chester*: one in Downingtown 4/6-7 (John Daniel), *doc submitted*.

**Prairie Falcon\*** – *Clearfield*: one in Karthaus Twp. 5/16 (John Forcey), *doc submitted*.

**Northern Shrike** – *Butler*: one at SGL 95 on 3/22 (Martin Carlin) and perhaps the same one nearby the same day (Glenn Koppel, Mary Alice Koeneke); *Elk*: one near Wilcox 3/27 (Andrew Sidelinger); *Warren*: one along Wenzel Road 3/14 (Jeremy Nicholson).

**Sedge Wren** – *Cambria*: one at Prince Gallitzin SP 5/13 (Michael David); *Chester*: One at Coatesville 5/24 and 5/27 (Brian Byrnes, Joe Sebastiani); *Erie*: one at Presque Isle SP 5/7 (Justin Berkheimer); *Mercer*: one at Shenango Reservoir 5/14 (Kim Springer, Jim Springer).

**Snow Bunting** – *Crawford*: up to six at Pymatuning Causeway 3/1 (Isaac Field, Thomas Nonnenmacher, Steve Rotkovecz) and one there 3/3 (Ron Leberman).

**Pine Siskin** – *Crawford*: two north of Townville 4/19 (Alejandra Lewandowski); *Franklin*: one visited a feeder in Greene Knolls 3/6-5/1 (Val Barnes); *Huntington*: one visited a feeder on Stone Creek Ridge 4/10 (Greg Grove); *Mercer*: one 4/18 (Kim Springer), location not listed; *Lehigh*: one at Alburts 4/9-28 (Jeff Vinosky).

**Clay-colored Sparrow** – *Allegheny*: one at Chatham College in Pittsburgh 5/2 (Malcolm Kurtz); *Centre*: one at Beaver Stadium 5/7 (Joe Gyekis, Carl Engstrom) and one on Fox Hollow Rd. 5/11 (Carrington Stephenson); *Erie*: one in a backyard in Erie 5/5 (Jerry McWilliams); *Juniata*: one at a feeder in Mifflintown 3/21-4/23 (Chad Kauffman, m.ob.); *Lancaster*: one at Noel Dorwart Park 5/2-3 (Seth McComsey, m.ob.); *Washington*: one in a backyard in Washington 5/16 (Sayre Greenfield).

**Lark Sparrow\*** – *Lancaster*: the bird that spent the winter near Manheim continued to 3/6 (m.ob.), *doc previously submitted*.

**Henslow's Sparrow** – *Allegheny*: one at Imperial 4/18 (Aidan Place, Joe Papp, John Flannigan, Jim Hausman); *Armstrong*: one at Crooked Creek Lake 5/15 (Sam Guthrie); *Centre*: up to four at SGL 100, German Settlement Grasslands (John Carter, et al.); *Clarion*: several at Mt. Zion 4/4 (Mike Weible); *Jefferson*: one along Sandy Ridge Road 5/30 (Carl Engstrom).

**LeConte's Sparrow\*** – *Berks*: one at Kernsville Dam Recreation Area 3/9 (Kerry Grim), second county record, *doc submitted*.

**Seaside Sparrow\*** – *Philadelphia*: one at Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park 5/9 (Charles Homler), *doc submitted*.

**Harris's Sparrow\*** – *Bucks*: the bird that wintered in Bristol Twp. continued to 5/10 (Anne Jakubczak Edwards), *doc previously submitted*.

**Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow\*** – *Allegheny*: one in McCandless Twp. in early May (Steve Gosser), *doc submitted*.

**White-throated Sparrow X Dark-eyed Junco** – *Cumberland*: continued from the winter at Pine Grove Forest SP to 4/1 (Bob Koontz); *Huntingdon*: One photographed at Decorum 4/8, had been present a couple days (James Hamilton).

**Yellow-headed Blackbird\*** – *Elk*: one in the East Branch Lake vicinity 5/12 (Brendyn Baptiste), *no doc*.

**Brewer's Blackbird\*** – *Mercer*: one noted as possible at Lake Wilhelm 4/10 (Kim Springer), *no doc*.

**Lawrence's Warbler** – *Allegheny*: one at Deer Lakes Park 5/16 (Amy Henrici), remained through season; *Franklin*: at Upper Horse Valley, SGL 235, date and observers not listed; *York*: female at Gifford Pinchot SP 5/16 (David Arrow, Kaitlyn Arrow).

**Swainson's Warbler\*** – *Allegheny*: one found stunned after striking a building in Pittsburgh 5/14 (Trinidad Regaspy), *doc submitted*.

**Black-throated Gray Warbler\*** – *Lebanon*: the bird that wintered at residence off Clear Springs Rd. remained to 3/26 (Justin Felty, Nate Felty, Brandon Brown, Brian Brown, Jonathan DeBalko, John Leskosky, et al.), *doc previously submitted*.

**Summer Tanager\*** – *Adams*: an immature male at Gettysburg National Military Park 5/16 (Callan Murphy, Melanie Murphy), *doc submitted*; *Allegheny*: a female in Gibsonia 5/5-11 (Kevin Parsons, m.ob.), *doc submitted*, an immature male at Frick Park 5/17 (Kate St. John, Aidan Place); *Bucks*: one at Penn-Warner Tract 5/23 (Devich Farbotnik) *no doc*; *Centre*: male near Pleasant Gap Fish Hatchery 5/11-13 (Jeff Kennedy), *no doc*; *Chester*: male

visiting feeder 5/15, location not listed (Denice Hardtmann), *doc submitted*; *Dauphin*: one in Harrisburg 5/2 (Jane Webster), *doc submitted*; *Delaware*: female in Glen Riddle 5/9-10 (Hiroshi Iizka), *no doc*, male in Media 5/16 (Deborah Hansen), *no doc*; *Elk*: one in St. Mary's 5/13 (Carol Light), *no doc*, first county record; *Erie*: adult male at Presque Isle SP 5/1 (Susan Smith), *no doc*, immature male in Erie 5/15 (Nancy Andersen), *doc submitted*; *Huntington*: one present five days near Decorum (dates and observer not listed), *no doc*; *Lancaster*: immature male at Middle Creek WMA 5/16 (Carrington Stephenson), *doc submitted*, immature male in Denver 5/17-18 (Loretta Gehman), *doc submitted*, and immature male in Fruitville 5/18, *no doc*; *Lebanon*: one along Pine Rd. 5/2 (Jonathan Heller, Ted Nichols, Mike Epler, Tim Becker, Kathy Becker, Jen Szekeres, Vince Pantanella, Nate McKelvie, Nathan McKelvie), *no doc*; *Lycoming*: female in Newberry 5/14 (Joe Ananea, Maria Ananea), *doc submitted*; *Mercer*: one in Hermitage 5/9-12 (Mimi Hoffmaster, m.ob.), *doc submitted*; *Philadelphia*: first year male at John Heinz NWR 4/22-5/9 (Daniel Long, m.ob.), *doc submitted*, up to two 5/4-7 (immature male and adult male) at Carpenter's Woods (Julian Gottfried, m.ob.), *doc submitted*, male at Awbury Arboretum 5/9-12 (Bill Reaume, m.ob.), *doc submitted*, first year male at Independence National Historic Park 5/5-7 (Katrina Rakowski, Victoria Sindlinger), *doc submitted*, first year male at Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park 5/14-16 (Robert Kerchnyak, m.ob.), *no doc*; *Susquehanna*: one in Forest Lake Twp. 5/9 (Kim Housen), first county record, *doc submitted*.

**Western Tanager\*** – *Chester*: immature male at Valley Forge National Historic Park 3/15-21 (Kate Jensen, Rick Keyser), third county record, *doc submitted*; *Lancaster*: immature male in Eden 4/22 (Maddie Matthew), second county record, *doc submitted*.

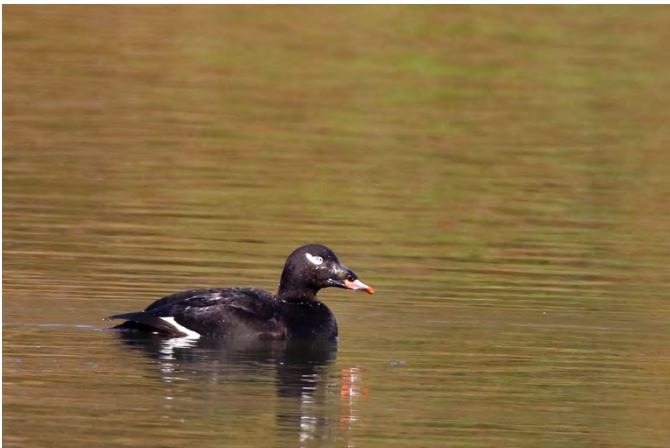
**Painted Bunting\*** – *Allegheny*: the male that overwintered in O'hara Twp. was last seen 4/20 (Brian Shema), *doc previously submitted*; *Erie*: male in Erie 5/31 (Eric Smylko), third county record, *no doc*; *Lancaster*: male that wintered in Bowmansville was last seen 4/8 (observer not listed), *doc previously submitted*.

**Dickcissel** – *Allegheny*: one detected by nocturnal flight call recorder 5/14 (David Yeany II); *Clinton*: one at feeder in Avis 4/17 (Lou Myers); *Cumberland*: two at Mud Level Road 5/30-31 (Ramsay Koury, Annette Mathes, Vern Gauthier, Donald Weidemann); *Franklin*: five at Portico Rd. 5/10 through season (Carl Garner, Gavin Anderson, m.ob.), two at Church Rd. 5/22 through the season (Bill Oyler, Jefferson Shank, Bob Kochert, Val Barnes); *Lancaster*: immature male that overwintered near Reamstown was last seen 4/12 (observer not listed), six singing males near Peach Bottom 5/20-21 (John Garrison, Jason Horn); *Lehigh*: one detected by nocturnal flight call recorder in Alburts 5/24 (Jeff Vinosky).

## Photographic Highlights



A few weeks after this photo of 31 May, these **Trumpeter Swans** at Creekview Road, *Cumberland* became the second pair to nest successfully in Pennsylvania (first nesting was in *Jefferson* 2018). (Dave Kerr)



The most often reported scoter species in Pennsylvania, **White-winged Scoter** was found in 12 counties during the spring, including this male at Two Mile Run County Park, *Venango* 3 May. (Jeffrey Hall)



Total number of **Black-billed Cuckoos** in eBird for the spring season in Pennsylvania was 552, compared to 1255 for Yellow-bills; this Black-bill was in Middletown Twp., *Delaware* 10 May. (Kristen Johnson)

*Color printing*  
*Sponsored by Ted Weller of*  
*Wexford, PA.*



In Pennsylvania, **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** generally out-number Black-bills approximately 2:1; this Yellow-bill was in Murrysville, *Westmoreland* 25 May. (Tom Kuehl)



Many visuals of **Eastern Whip-poor-will** are of seemingly disembodied eyes glowing in head-lights on a gravel road deep in a forest; occasionally we are fortunate to see the whole bird, like this individual in West Lebanon, *Indiana* 27 May. (Anthony Bruno)





**Sora** at known nesting location in Marsh Run Swamp, Fairview Twp., York, 20 April. (Dean Newhouse)



Not often seen in Venango, this handsome **Black-bellied Plover** was at Kahle Lake 12 May. (Meg Kolodick)



Occurring annually, but nevertheless uncommon in central Pennsylvania, this **Semipalmated Plover** was at Pine Grove Rd, Juniata 11 May. (Rob Dickerson)



This **Wilson's Phalarope** at Canonsburg Lake 22 May was a first-ever for *Washington*; reported in six counties this spring, all singles. (John Flannigan)



**Red-necked Phalaropes** were in seven counties; this bird was in the wet fields at South Avis, Clinton 31 May, a shorebird hotspot (depending on rain conditions) in central Pennsylvania. (Wayne Laubscher)



Lycoming's second-ever **Red Phalarope**, and the only one in the state this spring, was at Rose Valley Lake 24-25 (here 25) May. (Bobby Brown)





This **Marbled Godwit** at Bald Eagle SP, Centre 30 April came down as part of a fallout during heavy rain the previous day; the only one in the state this spring and the second record for the county. (Bob Snyder)



Two of four **Short-billed Dowitchers** at Imperial Grasslands, Allegheny 16 May. (Mark Vass)



**Bonaparte's Gulls** and a possibly confused **Canada Goose** at New Milford, Susquehanna 18 April. (Nancy VanCott)



Formerly accidental, now almost reliable along the Delaware R. in Bucks, this first winter **Black-headed Gull** was in the area of the Penn-Warner Tract and Morrisville 8-22 (here 14) March, likely the same bird also seen 16 April. (Kerry Loux)



This first-cycle **Glaucous Gull**, along with a **Herring Gull**, was at FDR Park, Philadelphia 12 April; these big gulls were reported also in Bucks, Delaware, and Erie. (George Armistead)



**Sharp-shinned Hawk** dining on a Red-bellied Woodpecker that had been grabbed off a tree trunk in Howard, Centre 23 March. (Bob Snyder)





Found with increasing frequency in the east but still rare in the west, this **Mississippi Kite**, the second for *Indiana*, spent 13-16 (here 14) May in the town of Indiana; kites were reported from six counties, including the usual multiples from *Chester*. (Michael David)



Most **Rough-legged Hawks** are gone before March; only six birds, in four counties, were reported, all in March, including this light-morph at Pymatuning WMA, *Crawford* 1 March. (Mark Vass)



After a winter lacking in **Snowy Owls** in the state, a few were found in March-April, all in the northwest, including this late owl at Reno, *Venango* 8 April; possibly the same bird was photographed the next day on the nearby Allegheny River. (Jeffrey Hall)



This **Barred Owl** was an early morning visitor to the Nature Center at Richard Nixon County Park, *York* 7 May. (Bob Reiter)



**Grasshopper Sparrow** at SGL 108, *Cambria* 31 May, nicely exhibiting the often inconspicuous yellow spot above the eye. (Pam Illig)



**Clay-colored Sparrow** was found in six counties; this sparrow was found on the campus of Chatham University, *Allegheny* only on 2 May. (Michael David)





**Winter Wren** at Mill Road, *Susquehanna* 7 April (*Barb Stone*)



**Golden-winged Warbler** on Highline Road, *Pike* 15 May. (*Steve Evans*)



**Blue-winged Warbler** proclaiming his territory from a crabapple perch in *Jacobsburg SP, Northampton*, 3 May. (*Dave DeReamus*)



**Lawrence's Warbler** is likely a 2nd generation hybrid of Golden- and Blue-winged Warblers – possibly from a mating of a Brewster's Warbler, a first generation hybrid, and one of the parental species; this warbler was at *Deer Lakes Park, Allegheny* 17 May. (*Dave Brooke*)



**Orange-crowned Warbler** was reported from ten counties, a typical spring number; this Orange-crown was attracted to a backyard water feature in *Lebanon* 10 May. (*Mike Dale*)



This **Mourning Warbler** in the *Slate Run* area, *Lycoming* 28 May lacks the usual dark bib. (*Rick Carlson*)





**American Redstart** on nest, which included spider webbing, at Sizerville SP, Cameron 24 May. (Wayne Laubscher)



**Cerulean Warbler** is a declining species, but they remain numerous on the steep slopes above the Lower Trail and Juniata River, Huntingdon/Blair; this Cerulean was photographed 20 May. (Ron Crandall)



A backyard **Magnolia Warbler** in State College, Centre 24 May. (Ron Crandall)



Male **Blackburnian Warbler** in Harrison Hills Park, Allegheny 3 May. (Dave Brooke)



This banded **Yellow Warbler** was at Cherry Valley NWR, Monroe 27 May; believed to have been banded on the refuge. (Nancy Tully)



**Prairie Warbler**, with trademark facial arc, at SGL 108, Cambria 28 May. (Pam Illig)





**Blackpoll Warbler** identification is easier in spring, like this male at Canonsburg Lake, *Washington* 20 May. (John Flannigan)



Several **Wilson's Warblers** were at Memorial Lake, *Lebanon* in mid-May, including this male showing off his stylish chapeau 15 May. (Rick Carlson)



An amazing spring, perhaps unprecedented, in the record books at least, for **Summer Tanager**, found in 16 counties including this young male at *Denver, Lancaster* 17 May; reports were somewhat clustered in the southeast and far west, possibly a reflection of areas of greater birder activity. (Pamela Fisher)



**Western Tanagers** were found in *Lancaster* and at Valley Forge National Historical Park, *Chester* 15-21 (here 18) March, the second record for *Chester*. (Barry Blust)



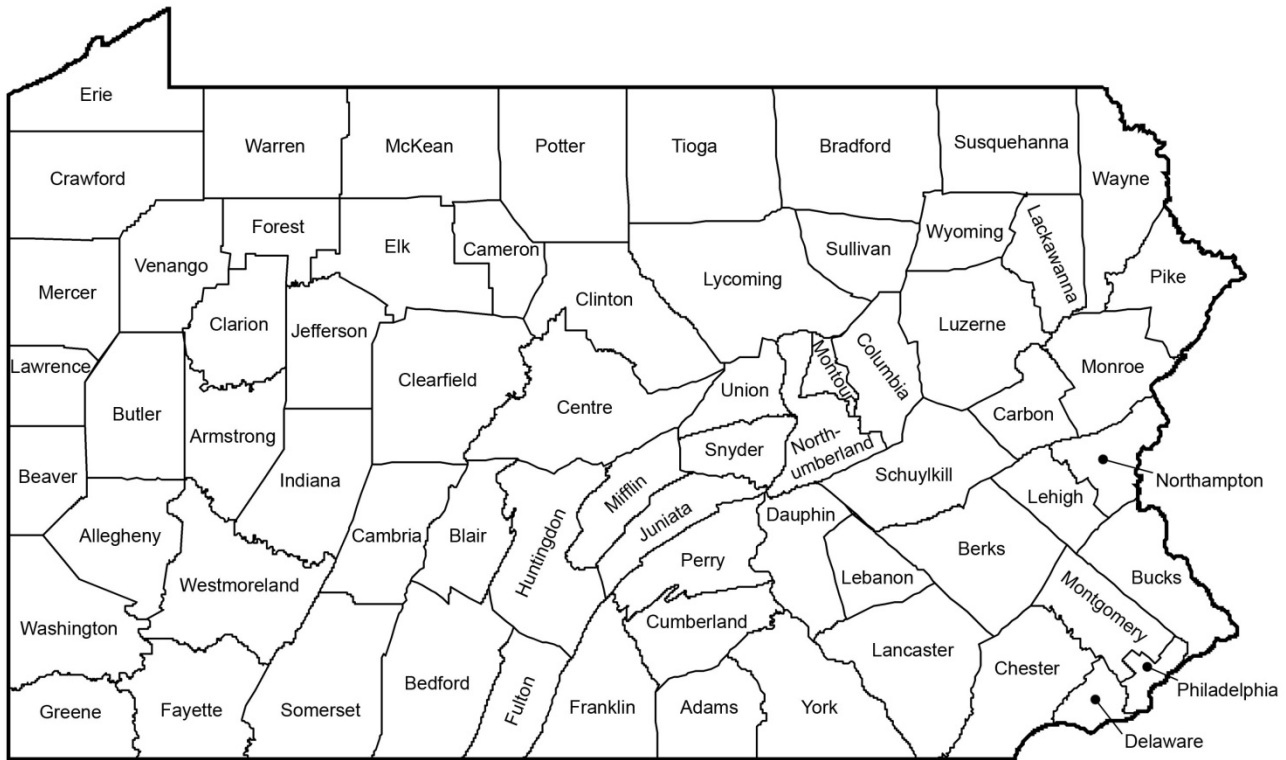
This brilliant **Painted Bunting** showed up in a yard at a private residence in *Erie* 31 May and stayed through at least the next day for this photograph; third county record. (Mary Birdsong)

**Find more photos on the IN FOCUS page – inside back cover**

### Statement on Photo Plagiarism

If we discover that a submitted photo has been plagiarized, we will print a correction and properly identify the actual photographer. We will no longer accept photos from someone who knowingly takes credit for the efforts of others.

# Local Notes – March 2020 through May 2020



## ABBREVIATION

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	SF	State Forest
Cr.	Creek	NA	Nature Area or Natural Area	SGL	State Game Land
et al.	and others	NF	National Forest	SP	State Park
Ft.	Fort	NM	National Monument	S.T.P.	Sewage Treatment Plant
G.C.	Golf Course	NP	National Park	subad(s).	subadult(s)
G.P.	Game Preserve	NWR	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	WA	Wildlife Area
juv(s).	juvénal [plumage]; juvenile(s)	R.	River	WMA	Wildlife Management Area
L.	Lake	RA	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, Ithaca, New York. Available: <http://www.ebird.org>. (Accessed: 31 March 2014 abundance [web application]. eBird, Ithaca, New York. Available: <http://www.ebird.org>. (Accessed: 31 March 2014)

*The following counties need a compiler: Bradford, Fulton, Luzerne, McKean. The following counties had no report submitted: Perry, Snyder, Union.*

## Adams County

Locations: Freedom Twp (FREE), Gettysburg National Military Park (GNMP), L. Heritage (LH), Long Pine Run Reservoir (LPRR), Michaux SF (MICH), Ridge Rd - Cumberland Twp. (RRCT), Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve (SHNP).

A very balmy March averaging 6° F above normal with no snowfall was followed by April and May temperatures 2 to 3°F below normal. Rainfall for the period was slightly above average, keeping lake and reservoir levels at or near capacity. The species count of 189 was driven by excellent warbler variety for Adams. Individual species highlights for the county were led by an **American Bittern** sighting and a **Summer Tanager** in flight with its image captured by some quick camera action.

Waterfowl variety was on the low side with 24 species reported. The only **Snow Goose** sighting was a trio at Pumping Station Rd 3/13 (AP). **Mute Swans** have long had a presence in the county but five locales

reporting them is high. Hopefully, it is a result of a limited number roaming the county as all water bodies had open water and not a result of an expanding population. **Tundra Swan** high count was 25 birds at LPRR 3/8-17 (RK, BO). A 10-count of **Blue-winged Teal** came from Crooked Creek Wetlands 3/21 (PK) and a FREE farm pond held up to 4 birds 4/12-5/1 (MS). **American Black Duck** was only reported twice: a single at LH 3/20 (CM) and a pair at a FREE farm pond 3/6-8 (MS). High count of the four **Green-winged Teal** reports were 15 birds at Crooked Creek Wetland 3/22 (CM). LPRR held up to 3 **Long-tailed Ducks** 3/12-16 (VB, BK, BO) and 2 **Common Goldeneye** 3/20 (CM, RG&TS). A pair of **Common Mergansers** on the Conewago Creek at East Berlin 5/18 (PK) were late. A nice 7-count of **Pied-billed Grebes** came from LH 3/20 (CM) with an 8-count of **Horned Grebe**. Up to 4 **Common Loons** were at LPRR 3/28-5/15 (m.ob.).

Breeding confirmation for **Ruffed Grouse** came from a hike on the Lippencote Trail in MICH 5/31 (MB). An adult and chick were spotted with additional chicks suspected to be hidden in deep cover. Ring-necked Pheasant was a miss while **Wild Turkey** continued to enjoy wide reporting. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was limited to reports from four locales 5/15-31 (m.ob.) while Black-billed Cuckoo went undetected. A roosting

**Common Nighthawk** was found 20 feet up on a willow tree branch along McLaughlin Rd. 5/19 (DP). It remained for at least two hours while the observer was gardening and despite harassment from **American Robin**. A **Sora** was found along a wetland pond on Meadowbrook Golf Course 5/30 (DS).

Shorebirding was very limited but there were some nice yellowlegs counts. Hamiltonban Twp. Community Park held up to 9 **Greater Yellowlegs** 4/20-5/19 (CM, MS) and up to 20 **Lesser Yellowlegs** 5/1-15 (CM). **American Woodcock** and **Wilson's Snipe** enjoyed decent reporting. A single woodcock was at RRCT 3/15-27 (CM) while trios were found along Mountain Rd 3/14 (MB) and Shippensburg Rd 3/20 (MB). A snipe was found in MICH 3/25 (DBr), a pair were at GNMP 3/20 (CM) and up to 6 were near B & F Rd 4/24 (DS). A single **Bonaparte's Gull** was at LPRR 3/28 (BK) and a 7-bird flyover was seen at RRCT 4/6 (CM). **Herring Gull** singles were at GNMP 3/2 (DH) and LH 5/2 (CM). A pair of **Caspian Terns** was over New Oxford 4/19 (CM) and 4 **Forster's Terns** were at LH 5/6 (CM). An **American Bittern** was detected at FREE 4/28 (MS) but no additional details of the sighting were provided. The **Great Blue Heron** rookery near Knoxlyn Rd private property tallied 42 individuals 3/11 (SW). A good find was a **Black-crowned Night Heron** at a pond along Old Mill Rd 5/5 (SW). Six reports of **Broad-winged Hawks** spanned 4/9-5/14 (m.ob.) but no count exceeded 2 birds. Nine sites reporting **Barred Owl** was a positive, but no reports of Eastern Screech Owl and Great Horned Owl were provided, especially the latter. The good winter reporting of **Short-eared Owls** saw some carryover into March. Up to 5 birds were seen along Pumping Station Rd through 3/11 (LF, CM).

All expected woodpecker species continues to show strong reporting. In addition to the GNMP stronghold, **Red-headed Woodpecker** was found at 12 other sites (m.ob.). A **Merlin** was at SGL 249 on 4/12 (D&JG), and a **Peregrine Falcon** was along Hunterstown Rd 4/2 (AVH). It was an especially strong reporting period for **Acadian Flycatcher** with reports from 10 sites starting 5/1 (m.ob.). The three **Least Flycatcher** reports were confined to a very tight window 5/14-16 (D&JG, CM, SW). Highlight of the vireo group was a **Philadelphia Vireo** at LPRR 5/14 (MB). None of the four reports of **Horned Lark** 3/22-5/27 (D&JG, SK, CM, DS) exceeded 4 birds. High count for **Purple Martin** was 15 birds at the Gettysburg College colony 4/26 (CM). A **Cliff Swallow** was spotted at Lake Mae 4/28 (CM). **Carolina Chickadee**, **Tufted Titmouse**, and **White-breasted Nuthatch** continue to show improved reporting trends from the prior two-year lows attributed to West Nile Virus. **Black-capped Chickadee** reporting was limited to 2 birds at LPRR 3/12-5/14 (GA, BK, DT). Five reports of **Winter Wren** 3/26-4/28 (MB, D&JG, CM) were a decent showing. A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** at RRCT 3/30 (CM) was early. *Catharus sp* reporting was at typical spring migration levels, and **Gray-cheeked Thrush** continued to be elusive with only one bird at GNMP 5/16 (CM). Up to 55 **American Pipits** were found at RRCT 3/5-24 (CM). The only **Purple Finch** reports were single birds at Knoxlyn Rd 3/30 (SW) and RRCT 4/7 (CM).

**Grasshopper Sparrow** was found at five sites starting 4/22 (m.ob.) with a high count of 5 birds along B & F Rd 4/24 (DS). **Fox Sparrow** showed particularly strong movement through the county 3/11-4/1 (m.ob.). An East Berlin backyard feeding station hosted up to 5 birds 3/23-25 (PK) and a 0.75-mile hike in MICH produced an 18-bird count 3/21 (BK). A **Dark-eyed Junco** was getting tardy at SHNP 5/19 (CM). **Vesper Sparrow** is regularly missed during this period so four sites reporting birds 3/29-4/27 (TA, CM, DS, SW) was exceptional. High count was 4 birds at GNMP 4/27 (TA). Up to 7 **Savannah Sparrows** were found at GNMP 4/25-5/3 (DB, BP) and a single was along Schriver Rd 5/20 (MB). **Swamp Sparrow** was detected at eight sites starting 3/22 (m.ob.) but high count was limited to 3 birds. Up to 3 **Yellow-breasted Chats** at GNMP 5/22-28 (MMa, EP) were a nice count, but it was the only locale reporting their presence. Four sites reported **Bobolink** 4/29-5/27 (m.ob.) with a high count of 7 coming from GNMP 5/5 (AM). The 10 sites reporting **Eastern Meadowlark** were all within an 8-mile radius of Gettysburg. **Orchard Oriole** and **Baltimore Oriole** had a repeat of 2019's strong spring showing with 7 sites and over 20 sites, respectively, producing birds. The sole **Rusty Blackbird** report was a pair at Knoxlyn Rd 4/19 (SW).

The 33 warbler species reported is very high for *Adams'* spring migration reporting. It is suspected that the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in more birding hours and a greater number of different site visits than typical. Max counts for individual species showed no real indication of an overly strong migration or a true fallout day, nor was any single site a clear hotspot. However, *Adams'* birders, as a group, were certainly successful in finding a rewarding variety of warblers.

Singles of **Worm-eating Warblers** were found at LPRR 5/11 (CM) and SHNP 5/13 (CM). Nice finds at GNMP were a **Golden-winged Warbler** in the Spangler's Spring area 5/10 (MB), a **Prothonotary Warbler** 5/9 (MS), a **Cerulean Warbler** 4/29 (MS), and a **Yellow-throated Warbler** 5/10 (MB). Singles of **Blue-winged Warbler** were found at GNMP 5/9-11 (CM) and SGL 249 on 5/25 (D&JG). **Tennessee Warblers** were found in a tight window 5/15-19 (CM, SW) at three locales. A **Nashville Warbler** report came from GNMP 5/10 (MB). A **Mourning Warbler** at RRCT 5/18 (CM) and a **Kentucky Warbler** at SHNP 5/15 (SW) were the only reports for those species. SHNP produced nice counts of up to 4 **Blackburnian Warblers** 5/9-15 (CM, SW) and up to 6 **Chestnut-sided Warblers** 5/9-15 (PKB, EB, CM). **Palm Warbler** and **Prairie Warbler** enjoyed good reporting with seven and nine reports, respectively. Singles of **Canada Warbler** 5/9-23 (CM, DR) were found at three sites. Up to 2 **Wilson's Warbler** were at SGL 249 on 5/5-10 (D&JG, CM) for the only reports.

Were it not for a quick camera shot and subsequent review of the photo, a first-spring male **Summer Tanager** flying away from the observers at GNMP 5/16 (CM, MM) would likely have escaped identification. This species is extremely rare for the county, and it is nice to be one of the counties providing a "hit" as part of this year's notable influx into the state. **Blue Grosbeak** was sighted at Mason Dixon Farms 5/20 (AW) and Cunningham Rd 6/31 (CM). A single **Dickcissel** was found in a field along Barlow Rd 5/27 (SK).

Observers: **Phil Keener**, 198 Jacobs St, East Berlin, PA 17316, (717) 259-9984, [pittche74@yahoo.com](mailto:pittche74@yahoo.com), Gavin Anderson, Tony Arnold, Val Barnes, Eric Beck, Don Bemont, Mike Bertram, Dustin Brace (DBr), Peggy Keating-Butler, Nicole Bye, Ian Clarke, Carol Culvyhouse, Josh & Sue Donaldson, Nate Felty, Laura Frazier, Ron George & Tracy Snyder, Don & Jennifer Gilbert, Diane Holsinger, Caroline Jones, Gabrielle Joyce, Stefan Karkuff, Robert Keener, Bob Koontz, Michael Locher, Nancy Locher, Henry McLin, Michele Magee (MMa), Julie Malcon, Andrew Molloy, Callan Murphy, Melanie Murphy, Ted Nichols II, Bill Oyler, Karol Pasquinelli, Milton Paul, Ann Pettigrew, Elizabeth Pokrivka, Dan Popek, Bonita Portzline, David Rice, Michael S, Jefferson Shank, Danny Stoner, David Taylor, Kathi Tremblay, Aaron Van Houtte, Andy Wilson, Jenny Wood, Scott Wood.

#### **Allegheny County**

Locations: Dashields Dam (DASD), Deer Lakes Park (DEER), Duck Hollow (DH), Frick Park (FP), Imperial Grasslands (IMP), North Park (NOR), Schenley Park (SCHE), Wingfield Pines C.A. (WP).

We had a very memorable season this year! Spring seemed to get a slow start in April with cold temperatures and a lot of rain. A few mild days early in May brought in migrants. A week into May the bottom dropped out and temperatures dropped to near freezing with rain. The weather rebounded, and several rare and uncommon birds arrived making this spring one to remember for birds and birders dealing with the Coronavirus epidemic.

A **Mute Swan** was at NOR 3/21 (AP). The park had a feral population many years ago, but this could have been a bird from elsewhere; it is hard to know. A late **Tundra Swan** was at Brunots Island in the Ohio R. 5/11-12 (MJ, JP, JF)

A nice count for here, 13 **Blue-winged Teal** were at DH 4/14 (JS, SS, m.ob.). Smaller numbers were present in the county most of March and April. Another nice count of a migrant duck, 14 **Northern Shovelers**

were at DH 3/27 (AP, m.ob.). A late **Gadwall** was at NOR 5/4-7 (ME, LS, DN, et al.). A male **Northern Pintail** was at WP 3/21-25 (JP, JHa, et al.) offering close views of this handsome species. A male **Surf Scoter** was a nice find on the Allegheny R. at Tarentum 3/21 (ABO). A **Long-tailed Duck** at DH 3/28 (JV) was the lone report for the season. A number of **Bufflehead** were in the area 4/5, a sort of mini-fallout. Twenty were on the Allegheny R. at the Highland Park Dam, 11 were upriver at Verona (AH), and 57 were at DH (LC, RC, FI, eBird reports). **Common Merganser** was confirmed breeding at another site this spring. A female with 9 ducklings was at WP in mid-May (JeH, JP). Up to 15 **Red-breasted Mergansers** were at DASD on the Ohio R. 3/29 and 4/18 (MV), a reliable location for this species during migration. There were other reports in eBird from eight locations during the season. **Ruddy Ducks** were reported from several locations 4/18: 6 were at DH (MF), 6 were at DASD (MV), 13 were on the Allegheny R. at Blawnox (DY), 2 were at IMP (MV, et al.), and 5 were on the Allegheny R. at Creighton (AH, PM).

A **Northern Bobwhite** appeared at a backyard feeding station 4/7 (RDe). An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was heard calling in FP 4/24-25 (MK, AP, TRh). It was initially heard by a non-birder a few days prior (*fide* MK).

A **Sora** was at WP 5/12 (AP) and continued 5/13 (FI, ST). A dead **Virginia Rail** was found in downtown Pittsburgh 4/8 (TR), an unfortunate victim of a window strike. It was found during a Birdsafe Pittsburgh survey to collect data on window strikes. On a happier note, a pair of **Virginia Rails** returned to Harrison Hills Park for the second consecutive year and were confirmed breeding. A single chick was seen in early May (RB, DB). One was in Marshall Twp. 4/29 (JHz) and two were at WP 4/30 until at least 5/12 (JM, m.ob.). A **Common Gallinule** was a nice find at IMP 5/13 (RM, photo in eBird by a visiting birder from North Carolina). The bird remained until at least 5/24 (m.ob.) and provided the third record for IMP.

Mudflats at NOR attracted shorebirds in good numbers. Ten **Semipalmated Plovers** were there 5/10 (SD), a nice count of 25 **Lesser Yellowlegs** was made 5/11 (MD), 17 **Solitary Sandpipers** was the high count 5/23 (AP), and 20 **Least Sandpipers** was the high count 5/11 (MD). Rare in spring, 4 **Short-billed Dowitchers** were at IMP 5/16 (MV, m.ob.). IMP has a history of producing good counts of **Wilson's Snipe** in spring. Twenty-five were there 3/20 (MV), and 23 were there 4/18 (FI). **American Woodcocks** are still holding on at IMP with three displaying 3/8 (MF). Continued construction is eliminating brushy habitats and open fields preferred by this species. One was at Boyce Mayview Park 3/1-3 (JP, MM), and 3 on 3/7 (JM). Three were heard at Sewickley Heights Park 5/1 (eBird), and 7 were at NOR 3/24 (SD). One was heard just outside SCHE in Pittsburgh 4/3 (FI), a first for that location. A male **Wilson's Phalarope** appeared briefly at IMP 5/17 (MV); the eighth record for that location.

The gull and tern migration at DASD suffered this year from poor weather conditions and lack of regular coverage. The high count of **Herring Gulls** at the Highland Park Bridge colony was 95 on 4/18 (SK), and 42 were at the Emsworth Dam 4/23 (PB). An adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was a great find at Emsworth Dam on the Ohio R. 5/5 (PB). **Bonaparte's Gulls** were observed at several locations this spring. An early bird was at DH 3/27 (AP). High counts include 20 at Emsworth Dam 4/1 (PB), 15 at the Highland Park Dam 4/5 (AH), 15 at DASD 5/6 (ST), and 20 at Brunots Island 5/11 (MJ). A great flock of 27 **Caspian Terns** was at IMP 4/18 (MV, m.ob.), the third record for that location. Two were at DASD 4/18 (MV), one was at Brunots Island 5/6 (MJ) and 4 were at Oakmont 5/10 (MD). **Common Tern** moved through the county in small numbers. Six at DH 5/15 (AP) represented the high count for the season. Two were at Brunots Island 5/6 (MJ), and 3 were there 5/11 (AP). One was at DASD 5/26 (MV). **Forster's Tern** was reported 4/18 to 5/6. May 6th produced numbers on the Ohio R. including 12 at Brunots Island (MJ, AP) and 14 at DASD (DW, ST).

Single **Common Loons** were at DH 3/29 (AP) and 4/14 (JS, SS). One was at IMP 4/18 (MV), an uncommon visitor to that location. A late loon was at DASD 5/20 (MV).

Two **Great Egrets** were at Sharpsburg 3/31 (FI, et al.), and one was at Emsworth Dam 4/23 (PB). An **American Bittern** was photographed perched on top of a well-groomed shrub next to a house in the Mount Washington section of Pittsburgh 4/5 (*fide* MV). The photo was posted on a Facebook page with the observer asking what type of bird it was. One

was a nice find at WP 5/12 (JP), and another was observed in flight at DEER 5/17 (DYe). An adult **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was a nice find at WP 5/12-18 (JP, m.ob.).

Two **Black Vultures** were perched in a tree in Fox Chapel 4/5 (CH). One of the birds had a red wing tag labeled H73. The birds were seen again and photographed the following day at nearby Beechwood Farms 4/6 (MB). **Osprey** returned to established nest sites at Leetsdale and Neville Island (MV, PB). A kettle of 57 **Broad-winged Hawks** was observed flying over Squirrel Hill 4/23 (MK) and 53 were over Sewickley 4/29 (KD, BG, KS). A **Rough-legged Hawk** was spotted flying over WP 3/22 (JP, JF), one of the few records away from IMP. The county **Bald Eagle** nests were all active again this year.

There were several **Red-headed Woodpecker** reports, a rare treat for us. The immature bird that wintered in Allegheny Cemetery in Lawrenceville was reported up to 5/4 (eBird). One was at Beechwood Farms 4/22 (MT) and nearby at a private residence in Fox Chapel 5/11 (BSh). One was found in FP 5/15 (m.ob.) and again 5/18 (AP,) and one was photographed at a feeder in Swissvale 5/30 (eBird).

**Merlins** were reported nearly the entire season. Single birds were at SCHE 3/7 and 3/23 (FI), O'Hara Twp. 3/11 (BSh), Oakland 3/24 (which could have been the SCHE bird) and Beechwood Farms 4/29 (BSh). Two late reports include one in FP 5/3 (JC) and one at DASD 5/7 (ST). May records are rare here.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** reports include singles at DEER 5/16 (AH) and FP 5/20 (MS, EH). **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** are more often reported in the fall so the reports this spring were unexpected. One was at DEER 5/17 (DYe, AH) and 5/23 (AH), FP 5/19 (ST) and 5/25 (NH), and at Chatham University in Squirrel Hill 5/30 (MKu). **Alder Flycatcher** is a rare migrant here. Single birds were at FP 5/19 (AP, m.ob.), 5/20 at NOR (DN) and 5/28 at WP (NL, eBird with recording).

A very early **Blue-headed Vireo** was at IMP 3/31 (AP). Another early bird was at FP 4/7 (JS, SS). **Philadelphia Vireos** had a good showing this spring, a species normally more numerous in fall. An early bird was at Barking Slopes 5/9 (MD) and one was at South Park 5/19 (JF). Reports were regular at FP from 5/15-22 with a high of 3 on 5/15 (m.ob.).

Flocks of **Fish Crows** were reported as this species continues to increase in the area. Thirty-two were in Oakland 3/24 (FI) and 38 were in Squirrel Hill 3/27 (MKu). **Common Ravens** also continued with birds seen regularly in Bridgeville (a new location) during the season (RT).

A **Marsh Wren** returned to WP again this spring, first observed 3/12 (JM). An individual was observed carrying cattail down 5/7 (JM), an indication that potential nest building was underway, but breeding was never confirmed. The bird was seen into mid-May (m.ob.). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was discovered feeding on a mowed lawn at Chatham College in the Squirrel Hill section of Pittsburgh 5/2 (MKu, m.ob.). A **Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow** visited a backyard in McCandless Twp. in early May (SG) where it was photographed. I'm not aware of any records in this county at least since I have been *Allegheny's* compiler.

There were a number of **Purple Finch** reports the entire season in eBird, too many to list here. Two late birds include one in Penn Hills 5/18 (MF) and one in Natrona Heights 5/28 (PH). A **Rusty Blackbird** was at Peter's Creek in Jefferson Borough 3/15 (JHa, BMu), 2 were in Pine Twp. 3/22 and one remained 3/24-25 (PL, SL), and one was in FP 3/31 (FI).

**Worm-eating Warbler** is a rare migrant and local breeder here. Two were at Harrison Hills Park 5/3 (SM), a reliable breeding location. One was at FP 5/7 (MK) and 5/13 (AP). One was also at Sewickley Heights Park 5/7 (MT, CD, ST). **Northern Waterthrushes** are normally not expected until mid-May but this year they started to appear in late April. One was at FP 4/25 (JC). This species was present at the park 4/25-5/23 (m.ob.). Another early bird was at WP 4/30 (JM) and 5/4 (JF, JP). One was at DASD 5/3 (MV), one at SCHE 5/13 (OL) and one at Harrison Hills Park 5/13 (DN). **Golden-winged Warbler** is always notable and there were multiple reports this spring. Single birds were at FP 5/3 (AH, PM) and 5/9-11 (AP, m.ob.). A female was there 5/17 (NH). One was at Beechwood Farms 5/6 (JF), one was at Barking Slopes 5/9 (MD), and one was well described in an eBird checklist from NOR 5/14. A **Brewster's Warbler** singing a Blue-winged Warbler song was at FP 4/30 (SL). A **Lawrence's Warbler** was found at DEER 5/16 (AH) where it



remained through the season (m.ob.). What appeared to be a **Blue-winged Warbler** with a small light-black auricular patch (confined just below the eye) was photographed at FP 5/16 (CK). This may have been a hybrid, but it did not match the appearance of any of the typical hybrids.

**Prothonotary Warbler** is a very rare migrant so three reports were exceptional. The first was at FP 4/29 (NH) where it remained until 5/7, giving birders the opportunity to observe this golden beauty at close range. One was at NOR 5/3 (SD) and another was found at Boyce Mayview Park 5/19 (JSa) where it remained through the season (m.ob.). Another rare migrant, a **Swainson's Warbler**, was tragically found in downtown Pittsburgh stunned from a window strike 5/14 (TR). It appeared somewhat alert, so it was captured and taken to SCHE where it was released. We can only hope it made a full recovery. This represented the fifth county record and the first since 2007. **Orange-crowned Warbler** is also a rare migrant, particularly in spring so six reports were unprecedented. The first was at Sewickley Heights Park 5/8 (ST). Two birds were reported 5/9, one at Hartwood Acres (MKu, DYe, ph.) and an eBird entry from SCHE with a good description. One was in Natrona Heights 5/14 (DB), one was at SCHE 5/15 (KSJ) and one was at FP 5/16 (CK). The much sought-after **Mourning Warbler** was at FP from 5/13-24 (DYe, m.ob.). Other reports include one in Indiana Twp. 5/13 (DYe), NOR 5/15 (SD) and DEER 5/16 -18 (DYe) and again 5/23 (AH). **Wilson's Warbler** is an uncommon but regular migrant. One was reported at FP 5/8-19 (MT, RSe, MK, MH, AP, CK), 2 at DH 5/15 (FI), one at NOR 5/17 (DN), and one in Pleasant Hills 5/16 (SSn).

Amazingly, 2 **Summer Tanagers** were reported this spring, the first in six years. A female was discovered at a small farm in Gibsonia feeding on bees at the owner's hives 5/5 (KP). The owners were welcoming to birders and quick thinking by Shannon Thompson provided the bird with mealworms to divert its appetite from the bees and to serve as a gesture of thanks to the homeowner. It was last seen 5/11 (KP). A second-year male was seen briefly in FP 5/17 (KSJ, AP).

The male **Painted Bunting** that spent the winter at a feeder in O'Hara Twp. was last seen 4/20 (BSh). The bird was enjoyed by many during its prolonged stay thanks to the hospitality of the homeowner. There was a point of concern when the bird disappeared for a few days and then appeared ill or injured another day, but it seemed to recover. A **Dickcissel** was detected flying over Indiana Twp. by a nocturnal flight-call recorder 5/14 (DYe).

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### **Armstrong County**

Locations: Armstrong Trail no. of Dam 8 (AT8), Armstrong Trail at Dam 9 (AT9), Crooked Creek L. (CCL), Keystone L. (KL), Parks Bend Farm (PBF), Rolling Hills Road (RHR), Stone House Road (SHR).

All duck species and usual waterfowl for spring were accounted for.

A **Ruffed Grouse** was observed at Roaring Run 3/22 (DR). A lone **Red-throated Loon** was on the Allegheny R. at Kittanning 4/18 (AB, SG). Two **Virginia Rails** were observed on RHR 5/23 (AB, SG), after one had been discovered earlier in the month 5/8 when a single **Least Bittern** had also been observed (SG). A **Sora** was a nice report from KL 5/9 (AB). Five **American Woodcocks** were fun to watch 3/20 at SGL 247 (DB). A high count of 64 **Bonaparte Gulls** was reported from AT9 4/5, where the only **American Coot** in the county was spotted on the same day (CW). A lone **Forster's Tern** was at KL 4/12 (AB, SG) with 3 there 4/23 (AB). The only report of **Caspian Tern** was of 7 at KL 4/23 (SG). An awesome **Black-crowned Night Heron** was a great find on the Armstrong Trail at Manorville 4/28 (JB, SG). Only one **Great Egret** was reported, from AT9 on 4/19 (AB, SG, MH, RH).

Among raptors it was good to see that the **Bald Eagle** nest at SGL 105 across from East Brady was being used again 3/4 (MVT) as well as the one at the AT8 4/19 (AB, SG) and KL 4/8 (JS). Few **Osprey** appeared this spring, but one was seen at KL 4/5 (JS) and 4/27 (SG), and one was observed at CCL 5/1 (TR). The only **Northern Harriers** reported were 3 at Worthington 3/4 (MVT) and one above East Brady at a private cottage 5/7 (TA). The **Red-shouldered Hawk** nest at Crooked Creek was observed with one young 5/17 (AB). Several **Broad-winged Hawk** sightings included one posed nicely on a cable in Shady Plain 4/12 (MVT), a single at CCL 4/25 (TR), and another at L&D 7 at Kittanning 5/2 (MD).

Best owls were a **Short-eared Owl** at SHR farm 4/3 and a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** on Stitt Hill Road near Logansport 5/8 (JB). At the **Peregrine Falcon** nest at the Graff Bridge at Manorville/Kittanning an adult and a chick were observed 5/28 (MH, RH).

A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was a nice find on RHR 5/18 (MH, RH). A single **Henslow's Sparrow** was reported from CCL 5/15 (SG) and a **Lincoln's Sparrow** was observed on the AT8 5/9(SG). Only one **Yellow-breasted Chat** had been noted at SGL 247 on 5/23 (TR), and a **Worm-eating Warbler** was spotted at AT8 on 5/17 (SG). It was a good day at CCL 5/16 for warblers including a **Mourning Warbler**, **Northern Waterthrush**, **Yellow-throated Warbler**, **Cerulean Warbler**, and **Canada Warbler** (AB, SG), and another good day for warblers at CCL's Shrub Swamp Trail 5/19 (MD).

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### **Beaver County**

Locations: Ambridge Reservoir (AR), Brady's Run Park (BR), Economy Borough (ECON), Independence Marsh (IND), Raccoon Creek State Park (RCSP), Mouth of the Beaver River at Rochester (RCH).

It was a rather poor season for waterfowl. The only report of **Tundra Swan** was 4 at RCH 3/24 (DZ). **Blue-winged Teal**, **Gadwall**, and **American Wigeon** were all in short supply, the latter two being reported just once each: at RCH 3/3 (DZ) and at IND 4/6 (JM), respectively. **Ring-necked Duck** showed best at AR where they were present 3/13-4/18, but the top count was just 26 (MV). A **Lesser Scaup** lingered at AR to 5/17 (MV). The only rarity was a single **Long-tailed Duck** at RCH 3/27 (MV), which was in the company of 28 **Buffleheads**, also the top count of that species for the season. One species that did show well was **Common Merganser**; max count was 13 at RCSP 3/13 (JM), after which numbers dwindled, but they were found at four locations by season's end, including Townsend's Dam where a hen and two chicks were noted 5/29 (MV). This sighting, at last, added the lower Beaver River as a confirmed nesting site, the second known in *Beaver*. The other site is the RCSP wildflower reserve, where 3 were observed this year on 5/11 (DF, KS).

The only report of **Common Nighthawk** was one at New Brighton 5/24 (TJ, KJ). Both **Virginia Rail** and **Sora** were found during a marsh bird survey at the wetlands on Madden Run Road 5/13 (*vide* TJ). This site has been known for periodically hosting Virginia Rails deep into May (and

perhaps beyond) for at least the past decade. A return visit on 5/26 produced one **Sora** (TJ) but no Virginia Rails. A Sora was also reported at IND 4/23 (DZ), the third or fourth record for the location.

Despite the ongoing degradation of habitat at the site, IND managed to host some interesting shorebirds this spring, part of a nice flight across the broader region of sw. Pennsylvania this spring. All reports that follow were from IND. Seven **Semipalmated Plovers** appeared 5/14 (MV) with one remaining to 5/19. Four **White-rumped Sandpipers** 5/17 (DZ) were a very nice find for spring. Up to 7 **Pectoral Sandpipers** were present 4/16-28 (DZ) but none were seen in May. Two **Semipalmated Sandpipers** put down 5/17 (DZ), and a **Short-billed Dowitcher** was noted 5/12 (DZ, MV). **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, and **Least Sandpiper** were all seen in small numbers more or less on typical dates (m.ob.). Small numbers of **Bonaparte's Gulls** were noted at RCH 3/27-4/27 (MV, DZ) and a late bird was at RCSP 5/17 (MV). Twelve **Forster's Terns** at Monaca 4/18 (DZ) was a nice count, and one was at RCSP 4/19 (JM).

A **Common Loon** lingered at AR 5/8-17 (MV, DZ), and a count of 47 **Double-crested Cormorants** at RCSP 4/28 (JM) was a good tally for the small lake there. The only report of **Great Egret** was 4 at IND 4/5 (DZ). **Ospreys** were noted at the long-standing nests at Aliquippa and New Brighton, and one was noted all season around RCSP but it is not known (or was not reported) whether there is a nest at or near the lake. The **Bald Eagle** nest in New Brighton had 2 young 5/26 (TJ). Two **Barred Owls** were at AR most of the season (DZ), a species that is definitely underreported in *Beaver*. A **Red-headed Woodpecker** in ECON 5/6 (KD) appeared in yard that has a long history of bird records and provided a first for the location.

**Common Raven** was noted in five locations. They hardly warrant mention in this report any longer. A **Purple Martin** appeared at AR 4/16 and 10 were there 5/4 (both DZ). This species is rare in *Beaver* with only one or two annual locations still known, and AR is not one of them. Very interesting was a **Cliff Swallow** at RCH 5/31 (MV), another species with near-zero presence in the county outside of migration. Lingered **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were at AR 4/29 (DZ) and RCSP 5/1 (DF, KS). It was a poor year for spot-breasted thrushes, with only a handful of reports of **Swainson's Thrush** 5/19-26 (m.ob.) and just one of **Gray-cheeked Thrush**, at BR 5/23 (TJ, KJ). **Yellow-breasted Chat** was noted in Greene Twp. near the former Little Blue Lake site 5/21 and 5/31 (MV).

By far the bird of the season was an adult male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** photographed in Monaca 4/28 (KK *vide* MF). The observer just happened to notice it while driving down the street, a serendipitous find that represented the first for *Beaver*. It was not seen thereafter. One **Bobolink** was noted in Greene Twp. also near Little Blue Lake 5/31 (MV), which remains one of only a few reliable locations for the species in the county. Reports of **Rusty Blackbird** were few; 2 were at RCSP 3/15 (MV) and up to 6 were seen on a few dates at IND 3/24-4/28 (DZ, JM, et al.).

It seemed in most of sw. Pennsylvania to be a rather slow passerine migration through the first half of May, no doubt owing to downright cold temperatures and persistent north winds—the high temperature on both 5/9 and 5/11 at Pittsburgh International Airport was just 43F!—until a strong warm front 5/14-15 finally burst the dam open. Despite the great conditions in the second half of the month, reports of warblers in *Beaver* were sub-par nevertheless. A **Northern Waterthrush** at the RCSP wildflower reserve 5/1 (DF, KS) was the only “rarity”. A **Kentucky Warbler** was noted at BR 5/23 (TJ, KJ); sightings of this species away from RCSP are always welcome. A very early **Hooded Warbler** sang at RCSP 4/12 (vr. CD); the next record in the county this spring was a much more on-time 4/25. **Cape May Warbler** was in short supply with singles at RCSP 5/7 (CD) and at ECON 5/14 (KD) the only ones found. The poor overall season was typified by **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, which was noted a grand total of three times, the first of which was a bit early at RCSP 4/30 (CD). Perhaps birders didn't get out much in the county after the warm front of 5/14-15, as this system no doubt carried hundreds of Black-throated Blue and other “second wave” warblers with it. **Pine Warbler** was noted at AR 4/30-5/21 (DZ) where they probably breed most years. One **Canada Warbler** was at RCSP 5/23 (DZ), and **Wilson's Warbler** was noted in Hanover Twp. 5/10 (JM) and BR 5/23 (TJ, KJ). An outstanding count of 21 **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** was made at BR that

same day, 5/23 (TJ, KJ).

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### **Bedford County**

Locations: Allegheny Front Hawk Watch (AFHW), Jan and Brent Chippendale property near Centerville (C), Fam Farm (FaF), Mountain Meadows (MM), Shawnee SP (SSP), Teaberry Road (TR), Union Memorial Church (UMC), Whitetail Wetlands (WW).

Although spring rainfall was about normal, the temperatures were above average in March. What promised to be an early spring fizzled in April and May since the weather turned cold, with exceptionally low temperatures in early to mid-May. A hard freeze followed by snow showers on May 9 put many birds (especially nestlings) at risk from cold and lack of food. Tree leaf-out was late, but the freeze killed many buds and newly emerged leaves, thereby reducing caterpillar populations – important food for nestlings. Another unusual phenomenon that most certainly affected observations was the COVID-19 stay-at-home restrictions. Some birders reported almost exclusively from their properties, while a few *Bedford* residents continued to bird throughout the county in April and May. Observations in eBird were down compared to other years.

Waterfowl migration was early: 100 **Snow Geese** were reported at AFHW 3/6 (DP) and 46 **Canada Geese** at WW 3/6 (M&LJ). On 3/8, 120 **Tundra Swans** flew north over AFHW (EB), while the first 2 spring **Wood Ducks** in *Bedford* were reported at MM 3/11 (M&LJ). **Wood Duck** numbers steadily increased until 5/2 when a high of 13 was reported at MM (M&LJ). Eight **Blue-winged Teal** were seen at SSP 3/21 (J&SD). A **Northern Shoveler** was reported at WW 3/7 (PI), while **Gadwall** were more numerous and more frequent - a high of 7 was at SSP 3/27 (CP). Sixteen **American Black Ducks** were at Woodbury Reservoir 3/4 (EB). **Green-winged Teal** frequented WW in early March, with a high of 7 reported 3/7 (PI), increased until 5/2 when a high of 13 was reported at MM (M&LJ).

**Redheads** were seen at L. Gordon 3/7 (J&BC) and 6 were at WW 5/2 (EB, PI). **Ring-necked Ducks** peaked at 30 at SSP 3/21 (J&SD). **Lesser Scaup** moved through *Bedford* in mid-March and April, with a high of 56 at SSP 3/15 (M&LJ). **Bufflehead** numbers were lower this year, but 56 were reported at SSP 3/27 (CP, RP). Just 4 **Common Goldeneye** were at SSP 4/4 (SC). Mergansers were commonly seen in April and May at SSP: highs were 16 **Hooded Mergansers** 3/27 (CP, RP), 32 **Common Mergansers** 3/7 (EB, PI), and 45 **Red-breasted Mergansers** 4/25 (J&SD). Small numbers of **Ruddy Ducks** frequented SSP in late March and April, with a peak of 12 on 3/21 (J&SD).

Sadly, the only **Ruffed Grouse** was reported at SSP 4/23 (AB). **Wild Turkeys** were much more numerous, with frequent sightings in many areas of *Bedford*. One flock of 13 was at C 3/3 (J&BC). Did the May freeze affect **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** distribution? Only two were reported: one at MM 5/23 (M&LJ) and one at TR 5/24 (ANON).

Four **Common Nighthawks** were at SSP 5/21 (AB). **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were heard almost every May night at MM (M&LJ), with the first reported 5/2 at C (J&BC). **Chimney Swifts** were common in both *Bedford* and *Everett*. Two were at Hyndman Road 5/30 (ND). The first **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was at MM 4/29 (M&LJ). A **Virginia Rail** and **Common Gallinule** (a county record) were excellent finds, both spotted at WW 5/2 (PI, EB). **American Coots** were common at SSP in March and April, with a high of 18 on 3/31 (M&LJ).

Three **Least Sandpipers** were reported at SSP 5/7 (LP). **American Woodcocks** were first seen at C 3/8 (J&BC). A **Wilson's Snipe** was at SGL 48 from 4/29 (AB). **Spotted Sandpipers** were common at SSP, a high of 10 on 5/7 (LP). **Solitary Sandpipers** were less common, but 2 were seen at Down River G.C. 5/9 (EB). The best place to see gulls in *Bedford* was SSP: highs of 50 **Bonaparte's Gulls** 4/8 (WT&JM), 183

**Ring-billed Gulls** 3/15 (M&LJ), and 10 **Herring Gulls** 3/21 (TA). Fifteen **Common Loons** flew by AFHW 4/29 (DP); sightings at SSP were frequent. Large numbers of **Double-crested Cormorants** also frequented SSP, with a high of 100 reported 4/9 (WT&JM). An early and surprising **Great Egret** made a fairly regular appearance at SSP from late March through late April, with a high of 4 on 4/24 (AB).

A few scattered sightings of **Black Vultures** were reported, with a high count of 4 at Hyndman Road (ND). **Turkey Vultures** were much more common and widespread, with a high count of 61 near Everett flying slowly southeast in the early evening 3/2 (M&LJ). At least some were quite likely flying toward a roost reported at UMC where birds congregated in numbers as high as 42 on 4/20 (EB). The roost was no longer in use by mid-May.

Observers at the AFHW recorded a total of 955 raptors in 202 hours of observation. Reduced hours due to bad weather most likely caused a reduced total count that was seen in most species except Osprey, which showed a 14% increase over 2019. Fifty-one **Ospreys** flew south over AFHW 4/29 (DP), but no confirmed nests have been recorded in *Bedford*. A high count of 32 **Golden Eagles** was recorded over AFHW 3/12 (DP). Unlike Golden Eagles and Osprey, **Bald Eagles** do nest in Bedford County. Impressive numbers of **Bald Eagles** were found at SSP, with a high of 14 on 3/14 (RH, SM). A confirmed nest of **Red-shouldered Hawks** was reported at Foor Farm (EB), with one adult feeding 2 nestlings 5/23 (EB). A nest occurred in the same location last year. A high of 134 **Broad-winged Hawks** flew over AFHW 4/23 (DP). For the second year in a row, an adult Broad-winged Hawk carrying food was at MM, observed on 5/12 (M&LJ).

The only report of an **Eastern Screech-Owl** was 3/8 at MM, where 2 **Barred Owls** were also reported several times, the last on 5/9 (M&LJ). **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were reported from six locations, with the last sighting at FaF 5/12 (AB). Consistent sightings of **Red-headed Woodpeckers** increased in the Dutch Corner area of *Bedford* with a high of 4 at the Benitez home during early May (AB).

Farm fields and tree rows in eastern *Bedford* must be good habitats for **American Kestrel** since consistent sightings were reported in March and April with a high count of 2 at UMC 3/27 (EB), which was also the site for a **Merlin** reported 3/24 (EB). **Fish Crows** were at two locations in *Bedford*, with a high count of 4 at the Bedford Elementary School Trail 4/6 (WT&JM). **Common Ravens** were consistently seen, and a high 3 at the Jean Bonnet Tavern 3/31 (M&LJ).

**Black-capped Chickadees** are year-round residents and early breeders. Two nesting pairs were confirmed at MM, young fledged 5/28 and 5/31. The only report for **Purple Martins** was 22 at Everett 4/28 (M&LJ). Eight **Cliff Swallows** were seen at Huntingdon & Broad Top Rail Trail - Cypher 5/9 (EB). Eighteen **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were observed at SSP 4/18 (WT&JM). A **Winter Wren** was observed at MM 4/5 (M&LJ). A high count of 30 **Gray Catbirds** was at WW 5/5 (KL, ANON). There were 3 reports of single **Veerys** in mid-May in southern *Bedford*. A **Swainson's Thrush** was in Hyndman 5/16 (BY), and **Hermit Thrush** at C 3/7 (J&BC).

Three **Grasshopper Sparrows** were at Casalena Farm 5/3 (MJC). **American Tree Sparrows** were located at WW the first two weeks of March, with a high of 4 on 3/14 (RH, SM). Unusually low numbers of **Fox Sparrows** were reported, a high of just 2 at MM, although sightings were frequent from mid-March to 4/5 (M&LJ). **White-crowned Sparrows** were also scarce, but there were consistent sightings in the UMC area, with a high of 3 on 5/6 (EB). **White-throated Sparrows** were frequently reported, with a high of 24 on 4/22 MM (M&LJ). The last two were seen at Foor Farm 5/14 (EB). Only one **Savannah Sparrow** was at Casalena Farm 5/3 (MJC). Three **Swamp Sparrows** were reported from three locations on 5/2 (m.ob.). **Eastern Meadowlarks** were consistently at UMC, with a high of 7 on 3/27 (EB). Three **Rusty Blackbirds** were seen at FaF 5/12 (AB).

Warbler species totaled 28, an increase of two from last year. Highlights were a **Golden-winged Warbler** at SSP 5/2 (SC), while a **Brewster's Warbler** (hybrid) was reported at TR 5/29 (ANON). A **Blue-winged Warbler** was seen at Bedford Valley Road 5/17 (K&JR). At MM, a **Nashville Warbler** was reported 5/3 and a **Kentucky Warbler** 5/9 (M&LJ). Six **American Redstarts** were seen at FaF 5/12 (AB). Two **Cape**

**May Warblers** were at Woodbury Reservoir - Yellow Cr. Fly Fishing Area 5/13 (AH). **Blackpoll Warblers** breezed through in late May and were reported from three sites, with a high of 3 at TR 5/24 (ANON). Five **Palm Warblers** were at SSP 5/2 (KL, ANON). One **Canada Warbler** was reported from C 5/7 (J&BC).

Regular sightings of **Scarlet Tanagers** were recorded in May at MM (M&LJ); a high count of 3 was at SSP 5/20 (AB). **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were regular visitors at MM, numbers peaked at 12 on 5/9 (M&LJ). **Indigo Buntings** were reported from numerous sites, with a high of 7 from UMC 5/18 (EB).

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### **Berks County**

Locations: Blue Marsh L. (BML), Blue Marsh L. State Hill Boat Launch (BMLSH), Kernsville Dam Recreation Area (KDRA), L. Ontelaunee (LO), Shartlesville Farm Pond (SFP), SGL 110 - Northkill Gap (SGL110).

March 13, 2020 was a Friday that turned out to have a larger than anticipated impact on the lives of Berks Countians. For on that date, the term COVID-19 became part of everyone's daily life. We discovered that we had taken the freedom to move freely in our communities for granted. Birders, although restricted in some parts of *Berks*, continued to pursue their pastime and file their reports which now probably included more sightings with less travel -- even their own backyards if the changes to their employment kept them at home. Life changed on that Friday the 13th, and birding provided an avenue to reduce the stress of COVID-19.

**Snow Goose** migration routes continued to avoid *Berks* with fewer flocks of large numbers spending days on the two major lakes and surrounding farms. Three exceptions were 1500 **Snow Geese** in the fields along Zweig Road 3/1 (MW), 5000 at Gotwal's Pond 3/1, and 6000 at the same location 3/4 (RK). A single **Cackling Goose** was found in a flock of geese at L. Ontelaunee Bailey's Creek 3/1 (RK).

Three immature **Mute Swans** arrived at SFP 5/2 and stayed until 5/9 (KG, TU), which included side trips to nearby lakes. Six Mute Swans were also seen at Bernhart's Dam 5/28 (JSp). Two un-banded **Trumpeter Swans** were surprisingly found at SFP 5/17 (KG). Unfortunately, they had flown when the observer returned with his camera. **Tundra Swans** continued to prefer LO for stopovers. A count of 153 were at LO 3/4 (RK), while 87 were tallied at LO 3/2 (MW).

Nine **Blue-winged Teal** were found at Peter's Creek 4/23 (JW, PW) and 2 were seen foraging along the shoreline of LO 4/18 (RK, MW). A good number of 16 **Northern Shovelers** were found at LO 4/18, where 12 **Canvasbacks** were found 3/13 (RK). A lone drake **Redhead** found SFP to its liking and was seen there 4/19-5/17 (MW, m.ob.). At LO, 11 **Redheads** were counted 3/12 (JH), and 14 were there 3/9 (DK).

Several storms forced "storm birds" to rest on the two main lakes in *Berks*. Five **Greater Scaup** were found at BMLSH 3/13 (DP). Two observers braved the weather to count 3 Greater Scaup at LO 3/30 (JW, PW). Greater numbers of **Lesser Scaup** sought refuge on *Berks* lakes, as did 20 on LO 4/18 (MW, RK) and 30 on BMLSH 3/29 (DP). Another storm resulted in 2 **Surf Scoters** and one **White-winged Scoter** stopping at BMLSH 4/18 (MW, JW, PW).

**Long-tailed Ducks** usually appear in small numbers in *Berks*, such as 2 at LO 4/6 (MW), but an unusually high number of 32 Long-tailed Ducks were counted at BMLSH 3/20 (MS). A more common storm bird, 362 **Bufflehead** were in scattered groups at LO 4/18 (RK). A high number of 13 of the more uncommon **Common Goldeneye** weathered a storm at LO 3/20 (RK).

A group of 357 **Common Mergansers** were watched while feeding at L. Ontelaunee West Shore Drive 3/1 (RK). A female **Common**

**Merganser** was observed teaching 2 young how to fish in the Schuylkill R. at Berne Bridge 5/7 (MW). Eleven **Red-breasted Mergansers** were seen at two different locations: BML 4/18 (RH) and LO (RK).

A single **Red-throated Loon** appeared at LO 5/16 and 5/23 (RK, DP). **Common Loon** numbers vary with each storm. Eight were counted at LO 4/9 (MW) and 51 rested at LO 4/13 (JW, MW, PW). A surprising 357 arrived before the fishermen at BML 4/18 (JS) but were scared away by noisy fishing boats. A high number of 21 **Horned Grebes** displayed their breeding plumage at BMLSH 3/27 (DP). Only one **Red-necked Grebe** was reported - at LO 5/13 (JW, MW, PW). **Double-crested Cormorants** are usually seen at LO and BML, such as the 35 at LO 4/13 (MW). Cormorants were surprisingly added to an observer's yard list when 35 flew over Mt. Penn 4/20 (KK).

Single **American Bitterns** made appearances throughout *Berks*: one fed at Lowland Road Retention Pond 4/16 (MW), one was discovered hiding along the shoreline of LO 4/25 (SF), and 2 **American Bitterns** flushed at Peter's Cr. 4/25 (TU). The **Great Blue Heron** rookery at New Bethel Church Road numbered 17 nests 5/9 (MW), and the rookery at Van Reed Road in Spring Twp. had 28 herons present 3/22 (EB). The first reported **Great Egret** was at Lowland Road Retention Pond 4/6 (MW). A **Cattle Egret** was photographed next to a small herd of cows along Hoch Road in Fleetwood 5/17 (LW). The curious cattle were lined up along the fence within six feet of the egret. Six **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were seen along the marshes of BML at the Old Church Road access 4/25 (JW, PW).

Spring migration count at Hawk Mt. South Lookout was conducted 4/1-5/15. This total count was 30% above the ten-year average. Raptors totaling 1269 of 14 species were counted. Increases were noted for **Bald Eagle**, **Turkey Vulture**, and **Broad-winged Hawk**. Decreases were counted for **Northern Harrier**, **Black Vulture**, and **Sharp-shinned Hawk**. On 5/17, the 7th record for **Mississippi Kite**, a presumed non-migrating adult, flew to the southwest past the north lookout. The high-count day tallied 392 hawks (LG, HMNL). The first report of **Osprey** in *Berks* was at KDRA 4/4 along the Schuylkill R. An immature **Golden Eagle** surprised a group of Sunday morning birders at LO 3/1 (MS, MW).

The **Virginia Rail** was seen and heard calling at KDRA 4/12 to 5/2 (KG, MW) and 4 were seen and heard on both sides of the marsh trail there 4/23 (KG). In Bern Twp., yard work was stopped near Blue Marsh L. when **Sandhill Cranes** were heard calling as they flew overhead 3/9 (JS).

Three **Semipalmated Plovers** sought cover at L. Ontelaunee Water Street 5/26 (RK). A 5/25 storm forced a nice variety of shorebirds to seek shelter at Hamburg Commerce Park 5/26 - including 2 **Solitary Sandpipers**, one **Spotted Sandpiper**, one **Greater Yellowlegs**, 3 **Lesser Yellowlegs**, one **Least Sandpiper** and 4 **Baird's Sandpipers** (MW). The scattered storms provided rain-pool feeding areas for a variety of migrating shorebirds. A **Dunlin** appeared at the School Road farm pond 5/23 (RK). A male **Red-necked Phalarope** found enough food at the same School Road farm pond on 4/30 to return 5/13 and stay until 5/17 (JW, MW, PW, m.ob.). Twenty **Wilson's Snipe** fed in a rain pool along Siegfriedale Road in Kutztown 4/17 (TU). Four **American Woodcock** began displaying in the fields along River Road 3/1, and 6 were there 3/2 (MW).

A frequent spring migrant in *Berks*, 150 **Bonaparte's Gulls** stopped at LO after a storm 4/18 (RK). A holdover **Greater Black-backed Gull** was found at BML 3/4 (RK). Four **Caspian Terns** made a fleeting appearance at L. Ontelaunee Bailey's Creek 4/19 (JW, PW). Two irregular visitors appeared 4/18 after storms—**Common Tern** at LO (JSp) and **Forster's Tern** at BMLSH (DP).

**Eurasian Collared-Doves** were present during this quarter at their usual spot in Shartlesville. However, 7 doves, a new number, were photographed as they fed at a farm 3/2 (CDP, JCP). A **Short-eared Owl** perched on a traffic sign in Hamburg's farm area 3/10 (MW). **Common Nighthawks** made their first appearance 5/23 with 3 seen in Leesport (EB) and 3 in Morgantown (HH). SGL110 remains the only nesting area for **Eastern Whip-poor-will**. There were 3 on 4/28 (KG), and 4 seen and heard in that location 4/1 (MW). A female **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was observed taking worms from a gypsy moth worm nest 5/23 (MW).

The **Peregrine Falcons'** nesting at 5th and Penn in Reading was

successful this year with 2 young fledged (BU, m.obs.). Migrant flycatchers were scarce but four were documented: **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** at Trout Run Res. 5/16 (RK), **Acadian Flycatcher** at Neversink Mt Preserve 5/17 (RK), **Alder Flycatcher** at Jim Dietrich Park 5/23 (JSp), and **Least Flycatcher** at SGL110 (KG).

An early arrival date for **Purple Martin** at the Mill Hill Road gourds was 4/4 (MW); the earliest arrival date on record is 3/28/1984 (KG) at a colony in Hamburg. **Cliff Swallows** arrived at LO 5/1 (DB). The new bridge at Berne had nesting Cliff Swallows 5/14 (MW). A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was observed taking worms from a Gypsy Moth nest to a nearby tree at SGL 106 on 5/16 (MW). **Golden-crowned Kinglets** sang loudly on their stopover in SGL110 where 79 were counted in several groups 4/4 (MW).

**Gray-cheeked Thrush** sometimes get overlooked during migration, but single birds were at Buxton Conservancy 5/17 (MSI), Nolde Forest 5/25 (DK), and William Penn Forest 5/10 (AZ). Bad weather often brings **American Pipits** to the fields, and such was the case when 50 were found along Mertz Road 3/28 (MW) and 30 were seen feeding along the roadside 4/18 (TU).

Birders found 33 warbler species during migration. Perhaps the most cooperative was a singing **Prothonotary Warbler** found at Exeter Scenic R. Trail 5/12 (JW, PW, m.ob.). It was last documented 5/25 (RH). **Mourning Warblers** proved to be easier to locate this season with 8 different birds documented (m.ob.).

A **Le Conte's Sparrow** photographed at KDRA 3/9 (KG) was a new species for *Berks*. An earlier photograph from 2/18 (AM) was shown to KG after his discovery. The first birder had difficulty with his bird's identification and then did not know who to notify of his discovery. **Lincoln Sparrows** appeared in five reports from all four corners of *Berks*: Peter's Cr. 5/3 (JB), Berne Bridge 5/14 (KG), North Park 5/15 (JW, PW), Kutztown 5/17 (NL) and French Cr. SP 5/18 (RK). A singing **Blue Grosbeak** caught the attention of an observer at KDRA 5/19 (KG).

On May 9, a record setting polar vortex dropped down from Canada and surprised the northeast United States with freezing temperatures and snow. Several locations recorded their lowest May temperatures ever. From Texas to Maine, temperatures fell in every state in the eastern half of the lower 48 states north of Florida. Caught in this mayhem were millions of migrants. *Berks* also had freezing temperatures which destroyed some of the food for those hungry birds. **Baltimore Orioles** and **Orchard Orioles** began showing up at residential feeding stations that had never had those birds so close to windows. The birds were desperate to replace the food lost to the cold temperatures and consumed oranges, grape jelly, and suet in a frenzy. Baltimore Orioles competed with the usual suet eaters such as **Red-bellied Woodpeckers**. Records from eBird show almost unbelievable numbers to a period of two weeks after May 9. For the week of 5/9, 462 Baltimore Oriole sightings were reported; for the week of 5/15, 406. These numbers do not include orioles seen but not reported. The average homeowner who put out feeders for the children to enjoy were depleting the shelves of oranges and grape jelly. Hardware stores in Hamburg had to order more feeders just when the bird feeding purchases normally slowed down. Orchard Oriole sightings peaked at a much lower rate but still sightings were above normal. During the week of 5/1 there were 33 reports, and for the week of 5/8, 22 reports.

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## Blair County

Locations: Canoe Creek SP (CC), Plummer's Hollow (PH), Reese Pond (RP), SGL 278 North (SGLN), Yellow Springs Pond (YSP).

The spring weather saw moderate temperatures with average amount of rain during this period. One hundred ninety-three species were reported, 10 more than the previous spring report. Information was obtained primarily from eBird data. Unfortunately, the Penn State Altoona Earth Day Birding Classic was cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic; however, that did stop local birders from getting out to enjoy the outdoors.

A flock of 25 **Tundra Swans** was noted at PH 3/5 (MB) and 9 more at Kittanning Res. 3/9 (BY). Twenty duck species were documented. Uncommon ducks included 4 **Canvasbacks** at CC 3/19 (m.ob), a large group of 140 **Long-tailed Ducks** at CC 3/19 (DG, GG), and another large raft of 74 at RP on the same day (MN, DS). Six **Northern Shovelers** were noted at RP 3/29 (JC) and 3 appeared at Bellwood Res. 4/18 (CE). Nine **Blue-winged Teal** were at CC 4/18 (JC), and pairs were noted at Tipton Wetland 3/25 and RP 4/21 (MN). Three **Common Goldeneyes** were at CC 3/20 (JC) and 3 more at RP 3/19 (MN, DS).

There were a few single reports of **Ruffed Grouse** drumming throughout the county, and a group of 9 fledged young grouse was observed in PH 5/30. **Wild Turkeys** and **Chimney Swifts** were reported across the county with a high of 13 swifts. Only single reports of **Eastern Whip-poor-will** were documented at PH (MB). A **Virginia Rail** was reported at SGLN 4/22 (JC), and one called in the Moorhen Marsh near Pinecroft along with 2 **Sora** 5/9 (JC).

Shorebirds included a single uncommon **Least Sandpiper** YSP 5/9 (JC), a lone **Pectoral Sandpiper** foraging along with 5 **Solitary Sandpipers**, 7 **Lesser Yellowlegs**, one **Greater Yellowlegs** and one **Spotted Sandpiper** at Watts Farm Field, which was flooded from a heavy thunderstorm 5/9 (JC). Single **Greater Yellowlegs** was photographed CC (TA) and a single at Reservoir Park (MN), both 4/27. A high count of 6 **American Woodcocks** were reported at PH 3/21 (MB), and 4 more peenting at SGLN 5/9 (JC).

Gulls that were reported included 8 uncommon **Bonaparte's Gulls** at CC 4/27 (TA), a high of 15 **Ring-billed Gulls** at CC 3/9 (MN, DS), and a lone **Herring Gull** soaring over PH 4/13 (MB). A lone **Caspian Tern** appeared with 2 **Forster's Terns** at CC 4/18 along with a rare **Red-throated Loon**, a raft of 26 **Common Loons**, 32 **Double-crested Cormorants**, and a **Great Egret** (JC).

A **Northern Harrier** was viewed at YSP 3/20 (JC), and one at PH. **Ospreys** and **Bald Eagles** were consistently observed at CC, with a high of 6 Ospreys 4/27 (TA), and singles noted near the Tyrone area, including RP 4/28 (JC). A **Peregrine Falcon** was viewed PH 4/14 (MB), as were lone **Merlins** at PH 4/10 (MB) and at CC 4/18 (JC).

An uncommon **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen at PH 5/19 (MB). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was recorded at PH 5/20 (MB) and only a single **Alder Flycatcher** at PH 5/23 (MB). There were four reports of single **White-eyed Vireos** from across the area (m.ob.),

A strong number of warbler species were spread across Blair as 32 species were recorded. The most notable uncommon warblers included 3 **Golden-winged Warblers** at Frosty Hollow 5/17 (LB), and other single reports at Lower Trail - Cove Dale 5/15 (JC) and PH 5/3 (MB). A single **Mourning Warbler** popped up along the Ray Amato Memorial Nature Trail 5/7 (MN), and one at PH 5/16 (MB). Lone **Kentucky Warblers** were also noted on Bells Gap Trail 5/17, and one recorded singing at PH 5/1 (MB).

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**Bradford County** – no compiler

## Bucks County

Locations: Bradford Dam (BRD), Maple Knoll Farms in Buckingham Twp. (MKF), Nockamixon SP (NSP), Peace Valley Park (PVP), Penn-Warner Tract (PWT), Quakertown Swamp (QTS), Silver Lake Park (SLP).

During the month of March, temperature (+7.8°F) was downright hotter but precipitation (-0.27") was fairly normal compared to the average. April was fairly normal temperature-wise (+0.6°F), and a little bit wetter (+0.78"). May featured average temperatures (+0.1°F), but drier than normal weather (-1.46"). In total, 227 bird species were reported, one fewer than last spring's total and below the 10-year average of 236. Waterfowl fallouts were extremely few this spring. Never mind fallouts, there were very few waterfowl regardless! Several possible warblers were missed, too. Headline species from this reporting period include **Trumpeter Swan**, **Common Gallinule**, **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** (!), **Wilson's Phalarope**, **Red-necked Phalarope**, **Black-headed Gull**, **Little Gull**, extraordinary **Glossy Ibis** numbers, **Mississippi Kite**, **Harris's Sparrow**, and **Summer Tanager**. Thanks to August Mirabella for compiling some general notes and observations. Ken Kitson's 1998 *Birds of Bucks County* was referenced for some historical information.

*Bucks* lost a wonderful component this spring that was the Pennsylvania Migration Count (PAMC), one of my personal highlights of the year. This count used to be held statewide on the 2nd Saturday in May, but recent years brought low turnout in many counties, and this year it was announced that no formal state report would be compiled. My tremendous thanks go to Diane Allison for her work compiling the *Bucks* PAMC reports for 20 years, resulting in an unbroken stretch of solid data to refer to.

Another reason the PAMC could not be run was due to the coronavirus pandemic that has seized the country. Although many birders chose not to follow stay-at-home orders, many more ended up spending much less time birding at familiar locations and varied habitats. It is possible that this affected reporting frequency for some species.

Many **Snow Geese** cleared out of the general area by early Mar, although no observed flocks reached 100 birds (m.ob.). The last report was from Churchville Park 4/7 (KK). **Mute Swan** numbers were on the lower side again this year, with a high of 7 at PWT 5/18 (AHn). The pair of **Trumpeter Swans** from the winter season stayed just long enough at PWT to be featured in this report; present there 3/1 (RS). **Tundra Swan** reports were extremely low. Singles were at L. Towhee C.P 3/12 (RSm, ph) and NSP 3/21 (BKI, DG).

This spring was one to forget for nearly all ducks, with 22 species reported. Species variety was not great, and individual counts were often terrible. Early **Blue-winged Teal** reports came from PWT on the very early date of 3/1 and from BRD 3/27 (RS ph., GJ). A late male **Northern Shoveler** was at PWT until 5/14, as well as a pair of **American Wigeon** 5/10 and an **American Black Duck** 5/9 and 5/23 (AHn). **Northern Pintail** is mentioned for its astonishing near absence. This once-frequent spring migrant is moving through the state ever earlier and in smaller numbers, with one at PVP 3/2 providing the only report (AM)! **Canvasback** was unreported, and the only **Redhead** was at PWT 3/8 (DF, AM). **Greater Scaup** was seen at a few locations, but never more than 2 birds (m.ob.). Even **Lesser Scaup** totals did not exceed 3 birds at any location (KR, MGa, m.ob.).

**Surf Scoter** was at NSP 4/19, as well as another scoter that could have been Surf or Black (JF ph.). NSP also hosted a pair of **White-winged Scoters** 3/19 (KR ph.). All reports of **Long-tailed Duck** were at NSP, with a high of 4 on 3/19 (DF). The high count of 28 **Common Goldeneyes** at Morrisville Levee 3/10 was not too unusual for this river location (JHo, MSa). Now established as a breeding species in *Bucks*, 20 brand-new **Hooded Mergansers** were observed with a female at QTS 5/4 (KH ph.). Fifteen **Red-breasted Mergansers** were at PVP 3/19, the high count by far (AM). Although slightly more than last year, **Ruddy Ducks** had a light showing with a high of 15 at Churchville Park 3/16 (MGr). **Horned Grebe** is not a duck, but this year it went right along with them in terms of numbers. The high count of just 4 was at NSP 3/27 (SGr).

Different from last year's closer ratio, **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** (26

sites) were encountered much more than **Black-billed Cuckoos** (9 sites) (m.ob.). Although other areas of the state had good numbers, *Bucks* had unusually low **Common Nighthawk** reports and numbers.

The high was just 6 in Yardley Twp. 5/17 (AHs, SH). Reports of **Virginia Rail** came from a solid six locations, with 2 birds at two of these locations (MGa, DF, m.ob.). One of these reports was of a road-killed bird in Warminster Twp. 3/25 (DR ph.). Although **Sora** was only reported once, the count of 7 at PWT 5/9 likely represents a new spring high count (DF). After going over a year with none, several **Common Gallinules** were observed this spring. The first was at SGL 56 from 5/10-15, quite a good bird for the upper county (EB ph., m.ob.). One was first at PWT 5/9, with likely a second bird 5/16 (DF). The observer noted that the birds continued staying together and may be a breeding pair (DF). Strong numbers of **American Coots** continued from the winter season at PWT (m.ob.). Highs included 400 on 3/8 and 360 on 4/20 (MGa ph., AHn). **Sandhill Cranes** had a showing similar to recent years. The annual Pine Run Res. pair stayed until 3/13 (LGu). One was in New Britain Twp. 3/29-31 (BF, m.ob., ph.). Three cranes were at the preserved Patterson Farm 4/10-11 (MGa ph.).

The spring shorebird season was somewhat varied, with a couple outstanding highlights. Four **Black-bellied Plovers** were seen at PWT between the dates of 4/13 (new record early date) and 5/18 (DF, AHn ph.). The high count of **Semipalmated Plovers** at PWT was a decent 27 on 5/16 (DF). A **Stilt Sandpiper** at PWT 5/6 was not seen again (JHa). **Dunlin** had a high count of 13 on 4/13 (DF). Counts of **Least Sandpipers** were decent at a few locations, but PWT had the most by far with about 100 on 5/14 (AHn). Likely the same **White-rumped Sandpiper** spent 5/8-10 at PWT (DF, AHn).

Without a doubt the rarest bird in the county this spring, a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was found at PWT 5/18 (JHa) and photos were obtained (DF, AHn ph.). Fairly rare in these parts during their typical September migration, Buff-breasted are very rare anywhere in the eastern United States in spring. This was the first *Bucks* spring record and possibly the second spring record in Pennsylvania. You know it's rare when Cape May, New Jersey doesn't have a spring eBird record! Back to more normal shorebirds, single **Pectoral Sandpipers** were at PWT on multiple dates (DF), and one was at Pine Run Res. 4/20-23 (KR ph.). A peak count of 22 was had for **Semipalmated Sandpipers** at PWT 5/25 and 5/28 (AHn). The only **Short-billed Dowitcher** report was at PWT 5/28 as well (AHn ph.). Eight locations hosted **Wilson's Snipe**, with QTS featuring anywhere from one to possibly 10 birds including in "winnowing" flight displays (DF, AHn).

An apparent male **Wilson's Phalarope** was at PWT 5/31 to make it on this report (AHn ph.). The other standout shorebirds were 3 **Red-necked Phalaropes** that spent 4/30 and 5/1 at PVP after a rainstorm (DI ph., m.ob.). These rare migrants were just the third PVP record. Probably all three were stunning breeding females, and many observers got incredible views and photos! **Solitary Sandpipers** were found at multiple locations, with a high of 10 at PVP 5/14 (AM, m.ob.). A record early (by one day) **Greater Yellowlegs** was along the Delaware R. in Morrisville 3/10 (SGo, RSe). The season's high count was about 20 at PWT 5/8 (DF). A healthy high number of about 80 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were also at PWT 5/8 (DF).

Ten gull and 4 tern species were found in the county this spring, identical to last year. **Bonaparte's Gull** was well-represented compared to previous years. Groups of 100 or more included 100 at PWT 4/13 and 165 at NSP 4/18 (DF). Good counts were had at the Delaware R. in Morrisville, with 63 on 4/20 and a high number of 30 for the date on 5/9 (MGa ph.). **Black-headed Gull** used to be truly accidental here, but PWT is becoming a reliable location for the species. One was there around 4/16 (DF), likely the same bird as a first-winter that spent 3/8-22 at the Delaware R. in Morrisville (RS, m.ob. ph.). This brings the total number of county records to 14. **Little Gull** is becoming regular at PWT as well. One was there 4/4, and 2 on 4/13-4/18 (DF, JHa). Perhaps these were just 2 birds total, but they bring the county total reports up to 18. Five **Laughing Gulls** arrived on time at PWT 3/28 (DF), and 530 were present as usual 5/2 (AHn).

One **Iceland Gull** at PWT was reported regularly 4/1-5/8, presumably the same bird (RS, AHn, DF). A high of 3 were at NSP 3/14

(AM), and one 4/6 was likely a fourth individual (AHn). High counts of **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at NSP were 461 on 3/14 (AM) and 410 on 4/11 (KR), the widely spaced dates suggesting good migrant turnover at this site. One **Glaucous Gull** was at PWT 4/20-5/8 (DF, AHn).

The sum of **Caspian Tern** high counts from four sites was 19, with a great count of 11 at NSP 4/16 (MGa ph., m.ob.). Three **Black Terns** were at PWT 5/23 (DF). Single **Common Terns** were at PWT 4/18 and 4/20 (DF, AHn). Just one **Forster's Tern** was reported, at PWT 4/13 (DF).

Red-throated Loon was not reported this spring. The high count of **Common Loons** was 28 at NSP 4/21, not too exceptional a number during spring weather events (KR, IB). **Great Cormorant** reports were low, at only four locations and not exceeding 2 anywhere (m.ob.), save for 6 at the usual Mud Island site 3/8 (AM). A fairly tame high count of 192 **Double-crested Cormorants** was at Neshaminy SP 4/27 (MGr).

Although the QTS **American Bittern** total was only 11 on 6 evenings 4/7-5/12 (DF), singles were detected at three other locations including a near-record early bird at BRD 3/30 (VP, m.ob.). **Great Blue Heron** colonies continue to be active in the upper and central county. Most were reported to be doing well, but official censuses were not available (DF, DA). At least 11 sites hosted ones and twos of **Great Egrets** (m.ob.). An uncommon spring **Snowy Egret** was described at QTS 5/27 but was not seen again (NK). An adult **Little Blue Heron**, always nice to see, was more cooperative at BRD 4/23 (GJ). Only one **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was at the well-known SLP site this year, staying 4/21-5/21 (DD ph., m.ob.). It was a tremendous spring for **Glossy Ibis** at PWT, as it was elsewhere in the southeast corner of the state (and sometimes beyond). There were counts of 5 on 4/9, 2 on 4/18, 11 on 5/2, one on 5/23, and one on 5/25 (JHa, DF, AHn). A very high count of 19 flew past Milford Twp. 5/30, quite unusual for the upper county (DF).

**Osprey** are common nesters on the lower Delaware R., so 7 occupied nests by 3/28 was normal (DF). It is not common to have **Golden Eagles** in *Bucks* during spring migration. Although most have gone by April, singles were well-described at Giving Pond 4/2 and Solebury Twp. 4/7 (JBH, RSe). Always hoped for in late spring, *Bucks'* 20th **Mississippi Kite** was seen roosting up in Bridgeton Twp. 5/17 (FS, PK). Although it seems that PVP had no nesting **Bald Eagles** this year (AM, JM), PWT now has four nests (DF) and a new nest was active in Doylestown's Central Park (m.ob.). **Red-shouldered Hawk** chick(s) were confirmed at the usual Tincum Twp. nest on 5/2 (DA). The top **Broad-winged Hawk** spring count was 13 at BRD 4/23 (GJ), again a number that likely reflects incomplete spring hawk watching efforts. A bird was seen incubating on a nest at SGL 157 on 5/25, possibly the first documented nest in quite a while (PH ph.). More will follow in the upcoming breeding season report.

Two **Eastern Screech-Owls** were in a box during a check, at least one incubating an egg (DF ph.). **Barred Owls** were seen in singles and pairs at 8 sites, many of them well-known haunts (m.ob.). A juv. was photographed near SGL 56 - Wildcat Lake (*vide* DF). Although PVP had no **Long-eared Owls**, up to 4 were in West Rockhill Twp. on three dates 3/1-4/5 (AHn ph.). Northern Saw-whet Owl was not reported.

A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at PVP 5/13 was late, but not record-late (AM). Annual sites for **Red-headed Woodpecker** included one to 2 at Buckingham Twp. 4/17-5/10 and up to 3 at SGL 157 on 5/4 through the end of the period (DS, m.ob.). Surprisingly, they were reported at no fewer than 12 other locations this spring (m.ob. ph.!) Mostly singles were seen, although 2 were confirmed at PVP 4/19 after one was present for most of the period (BKO, KK ph.). Given the timing of most reports in late Apr and May, it is this writer's speculation that a good number of these were spring migrants. Either way, the number of sites was encouraging for this declining species.

The **American Kestrel** nest box monitoring continued, with a general cleaning of 81 boxes yielding 55 birds 3/21-22 (DF). One of these was a female banded last year as a chick 12.5 miles away (DF). A **Merlin** that circled low over NSP 5/29 was just four days shy of the spring late date of 6/2, but probably a very late migrant (PH ph.).

The always-infrequent **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen at SGL 157 on 5/17 (KR, DF), and also in a park in Milford Twp. 5/18 (BH ph.). **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at SGL 157 on 5/17 for the only report

(DF). **Alder Flycatcher** was found at SGL 157 on 5/17 (DF), BRD on 5/19-20 (GJ vr.), and SGL 56 – L. Warren on 5/25 (JBH ph.). **Least Flycatchers** were extremely well represented this spring, with singles and sometimes 2 detected at 17 locations (m.ob., ph., vr.), including a high of 5 at PWT 5/16 (DF). A **White-eyed Vireo** heard at NSP 4/15 beat the previous known spring arrival by two days (KI, VM). One **Philadelphia Vireo** was at Core Creek Park 5/21, a species seen far more often in fall than in spring (DD). Even considering the 3.5-mile distance, 21 **Warbling Vireos** at Neshaminy SP 5/4 were impressive (MGr).

**Common Raven** is now far from a *Bucks* rarity; a nest with 4 chicks was confirmed in Haycock Twp. 5/16 and a count of 6 at the Kintnersville site 5/19 likely reflected similar results (AM, JBH, MS, BR). In a decidedly non-irruption year, Black-capped Chickadee was unreported. **Horned Lark** topped out at 63 at MKF 3/9, the highest number of winterers/migrants this spring (RS). A pair in a Bedminster Twp. field 5/1 may have stayed to try to breed (AG). In recent years, a pair or two stay the summer at MKF but are rarely confirmed breeding. This year, a nest was found with 3 well-grown young 5/17, at least 2 of which were fledged by 5/27 (RSm ph.)!

A 5/9-10 **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was late in New Britain Twp., four days shy of the spring migrant late date (TH, AHn ph.). As with Black-capped Chickadees, Red-breasted Nuthatch was unreported this spring. Only one location had a migrant **Marsh Wren**, BRD on 4/30 (GJ). **Gray-cheeked Thrush** detections were unusually low. One was at a yard water feature in New Britain Twp. 5/20 (TF ph.) and single(s) were present at SLP 5/15-25 (DD ph., m.ob.). Conversely, **Swainson's Thrush** was very well reported. Birds were found at 23 locations, with the sum of high counts totaling 49 (m.ob. ph.). These were undoubtedly buoyed by high counts 5/16, including a record high *Bucks* eBird count of at least 12 at SLP (DD ph.). **American Pipits** were found in few places but decent numbers. Forty-five were at MKF 3/24 (RSm), a high of 24 were at the preserved Patterson Farm 4/12 (MGa ph.), and one could be seen at PWT 5/8-10 (DF).

A male **Purple Finch** was at a New Britain Twp. feeder 3/22-25 for the only report (TP ph.). As expected, no other irruptive finches were seen. **Grasshopper Sparrow** is a regular at Van Sant Airport, but only one was detected on multiple visits through the month of May, somewhat concerning (m.ob. ph.). One was at Forest Rd. Park in Hilltown Twp. 5/11, as was a **Savannah Sparrow** 5/24 (AHn vr.). Mowing at this site may have later doomed these birds. One to 2 **American Tree Sparrows** were at QTS 3/12-14, the only Mar. report of this quickly disappearing Arctic sparrow (RSm ph., KL ph., AM ph.). **White-crowned Sparrow** was documented at five sites outside of known wintering spots (m.ob. ph.). One of these 5 sites, in Bristol Twp., also held the **Harris's Sparrow** that continued from the winter as late as 5/10, when it was in dapper breeding plumage (AE). **Vesper Sparrow** was at a farm near MKF 4/22 for the only report (RSm). **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at 4 locations, mostly in May (m.ob. ph.).

A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was exquisitely described near Tyler SP 5/15 (ME). One was also at PWT 5/9-10 (DF). Expect **Bobolink** and other grassland breeders to feature more prominently in the summer report now that the PAMC does not exist to list spring totals. In addition to the numerous spring migrants, single wintering **Baltimore Orioles** were in New Britain Borough 3/24-4/23 (LS ph., JMc) and Middletown Twp. 3/10-4/23 (DP). **Rusty Blackbird** high counts were very low, with just 38 at QTS 3/20 and 25 at BRD 4/6 (AHn, MGr).

Warbler variety dipped a bit from previous springs, with 30 species reported. If half of two species makes one, then add a species in the form of a "**Brewster's**" **Warbler** at SGL 196 5/14 (BH ph., vr.). On 3/21, a **Louisiana Waterthrush** was at the Manderfield Woodland Preserve, just one day later than the record early date (AB ph., MSo). Territorial male **Prothonotary Warblers** returned to Riegelsville 4/30 and Tyler SP 5/1, with migrants at PVP 4/29-30 and Churchville Park 4/23 (m.ob.). One to 2 **Orange-crowned Warblers** spent 3/14-18 at SLP (DD ph.), puzzling given the timing between winter records and the 4/4 spring arrival early date. Three **Mourning Warblers** were found, one at PVP 5/15 (LGI) and one of each sex along the Neshaminy Cr. 5/17 and 5/31 (NG). **Hooded Warbler** was reported at 9 locations, a couple probably breeding near

SGL 157 (m.ob.). An **American Redstart** at PVP 4/25 matched the county early date (CP). It was a great year to see **Bay-breasted Warblers**, with 6 in one flock near Tyler SP 5/17 setting a new eBird high count (ME). One at SLP 4/30 tied for the record early date (RF). Six **Blackburnian Warblers** at SLP 5/15 were also high, right on par with boreal warbler reports this year (DD). See the previous season's report for the **Pine Warbler** that successfully wintered in Lower Makefield Twp., last seen 3/9 (CF). No fewer than 10 were observed together as a migrant flock at NSP 4/15, an eBird high count (KI, VM). Golden-winged, Kentucky, and Yellow-throated Warblers were all missed. Lastly, a **Wilson's Warbler** must have nearly fooled the observer at Kemper Park, Warrington Twp. 4/1 (GJ ph., vr.)! The previous spring arrival date was 4/28, plus very rare winter occurrences.

A **Summer Tanager** at PWT 5/23 was part of a statewide event for the species (DF). This was the 15th *Bucks* record known and the first since 2016. **Blue Grosbeak** barely made it on this report, with at least one visiting feeders in Falls Twp. starting 5/17 (VB ph.). This species still seems to have difficulty expanding in the county as a breeder.

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### **Butler County**

Location: Lake Oneida (LO), South Shore (SS).

Spring was slow and gradual with warmups alternating with cold snaps, including a May freeze that damaged emerging fruit and caused some concern about insectivores finding food. Indeed, some wondered if winter would ever end with three separate horizontal snowfall blizzards with severe dense fog that hit three separate times obliterating everything to zero visibility during the Bartramian Audubon Society's Global Big Day celebration on May 9.

Even though movement of migratory ducks had started in Feb with a few small flocks at L. Arthur and L. Oneida, mild weather in early March brought larger flights including 56 **Redheads** at Barkley Road 3/6 (KB), 75 **Ring-necked Ducks** there 3/5, and 103 **Lesser Scaup** at Bear Run Boat Launch 3/2 (MC). By the second week of March, flocks in the hundreds, including 116 **Gadwall** 3/12 (GK, MAK) and 200 scaup sp. at L. Arthur 3/13 (DK, et. al.) made birders hopeful for a great waterfowl migration. Unfortunately, it turned out to be less than spectacular with no truly large flights like those known to pass through *Butler* (exception: **Double-crested Cormorant** 5/1). High counts included 125 **Ring-necked Ducks** at Waterfowl Observation Area 3/24, 140 **Buffleheads** at SGL 95 Dam, 600 **Red-breasted Mergansers** at South Shore 3/29, and 400 at SGL 95 Dam the same day (GK, MAK). Overall 28 duck species were reported, with **Wood Duck**, **Mallard**, **Ring-necked Duck** and **Bufflehead** the most frequently reported. Only seen once or twice were **Northern Pintail**, **White-winged Scoter** (the only scoter reported) and **Common Goldeneye**. Several species lingered into May including **Gadwall** until 5/11, **Ring-necked Duck** 5/14 (GK, MAK), and **Red-breasted Merganser** 5/14 (KD).

**Ruffed Grouse** was heard in three different locations (m.ob.). **Pied-**

**billed Grebe** was seen in small numbers from 3/11 through early May, and **Horned Grebe** was present 3/17 through the end of Apr. One late bird was seen at LA 5/9 during the Butler Big Day 5/9 and one, perhaps the same bird, lingered until 5/17 (DP). A very nice high count of 25 was tallied at SS 3/27 (GK, MAK). **Common Nighthawk** was noted regionally the third week of May with birds seen in three locations in *Butler*. High count was 14 flying over Swope Road 5/24 (GK, MAK).

Listed as "probable" breeders in *Butler* during the Second *Pennsylvania Atlas of Breeding Birds* (BBA) survey, **Sora** and **Virginia Rail** continued to be encountered in their stronghold in SGL 95, but nowhere else. **American Coot** was seen in small numbers in a few locations, but nothing like the many hundreds of birds often seen during the fall migration.

Shorebird migration, hardly ever great in *Butler* due to limited habitat, saw eight species including a **Semipalmated Plover** at Glade Run L. 5/14 (LC ph.), **Spotted Sandpiper**, **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Wilson's Snipe**, and **American Woodcock**. The surprise of the season was an adult female **Red-necked Phalarope** that dropped in at a retention pond in a large industrial park in southern *Butler* 5/26 (PL, m.ob.) after the remnants of a weakened tropical storm passed. Seen by only a handful of birders just before dark, it apparently left overnight as it was not found the next morning. This bird is probably the 6th county record after four records from the 1970s and one in 2011.

Three gull species frequented LA and L. Oneida, highlighted by an unusual high total of 60 **Bonaparte's Gull** at Trout Cove 4/1 (GK, MAK). **Ring-billed Gull** and **Herring Gull** appeared in their usual smaller spring-season numbers. More often seen in late summer, 2 **Caspian Tern** visited Moraine SP's Waterfowl Observation Area 4/26 (KB). **Forster's Tern** dropped in at Glade Run L. 4/26 (DB) and one was at SS 5/1 (MC). Small numbers of **Common Loon** moved through starting 3/25, culminating in a nice flight of 110 at SS 4/17 (MC) and 400-plus at the LA propagation area 5/1 (KW). They continued to stop at LA in small numbers through May and into June.

**Double-breasted Cormorant** started showing up at LA the third week of Mar and, much to the chagrin of anglers, flocks in the hundreds rested and dined through mid-April including rafts of 459 at SS 4/14 (KB), 800-plus at Zion Church Road 4/17 (RT), and a whopping 1600-plus at the LA propagation area 5/1 (KW). A **Great Egret** stayed at Moraine SP's Waterfowl Observation Area for at least a week, seen daily 4/28 - 5/2 (m.ob.), and other lone egrets stopped at LA and SGL 95 periodically through the season. **Osprey**, now fixtures at LA, started to be seen at L. Oneida and Glade Run L. **Northern Harrier** was spotted in two locations 3/1 and 3/4 (MC) but was not reported after that.

**Sandhill Crane** was seen in early Mar at Roher Road 3/4 (MC); most reports were one or 2 birds seen during May (m.ob.) Six cranes were counted at Moraine SP on the Big Day 5/9 (GW). **Short-eared Owl** thrilled birders during the winter season at Johnson Road and remained until 3/15 (MC). Perhaps one day they will nest at the recovering strip-mine area. **Red-headed Woodpecker** was found at Kildoo Road 4/29 (GK, MAK) and 2 frequented Claytonia Road in May (BB) where they are known to breed. Falcons included decent numbers of **American Kestrel**, but the only **Merlin** reports included a single bird at SS 3/10 (MC) and one at Grindel Road 3/31 (GK, MAK). Likewise, there were 2 reports of **Peregrine Falcon**: a lone bird at McDanel Boat Launch 3/24 (MC) and one there 4/7 (MC).

Not often seen, **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at Kohlmeyer Road 5/24 (GK, MAK) and even scarcer **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was photographed at McCalmont Road 5/23 (LC). **Northern Shrike** was seen at SGL 95 Calico Road 3/22 (MC) and one (perhaps the same bird) was seen nearby at Gate 7 the same day (GK, MAK). Once again, **Common Raven** was reported from widely scattered locations through the season (m.ob.).

**Purple Martin** and **Tree Swallow** arrived a bit early near LA 3/24 and 3/15 respectively (GK, MAK) and seldom seen **Bank Swallow** appeared at three locations. Is there a colony waiting to be discovered? Following a bad winter for boreal species wandering south that saw only four reports of **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, only 3 single birds were reported from widespread locations 3/29 to 4/8 (KB, RN).

Usually gone by early May, **White-crowned Sparrow** hung around in many locations through the second week of May with the last one reported at Squaw Valley Woodlands 5/16 (DW). During the Second BBA, **Dark-eyed Junco** was only listed as "possible" in 2 *Butler* locations. Six calling and singing at SGL 95 Parker 5/30 (KB, MC, GK, MAK) suggested that they are breeding in the northeast corner of *Butler*.

Reports of hard-to-find **Yellow-breasted Chat** increased recently, most from SGL 95 (m.ob). **Rusty Blackbird** passed through 3/11-5/7 with notable highs of 32 at Muddy Creek Wetland 4/12 (GK, MAK) and 50 at Claytonia Road 4/12 (BB). A very nice tally of 32 warbler species included not-often-seen **Worm-eating Warbler**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Mourning Warbler** and **Canada Warbler** (m.ob.). Most frequently seen warblers included **Ovenbird**, **Common Yellowthroat**, **Hooded Warbler**, **Yellow Warbler**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler** and **Black-throated Green Warbler**.

We are pleased to report that 2020 Global Big Day for birds May 9th attracted 29 *Butler* birding enthusiasts versus just 10 last year. However, this year's weather was the worst in the 24 consecutive years of operation. Another change was the PSO decision to no longer sponsor the Pennsylvania Annual Migration Count (PAMC). Nevertheless, the Bartramian Audubon Society decided to continue to support the annual event for its pure scientific value and outdoor pleasure. Despite bad weather, including snow, participants recorded 128 species highlighted by a mass of an estimated 12,600 swallow migrants moving at L. Arthur (GW).

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#### **Cambria County**

Locations: Prince Gallitzin SP (PG).

The waterfowl migration at PG continued into the period with good numbers and species. Some of the better sightings were a **Trumpeter Swan** 5/13 (TD), **Lesser Scaup**, and large numbers of **Ring-necked** and **Ruddy Ducks**. **Yellow-Billed Cuckoos** seemed to be more numerous this year. Three **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were heard at Dean 5/14 (TD). **Virginia Rails** and **Sora** were heard and seen at PG 4/18 (CE). A **Common Gallinule** was seen at a marsh adjacent to PG on 5/17 (TA), one of very few records for *Cambria*.

A single **Upland Sandpiper** was seen by birders at Babcock Mine during mid-May. This bird or birds have been seen in this area for quite a few years, although it has not been regularly reported. Shorebird species seen at PG were **Dunlin**; and **Least**, **Semipalmated**, **Spotted**, and **Solitary Sandpipers**. Also reported were **Willet**, and **Greater** and **Lesser Yellowlegs**. A **Red-throated Loon** was at PG 4/18 (C&LP). Two **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were seen at PG during May. A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at PG 5/16(TD).

Due to the extreme cold on the weekend of 5/9, large numbers of swallows were found dead throughout PG area. Rangers reported dead and grounded birds almost everywhere. The temperatures were in the thirties with high winds and snow. A check of the **Purple Martin** colony showed 13 dead and only 4 survivors. Luckily more birds showed up and the colony grew to being almost full. Most surely swallows were not the only species affected by this wintry blast.

A **Sedge Wren** at PG 5/13 (MD) represented *Cambria's* second record. Three **American Pipits** were seen in the Ebensburg area 5/1 (CW). Grassland sparrows were seen in the usual reclaimed strip mines with extensive areas of grass. **Bobolink** numbers seemed low especially after the winter blast on 5/9. About a dozen **Rusty Blackbirds** were at PG 4/20 (MD). The warbler migration was sparse with more birds showing up in the latter half of May. The best find was a group of **Golden-winged**, **Blue-winged**, and **Brewster's Warblers**, all seen in the same



area near Fallentimber 5/30 (TA).

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### **Cameron County**

Locations: Brooks Run (BR), Sinnemahoning SP (SSP), Sterling Run (SR), Sterling Run Mines (SRM), West Creek Trail (WCT).

While the winter weather persisted well into May, one hundred fifty-one species were found.

Two **Tundra Swans** were at SSP 5/7 (MJ). Two **American Wigeon**, 2 **American Black Ducks**, and 10 **Ring-necked Ducks** were seen at SSP 3/24 (MJ), as were 4 **Lesser Scaup** 4/5 and 8 **Long-tailed Ducks** 3/24 (MJ). Eighteen **Buffleheads** and 12 **Hooded Mergansers** were at SSP 4/5 (MJ). Also at SSP were 55 **Common Mergansers** 3/18 (MJ), 8 **Red-breasted Mergansers** 3/31 (KL), and 2 **Ruddy Ducks** 3/24 (MJ). Fifteen **Horned Grebes** came through SSP 4/5 (MJ).

An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was found at Quehanna Wild Area 5/1 (NB). Eight **Killdeer** were at SRM 3/21 (MJ). A **Wilson's Snipe** was at Emporium 4/5 (MB&PB), and a **Greater Yellowlegs** visited SRM 4/28 (MJ). At SSP, there was a **Bonaparte's Gull** 3/28 (M&PB), one **Forster's Tern** 4/30 (MJ), 4 **Common Loons** 5/7 (MJ), and 3 **Double-crested Cormorants** 5/1 (MJ). Two **Golden Eagles** traveled through SSP 3/18 (MJ). A **Northern Harrier** was at Gilmore Trail 5/19 (AS), and a **Great-horned Owl** was heard at SR 5/5 (BH).

Two rare **Red-headed Woodpecker** sightings were at SR 5/5 and 5/21 (MJ). A **Merlin** was at SSP 5/9 (GJ). An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at WCT 5/18 (MJ), and 11 **Blue-headed Vireos** were found at May Hollow 5/20 (AS). Seventy-six **Tree Swallows** were at SSP 5/7 (MJ), with 3 **Bank Swallows** seen there 5/9 (BH) as were 59 **Cliff Swallows** 5/6 (MJ). Fifteen **Veery** were at Sizerville SP 5/9 (BB). Six **Swainson's Thrush** were at WCT 5/18 (MJ), and 29 **Hermit Thrush** were found at BR 4/17 (MJ).

There were 8 **Purple Finch** at Hunts Run 3/1 (BK), and 31 **American Goldfinch** in Emporium 3/24 (BR). Three **Grasshopper Sparrows** were at SRM 5/27 (MJ) with 4 **Eastern Meadowlark** there 4/5 (MB&PB). A single **Orchard Oriole** was at West Creek 5/13 (MB&PB). Three **Rusty Blackbirds** were at SR 3/6 (MJ). Twenty-seven warbler species were found. Of special interest was a **Brewster's Warbler** at SSP 5/9 (ES), a **Mourning Warbler** at WCT 5/15 (MJ), a **Kentucky Warbler** at SSP 5/27 (DB), and two **Yellow-throated Warblers** at SSP 5/9 (JF).

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### **Carbon County**

Locations: Bear Cr. L. (BCL), Beltzville SP (BSP), Hell Hollow Rd. (HHR), Mauch Chunk L. (MCL), Penn Forest Res. (PFR), Wild Cr. Res. (WCR).

Completely disregarding the CDC's COVID-19 safety recommendations, up to 425 **Bonaparte's Gulls** converged upon BSP 4/18 (RR, BReh et al.). Photographs of the event document an overall failure of these birds to socially distance, although since most were in black-hooded breeding plumage, one could argue that face coverings -- indeed, whole head coverings -- were at least in use. This influx briefly attracted an adult **Little Gull** (RR), one of a handful of records for Beltzville L., and was part of a remarkable waterbird fallout across the region that day. Other notable species and/or numbers at BSP 4/18 (RR, BReh et al., unless otherwise attributed) included 10 **Lesser Scaup** (PN), 3 **Surf Scoters**, 80 **Bufflehead** (TS), 18 **Hooded Mergansers**, 5 **Red-**

**breasted Mergansers** (JHor), 314 **Ruddy Ducks** (TS), one **Red-necked Grebe** (present 4/16-19), one **American Coot** (PN), 6 **Lesser Yellowlegs**, 6 **Greater Yellowlegs**, 18 **Caspian Terns**, 3 **Common Terns**, 12 **Forster's Terns**, and 10 **Common Loons** (TS). A short distance northeast, also on 4/18, PFR produced 5 **Caspian Terns** (EK), 3 **Common Terns** (JHor), and 2 male **Black Scoters** (RR, BReh et al.), scarce at best in spring in the Lehigh Valley area. This completed *Carbon's* scoter series for the period, since 4 **White-wingeds** had visited BSP 4/13 (RR, BReh et al.).

Excluded inadvertently from the previous *Carbon* summary, a female goldeneye photographed in flight with 25 **Common Goldeneyes** at BSP 2/3 (PN) showed some characteristics of **Barrow's Goldeneye**, which would be a county record. Examination of the images reveals that, although the bill is orange, it seems similar in length and shape to those of the surrounding **Commons**. To be fair, the mystery female's forehead does appear somewhat peaked and its head may be warmer brown but, without a shot of the bird's upper wing pattern or perched head profile, it is probably best to consider its identification inconclusive. Kudos to the photographer and those eBirders who noticed the orange bill, however.

The only other ornithological occurrence that could compete with the riches of 4/18 was that of 2 **Red-necked Phalaropes**, a male and a female at separate respective access points to BSP 5/29 (RR, BReh, TS, RW), representing the third county record on eBird. This writer acknowledges that frontloading the season summary with the climactic action is akin to admitting, "It's all downhill from here!"; however, because *Pennsylvania Birds* is a journal of ornithological record, not a novel with a plot arc, this writer does not care.

Interesting waterfowl were observed in *Carbon* throughout Mar and Apr. Single **Tundra Swans** appeared at WCR 3/3 (RR, BReh) and 4/5 (NF) and at BSP 4/6 (RR, BReh), while 3 flew over BSP 3/16 (MB). Up to 3 **Blue-winged Teal** lingered at MCL 4/18-20 (BF, DF, RR), and a dapper drake was photographed at BSP 4/30 (RR, NF). Other dabblers detected infrequently were these: one **Gadwall** at Strohl's Valley Rd. 3/2 (PN) and 2 at Spruce Hollow Rd. 3/16 (NF), three reports of **American Wigeon**, and 14 **Northern Pintail** at PFR 3/12 (RR, BReh). Max counts from the period, all from BSP, included 680 **Snow Geese** 3/3 (RR, BReh), 18 **Northern Shovelers** 3/27 (TS), 63 **Ring-necked Ducks** 3/13 (RR), 8 **Greater Scaup** 3/13 (RR), 67 **Long-tailed Ducks** 3/20 (EK, RR), 11 **Common Goldeneye** 3/2 (PN), 65 **Common Mergansers** 3/2 (RR), 21 **Red-breasted Mergansers** 3/20 (TS, RR), and 10 **Horned Grebes** 4/6 (RR, BReh). Oddly, neither Canvasback nor Redhead was reported.

**Virginia Rail** was located four times during the Pennsylvania Game Commission's 2020 Marsh Bird Survey: in the BSP spillway 5/5 (RR), in its usual haunts on SGL 40 south of I-80 on both 5/7 and 5/25 (RR), and two at Palmerton's Blue Shamrock Golf Club 5/23 (RR, BReh). A **Least Sandpiper** at BSP 5/29 (RR, BReh, TS) was relatively late. On 5/11, five **Semipalmated Sandpipers** utilized BSP's pebbly shoreline (RR, TS), where the spring's lone **Wilson's Snipe** had seemed out of its element back on 3/2 (RR). **Great Black-backed Gull**, difficult in *Carbon*, was noted at BSP 3/30 (RR). **Caspian Tern** showed up once outside the 4/18 fallout, at BSP 4/30 (RR); an early **Black Tern** was reported at BSP 4/13 (EK).

**American Bitterns** were discovered on the ground (as opposed to in the air at dusk) at BSP 4/29 (BReh, RR) and BCL 5/1 (DF). **Great Egret** was seen a few times between mid-Apr and mid-May. A **Northern Goshawk** was reported over Palmerton 3/19 (DT). One **Red-headed Woodpecker** arrived at the BSP picnic area 5/15 (BReh, RR, BReh), where it does not nest but is semiannual. A **Peregrine Falcon** passed BSP 4/18 (MS).

The passerine migration was neither under- nor overwhelming, with all expected transients except Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied flycatchers showing in *Carbon* but not necessarily promptly or in significant numbers. **White-eyed Vireo**, apparently not a breeder in the county, appeared on three consecutive days: on Germans Rd. 5/13 (JH), on Sport Club Rd. in Bowmanstown 5/14 (RR, BReh), and at BSP 5/15 (EB). A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** or two along HHR 5/20 (RR, BReh) constituted the only sighting or hearing of this undoubtedly overlooked taxon. A **Pine Siskin** was

described well at a feeder in Beaver Meadows 5/4 (SG). Late **Fox Sparrows** were tallied at HHR 5/2 (RR, BReh) and BSP 5/9 (TS). **Vesper Sparrow**, another potential but often not actual nester, despite annual visitations, was found along Harry Rd. near Parryville 5/19 (JH). **Lincoln's Sparrow** graced BSP 5/9 (RR, TS), 5/17 (TS), and 5/19 (TS). **Mourning Warbler** was reported along Lentz Trail downstream from MCL 5/11 (DF) and **Cerulean Warbler** was eBirded at WCR 5/21 (NF), both without details.

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### Centre County

Locations: PSU Arboretum (ARBOR), Bald Eagle SP (BESP), Colyer L. (COL), PennDOT remediation ponds on Rte. 220 west of Julian (JUL), Muddy Paws Marsh (MPM), Pennsylvania State University (PSU), Scotia Barrens and Pond (SCO), State College (STCO).

Heavy rain resulting from a severe storm system moving through the region resulted in a fallout of shorebirds, waterfowl, and waders at BESP on 4/30. The following rare species were observed in five or more locations and are not discussed further: **Snow Goose**, **Virginia Rail**, **Great Egret**, **Warbling Vireo**, **Gray-cheeked Thrush**, **Mourning Warbler**, and **Yellow-throated Warbler**. Information for this report was obtained primarily from eBird and the STCO Bird Club listserv with background and current status from *Birds of Central Pennsylvania* by Nick Bolgiano and Greg Grove, 2010 (B&G, 2010).

A **Trumpeter Swan** with tag #T77 was present at MPM 3/18-31 (DR, et al.). The female **Harlequin Duck**, which was present throughout much of the winter, continued at BESP 3/10-4/18 (BSn, et al.). Among the many species involved in the 4/30 fallout at BESP was a single **Red-necked Grebe** (JV, et al.). This has been a casually occurring species (B&G, 2010).

Most unusually, four accidental species were present. Two species were part of the BESP fallout of 4/30, the first being a male **Eared Grebe** 5/1 (CE, et al.) and according to eBird was the fifth observation of this species. Previously it was reported in Centre Furnace's Duck Pond 1/1999, at the PSU Bathgate Retention Pond 9/2006, at BESP 11/2010, and at COL 3/2011. A **Marbled Godwit** was spotted at BESP 4/30 (CE, et al.), as well as one reported across the lake in Howard the same day with multiple species involved in the fallout (BSn). Because these locations are a short distance apart, these are likely the same bird. This is the second Marbled Godwit record per eBird, with the first occurring also at BESP 4/2014.

A flock of 8 **American Avocets** in breeding plumage were seen at the Nittany Farms Pond 4/18 (JP, et al.). This was the eighth record for this species in eBird, with previous sightings occurring at COL 8/2009, 8/2011, and 7/2014, in Pine Grove Mills 5/1998, and at BESP 10/2007 and 8-9/2014. The first record of a **Brown Pelican** was at MPM 4/8 (JS *fide* WL). The bird flushed a short distance from the observer, who got a good description of the bird augmented by watching "through binoculars for over a minute as it flew away," then confirmed with a field guide.

One **Eurasian Collared-Dove/African Collared-Dove** was photographed in Port Matilda 4/11 (MF). Single **Common Gallinules** were in several locations over a three-week period. One was at JUL 4/28-5/6 (JH, et al.), and another at SCO 5/7-14 (JH, et al.). A birder conducting a nocturnal flight count in STCO recorded one on 5/11, and another bird was observed at BESP 5/13 (BS). **Sandhill Cranes** have become regular visitors (B&G, 2010). One was observed along Tadpole Rd. and the Fairbrook wetland 3/24-29 (KE, et al.). Another, possibly the same bird, was spotted there 5/24 (NSP), and another crane was present at SCO 3/26 (CE).

Up to 4 **Black-bellied Plovers** fell out at BESP 4/30 (CE, et al.), and one or two were present on Tadpole Rd. 5/1 (JV, et al.). One was heard during a nocturnal flight count in STCO 5/27 (JG). At BESP, up to 10 **Dunlins** were observed 4/16-5/14 (CK, et al.), and 2 were seen 4/22-28 (CE, KE, EZ). A single **White-rumped Sandpiper** was spotted at the Bernel Rd. ponds 5/13-15 (JV, et al.). One **Wilson's Phalarope** was seen wading in the flooded fields along Tadpole Rd. 5/31 (AM) with video shared on eBird.

A **Red-throated Loon** lingered at BESP 4/18-30 (BS, et al.). Another casually occurring species is **Least Bittern**, and one was present at MPM 5/19 (JG, JA). A casually occurring rarity, **Black-crowned Night-Heron** allowed itself to be observed by many area birders at the Duck Pond 4/18 (JG, et al.).

Two migrating **Northern Goshawks** were spotted, an immature bird flying over a ridge near Julian 3/22 (DO) and one in STCO 4/1 (NSP). There were 2 **Barn Owl** observations. The first was at a continuing location near Spring Mills 3/9-27 and 5/2 (JG, et al.), while the other was reported near Millheim 3/24 (JD).

Single **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were present in three locations: SCO 5/15-21 (JV, JH, KC), ARBOR 5/17 (JG), and STCO 5/23 (JG). Observers spotted one or 2 **Philadelphia Vireos** 5/16-20 at SCO (CE, et al.). **Marsh Wrens** showed up at multiple locations. Singles were reported at MPM 4/23-24 (TG, JC), at JUL 5/1-5/5 (JV, et al.), on the PSU central campus 5/13 (JG), and at the Haugh Family Preserve 5/16 (PB, SB).

A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was spotted at Beaver Stadium 5/7 (JG, CE), and another was located on Fox Hollow Rd. 5/11 (CS). Up to 4 **Henslow's Sparrows** were observed in SGL 100 - German Settlement Grasslands 4/23-5/24 (JC, et al.).

Two warbler species were noted: a **Prothonotary Warbler** along the stream in Unionville 4/20 (DO), and a **Kentucky Warbler**, with one spotted on PSU central campus 5/15 (JG, JV, JH) and another, probably female, in Port Matilda 5/18 (PW). A third was at SCO 5/26 (JH, et al.). A casually occurring male **Summer Tanager** was seen at various locations near the Pleasant Gap Fish Hatchery 5/11-13 (JK, et al.).

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### Chester County

Locations: Bucktoe Cr. Preserve (BCP), Chambers L. (CL), Coventry Woods (CW), Downingtown (DOW), Struble L. (SL), Marsh Cr. SP (MCSF), Pickering Cr. Trail (PCT), Octorara Res. (OCTRES).

It was a spring season like no other – at least for the birders. Early March brought word of a global pandemic, COVID-19, spreading rapidly. By the third week in March, Pennsylvania was under "stay-at-home" orders by Governor mandate. This provided most birders an opportunity to study the locals around the neighborhood, and watch the season unfold in a more localized region. It may also account for some increased detection of some species this spring. Interest in birding as a hobby caught on with those who had more time to pay attention to what was outside their window. This trend was even covered by national media, and parks and other public open spaces were packed as more people found refuge from the quarantine in the outdoors. As luck would have it, spring held a wonderful show of migrants, and birders were happy to be showered with colorful arrays of birds to observe and enjoy.

Standout birds of the season were a couple of **Common Gallinules**, a curious sapsucker, appearing to be a hybrid between Yellow-bellied and Red-naped, and the third county record of a **Western Tanager**.

A pair of **Trumpeter Swans** was discovered at OCTRES 4/3 and lingered there through 5/11, spending time mostly in *Lancaster*, but

occasionally crossing the county line (PM, m.ob.). This species is increasing in numbers, and annually appearing. A drake **Eurasian Wigeon** was a lucky find at the Water Treatment Plant in Honey Brook 3/26 (LW), and the only observation of this rarity. The only **Canvasback** was one at MCSP 3/28-30 (JM, MH, DH). Reports of this sea duck were light in winter, so spring scarcity was expected. Two hen **Surf Scoters** spent time at SL 5/23 (HM, m.ob.), and were the only scoters documented for spring. **Red-breasted Mergansers** are annual but typically low in spring, this year ranging from 3/18-4/30 (m.ob.).

Three **Red-necked Grebes**, all nearing breeding plumage, spent time at MCSP 4/30-5/1 (MH, m.ob.) and were the first reported for the year. This large grebe is absent some years, and reports elsewhere in the region were limited, making this trio a good find.

It was an excellent spring for encounters with both cuckoo species. Reports of the less common **Black-billed Cuckoo** were numerous throughout the county (m.ob.). Some springs this species is only encountered a handful of times. A good number of caterpillars emerging after a mild winter may have assisted this atypical abundance. **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** returned to Goat Hill Preserve in the Serpentine Barrens region, detected there 5/10 to the end of the reporting period (m.ob.). This species was not detected elsewhere, including Chrome Barrens, where they once could be found. In general, this goatsucker like others is experiencing an overall decline in population.

A **Common Gallinule** was discovered at Exton Park 4/29 (KC, CM), and delighted local birders during its stay through 5/5. Another Common Gallinule was photographed by a kayaking birder at SL 5/16 (JA). The region saw an uptick in reports this spring, so it could have been different individuals.

BCP hosted its annual evening Kite and Shorebird Watch 5/17 through early Jun, and this year yielded opportunities for some lucky birders to witness the phenomenal spectacle of strings of shorebirds together racing across the sky to their Arctic nesting grounds. **Black-bellied Plovers** are some that are expected in this group, and usually move before the knots and turnstones wing north. This year 440 were tallied at BCP on the evening of 5/26. Lowered water levels at MCSP offered habitat for shorebirds to refuel for a few days and included up to 5 **Semipalmated Plovers** 5/14 (m.ob.). Another Semipalmated Plover was found at Great Marsh 5/15 (JM), and yet another seen and heard in flight over Honey Brook 5/23 (HM). **Whimbrels** were again anticipated among the first flocking migrants to grace the evening skies on their journey northward. A flock of 157 was spotted over MCSP the evening of 5/23 (HM), while 200 were tallied at BCP the same evening (LL). Another 250 flew over BCP 5/24 (LL, AB).

A single **Dunlin** foraging the edges of a small pond in Unionville 4/2-8 (LL, JS) marked the only observation on the ground. This shorebird was detected giving nocturnal flight calls over DOW 5/25 and 5/27 (ZB). A congregation of 50 **Least Sandpipers** was a good high count from Cochranville 5/7 (ZM). Numbers trend much lower for this expected migrant, unless habitat is conducive for feeding. A single **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was found in Unionville 4/30 (JS, KC). Typically, this long-distance migrant is harder to find in spring than fall migration. A **Short-billed Dowitcher** was heard giving calls during nocturnal migration listening 5/15 (ZB). This species is irregular in both migration periods and not found each year.

An **Iceland Gull** was picked out of a flock of **Herring Gulls** passing over BCP 3/29 (LL). Tern reports were more numerous in both diversity of species and occurrence this spring. **Caspian Terns** were noted 4/10-5/16 on multiple occasions while visiting local lakes. A very early **Black Tern** in breeding plumage was seen at MCSP during a storm 4/13 (LL). This date was about 10 days earlier than the expected date range begins and presumed to be storm assisted. Two more Black Terns were found at MCSP 5/22 (AB). A **Common Tern** made a quick appearance at MCSP 5/1 (BB, JD). A **Red-throated Loon** stood out in a group of Common Loons in flight over BCP 4/16 (LL). Another was seen briefly at MCSP 5/8 (LL).

The cryptic nature of the **American Bittern** enhances the excitement level of birders who find them. The wetland at Exton Park is always a good place to look for this migrant, and it was reported 4/2-5/15 (m.ob.). **Least Bitterns** are state-endangered but presumed to nest most

years at MCSP. One was discovered at Exton Park 5/2 (JH), and later reports proved a pair. The two lingered through the end of the reporting period, strongly suggesting nesting. An immature **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was spotted in the willows lining the edge of MCSP 5/1 (KF, m.ob.). Another black-crowned was seen there 5/23 (AB).

This spring saw an uptick in **Glossy Ibis** sightings, and most were of multiple birds in flocks in the air. A surprising count of 32 were seen in flight over MCSP 4/5 (LL), another 2 were seen at the Great Marsh 4/11 (MC). Other flocks noted included 7 at Goat Hill Preserve 5/3 (KF), 9 at MCSP 5/15 (AB), 8 in West Chester 5/15 (BR), and one from MCSP 5/1 (DH) and 5/3 (LL).

*Chester* is the Commonwealth's hotspot for **Mississippi Kite** with multiple reports of this southern raptor each spring. It was first seen by a keen-eyed birder traveling on the Pennsylvania Turnpike near Malvern 5/10 (ZM). All other reports came from the southern end of the county and included one in Unionville 5/15 (EN, m.ob.) and multiple reports from BCP during the dedicated Kite and Shorebird Watch held there, beginning 5/19 (LL, m.ob.). Shocking was a group of 6 seen soaring in one binocular view 5/29 (m.ob.!) This marked a state-record high count of Mississippi Kites. Despite the annual activity noted, nesting has not been detected nearby. A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard in Kennett Square 3/1 (JA). It was a low winter count for this tiny owl's presence in the region due to ample food in the northern part of its range, so this likely migrant was an unexpected find.

An incredible discovery was an unusual looking sapsucker 4/6 (JD) that appeared to show highly favorable traits of the western **Red-naped Sapsucker**. Birders flocked to a neighborhood in DOW 4/7, hoping to scrutinize field marks to confirm the ID, as a Red-naped would be the first for Pennsylvania and an exceedingly rare record east of the Mississippi R. Photos were circulated widely around the country and to experts in western states where Red-naped is found. With low vagrancy patterns and evident intermediate features between the winter-resident **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, it was determined that this bird was likely a hybrid and voted as such by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee.

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was observed at PCT 5/16-19 (BH, m.ob.). This was the only known occurrence in spring. **Cliff Swallows** are a former nesting species here historically and now as low-density migrants in spring. Typically seen as singles or pairs, the high count was of 4 from Pocopson Wetlands 5/11 (RG).

A singing Sedge Wren was discovered outside of Coatesville 5/24 (BBy), and again independently by another birder 5/27 (JS). The late date and continued song seemed promising that nesting could or already was occurring, marking a potential first record of modern day nesting in the county. Guidance from the PGC and Brandywine Conservancy were sought after to promote the wren's potential success. Unfortunately, efforts to protect the habitat were hampered when the area was mown down, and resulted in the bird's immediate disappearance. It was last observed in early June.

Nocturnal migrant listening often rewards the observer with species and numbers hard to obtain during daylight. A **Swainson's Thrush** flock of 134 migrating over DOW 5/25 (ZB) marked a county record. There was a noted uptick in **Gray-cheeked Thrush** encounters by observers this spring. Whether this was due to birder bias, more people looking due to changes in lifestyle forced by the pandemic, or more Gray-cheekeds stopping here during migration is a mystery. This low-density migrant was noted 5/15-5/27 (m.ob.). More common during fall migration, a **Lincoln's Sparrow** was found at OCTRES 4/5 (RG), and one was reported from DOW 5/11 (ZB). Two more reports came 5/21, from PCT (BB) and Sanatoga Preserve (JW, PW).

With the pandemic making for a difficult spring for most people, the fantastic shower of warblers dropping in delighted birders seeking ornithotherapy throughout the region with 32 species tallied county-wide. Notable was a strong showing of boreal-nesting species. These birds are often hard to find, and spring occurrence rewards admiring observers with handsome plumage and bold song. There was an increase of **Golden-winged Warblers** found this spring, which is especially notable since this species is drastically declining in population overall. The first observation

came from CW 5/3 (RG, MD, CH, MH, ZM), where birders were rewarded with a singing male. Another male was found 5/9 at Chrome Barrens (KF) and lingered into 5/10, and another male seen from a yard in Coventry 5/10 (PW, JW, SBa, MS). A **Prothonotary Warbler** was found along the Schuykill R near Phoenixville 5/4 (WS), where they were last known to be nesting in the county. It was only seen this one day, diminishing hopes that nesting would happen.

**Tennessee Warblers** are among those notable boreal species that trended upward in observations, found 5/4-24. A high count of 6 Tennessees' was from both Crow's Nest Preserve 5/17 (NF, SS), and PCT 5/18 (BQ). Spring is more favorable than fall for finding **Mourning Warblers** here, and this spring 4 individuals were discovered. One was found at CW 5/13 (MA), and a male was spotted at PCT 5/17-20 (BH, m.ob.). A singing male was found in DOW 5/18 (HM), and one at BCP 5/20 (LL). Presumed the same individual nesting last year, a **Kentucky Warbler** was on territory at Warwick C.P. starting 5/3 (m.ob.). Another was found at CW the same day (DT, RT). A singing male was recorded from Bryn-Coed Preserve 5/14 (RK). Declining in general, Kentuckys here are always a good find. **Cerulean Warblers** are another species suffering population loss and no longer known to nest in *Chester*. Single Ceruleans were encountered at CW 5/13 (RG, MD, CH, MH, ZM), Waterloo Mills Preserve 5/10 (KF), Kennett Square 5/11 (HD), and again at CW 5/14 (CH).

**Bay-breasted Warblers** put on a nice show for birders across the county, with numerous encounters, often in small feeding *flocks*! This uncommon spring migrant had a high count of 8 individuals, 6 of those feeding in one tree, from PCT 5/14-24 (m.ob.). **Yellow-throated Warbler** was found in several locations 4/17-5/20 (m.ob.), but none were known to linger. **Cape May Warblers** made a nice showing 5/3-19 (m.ob.). This is another splashy boreal species that dropped in with better-than-average numbers.

A male **Summer Tanager** excited the birder who found him coming to her suet feeders 5/15 (DH). He was a one-day wonder, and the only Summer Tanager found in spring. This species is an irregularly found migrant and always a treat for birders who find them here. A shining star during the early throes of the pandemic, a young male **Western Tanager** caused great excitement for birders when it was reported from a yard within Valley Forge National Historic Park 3/15 (KJ, RK). This is only the third county record of this western vagrant. It continued through 3/21, offering great looks to those who sought a bright spot during a difficult time.

Observers: **Holly Merker, 520 Baintree Run, Downingtown, PA 19335, (610) 733-4392, HCYbelle@gmail.com.** Mike Andersen, Josh Auld, Zach Baer, Adam Bartles, Sandy Bauers (SBa), Barry Blust, Sabrena Boekell, Sharon Burke, Lois Bryan, Brian Byrnes (BBy), Kayann Cassidy, Susan Charkes, Evan Coates, Steve Cottrell, Mike Coulter, John Daniel, Hank Davis, Beth Daugherty, Mike Defina, Joey Della Penna, Nikki Flood, Judy Ford, Kevin Fryberger, Michael Gardner, Jean-Marie Gauthier, Louise Gensemer, Peter Gibb, Al Guarente, Denice Hardtmann, Michael Hartshorne, Mary Ellen Heisey, Jason Horn, Barbara Hostetler, Chad Hutchinson, Kate Jensen, Dave Karkosak, Joanne Karkosak, Clyde Kessinger, Rick Keyser, Carol Kuniholm, Larry Lewis, Dave Luning, Carol Majors, Ron Majors, John McNamara (JM), John Mercer (JMe), Patrick Millar, Zach Millan, Jim Moffett (JMo), Michael Niven, Ellen Nunn, Brian Quindlen, Brian Raicich, Rick Robinson, Joe Sebastiani, Charles Shattuck, Kathy Shattuck, Win Shafer, Vince Smith, Marilyn Spitz, Tim Sterrett, Ian Stewart, Scott Stollery, Wendy Sykora, George Tallman, Diane Thomas, Rick Thomas, Gerry Tieg, Andy Urquhart, Patricia Verbosky, Laura Wagner, Jeff Wahl (JWa), John Werth, Patty Werth, Ann Williams.

#### **Clarion County**

Locations: Clarion (CL), Cook Forest SP (CF), Curllsville (CV), Kahle L. (KL), Mt. Zion - SGL 330/Piney Tract (MZ), New Bethlehem (NB), Redbank Valley Trail (RVT), Rimersburg (RI), Sarah Furnace (SF).

Five waterfowl reports merit some mention this season, where variable and unusual weather likely caused some changes in migration. **Blue-winged Teal** was only seen at one location, with a single bird noted at a small pond near Leeper 4/8 (SK). **Northern Pintail** were also only noted once, with 4 at KL 3/5 (DS). **Redhead** were at KL as well, where 30 were seen 3/11 (RF), and 2 **Long-tailed Ducks** there 3/16 (MB, ES). **Red-breasted Mergansers** were reported in NB, with a single bird 3/29 (J&AK) and one fairly late female at KL 5/17 (ES).

**Ruffed Grouse** had a better showing with one to 2 birds seen and heard drumming in several areas around Lucinda 4/12-5/7 (ES). **Common Nighthawks** were seen in migration with 2 noted at dusk near CV 5/16 and 5/25 (DD, CW). An unusual species in any season, a **Sandhill Crane** was seen near Callensburg, calling and flying over some marshy fields 5/14 (NH). As they increase their range in Pennsylvania, it would not be surprising to add a breeding record for *Clarion* as there is available habitat.

Two **American Woodcock** were first calling and displaying fairly early this year near CV 3/2 (DD, CW). At the same location near CV as heard last year, one to 2 **Wilson's Snipe** were heard winnowing after dusk between 4/5-23, and one was also heard on nearby Rankin Rd 4/16 (DD, CW). Both sites have small marshy areas surrounded by grassland and some agricultural fields. **Great Egrets** are not reported some years, so worth noting one seen at KL 4/19 (TS).

**Osprey** were found in greater numbers this year, with a bird found in CV 4/14 and 4/24, and one also seen near CL 4/18 (CW). At Beaver Creek, where there is good habitat and a nesting platform, one was seen 4/19 (TS), and at KL where there is also great habitat, one was noted 4/19 (ES) and 5/8 (BB). Remarkably, there were three reports of **Golden Eagle**, which is very unusual. This covered a span of 6 days and sightings were within several miles, so possibly the same bird, however this is peak migration time for the species. One was seen soaring over fields near CV 3/21 and 3/26 (CW) and, about 5 miles away towards Limestone, another bird was seen 3/22 (ES).

**Northern Harrier** numbers continued to be good into the spring, with multiple areas reporting. A pair was seen at Rankin Rd near CV 3/13 (CW), and a pair also present at MZ 5/4-31 (RP, CR, ES). During May, 5/2-16, singles were also reported from RI (DSh), Limestone (JC), and CV area (CW, AM). Three successful **Bald Eagle** nesting efforts were welcome news for this raptor that continues to do well in its population recovery. A longstanding nest along the Clarion R. near Sligo had an adult on the nest 4/14 (CW), and another location on the river near Millcreek had 2 adults at the nest 4/4-6 (ES). A newer nesting location on the Clarion R. near Callensburg had multiple reports from 4/6-5/17 with 2 adults seen and 2 young in the nest (NH, ES, CW). The only location for **Short-eared Owl** was at Rankin Rd. near CV, where 2 were seen through 4/16 (DD, CW). Unfortunately, they did not continue, though this was historically a breeding location, and a large expanse of excellent habitat remains.

**Red-headed Woodpeckers** are always worth noting. One was seen near Lucinda 5/2 (ES), one at CF 5/12 (ES), and one at a feeder near Fisher 5/15 (DK). There are just two falcon reports for the season, the first being a **Merlin** spotted near Leeper 4/13 (BB). A **Peregrine Falcon** was seen outside Clarion at the I-80 overpass taking down a pigeon over the median 3/11 (CW).

**Alder Flycatchers** are not common but generally regular in migration, however it is worth noting an unusual count of 5 singing at Beaver Creek 5/30 (ES). There is a large area of excellent habitat here, although nesting at this site had not been confirmed in the past. **Purple Martins** have had some newer nesting locations in the county but are never common. Two were seen near CV 5/18 (CW), and 4 were seen at KL 4/19 (ES) and 12 also reported 5/22 (MH, RH, FM).

Other than at their regular location at CF, only a single **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was seen at CL 4/3 (TS). A rare migrant, a **Marsh Wren** was found at the edge of KL 5/5 (ES). **Purple Finches** continued as year-round residents at a location with great spruce and pine habitat in RI, with remarkably up to 30 birds seen in migration during Apr and continuing with 4 to 7 into nesting season at the end of May (MM).

**Fox Sparrows** had lower than usual numbers, with just one bird at



CL 3/21 (TS) and one in RI 4/5 (DSh). Cold, snowy weather hit in early May, possibly leading to the increased numbers and sightings of **White-crowned Sparrows**, which make their way through the state in this time period. Up to 6 were at one location in CL 5/5-10 (TS), and one to 2 at two other locations in CL 5/4-10 (ES). Three were present in RI 5/3-12 (MM) and 3 near NB 5/10 (ES). Up to 6 were at feeders near CV 5/8-17 (CW). **Henslow's Sparrows** were first heard with a record early return a week sooner than normal, when several were found at MZ 4/4 (MWe). **Lincoln's Sparrows** have not been as common in spring, so it was unusual to have three sightings at one location near CV. One bird was seen there 5/2, 5/13 and 5/17 (CW). **Rusty Blackbirds** are infrequently reported, and this season only one sighting was made, 4 birds seen at a farm field seep beside a wooded area near RI 3/28 (CW).

**Worm-eating Warblers** are the first of note for these species, and they remain present at their regular locations along wooded riparian slopes along the southern edge of the county, which is actually about the northern edge of their range in western Pennsylvania. They were found in two areas along the Armstrong Trail near East Brady 5/10-11 (ES): 2 were seen along RVT 5/27 (MHi, RH, FM), and one there 5/28 (CW). The first **Louisiana Waterthrush** was heard singing near SF 4/5 (CW). RVT is also an excellent location for this species, and up to 5 birds were found there from 4/15 through the end of the season (MHi, RH, FM, ES, CW). A new, more northern location was found for this species, with one found along Licking Cr. near Snyderburg 5/27, well into breeding season (ES).

**Cerulean Warblers** are a species of concern but numbers along RVT, where they are most regular, appear to be holding. They were reported back on territory in their usual time frame, with the first heard 5/1 (CW), and then up to 5 singing males found between 5/22-29 (ES, CW). One was also reported at the Foxburg trail along the Allegheny R. 5/30 (MW). **Blackpoll Warblers**, common in later May, were down this year with one at SF 5/17 (TR) and one at Foxburg 5/30 (MW). **Pine Warblers** were up in reporting with three locations. One was early in the season at a suet feeder near Strattanville 3/19 (MH), another also at a suet feeder in CL 4/20 (ES), and one near Leeper 4/30 (SK). **Yellow-throated Warblers** were present in a limited range, noted in one regular location on RVT near RI 5/22 (CW) and 5/27-28 (MHi, RH, FM). **Wilson's Warbler** rounds off the list as it remains just an intermittently reported migrant, and just one was found near CV 5/16 (CW).

ADDENDUM: A significant sighting for the winter season of 2019-2020 was missed. In a sign that **Golden Eagles** may be spending the winter in *Clarion* like other areas of Pennsylvania, one was seen at MZ 2/16 (MWe).

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### Clearfield County

Locations: Curwensville L. (CL), Platt Road Swamp (PRS).

Personal communication was supplemented by information from the PSO listserv and eBird for this report. A **Greater White-Fronted Goose** was seen with a flock of **Canada Geese** at PRS 3/3 (BM). A tagged **Trumpeter Swan**, T51, was photographed at Sunset L. 3/25 (JG). As many as 4 **Surf Scoters** were observed at CL 4/30 and 5/11 (JF, BM, JS, DR, JV) and as many as 3 **White Winged Scoters** were at CL 4/18 and 4/26 (JF, JS); an additional 2 **White Winged Scoters** were seen at Treasure L. 4/26 (DR). A **Red-Necked Grebe** was seen at CL 4/8 (JS). A **Common Gallinule** was seen at the DuBois Res. 5/8 (DR).

One **Upland Sandpiper** was observed along Sandy Ridge Road 5/24 (NL) and 5/25 (JF). Three **Short-Billed Dowitchers** were observed in Karthaus 5/16 (JF). **Red-throated Loons** were seen at CL 4/17 (JS) and 4/30 (DR). A **Great Egret** was seen flying over the golf course at Treasure L. 4/13 (DR), and later one was seen at PRS 4/19-25 (JF, GO,

JS, TS). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard calling at PRS 3/18 (JF). **Merlins** are becoming common in *Clearfield* with observations in DuBois 4/2 (NV), Karthaus 4/2 (JF), Bimini L. 4/30 (DR), and CL 5/7 (JV) and 5/11 (BM, JS, JV). A **Winter Wren** was observed at the intersection of Anderson Cr. Road and Gordon Road in Huston Twp. 4/3 (DR). A **Gray-Cheeked Thrush** was heard singing near Clear Run 5/29 (DR).

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### Clinton County

Locations: Avis (AV), Central Mountain High School (CMHS), Kettle Creek SP (KCSP), Lock Haven (LH), Mill Hall (MH), South Avis (SA), Susquehanna R. (SR).

April produced a few large fallouts of waterfowl. The first occurred with **Bufflehead**, many **Ruddy Ducks**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Ring-necked Ducks**, and **Horned Grebes** on the SR at LH 4/18 (DR). A waterfowl raft included **White-winged Scoters**, **Greater Scaup**, **Common Loon**, and **Double-crested Cormorants** at LH 4/25 and 4/26 (C&CH, DR). Two **Surf Scoters** were reported on the SR at SA 4/25 (C&CH, TS).

Nine **Caspian Terns** were seen at KCSP 4/29 (SL). Rare for Clinton, a **Black Tern** was hawking insects over water at SA 5/6 (SA). The returning pair of **Ospreys** was again nesting on a cell tower in Mill Hall and produced 3 young during the period (m.ob.). Two **Black Vultures** were seen near AV 4/29 (DR).

Very good birds for Clinton, 3 **Glossy Ibis** were spotted at KCSP 4/29 (SL). **American Bitterns** were observed at the MH wetlands 4/25 and at the CMHS wetlands at MH 5/18 (BS, DF). Another rarity for the county, a male **Least Bittern** was seen at the MH wetlands 5/8-9 and again 5/16 (BS, DR, SR, WL). A **Sora** was found at McElhatten 5/15 (C&CH).

Two **Black-bellied Plovers** were at SA 4/30 (C&CH), and a **White-rumped Sandpiper** was observed at SA 5/31 (AC, BS). Two of the three species of phalaropes showed up at SA during the period. A **Wilson's Phalarope** was seen there from 4/25-28. A **Red-necked Phalarope** arrived there 5/29 and remained through at least 5/31 (m.ob.).

**Red-headed Woodpeckers** were near Lamar 5/16 (C&CH), and another was near Haneyville 5/30 (DF). A road-killed Red-head was seen between MH and Beech Cr. 6/15 (WL). An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was found near Castanea 5/18 (AC, BS). **Marsh Wrens** were reported at the MH wetlands 5/22 and 5/30 (BS, LB). Another was found at the CMHS wetlands 5/1 (CH). **Golden-winged Warblers** were discovered near Eastville 5/2 and 5/4 (LH). One was seen in a yard in Woolrich 5/18 (C&CH). Yet another great bird for Clinton, a **Dickcissel** showed up at a feeder in AV 4/17 (LM).

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### Crawford County

Locations: Conneaut L. (CL), Conneaut Marsh - Custards (CM-C), Conneaut Marsh - Geneva (CM-G), Conneaut Marsh - McMichael Rd (CM-MMR), PSP (PSP), PSP - Dam (PSP-D), PSP - Miller's Ponds (PSP-MP), PSP - Spillway (PSP-S), Woodcock Cr. Park - Dam (WCP-D).

**Snow Goose** is scarce in the spring, so one at PSP-S 3/15 (RL) and 4 at PSP-MP 3/24 (RL, CN) are especially notable. A single **Mute Swan**, infrequent in *Crawford*, was seen at CM-G 5/19 and 5/21 (MV, SW). There was a significantly higher-than-normal number of **Trumpeter Swans** this season, as seen in this table:

Number	Date	Location and Observer(s)
2	3/5 - 4/11	CM-C (m.ob.)
4	3/8	CM-G (JM)
1	3/30	Ernst Bike Trail (BWi)
1	4/19, 4/25	Erie NWR (RE, EN, KN)
3	4/25	CM-G (RL)
1	4/26	CM-MMR (AL)

Notable counts of **Tundra Swan** included 175 near SGL 272 3/5 (EN, KN) and 80 near Steuben Twp. 3/8 (MBi).

Early observations of **Blue-winged Teal** included 2 at CM-MMR 3/17 (CG) and 2 at CM-C 3/17 (RN). A late Blue-winged Teal was at PSP-MP 5/30 (MV). A good count of 141 **Northern Shovelers** were in the Conneaut Marsh area 4/1 (RL).  **Gadwall** included 691 in the Pymatuning area 4/1 (RL) and 3 late birds at PSP-S 5/26 (RHs, SS). Two late **American Wigeon** were at PSP-MP 5/1-2 (JM, CN, KPi, MW). A notable count of up to 154 **Northern Pintails** were at CM-G 3/1 (CG, MV). Several late Northern Pintail at CM-MMR included 16 on 4/24 (KPi), one 4/25 (RHo), and 2 on 4/26 (AL). **Canvasback** were lower in frequency and number than normal this spring (m.ob.). Excellent counts of 1300 **Redheads** were at CL 3/3 (RL), and 2747 **Ring-necked Ducks** were at CM-C 3/24 (RL). **Greater Scaup** were in their expected numbers and locations (m.ob.) with a high count of 33 at Candahota L. 4/5 (JC). **Lesser Scaup** included a good count of 228 at CL 3/3 (RL) and 2 late birds at PSP-S 5/23-30 (RH, SHs, SMc, MV).

**Long-tailed Duck** included 40 at CL 3/8 (RL), one at CM-C 3/21 (RHo, TN), 3 at PSP-D 3/23 (MW), 8 at Erie NWR - Sugar L. 3/31 (RE), and 2 at PSP - Causeway 4/2 (CN). A good count of 157 **Buffleheads** were at CL 4/1 (RL). Counts of 108 **Hooded Merganser** were in the Pymatuning area 4/19 (RL) and 500 **Red-breasted Mergansers** at PSP-D 3/28 (MW). A count of 155 **Ruddy Ducks** were on CL 4/19 (CN); 2 late birds were seen at PSP- Causeway from 5/23-5/30 (RHs, SH, SMc, MV).

There was a higher number of **Ruffed Grouse** this spring, all on the eastern half of the county (m.ob.). A late **Horned Grebe** was at SGL 277 on 5/25 (RHs, SH). Four reports of **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** were singles at Hartstown Marsh 5/24 (MHa), at PSP-D 5/25 (SMc), in the Pymatuning area 5/30 (RL), and at CM- MMR 5/30 (AH). One **Black-billed Cuckoo** was in the Townville area 5/21 (AL) and another near WCP-D 5/23 (BWi).

Reports of **Common Nighthawk** were lower than average this spring, including single birds in the Meadville area 5/16 (CG), in the Townville area 5/21 (AL), at WCP-D 5/25 (RHs, SH), and at a private location in the Meadville area 5/26 (KPi). Early reports of **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** included 2 north of Townville 4/23 (AL), and one in Meadville 4/24 (RHo). A **Virginia Rail** at CM-MMR 3/26 (MAK, GK) represents a very early date for this species. **Sora** and **Common Gallinule** occurred in their expected numbers and locations (m.ob.). Continuing from winter, the number and frequency of **American Coots** observed were lower than normal (m.ob.). **Sandhill Crane** were as expected (m.ob.)

An **American Avocet**, an excellent bird for *Crawford*, was at PSP-MP 5/30 (RL). A **Black-bellied Plover** was at PSP-MP 4/18 (JM, TN, MW). A good count of 21 **Semipalmated Plovers** were seen at PSP-MP 5/14 (MW). An **Upland Sandpiper** was in the PSP-MP and the PSP - Wilson Rd areas beginning 4/25 and continuing throughout the rest of the season (m.ob.). A **Stilt Sandpiper** was reported at CM-MMR 4/19 (RSt). Two somewhat early **Dunlin** were at PSP-MP 4/12 (JN, TN), and a high count of 11 were seen 4/22 (MW). A **Baird's Sandpiper** was at PSP-MP 5/15-16 (AE, CN, KZ). Early observations of **Least Sandpiper** included 2 at PSP - Hartstown Project 4/14 (MW), 3 at PSP-MP 4/14 (NM) and up to 5 there 4/19-4/22 (JM, CN). A **White-rumped Sandpiper** was at PSP-MP 5/16 (AM, BWe). Good counts of **Semipalmated Sandpiper** included 19 at PSP-MP 5/14 (MW) and 23 at CM- MMR 5/16 (RT).

Twenty **Short-billed Dowitcher** were at PSP-MP 5/3 (CG). **American Woodcock** included 2 early birds in the Meadville area 3/1 (RHs, PS) and one along E. Spring Rd 3/5 (KZ); 16 were at Woodcock L.- Abandoned Rd Trail 3/11 (TN). An early **Solitary Sandpiper** was at PSP-MP 4/13 (MW). **Willet** is a rarely observed bird in *Crawford*, so 6 at PSP - Jamestown Beach 4/26 (MHa) were especially notable. **Lesser Yellowlegs** and **Greater**

**Yellowlegs** were again primarily in the Pymatuning and Conneaut Marsh areas (m.ob.). Up to 2 Lesser Yellowlegs were at PSP-MP 3/22-3/29 (JF, MHa, JM, CN), early dates for this species. A Greater Yellowlegs was first at PSP-MP 3/21 (RHo), and a high count of 160 were there 4/22 (MW).

A notable count of 5705 **Ring-billed Gulls** were observed in the Pymatuning area 3/15 (RL). Several large counts of **Herring Gull** at PSP-D this season included 2000 on 3/3 (MW), 1000 on 3/7 (MW), and 1000 on 3/14 (ZM). **Lesser Black-backed Gull** included one seen at PSP-D 3/3 (MW) and 2 seen 3/7 (TN, KPi, MW). A **Black Tern** was at Pymatuning L. 5/12 (KZ). **Common Tern** included 2 at SPS-S 4/10 (SR) and 4/21 (KZ), 3 in the Pymatuning area 5/16 (AM), and one there 5/19 (MV). An excellent count of 34 **Common Terns** were at SGL 269 on 5/6 (KZ). **Forster's Tern** were as expected (m.ob.). At least 90 **Double-crested Cormorants** were at Erie NWR - Sugar L. 4/11 and 4/18 (RE).

An **American Bittern** was at CM-MMR 5/16 (RT), and reports of **Least Bittern** included 2 at CM-MMW 5/21 (TN, KPi) and one at SGL 277 on 5/25 (RHs, SH). Fewer than usual, **Great Egret** included one at CM-C 4/11 (TN), 2 at Erie NWR 4/19 (RE), and 2 at CM-G 4/26 (AL). A **Black Vulture** was seen over a farm in Spring Twp. 5/21 (HC). **Rough-legged Hawks** were in their expected Pymatuning area (m.ob.), with 2 at PSP-MP 3/7 (MHa, RHr, DKa, SMa, RN).

A **Short-eared Owl** was in the Springboro area 3/12 (CN). **Red-headed Woodpecker** were as expected (m.ob.). **Merlin** reports were one in the Pymatuning area 4/9 (MW) and 5/30 (RL), and another near SGL 277 on 4/20 (KZ). A **Peregrine Falcon** was in the Pymatuning area 3/12 (RL).

**White-eyed Vireo** was near Hartstown 5/8 (MW) and 5/16 (TN), and one was at Erie NWR - Shafer and New Rds 5/27 (TN, KPi). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was observed at Woodcock L. - Tennessee Trail 5/20 (TN). **Common Raven** observations continued to increase, particularly in the eastern and central areas of *Crawford* (m.ob.). **Horned Lark** were as expected (m.ob.) with a high count of 30 in the PSP near Jamestown 3/1 (TN). Two quite early **Purple Martins** were in the PSP-MP area 3/23 (PF), and 12 early **Tree Swallows** were seen at CM-C 3/7 (TN, KPi). Two early **Bank Swallows** were at PSP-D 4/10 (MHa), and a high count of 40 **Cliff Swallows** were in the Pymatuning area 5/16 (AM).

Multiple observations of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** were reported (m.ob.). **Winter Wren** included one at Woodcock L. - Dickson Rd Trail 4/4 and 4/6 (TN), one at SGL 85 on 4/26 (KZ), one in the Springboro area 4/29 (CN), and another near Conneautville 4/30 (KZ). **Marsh Wren** was as expected (m.ob.) with 2 at CM-MMR 3/26 (MAK, GK), representing an early date.

A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was at Conneaut Marsh - Towpath Rd 5/21 (RL). An early **Wood Thrush** was at the Ernst Bike Trail 4/19 (IF). **Northern Mockingbird** was seen throughout the county and season (m.ob.). Two reports of **American Pipit** included 6 at PSP - Hartstown Project 4/16 (MW) and 15 in the Springboro area 4/17 (CN). A high count of 7 **Purple Finches** were in the Townville area 4/17 and 4/21 (AL), and **Pine Siskins** were north of Townville 4/19 (AL). The only reports of **Snow Bunting** were at PSP - Causeway with up to 6 on 3/1 (IF, TN, SR) and one 3/3 (RL).

Early **Chipping Sparrow** included one seen near CL 3/7 (RHr, SMa), 3 at CM-MMR 3/17 (CG), one at Woodcock L. - Abandoned Rd Trail 3/29 (BWi), and another near Guntown Rd 3/30 (CN). Early **Field Sparrows** included one at the Ernst Bike Trail 3/20 (BWi), another at Erie NWR 3/30 (EN, KN), and 2 at Woodcock L. - Abandoned Rd Trail 4/1 (TN, KPi). **Vesper Sparrow** included one near Brown Hill Rd 3/12 (RL) and another near Conneautville 4/16 and 4/30 (KZ). A singing male **Grasshopper Sparrow** in the Erie NWR - Sugar L. area 5/31 (RE) was especially notable. **Fox Sparrow** had only one at Greendale Cemetery in Meadville 3/23 (TN), one at Erie NWR - Deer Run Trail 4/1 (BWi), another at Woodcock L.- Abandoned Rd Trail 4/1 (TN, KPi), and 2 near Spring Twp. 4/5 (AT). Only three reports of **Lincoln's Sparrow** had one in the Townville area 5/13 and 5/14 (AL), one in the Erie NWR - Sugar L. area 5/14 (RE) and 2 near Tamarack L. Rd 5/21 (RL).

**Bobolink** was observed in expected numbers and locations (m.ob.). **Orchard Oriole** and **Rusty Blackbird** were as expected (m.ob.) with a high count of 100 of the latter at CM-MMR 4/24 (TN).

**Louisiana Waterthrush** occurred regularly throughout the eastern half of *Crawford* and continued the increasing trend of the last several years (m.ob.). Five **Northern Waterthrush** were in the Centerville area 5/1 (AL). A **Golden-winged Warbler** was observed and heard at PSP-S 5/16 (AM,

BWe). **Prothonotary Warbler** were as expected (m.ob.). **Orange-crowned Warbler** was notable near Spring Twp. 5/2 (AT). **Mourning Warbler** included up to 4 in the Meadville area 5/17 and 5/18 (TN, KPi), one at WCP-D area 5/22 and 5/24 (TN, KPi), and 2 at Cornplanter SF - Strawbridge Tract 5/30 (KPi).

One **Cerulean Warbler** was at Conneaut Marsh - Towpath Rd 5/21 (RL), and 2 at SGL 152 on 5/30 (TN). **Yellow-rumped Warbler** were as usual in the Conneaut Marsh area (m.ob.) as well as at WCP-D 5/7 (BWi), 5/10 (RHo, TN, KPi), and 5/14 (TN). **Canada Warbler** included three reports of a single bird in the Meadville area 5/15 and 5/17 (TN, BWi), at CM- MMR 5/19 (CA, KA, NA), and at Conneaut Marsh - Shafer Rd 5/24 (TN, KPi). **Wilson's Warbler** included one at WCP-D area 5/15 and 5/16 (RHo, TN, KPi, BWi), one near Hartstown 5/16 (TN), and one in the Meadville area 5/18 and 5/23 (TN, KPi, BWi).

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Wood, Kendall Zook.

### **Cumberland County**

Locations: Big Spring (BS), Mud Level Rd. (MLR), Opossum L. (OL), Tuscarora SF (TSF).

Please note that, unless otherwise stated, occurrences and the number of prior occurrences of the species listed in this report are according to eBird records and "An Annotated List of the Birds of Cumberland," *Pennsylvania Birds* 2016, Volume 30, Number 3 (Gauthier). It should also be noted that there may be current and historical sightings for *Cumberland* listed on eBird from the Susquehanna River that may be possible to list on this report but, without clear documentation otherwise, they are considered *Dauphin* birds as the county line is the west shoreline of the Susquehanna River.

Perhaps just as big a surprise were the male/female pair of **Black Scoters** found in the Rte. 533 Quarry in Shippensburg 4/19 (BK, CP, RP, VG, BO, SB). This was the first record of the species in the county. Not quite as rare was one **Long-tailed Duck** on OL 3/27 (TJ), 6 **Common Goldeneyes** 3/8 (SK), and one at SGL 169 on 3/21 (BK, VG), and one very late **Ruddy Duck** 5/30-31 (VG, RK, AM, JM).

Notable by its absence was the Chuck-will's-widow that had appeared every year since 2015. The bird was sought on a few occasions throughout the spring to no avail. **Eurasian Collared-Dove**, on the other hand, was reported per usual in northwestern *Cumberland* (west of Rte. 233 and Rte. 997 north), but in addition one-two were reported west of Newville in the area of Rte. 641 and Greason Rd. throughout the period. However, there was no confirmed nesting for this species in *Cumberland*. Reported most years in the spring but in very small numbers, one **Common Gallinule** was seen at SGL 169 on Cabin Rd. 4/16-19 (CP, RP, m.ob.), and one at Tichy Ponds in Mt.

Holly 5/11-12 (PB). A **Sandhill Crane** was seen in flight at Limekiln Rd. in West Pennsboro Twp. 5/12 (KJ).

In a poor spring for shorebirds, the only two species of note were 3 **Black-bellied Plovers** on MLR 4/30-5/1 (AdM, m.ob.) and one **Short-billed Dowitcher** at the same location 4/30 (VG, BK, AdM, BO, CP, RP). There

This season made the fourth straight spring that **Trumpeter Swans** were seen in *Cumberland*. There had only been three county records for all seasons. This is also the second consecutive year in which this species, that has only successfully bred once in Pennsylvania, is attempting to breed again. Last year it was at the Big Spring Fish and Game Club where a pair were unsuccessful. This year it is a mile east of that location on Creekview Rd. that a pair (perhaps the same one) is attempting to nest in a marsh. The result of this attempt will be updated in the Summer report. Additionally, there were also one other Trumpeter Swan and 2 **Tundra Swans** present throughout the season at the Big Spring Fish and Game Club. While it is unusual to have either species stay through migration, to have both in one location is highly unusual. The two Tundra Swans showed no sign of attempting to breed.

were two reports of a **Semipalmated Plover**, on the BS 5/16 (VG) and at Mountain Rd. Marsh in SGL 169 on 5/17 (KJ).

In contrast it was a great spring for two species of terns, which are only occasional in the spring, usually in low numbers of 3 or less birds. This year, **Caspian Tern** was reported on five separate dates at OL 4/13-5/1, with a high of 9 on 4/30 (DK, VG) and one other on MLR 5/3 (CP, RP), and **Forster's Tern** was reported on four different dates at OL 4/18-5/6, with an amazing 14 individuals seen 5/6 (DB, StB, SB, TJ).

**Least Bittern** was not reported from Mountain Rd. Marsh in SGL 169, which has been its most reliable location, but was reported from three other locations with singles at the Winding Hills Nature Trail in Mechanicsburg 5/4-13 (BM), on the Conodoguinet at Wolf Bridge Rd. in Carlisle 5/10 (PL, DB, StB, SB), and at SGL 169 on Cabin Rd. 5/11 (VG, RP, TJ).

There were two reports of **Golden Eagle**, which is a spring vagrant, with one at SGL 169 on 3/2 (BK) and one at Elk Hill Rd. in TSF 3/22 (VG). There was only one report of a **Barn Owl**, on Greason Rd. in West Penn Twp. 4/1 (TJ). An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at SGL 230 on 5/23 (RK, PL, AM), and a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at SGL 230 on 5/16 (RK, TA). In a better year than normal, an **Alder Flycatcher** was reported at Huntsdale 5/17-19 (VG, TJ, PB, DW), one near OL 5/21 (DK), and 2 at SGL 230 5/23 (RK, PL, AM). There were two reports of **Philadelphia Vireo** - one at Mt. Holly Marsh Preserve 5/9 (EB) and one at SGL 230 on 5/14 (DW).

A **Marsh Wren** was reported on the BS 4/18 (VG); only the fifth spring *Cumberland* record since 2000. The **Dark-eyed Junco x White-throated Sparrow** (hybrid) present in the winter period was seen at Pine Grove Furnace State Park in TSF 4/1 (BK). This is only the third Pennsylvania eBird

It was a truly outstanding spring for **Least Flycatcher** in *Cumberland*. This species shows up annually but in low numbers, usually no more than six or seven sightings throughout the period. This spring it was reported 21 out of 24 days, 5/1-24, from 25 locations across the county. It cannot be known for certain why there was such an unusually high number of reports, but perhaps weather patterns had something to do with it.

record for this hybrid.

When it comes to warblers of note, the **Northern Waterthrush** reported from the BS 4/11 (VG) was the first one reported on eBird in Pennsylvania in 2020. One **Golden-winged Warbler** was seen on Grahams Wood Rd. at the Conodoguinet Cr. 5/12 (RF) and, at SGL 230, there were 2 on 5/10 (KJ), one on 5/15 (TJ), and one on 5/24 (PL). There were several reports of **Prothonotary Warbler** at the Cabin Rd. and Bridgewater Rd. areas of SGL 169, with the highest report being of 8 individuals, including 3 males and 2 females in one tree 5/3 (AdM). There was a male/female pair noted at Cabin Rd. where new nest boxes had been placed in the fall of 2019. The species was confirmed breeding on Bridgewater Rd. in 2019. This year was a good year for **Mourning Warbler** as usually there is one to 3 reported for the season, with some years none. This spring there was one at the BS 5/10 (VG), 2 at Winding Hills Nature Trail in Mechanicsburg 5/15 (BM), one at SGL 169 on 5/17 (JS), one at the Pine Hill Arboretum Enola 5/24 (RK), one at



Ridley Park Camp Hill 5/25 (RK), and one to 3 at SGL 230 reported on six different days 5/13-26 (RK, m.ob.). There was one **Yellow-throated Warbler** male singing on East Creek Rd. Newburg on 5/9 and 5/21, assumed to be the same bird (JP, RP, CP, VG). There was no report of this species from West Fairview where it has bred at least the last two years.

The only report of **Dickcissel** for the period was of 2 singing males at the end of the period at MLR 5/30-31 (RK, AM, VG, DW).

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### **Dauphin County**

Locations: Cummings Swamp-Millersburg (CSM), Highspire Reservoir (HR), Wildwood L. (WL).

Last seen in 2017 at WL, a **Cackling Goose** was spotted there 3/15 (DK). Eighteen species of ducks were reported along the Susquehanna River at Front Street and West Fairview and other *Dauphin* waterways during March and April, as were the three scoter and three merganser species (m.ob.).

**Ruffed Grouse** were heard drumming in two locations at SGL 211 on 4/4-5 (AB, RZ). **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were first detected in Weiser SF 5/1 (MD). The first **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** of the spring was reported in Middletown 4/29 (DS). Marshland surveys along with individual observations played a role in identifying migrating **Virginia Rails** at WL 3/24-5/31 (DH, BK, SM, PS) and at the Dauphin Highlands G.C. 4/17 (AM). Two **Common Gallinules** were also seen, heard and photographed at WL 5/2 (DM) and 5/31 (SM). A **Sandhill Crane** was a one-day wonder at WL 5/20 (CE). Thirteen shorebird species were observed in *Dauphin* during this period, many of them on the mudflats of WL.

Gull and tern migration was in full swing with reports from Fort Hunter and Middletown Union Canal on the Susquehanna R., including **Little Gull** 3/22 (JH) and 3/27 (JL) and **Black-headed Gull** at CSM 3/27 (S&SB) and at Heritage Park 3/20 (SS), along with a rarely seen **Black Tern** 5/25 (AC).

**American Bitterns** were seen at WL 4/22-5/16 (m.ob.) and at HR 4/24 (JL). The rarer **Least Bittern** was spotted at CSM 5/18 (S&SB). The first **Great Egret** seen in *Dauphin* was at WL 3/20 (SH, JS) while a lone **Snowy Egret** stopped in to be seen and photographed at WL 5/28 (TA, R&PP). Another **Snowy** was observed at Fort Hunter 5/2 (IG, DH, PS, SS). **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** have been nesting in uptown Harrisburg at Second Street - Calder to Seneca Street since 2012; this year 11 was the highest number seen at one time, on 4/15 (BK). **Glossy Ibises** were spotted in migration in two locations in late Apr with 2 at WL 4/29 (RS) and one at HR 4/12 (JL).

This is the third year for **Ospreys** attempting to nest on the cell towers along Industrial Road near WL with 2 nests built on one tower (R&PP). Two nests have been worked on along the Susquehanna R. near Steelton 3/16 (EC) with a bird observed sitting on the northern nest 5/30 (EC) but no confirmation of young. A pair of **Bald Eagles** built a nest along Boathouse Road at Swatara Cr. in Hershey in early Apr (BH, S&GL) and produced 3 young. None had fledged by the end of this reporting period but were practicing their flapping quite a bit. Visible from the road, watching them grow up was a rewarding and delightful way to spend time during while quarantining. A special thank you goes to BH for photographing and documenting their growth for local birders.

The **Peregrine Falcons** at the Rachel Carson State Office Building in Harrisburg produced 3 young, but the first 2 to fledge at the end of May needed to be taken to a rehabilitator. The third one remained on the nest at the end of this reporting period (AMc). The pair at Clark's Ferry Bridge north of Harrisburg produced 3 young (EC, S&SB, S&GL) with 2 of them fledging and being photographed on 5/30, while the third was still under the bridge. Exciting news for *Dauphin* is that a pair had been repeatedly observed along a river cliff facing in the northern part of the county, and nesting was suspected

(AMc, SS).

A **Marsh Wren** was found at WL 5/1 (DH, PS). This species had only been reported twice in the past decade, the last time being in WL in 2013. Twelve species of sparrows were reported, including a **Vesper Sparrow** found at Haldeman Island at SGL 290 on 5/9 (S&SB). **Bobolinks** were found at DP 5/13 (AB, RS) and in the Lykens area 5/6 (S&SB).

A hike on the Stoney Cr. Powerline Cut produced 47 species of birds 5/4, including 12 species of warblers, one of which was a **Brewster's Warbler** (EC, S&SR). Thirty-four species of warblers were seen in *Dauphin* altogether, including a lingering and well-documented **Orange-crowned Warbler** present in eastern Harrisburg through the winter until last seen 4/13 (AO, m.ob.). A block away from this site, a **Summer Tanager** was observed and photographed at another home 5/2 (JW). The last time this species was reported in *Dauphin* in eBird was in 2006.

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### **Delaware County**

Locations: Barrett's Meadow (BM), Commodore Barry bridge/riverfront (CB), Delaware R. (DR), First State National Historic Park (FSNHP), Fort Mifflin (FM), Glen Mills School (GMS), Governor Printz Park (GPP), Haverford College (HC), John Heinz NWR (JHNWR), Bridle Trail (BT) at Ridley Creek SP (RCSP), Springton Res. (SR), Wallingford (WAL). NFC = night flight call

March was misty but near normal, even slightly on the warm side. April continued a bit wetter and cooler. May followed suit with cooler and drier, but no significant weather events stand out for this period.

The biggest day for migrating **Snow Geese** this year was with 200 over Media 3/26 (AG), 250 over one Swarthmore location (DE), and 800 over another (EN, SN), 800-plus over Haverford (KJ, SJ), and an estimated 1100 over WAL (RF). This is 12 days later than last year's peak day. A **Ross's Goose** picked out from among the flocks in WAL (RF) and Swarthmore (EN, SN) may have been the same bird. A single **Ross's** was also noted in a flock of 120 over BM 3/10 (AG). A lingering **Snow Goose**, mixed in with Canadas, was found DR at FM 5/29 (AG, JH) and 5/30 (AK). **Tundra Swans** at CB numbered 65 on 3/3 (RF) and 27 on 3/13 (AG). Forty were also noted at GPP 3/6 (AG).

In the waterfowl department, reports were up quite a bit from normal. A **Blue-winged Teal** was discovered at SR 4/18 (RF) and remained through 4/19 (AG). There were four reports of a pair from JHNWR in April (m.ob.) and one 5/6 from DR at FM (RF). A pair were at Crum Cr. Res. 5/4 (TB) but stayed only the day. At JHNWR, **Northern Shoveler** were reported five days in March (m.ob.) while **Gadwall** were reported eight days from March through mid-April (m.ob.) with a high count of 18 on 4/8 (RZ). A single **Northern Shoveler** was found in the Upper Ridley-Crum Important Bird Area 5/3 (KG). The only **American Wigeon** was in a pond near a Philadelphia Airport runway 4/2 (JMc). **Green-winged Teal** were more numerous than usual with nine days of sightings from DR at FM 3/13-4/12 (m.ob.) and 20 reports from JHNWR 3/4-5/1 (m.ob.). In addition, reports came from Brinton Lake 3/1 and 3/10 (BB), one from behind Jet Stream Parking 4/11 (TB), and even a NFC report from WAL 3/26 (RF). Most years it has been lucky to have four to six reports total. Scaup reports were also plentiful with 17 days where **Greater Scaup** were from DR at FM between 3/2-4/1 (m.ob.). One **Lesser Scaup** was at The Willows 3/2 (BMd), and there was a flyover with one in a flock of 8 **Canvasback** 3/20 at HC (KJ, SJ). Five **Long-tailed Ducks** at GPP 4/1 (DB, AB) were not an April Fool's joke and delighted a few additional birders who rediscovered them upstream DR at FM. Another possible sighting of this species was from SR 4/19 (TB).

**Common Goldeneye** were at JHNWR 4/2-3 (JMc, m.ob.) and DR at

FM 3/5 (JMc), 3/6 (m.ob.) and 3/9 (AG) where **Red-breasted Mergansers** were on 14 different days 3/27-5/23 (m.ob.). Again, this is a species that is usually recorded in the county only a couple of times during this season. There was also one at GPP 4/1 (DB, AB) and one at JHNWR 4/3 (DO), but the high count of 18 occurred 3/29 DR at FM (BQ, ZM). **Ruddy Duck** was found at SR 4/18 (RF) and 4/26 (RG), at GPP 4/12 (DO) and 4/18 (RF), and at DR at FM 4/18 (EN, SN), where a dozen were photographed. **Pied-billed Grebe** was at its usual haunt, Crum Cr. Res., from 3/4-4/11 (m.ob.) with other sightings at Earles Lake, JHNWR, GPP and SR during that same period (m.ob.). SR also held **Horned Grebes** on 3/25 (RF) and 4/18 (RF). The DR at FM hosted a single **Horned Grebe** on 3/29 (AG) but boasted a flock of 8 on 3/30 (DB, AB) for a new daily high count.

**Wild Turkeys** occasionally are reported from the southwest corner of the county. There were a couple in Chadds Ford seen 3/15 (EW) and 5/1-2 (LF, AS), and also in Glen Mills, 4/9 (RF) where one was seen parading under the Purple Martin houses at the GMS, also 4/9 (JP).

In this unusual year, there were about a dozen locations reporting **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** in *Delaware* during the month of May, with some locations having sightings on multiple days (m.ob.) and multiple NFC being reported from WAL (RF) and HC (KJ, SJ). The same was true for **Black-billed Cuckoo**, although only WAL (RF) reported NFC. Spring **Common Nighthawk** passage occurred after the first week of May and continued throughout the month with widespread movement of multiple birds noted 5/16 (m.ob.) and a high count of 20 at HC that night (KJ, SJ). Individual birds were photographed sleeping in trees at RCSP 5/9 (JHd) and JHNWR 5/15 (TB). An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was recorded vocalizing in WAL 5/3 (RF). **Chimney Swift** was first sighted over HC 4/5, a new early date (KJ, SJ), and the first **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** visited a yard in Aldan 4/21 (RH).

A **King Rail** flushed from a drainage ditch DR at FM 5/1 (JMc), and were by Night Flight Calls 4/29 and 5/13 (Kj, SJ), and at WAL 5/29 (RF), suggesting this species may not be so rare as thought. A **Virginia Rail** NFC was recorded from the latter location 3/26 (RF); this species was noted at Lester FedEx Complex Wetlands 3/27 (AG), on 3/29 (AB, DB), on 3/30 (DO), on 5/2 (RF) and near the fireman's pond DR at FM 5/3 (DO). Two **Common Gallinules** were found in the drainage ditch 5/1 (DO) and again 5/13 (m.ob.). There was an **American Coot** in the same area 4/9-19 (m.ob.). Microhabitat is clearly important. Three **Sandhill Cranes** were at JHNWR 5/13-14 (JMc, m.ob.), seen on both sides of the county line.

Reports from JHNWR did not compare but still included these: **Semipalmated Plover** from 5/14-23 (m.ob.) with a high of 9 on 5/14 (JMc); **Least Sandpiper** nine dates (m.ob.); **White-rumped Sandpiper** 5/15 (TB); **Pectoral Sandpiper** 3/16 – 20 (m.ob.) and also 4/14 (PS); **Semipalmated Sandpiper** six dates in May with a high of 21 on 5/28 (JMc); **Wilson's Snipe** from 3/1 (RZ) through 4/21 (AG) with a high of 24 on 3/31 (RZ). Both yellowlegs were reported frequently during the period here and DR at FM.

Interesting shorebird NFC were **Upland Sandpiper** 4/19 over WAL (RF), **Short-billed Dowitcher** 5/22 and 5/23 at that location (RF), and 5/26 at HC (KJ, SJ); **Least Sandpiper** on five dates with NFC over WAL (RF); **Greater Yellowlegs** 4/28 and 5/23 (RF) and **Lesser Yellowlegs** 5/3 (RF), both over WAL. Several unidentified shorebirds were heard 5/26-27 from both NFC locations. Improved technology, detection and identification will eventually provide more insight into what is flying over our heads while we sleep.

In addition to shorebirds, gulls and terns were well-represented along the DR, particularly at FM. **Bonaparte's Gulls** were sighted here from 3/21 (AG) until 5/22 (AG) with birds noted at least every few days, sometimes in large numbers; high count was 44 on 4/25 (RF). In addition, a lone Bonaparte's flew over WAL 3/26 (RF), a few were on SR the morning of 4/18 (RF, m.ob.), and 35 were counted at GPP 4/25 (RF) the same day the high count was achieved slightly upriver. To put this in perspective, last year this species was noted only on four dates in April, and double-digit numbers were never recorded. Also on the DR at FM were a single **Iceland Gull** 4/13 (RF) and **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** 3/28 (JMc), 3/29 (ZM, BQ) and 4/12 (DO). The latter species was also seen at CB 4/13 (RF). A **Glaucous Gull** was a surprise at GPP 4/19 (RK). River watchers at FM turned up as many as 4 **Least Terns** 5/25 (RF) and 5/29 (JH), 2 **Gull-billed Terns** 5/28 (RF), and **Caspian Terns** on multiple dates from 4/12 (JMc) through 5/27 (RF) with as many as 11 birds on 4/23 (RF, AG). There were also 7 Caspian reports from JHNWR during the same time frame (m.ob.). Back on the DR at FM, a **Black**

**Tern** appeared 5/28 (DB, RF). **Common Terns** were noted on six dates (m.ob.) from 5/6 (RF) to 5/30 (AK). **Forster's Terns** cruised the river 4/9 - 5/29 (m.ob.) with sightings also from GPP and a half-dozen that wandered to JHNWR 5/1 (JMc). A **Royal Tern** discovered at GPP 5/29 (KR) made it upriver to FM later in the day and was seen by many elated birders at those two locations.

Shorebird finds in *Delaware* were excellent this year, probably from increased coverage by birders spending more time outside due to COVID-19. While some unusual species stayed long enough to be seen by multiple observers, others just happened to be detected in the few minutes that they moved through the area. The sandbars and mudflats of the DR at FM were particularly productive resulting in the following: **American Oystercatcher** 3/24 (RF) and 3/29 (AG), fourth and fifth county records; **Black-bellied Plover** 5/18 (2, RF), 5/21-22 (m.ob.), 5/24 (DB, AG), and 5 or 6 on 5/28 (RF, DB); **Semipalmated Plover** 12 days from 5/6-28 (m.ob.); **Hudsonian Godwit** 5/28 (RF), fourth county record; **Ruddy Turnstone** 5/22 (JMc, m.ob.) and 5/28 (RF, DB); 8 **Sanderlings** 5/22 (JMc, m.ob.), a new high count; **Dunlin** on nine dates between 3/23 (AG) and 5/23 (m.ob.) when a new high count of 105 was recorded (RF); **Least Sandpiper**, 19 dates with a high count of 15 in the fireman's pond 5/16 (DB); **White-rumped Sandpiper** at the fireman's pond 5/13 (RF) stayed through 5/15 (m.ob.); **Pectoral Sandpiper** consistently observed 3/23-5/5 (m.ob.); **Semipalmated Sandpipers** 10 dates in May (m.ob.) beginning 5/13 (RF) with a high count of 34 on 5/23 (JMc); **Wilson's Snipe** 3/9 (AG) through 5/1 (RF) with a high count of 32 on 3/29 (ZM, BQ).

A **Red-throated Loon** was seen along the DR at FM 3/29 (ZM, BQ) and 3/30 (AG). **Common Loons** are not unusual in *Delaware*, but it is worth noting that 43 flew over HC 4/12 in less than two hours (KJ, SJ) and similar counts were obtained from watches in WAL with 32 on 4/19 (RF) and 42 on 4/21 (RF), though in longer time intervals. This migration is an under-appreciated morning phenomenon, as may be that of **Double-crested Cormorants**. On 4/19, 164 were counted in 4.5 hours headed NNE over WAL (RF) while 100 flew over HC in 2.5 hours that same morning (KJ, SJ). **Great Cormorants** were not reported from CB this year but from DR at FM 3/26 (SN), 3/30 (DE, AG) and 4/4 (DB, AB). There was also one at GPP 4/1 (DO), and one flew over Hildacy Farm Preserve 5/6 (DB) in a group of 7 Double-crested Cormorants.

An **American Bittern** was spotted at JHNWR 4/21 (JMc), and one visited a small pond at Memorial Park and Mineral Hill 4/26 (DF). A NFC from this species was recorded over WAL 4/28 (RF). **Least Bittern** reports came from JHNWR 5/10-28 (DB, RF, AG, JH, JMc, RZ). A **Little Blue Heron** was also present there 5/14 (RF, DO) and at DR at FM 5/25 (RF). **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was seen roosting in a tree DR at FM 4/17 (JMc), recorded as a NFC over WAL 4/28 (RF), foraging along a creek in Media 5/1 (MM), and headed for the pond at dusk at HC 5/23 (KJ, SJ). One was also at Marcus Hook 5/25 (AG). There was a surprising report of 14 **White Ibis** flying in V-formation over Bryn Mawr 5/26 (KB). **Glossy Ibis** were reported from JHNWR 5/11 (DO), 5/14 (RF, DO) and 5/26 (RF) when there were 8, and from DR at FM where multiple birds were reported on eight dates 4/21- 5/29 (m.ob.) with flocks as high as 26 on 5/22 (AG) and 27 on 5/13 (RF).

The first **Osprey** report came from JHNWR 3/12 (RZ). A **Mississippi Kite** over WAL 5/29 (DO) was likely the same individual seen 50 minutes later over HC (KJ, SJ). There was also one 5/31 in Glen Mills (BB), coincidentally the same date as a Glen Mills sighting last year.

**Olive-sided Flycatchers** were reported only from Thornbury Twp. Trail 5/16 (JM) and Media 5/18 (DO). There was one report of **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, at Taylor Memorial Arboretum 5/16 (EN, SN). **Alder Flycatcher** was heard at JHNWR 5/26 (RF) and 5/28 (JMc) and recorded at FSNHP 5/31 (DE, AG). **Least Flycatcher** was reported about a dozen times, mainly in the second week of May (m.ob.). An adult **Red-headed Woodpecker** was a lucky find at JHNWR 5/3 (RF). A **White-eyed Vireo** was early at the BT 4/12 (DB), and **Blue-headed Vireo** arrived early in Springfield 4/11 (AB) and lingered late in Middletown 5/16 (AG).

**Horned Larks** were found in the GMS area 4/4-11 (AB, DB, FG, AG, JMc, JP) and at DR at FM 5/29 (JMc). **Bank Swallow** reports were occasional from JHNWR beginning 4/20 (DO) and consistent from the DR at FM (m.ob.)

throughout May with a high count of 25 from groups heading upriver on 5/23 (RF). There was a single **Cliff Swallow** report from the BT at RCSP 5/9 (RG). The only **Red-breasted Nuthatch** report came from this same location 5/13 (DO). An early **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was in Havertown 3/19 (SB). **Gray-cheeked Thrush** reports were numerous with over 15 from different locations (m.ob.). The only 2 **American Pipits** were found in Glen Mills 4/8 (JMc). A female **Purple Finch** in Glen Mills 3/27 (BB) was the only reliable report confirmed by photo.

**Grasshopper Sparrows** were recorded in transit over WAL with NFC 4/29 and 5/3 (RF). **American Tree Sparrow** passage over the same location was from 3/26-4/7 (RF). There were 5 **White-crowned Sparrow** reports, all from JHNWR from 3/13-5/10 (JMc, DB). **Vesper Sparrow** was reported from Hildacy Farm Preserve 4/7 (DO) and the GMS area 4/8-9 (m.ob.). **Savannah Sparrow** tallied 10 reports (m.ob.) and five nights with NFC over WAL, the peak of which was 4/29 (RF). **Lincoln's Sparrows** were seen in Gradyville 3/1 (BM), Chester Park 5/9 (EN, SN), and at HC 5/15 (KJ, SJ).

A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was reported from Tincum Twp. 5/6 (AG). **Bobolink** NFC were reported 5/22-23 from WAL (RF); indeed, there was a flyover DR at FM 5/22 (AG). **Eastern Meadowlarks** returned to their usual DR/Philadelphia Airport location as of 3/25 and remained through the end of the period (m.ob.). Two were also found in Glen Mills 4/8-11 (m.ob.), and one was a flyover NFC at HC 4/19 (KJ). As usual, **Rusty Blackbird** reports were regular from JHNWR 3/13-5/3 (m.ob.), with a high estimate of 55 on 4/3 (RF) and at least another half-dozen reports from across the county (m.ob.).

Thirty-two warbler species and one hybrid were reported during the count period. Among the more unusual were these: **Golden-winged Warbler** discovered at the BT 5/13 (DE) as well as **Brewster's Warbler** seen there that same day (EN, SN); **Prothonotary Warbler** that traversed county lines at JHNWR 5/14 (RF); **Kentucky Warbler** at FSNHP 5/12 (AG) and CR 5/16 (DE) and at Smedley Park 5/16 (DO); a single **Cerulean Warbler** at Martin Park 5/9 (JMc) and Darlington Tract 5/9-10 (AG, m.ob.); **Yellow-throated Warbler** at RCSP in the mansion area 4/7-12, a month earlier than last year's dates here (BR, m.ob.); additional Yellow-throated at CFM 4/17 (JMc), SR 4/19 (TB), Houston Park 4/20 (RF) and 4/21(DO), and Media 4/25 (JG). There was an early **Nashville Warbler** in Aston 3/16-17 (BS). More numerous than usual were reports of **Worm-eating, Tennessee, Hooded, Cape May, Bay-breasted, and Wilson's Warblers**.

It is worth noting that **Scarlet Tanager** numbers also seemed high. In addition, *Delaware* was among the counties to enjoy a **Summer Tanager** invasion. A female was discovered coming to a beekeeper's residence in Glen Riddle 5/9 (HI) and remained through 5/10. She cleaned out all the dead bees around the hives those two days and helped herself to a few live ones as well. A male visited a Media neighborhood 5/16 (DH). **Blue Grosbeak** was seen in Houston Park 4/30 (SB), at the BT 5/13 (DL), at Taylor Memorial Arboretum 5/16 (SB), DR at FM 5/21 (RF), at FSNHP 5/31 (DE, AG) and in nearby locations in Concord Twp. 5/1 and 5/24 (EW), hopefully with confirmed breeding in that SW corner of the county.

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#### **Elk County**

Locations: Moshannon S.F. Beaver Run (BEA), East Branch Lake Vicinity (EBLV), Rasselas Marsh (RM), City of St. Mary's (SM).

Spring 2020 and COVID-19 quarantine brought more eBird sightings than expected with 171 species reported in *Elk*. Two **Gadwalls** were seen near Winslow Hill Viewing Area 3/31 (CB), a **Common Goldeneye** was reported in EBLV 3/21 (BB), a **Ruddy Duck** was seen in RM 5/13 (BB), and one **Pied-billed Grebe** was seen in RM 3/21 (BB) and one at BEA on 5/2

(CB, PS).

In EBLV, one **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was seen 5/24 (BB) and one **Black-billed Cuckoo** 5/24 and 5/29 (BB), and a **Common Nighthawk** was seen there 5/21 (BB). **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were calling in May as usual: near Wilcox 5/3 (BB), in Porcupine Hollow 5/11 (NF), and in Horton Twp. 5/30 (CB). **Chimney Swifts** were seen on six occasions (BB, CB, RH, ES) with a high count of 8 near Johnsonburg 5/1 (BB).

A rare sighting was a **Virginia Rail** in RM 5/27 (BB). With only one previous report of a **Sora** in *Elk*, one was heard in Kersey 5/12 (CB), and another reported in Mosquito Creek Wetlands 5/14 (DH). Only reported twice previously in *Elk*, an **American Coot** was seen in RM 4/6 and again 4/24 (BB). Three **Semipalmated Plovers** were ph. in Kersey 5/12 (CB), seen that day with 10 **Least Sandpipers**, 2 **Solitary Sandpipers**, one **Greater Yellowlegs** and 2 **Lesser Yellowlegs**.

A charm of about 100 **American Goldfinches** was seen in EBLV 5/1 (BB). Almost 20 reports of **American Woodcocks** covered all of *Elk* with a high count of 12 near SM 4/22 of "displaying males and females seen in two fields" (BB). At EBLV, five **Bonaparte's Gulls** were seen 5/3, one **Black Tern** 5/25, and a **Forster's Tern** 5/25 (BB). **Double-crested Cormorants** had four sightings at EBLV in April and May (BB, CB) with a high count of 9 on 4/7 (BB) and one at BEA 5/24 (BH). The earliest reported observation of an **American Bittern** in *Elk* was at BEA 5/5 (CB). A **Green Heron** was reported at BEA 4/22 (PW), in SM 5/13 (CL), and in Kersey 5/27 (CB).

A **Northern Goshawk** was in EBLV 3/23 (BB). Reported for the first time in *Elk*, a **Red-headed Woodpecker** was seen in Benezette 5/23 (CL) and two anonymous gentlemen). **Merlins** were seen in RM 4/25 and near Johnsonburg 5/1 (CB).

An **Acadian Flycatcher** was observed near Wilcox 5/21 (BB) and in Hallton 5/31 (ES). An **Alder Flycatcher** was "heard clearly multiple times" at EBLV Dam 5/3 (CB) and heard at BEA 5/24 (BH). **Eastern Kingbirds** were seen in Kersey: one 5/12, four 5/17, and again four 5/19 (CB). A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was seen near SM 5/16 (BB). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was ph. near SM 5/18 (MM). A **Warbling Vireo** was observed at two locations near Wilcox 5/3 (BB).

A **Northern Shrike**, a third-ever report for *Elk*, was "observed perched over a 5-year-old clear-cut watching for prey" near Wilcox 3/27 (AS). Three **Purple Martins** were seen at EBLV Dam 5/26 (CB). **Cliff Swallows** were seen in Benezette, five on 5/11 (CB) and nine on 5/23 (CL). A **Northern Mockingbird** was seen at four sites in mid-April and May (BB, RH). A seldom-seen **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was observed near Wilcox 5/21 (BB). **American Pipits**, previously reported in *Elk* only in 2016, were seen four times in Kersey, with a high count of 10 on 5/17 (CB). A **Pine Siskin** was seen in EBLV 5/4 (BB). One **Vesper Sparrow** was reported in Kersey 5/3 (CB). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was in Kersey 5/8 (CB) and ph. at a feeder in EBLV 5/11 (BB).

A first-ever report of a **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was from EBLV 5/12 and included an audio recording (BB). One **Rusty Blackbird** was seen near Weedville 3/27 (CB) and again in EBLV 4/10 (BB).

Twenty-seven species of warblers were reported for *Elk* during Spring 2020. These are notable: a **Worm-eating Warbler** in EBLV 5/4 (BB); a third-ever-reported **Louisiana Waterthrush** near SM 5/16 (BB), and a **Northern Waterthrush** in Benezette Twp. 5/30 (RH). A **Blue-winged Warbler** was seen near Wilcox 5/3 and in EBLV 5/12 (BB). A first-ever *Elk* report for an **Orange-crowned Warbler** was near Wilcox 5/13 "in association with 8 **Nashville Warblers**" (BB).

Three **Cape May Warblers** were seen in EBLV 5/15 (AS), and one near SM 5/16 (BB). One **Cerulean Warbler** was also seen near SM 5/16 (BB), and 4 were in Hallton 5/31 (ES). There were five sightings of **Bay-breasted Warblers**: six in EBLV 5/15 (AS); in SM, one 5/16 (BB) and three 5/18 (MM); in Ridgway, one 5/19 (MKL) and two 5/21 (PW). A high count of 27 **Black-throated Blue Warblers** were noted near SM 5/19, as many singing males were seen and heard in perfect habitat (BB). Two **Canada Warblers** were ph. near Ridgway 5/17 (PW) and another near SM 5/18 (MM).

A first-ever *Elk* sighting of a **Summer Tanager** was reported in SM at West Creek Wetland Learning Center 5/13 (CL).

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### **Erie County**

Locations: Edinboro L. (EL), Fairview Business Park (FBP), Presque Isle Hawk Watch (PIHW), Presque Isle SP (PISP).

The season opened relatively mild, then it became unseasonably cold from mid-April through mid-May, delaying Passerine migration with the heaviest movement occurring during the latter half of May. An ice-free lake and bay prevented any build-up of waterfowl and gulls with no significant numbers reported. An open winter without any ice dunes at Presque Isle State Park allowed higher-than-normal lake levels and heavy winds to erode and flood large portions of the park, making many of the trails impassable without high boots. Despite the cooler than normal spring and many days of north winds, the few days with warm southerly winds produced some significant hawk flights. Single-day highs were broken for **Turkey Vultures**, **Broad-winged Hawks**, and **Bald Eagles**, and even seasonal totals were broken for the latter two. The high water on PISP flooded large portions of the park creating ideal habitat for some species of birds such as **Prothonotary Warbler**. For the second year in a row they nested on the bay side at the entrance of the park. As expected during spring migration, there were a few memorable sightings: **Glossy/White-faced Ibis**, **Golden Eagle**, **Sedge Wren**, **Summer Tanager**, **Kentucky Warbler**, and the county's third **Painted Bunting**.

The following birds of note were recorded from PISP unless indicated otherwise: **American Bitterns** were recorded mostly in or near Niagara Pond, where they regularly occur, with a high of 10 seen leaving the pond in the evening 4/28 (JF, JM). Three **Cackling Geese** were at FBP 3/9 (KA). **Sandhill Cranes** were reported from several locations in the county, usually in singles or small groups (m.ob.). White-winged Gulls were not especially prevalent this spring, with only a few **Iceland Gulls** reported around PISP, and at least 3 additional Iceland Gulls of the Thayer's type (m.ob.). About 5 **Glaucous Gulls** were reported during the first week of Mar around PISP (m.ob.). Up to 4 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were present in Presque Isle Bay during the first week of Mar (JM).

A **Snowy Owl** made a brief visit at Sunset Point 3/11 (DZ). Trekking the pines in Mar and Apr, at least 7 **Long-eared Owls** were located but only 3 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** (RD). Single **Short-eared Owls** were at Gull Point 3/20 (RD) and 3/28 (RSw), and one over PIHW 4/7 (JM). **Common Ravens** have become regular visitors at PISP and residents in the county with mostly singles and pairs reported (m.ob.). A single **Snowy Egret** was reported from Gull Point periodically 5/22-28 (MB). **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were scarce with only 2 seen, leaving Niagara Pond on the evening of 4/28 (JF, JM). A distant **Glossy/White-faced Ibis** was a surprise at PIHW as it flew east towards PISP 5/14 (JM, RS, JF).

Always exciting was a **Golden Eagle** photographed passing over PIHW 5/2 (JM, KF). Up to 2 **American Avocets** were at EL 4/20 and 4/30 for the second and third records at this inland site (JH). Two Avocets were also at Gull Point 4/30 (MB). There was a **Willet** fallout 4/26 when a county record of 44 set down at Gull Point and another 20 at Manchester Beach in Fairview Twp. (BP). Four more **Willet**s appeared at Gull Point 4/30 (MB) and yet another 22 at FBP 5/3 (BG). Two **White-rumped Sandpipers** were photographed in a flooded field near Waterford 5/25, a rare inland sighting (JH).

An adult **Laughing Gull** was photographed at Gull Point 5/21 (MB) and likely the same bird was at the north pier 5/26. Two **Black Terns** were present on EL 5/10-12 (JH, et al.), and one was seen briefly over Misery Bay 5/11 (JB). An inland fallout of **Common** and **Forster's Terns** was noted over EL 5/11 when DS recorded up to 36 **Common Terns** and 53 **Forster's Terns**.

A **Sedge Wren** was seen and heard along Dead Pond Trail 5/7 (JB). An adult male **Summer Tanager** was a good find at PISP Vista 4 on 5/1 (SS), and an immature male was photographed in a backyard in Erie 5/15 (NA). At least 3 **Golden-winged Warblers** were at PISP 5/3-19 (m.ob.), and one was in Waterford 5/17 (JH). One or two pairs of **Prothonotary Warblers** returned for the second year in a row to nest at the head of Presque Isle Bay (JF, JH). These breeding pairs are the first in 30 years to use nesting boxes (JH). Single **Prothonotary Warblers** were also reported from various sites at the east end

of the park (m.ob.). **Orange-crowned Warblers** were reported from various sites at PISP 5/5-20 (m.ob.). **Kentucky Warblers** are not reported annually in the county, so singles reported at Dead Pond Trail 5/16 (DM) and Pine Tree Trail (KE) were good finds. The only **Prairie Warbler** report was on Pine Tree Trail 5/3 (JB).

Almost never reported in recent years, a **Yellow-breasted Chat** was at a residence in Erie 5/3-8 (NA). The only **Clay-colored Sparrow** was a migrant that dropped down briefly in a backyard in Erie 5/5 (JM). The find of the season was a male **Painted Bunting** photographed at a backyard feeder in Erie 5/31 for a third county record (ES). A pure white **Brown-headed Cowbird** flew over the PIHW 4/4 (JF, JM), and perhaps the same bird was photographed at a feeder in Fairview 4/10 (BL).

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### **Fayette County**

Location: Greenlick Run L. (GRL).

It was a notable season in *Fayette* with three first county records! For waterfowl, the spring produced no great fallouts so waterfowl were in small numbers.

A **Cackling Goose** was photographed on a small pond on Duck Pond Road in Dunbar Twp. 4/25 (MJ, m.ob.), seen again there 5/27 (MJ). This provided the first county record. Two **Northern Shovelers** were at GRL 3/27 (MJ, EJ, KB), and 6 were there 4/8 (MS). **Long-tailed Ducks** moved through in late Mar. Four were at GRL 3/27 (MJ, EJ, KB,) and one was at Hutchison Res. 3/27 (EJR). A total of 100 **Ruddy Ducks** were at GRL 4/18 (MJ).

A **Northern Bobwhite** was in Farmington 5/17 (DB), undoubtedly a released bird. There were three eBird reports of **Ruffed Grouse** from three different locations. A **Red-necked Grebe** was a nice find at GRL 4/8 (MS). An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was in SGL 51 on 5/2 (CL, PL). A **Sandhill Crane** was an exciting find at Bridgeport Res. 4/16 (BR), likely the same individual found Duck Pond Road 4/25 (MJ, m.ob.), another first county record.

Four **Semipalmated Plovers** were at Colonial Res. 4/23 (MJ). Three **White-rumped Sandpipers** were on Duck Pond Road 5/31 (MJ), and a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was there 5/9 (KB). This became a local hotspot this spring with regular checks. Four **Willet**s at GRL 5/3 (MJ) were fortunately spotted just before they flew off, providing yet another first county record!

There were two reports of **Bonaparte's Gull** at GRL: 3 on 4/18 (MJ) and 2 on 5/6 (KB). A **Great Black-backed Gull** was seen at the Summit Mt. Hawk Watch 4/29 (CL), a rare sight in *Fayette*. Five **Caspian Terns** were at Deer Lake 5/3 (MJ), and 2 at GRL 5/6 (MS). Always a welcome sight anywhere, a **Black Tern** was at GRL 5/6 (MS, MF). A nice flock of 20 **Common Terns** was at GRL 5/6 (MS), a rainy day that resulted in the birds dropping in. Two **Forster's Terns** were there 4/18 (MJ). A **Great Egret** was at GRL 3/28 (MJ, MG, EJ), one in Farmington 4/16 (MD), one at Mill Run Res. 4/23-28 (MJ, m.ob.), and one near Scottdale 5/2 (AB).

Seven **Black Vultures** were at Saltlick Run 4/3 (MJ, MG), and one was at Connellsville 5/5 (JB). Observations of this species have been increasing so it may become regular in the future. Single **Golden Eagles** passed over the Summit Mountain Hawk Watch 4/25 and 4/29 (CL). The hawk watch produced 599 **Broad-winged Hawks** 4/29 (CL).

A **Red-headed Woodpecker** was at GRL 5/6 (MS). They continued to be seen at Nemaocolin Woodlands Resort and the surrounding area. An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was a good find at Ohiopyle SP 5/18 (DF, BG). Another rarity, a **Marsh Wren** was at Jacob's Creek Wetlands 4/23 (MS, GS). Two **Savannah Sparrows** were at GRL 4/18 (MJ).

A **Northern Waterthrush** was at SGL 51 on 4/16 (CL). A **Golden-winged Warbler** was at Ohiopyle SP 5/29 (BO), and another was detected during a survey near Laurel Caverns 5/29 (TC). A rare **Prothonotary Warbler** was a great find at Spring Valley 4/30-5/1 (DB, DBI, MD, LD). Two



**Orange-crowned Warblers** were at Mill Run Res. 5/23 (MJ, et al.). A **Cape May Warbler** was at GRL 5/6 (MS).

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### Forest County

Locations: Cook Forest SP Cooksburg (CK), Kellettsville (KEL), Marienville (MAR), Allegheny NF Salmon Creek Valley (SCV), Tionesta (TIO), Tionesta Lake Dam (TLD), West Hickory (WH).

Two **American Wigeons** were ph. near CK 3/9, as was a **Red-breasted Merganser** there 3/24 and 3/27, and a **Pied-billed Grebe** 3/18 and 4/1 (SK). Four **Pied-billed Grebes** were seen at TLD 3/29 (FM). Two **Horned Grebes** were seen in Buzzard Swamp 3/15 (PS). The only **American Woodcock** was in SCV 3/12 (NV). A **Solitary Sandpiper** was near MAR 5/14 (SS). One **Double-crested Cormorant** was at TLD 3/29 (FM), near KEL 5/2 (KM), and near MAR 5/18 (AE). One **Green Heron** was near TIO 5/2 (JS, KS).

A **Northern Harrier** was seen in Howe Twp. 3/17 (SS) and also near WH 5/3 (JS, KS). An **Eastern Screech-Owl** was reported mid-afternoon at TLD 3/14 (FM). An **American Kestrel** was near CK 5/9 (PC) and near TIO 5/16 (FM). One **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was near MAR 5/18 (AE), and a **Willow Flycatcher** was on Lighthouse Island 5/25 (FM).

A **White-eyed Vireo** was at SCV 5/1 (KM). Previously reported only twice, in 2012, 10 **Purple Martins** were near KEL 5/3 (KM). Five **Bank Swallows** were near SCV 5/1 and again near KEL 5/2 (KM), while 6 were seen near MAR 5/18 (AE). Estimates of 50 **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** and 100 **Cliff Swallows** were near CK 5/9 (PC); 4 **Cliff Swallows** were near CK 5/11 (SK), and one was near KEL 5/13 (FM).

The only reports of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** were two separate sightings near KEL and Yellow Hammer 3/12 (SS). As a third-ever report for *Forest*, a **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was near MAR 5/18 (AE). A **Swainson's Thrush** was near WH 5/13 (FM). **Fox Sparrows**, seen singly or in pairs, were in a TIO yard seven times in April (FM). Two **Savannah Sparrows** were near MAR 5/18 (AE). Two **Bobolinks** were seen near TIO 5/16, and 2 more were ph. nearby on the same day (FM). One **Orchard Oriole** was reported on Lighthouse Island 5/18 (FM).

Three **Blue-winged Warblers** were near WH 5/3, and 4 were ph. and recorded near there later the same day (JS, KS). A **Tennessee Warbler** was near MAR 5/15 (TS). One **Nashville Warbler** was near WH 5/3 (JS), and 2 near TIO 5/13 (FM). A **Cerulean Warbler** was near WH 5/10 (FM). A single **Blackpoll Warbler** was near MAR 5/10 (BB), and possibly the same one seen there 5/22 (SS). Two **Palm Warblers** were ph. near CK 5/10 (SK). A **Canada Warbler** was near MAR 5/22 (SS), and a **Wilson's Warbler** was there 5/15 (TS).

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### Franklin County

Locations: Antrim Commons Ponds (ACP), Antrim Twp. Community Park (ATCP), Bender's Farm (BEFA), Buchanan State Forest-Eastern Slope Trails (BSF-EST), Caledonia State Park (CSP), Conococheague Creek-Throckmorton (CCT), Greencastle Reservoir (GRRE), Happel's Meadow Wetland Preserve (HMWP), Heisey Road Old Orchard (HROO), Keefer Road Farm Pond (KRFP), Kriner Road Retention Ponds (KRRP), Little Dipper Pond (LDP), Long Lane Pond (LLP), Lower Horse Valley-SGL076 (LHV-SGL076), Mountain Lake Fannettsburg (MLF), Upper Horse Valley-SGL 235 (UHV-SGL235).

Waterfowl highlights were limited in this reporting period. A dark phase

**Snow Goose** was at ACP 3/5 (CG, BO, VB, DH). A **Trumpeter Swan** (Tag T51) made a short stay at LLP 3/19 (BO). Five **White-winged Scoters** were found at BEFA 4/26 (BO, BKtz, BKrt, TKrt). **Long-tailed Duck** was reported from a number of locations. The most notable sightings were 10 birds found on LDP 3/19 (BO) and a long-staying drake at GRRE which was sighted there 46 consecutive days 4/7-5/22 (CG, m.ob.). **Red-breasted Merganser** was also reported from a number of locations, with the high count being 8 at LDP 3/19 (BO).

**Ruffed Grouse** are becoming more difficult to find. Two were reported in UHV-SGL235 4/7 (BO), one in Little Cove 5/27 (CGab), and one in BSF-EST 5/29 (DE). South-central *Franklin* is a go-to place for **Eurasian Collared-Dove**, with continuing reports from Shady Grove/Greencastle area north to Marion and east to Zullinger. **Black-billed Cuckoo** was reported from several locations, one on Mountain Road near Fort McCord 5/14 (BO), one at ATCP 5/16-17 (DE, RM), up to 2 at HROO 5/16-19 (JS, BKnr, BO, BKtz), and one on Red Rock Road in Little Cove 5/21 (BO). The only **Common Nighthawk** reports were from Wilson Avenue in the north end of Chambersburg Borough with one 5/22 (BO), ten 5/23 (BO), and one 5/27 (RG, TSG). **Virginia Rail** was reported at HMWP 4/17 (BO), at a Horse Valley marsh 4/23 (BO), and two at HMWP 5/14 (EB) and 5/21 (EB, JH). A **Sora** was calling on a farm near Orrstown 5/11-12 (JM, BKtz, BO). **American Coot** reports were birds at BEFA 3/19 (BO, BKtz), two at ACP 4/13 (CG, RP), at BEFA 4/13 (BO), in Little Cove 5/3 (CGab), and at KRRP 5/12-17 (DE, DC, JS, BO).

There were a number of good shorebird highlights during the period. **Semipalmated Plover** reports were two at ACP 5/4 (CG), one at ACP 5/15 (BO), one at ACP 5/20-25 (CG, BO, BKtz, m.ob.), and one at KRRP 5/21 (DC, BO). A nice find was a **Sanderling** at GRRE 5/19, and it stayed into 5/22 (CG, BO, BKtz, m.ob.). There were 3 **Dunlin** stopovers reported with one at GRRE 4/25-26 (CG, BO, DC, m.ob.), one at GRRE 5/2 (BO), and 2 at ACP 5/16-22 (CG, GA, m.ob.). **White-rumped Sandpiper** reports were from the Doyleysburg area of Path Valley 5/9 (MW) and ACP 5/31 (DC, GA, BO, BKtz). **Pectoral Sandpiper** reports were an early bird at KRFP 3/15 (BO, BKtz) and one on Creek Road in Path Valley 5/6 (BO). A short-staying **Short-billed Dowitcher** was at ACP 4/25 (CG, BKrt, TKrt).

The definite highlight of the spring shorebird season were sightings of **Willet**. One was found at ACP early the morning of 4/26 (BO, CG, BKtz). On 5/6 at about 10:30 AM a flock of 47 circled several times at ACP. When they finally put down, a **Peregrine Falcon** attacked, and the birds flushed up and departed to the west to continue their migration (CG). A couple hours later around 1:00 PM a flock of 50 was found resting at KRRP, well north of ACP (CG). These birds remained for a number of birders to see, with photos showing 50 birds (DC, BKtz, BO, GA). It is presumed that this was a different group of Willets from those that had departed west earlier in the day from a location south of this one.

It was a good spring for seeing gulls and terns in migration. **Bonaparte's Gull** reports were numerous; high counts were 42 at GRRE 3/25 (BO, GA), 91 at GRRE 3/29 (CG, BKtz), and 59 at LDP 4/15 (BO). A **Herring Gull** was found at a pond near Pleasant Hall 3/28 (BO). Two **Caspian Terns** were found at three locations: BEFA 4/23 (BO, BKtz), Mountain Road fishery ponds 4/30 (BO), and Mt Parnell fishery ponds 4/30 (BO). A **Common Tern** was resting and flying around GRRE 4/30 (CG, BO, BKtz). **Forster's Tern** reports were 4 from Mountain Road fishery ponds 5/4 (BO, BKtz) and interesting reports from MLF 5/6. What began on 5/6 as a sighting of one tern (BO) increased to 13 in number later in the day as the reporter watched additional birds settle into MLF (BKtz). Tern sightings were certainly a highlight!

**Common Loon** reports of one or two birds were numerous; however, notable were eight found at Letterkenny Reservoir 4/30 (BO). **Double-crested Cormorant** reports of small numbers were also numerous; notable was a migrating flyover flock of about 75 birds at Burnt Mill Road 5/8 (BKtz). An **American Bittern** was seen flying over a pond at BEFA 5/3 (BO). **Great Egret** reports were plentiful, which is not always so in spring. A surprise **Snowy Egret** was found at GRRE 5/29 (BO, CG, BKtz, m.ob.). **Black-crowned Night-Heron** reports were also more numerous than normal. One was at Antietam Meadow Park 3/27 (GA), at MLF 4/21 (BO), at Loop Road 4/24 (BO, BKtz, BKrt, TKrt) and 2 were at BEFA 4/24 (BO). Up to 6 were viewed in the Shippensburg Heron Rookery, on the Franklin County side of Middle Spring Creek, 4/23 through the end of May (BKtz, BKnr, BO, m.ob.).

A **Golden Eagle** was circling over Horse Valley 3/24 (BO). **Barn Owl** nesting occurred in the Edenville area (BO). There were **Merlin** reports from various locations (BO, GA, CG, DC, RG, TSG). **Peregrine Falcon** reports were from BSF-EST 5/2 (RG, TSG) and from ACP (refer to report above on Willlets) 5/6 (CG). The falcon that had been regularly wintering for the past two or three years into March in downtown Chambersburg seemed to disappear earlier this winter than in past ones.

A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was found at HROO 5/23 and photographed (BO, JS). **Alder Flycatcher** was found during the normal passage window at Fort McCord Road 5/17 (BO, Bktz) and Keefer Road 5/19 (BO). **Philadelphia Vireo** reports were at CCT 5/17 (BO) and Renfrew Park 5/30 (GA). Four **Bank Swallows** were reported at GRRE 4/29 (CG) with single birds at GRRE 5/3 (DE) and MLF 5/6 (BO). **Cliff Swallows** returned again to nest under the Wenger Road bridge over Wilson Run. A **Marsh Wren** was recorded singing at Fort Loudon Historical Site 5/2 (RQ).

**Purple Finch**, largely absent this past fall/winter/spring, were reported at a Heisey Road feeder 3/30 (BKnr) and in the Doylesburg area 4/3 (MW). A single **Pine Siskin** sporadically visited a Greene Knolls feeder 3/6-5/1 (VB). A late **American Tree Sparrow** was found singing at LHV-SGL076 4/14 (BO). **Lincoln's Sparrow** in the spring is not nearly as likely as in fall migration, but this spring there were reports at Red Rock Road in Little Cove 5/7 (BO), 2 at Paper Mill Road 5/9 (DC), at Pinewoods Park 5/9 (DC), at CCT 5/9 and 5/11 (BO), at Izaak Walton Meadows 5/11 (Bktz), at HROO 5/15 (BKnr), at Country Road 5/17 (DC), and at Lurgan Road 5/17 (JS). Of numerous **Bobolink** sightings a report of 16 on Coble Road 5/5 is most notable (DC). A large flock of an estimated 50 **Rusty Blackbirds** was reported at Burnt Mill Road 4/18 (CP, RP).

Winged-warblers were again reported from Horse Valley. A **Golden-winged Warbler** was found at LHV-SGL076 5/11 (DC) and up to 2 were at UHV-SGL235 5/13-23 (BO, Bktz, m.ob.). **Blue-winged Warbler** was reported at UHV-SGL235 5/5 (Bktz) and 5/17 (SW), in the Doylesburg area 5/5 (MW), at Red Rock Road in Little Cove 5/7 (BO), at ATCP 5/17 (DE), at HROO 5/18 (BKnr, BO), and two at Bricker Road-SGL 235 5/23 (DC). Hybrid winged-warblers, **Lawrence's** and **Brewster's**, were also noted by some birders at UHV-SGL235. **Mourning Warbler** reports were 5/15 at HROO (BKnr), 5/17 at ATCP (DE), and 5/23 at CSP (AW). A **Kentucky Warbler** was singing and photographed at BSF-EST 5/14 (RG, TSG) and sporadically found 5/14 through the end of May (RG, TSG, BO, Bktz).

A **Blue Grosbeak** was singing and seen 5/16 along Sandy Mount Road (BO). **Dickcissel** returned to regular late spring-summer locations with reports of up to 5 at Portico Road 5/10 through the end of May (CG, GA, m.ob.) and 2 at Church Road 5/22 through the end of May (BO, JS, BKnr, VB).

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### Fulton County

Locations: Buchanan SF (BSF), Cowan's Gap SP (CG), Knobsville (KN), Needmore (ND), Warfordsburg (WAR).

A first county record for *Fulton* was obtained this spring, albeit under unfortunate circumstances. An injured **Common Gallinule** was found near ND 4/17 and taken to rehab, the outcome of which is not known (*vide* Tiffany Willow).

Waterfowl reports were few and of very low numbers, with a nice count of 7 **Northern Shovelers** at CG 3/30 worth mentioning (BO). There were six scattered reports of **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**, all singles, the first on 5/25 (VG, Gabrielle Joyce); however, none of Black-billed. An **Osprey** at WAR 5/25 was late (VG).

*Fulton* lies primarily within the **Black-capped Chickadee** zone, but the southeast, in particular, is within or at least near the overlap zone with **Carolina Chickadee**. There were five chickadee reports that specified

Carolina - three from the southeast at Redbud Nature Area of BSF 3/20 (BO, VG), 3/30 (DT), and 5/25 (VG); one from SGL128 in the southwest (VG); and one from CG in the northeast 3/8 (VG).

Notable among thrushes, a **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was near WAR 5/25 (VG). Single **Swainson's Thrushes** were at CG 5/15 (Michael Saylor), Orchard Rd. 5/24 (JS), and in SGL 128 on 5/25 (VG). Single **Fox Sparrows** were found at Redbud Nature Area of BSF 3/20 (BO, VG) and 3/30 (DT). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at KN 5/23 (VG).

Thanks to some late May birding, a very respectable 25 warbler species were recorded. An early **Louisiana Waterthrush** was at Redbud Nature Area of BSF 3/20 (BO, VG). Late, single **Northern Waterthrushes** were at Fort Littleton 5/23, WAR 5/25, and BSF 5/25 (all VG). A **Golden-winged Warbler** and a **Cerulean Warbler** were at Bark Rd. in BSF 5/23 (VG), and a **Yellow-throated Warbler** was near WAR 5/24 (JS).

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### Greene County

Locations: Bell Farm (BF), East View (EV), Enlow Fork (EF), Franklin Twp. (FT), Lake Wilma (LW), Last Chance Ranch (LCR), Morgan Twp. (MT), Ryerson State Park (RSP), and Sycamore (SY).

Among ducks, **Wood Duck** was in EV 3/3 (MH); **Blue-winged Teal**, **Green-winged Teal**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Ruddy Duck** (4/13), and **Pied-billed Grebe** at LW 4/11 (SB, SC); **Northern Shoveler** and **Greater Scaup** at LW 3/27 (MH), and **Bufflehead** in MT 3/27 (KK). **Hooded Merganser** was at LW 3/27 (MH). **Common Merganser** was reported from many locations during the period and females with young were found in three locations (m.ob.).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was heard at LCR 5/27 (MLP). **Chimney Swift** was first seen in FT 4/27 (KK) and **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** at LCR 4/23 (MLP). **Killdeer** was sighted in FT 3/7 (MH, JH). **American Woodcock** was heard in MT 3/8 (KK). **Spotted Sandpiper** was in Center Twp. 5/9 (MH) and **Solitary Sandpiper** and **Lesser Yellowlegs** were found 4/25 at RSP (MH).

**Double-crested Cormorant** was found at LW 5/3 (KK). **Great Egret** on 4/19 and **Osprey** on 3/29 were at LW (SB, SC). **Bald Eagle** was observed in many locations throughout the period (m.ob.). **Red-shouldered Hawk** was heard calling at LCR 3/26 (MLP). **Barred Owl** was heard at SGL 223 on 4/11 (SB, SC). **Belted Kingfisher** and **Red-headed Woodpecker** were seen at CL 5/9 (RA, LA). **American Kestrel** was on nest in Washington Twp. 4/21 (AP).

**Eastern Wood-Pewee** was first found at EF 5/4 (BG). A **Least Flycatcher** called at BF 5/16 (m.ob.). **Eastern Phoebe** was heard at LCR 4/26 (MLP). **Eastern Kingbird** was reported at SY and LW 5/3 (JC, SB, SC). **White-eyed Vireo** and **Yellow-throated Vireo** were found in MT 4/29 (KK). **Blue-headed Vireo** and **Warbling Vireo** were found at EF 5/4 (BG) and **Red-eyed Vireo** heard at SY 5/7 (JC). **Purple Martin** was first sighted in FT 4/18 (CH), while **Tree Swallow** was first reported in MT 3/20 (KK). **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** arrived at EV 4/6 (MH, JH). **Barn Swallow** was reported at BF 3/30 (CDB).

**House Wren** was first seen in FT 4/20 (RB) and first **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** at EF 4/11 (LH). **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was sighted in Washington Twp. 4/21 (AP). **Swainson's Thrush** was found in FT 4/28 (TD). **Wood Thrush** was heard at SY 4/25 (AC, JC). **Gray Catbird** was found in MT 4/23 (KK). **Brown Thrasher** was first reported at EV 3/24 (MH). **Cedar Waxwing** was first sighted at SY 5/11 (AC, JC).

**Chipping Sparrow** 4/3 and **Field Sparrow** 3/27 were spotted in Morgan Twp. (KK). **Savannah Sparrow** was found in Jefferson Twp. 5/7 (BGa). **Swamp Sparrow** was observed in EV 3/21 (MH). **White-throated Sparrow** was last reported in Morgan Twp. 3/31 (KK). **White-crowned Sparrow** was last observed in EV 5/13 (MH). **Dark-eyed Junco** was last reported at Lake Wilma 4/11 (SB, SC). **Bobolink** was found at BF 5/4 (CDB). **Eastern Meadowlark** was heard calling in MT 3/12 (KK). Both **Orchard Oriole** and **Baltimore Oriole** were sighted at SY 4/28 (JC, AC).

Warbler sightings from MT included: **Ovenbird** 5/3; **Common Yellowthroat**, **Hooded Warbler**, and **American Redstart** 4/29; **Northern Parula** and **Yellow Warbler** 4/23; **Cerulean Warbler** 5/2; and **Yellow-**

**throated Warbler** 4/3 (all KK). **Worm-eating Warbler** was found at EF 5/4 (BG). **Louisiana Waterthrush** was heard at BF 4/5 (CDB). **Tennessee, Bay-breasted, Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Chestnut-sided, and Black-throated Green Warblers** were found at BF 5/16 (m.ob.). **Kentucky Warbler** was found at Lake Wilma 5/1 (SB, SC). **Common Yellowthroat** was first heard at EV 4/25 (MH). **Black-throated Blue and Nashville Warblers** were found in Cumberland Twp. 5/12 (TO). **Magnolia Warbler** was observed at EV 5/11 (MH). **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was last reported in Washington Twp. 4/21 (AP).

A **Scarlet Tanager** was found in FT 4/24 (RB). **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** arrived in EV 4/22 (MH). **Indigo Bunting** was sighted in FT 4/30 (PL).

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### Huntingdon County

Locations: Aitch Access at Raystown Lake (AA), Allison Road fields at Petersburg (AR), Brumbaugh's Access at Raystown Lake (BA), Cornpropst Mills (CM), Entriken Overlook at Raystown Lake (ENT), Juniata River (JR), Lake Perez (LP), Lower Trail at Alexandria (LT), Marklesburg waterfowl area-SGL 420 (MAR), Masseyburg (MAS), McAlevys Fort (MF), Murray Run Rd. (MRR), Old Crow wetland (OC), Orbisonia (ORB), Pennsylvania Furnace Rd (PF), Raystown Lake (RL), Rothrock SF (RSF), Seven Points Rec Area at Raystown Lake (SP), SGL 112/Mill Creek (SGL 112), SGL 322 at Petersburg Pike (SGL 322), Stone Creek Ridge (SCR), Stone Valley (SV), Trough Creek Valley (TCV), Tussey Mt. Hawk Watch (TMHW).

Looking back at the spring 2020 season, one wonders if the monthly weather summaries weren't reversed. March continued the unseasonal warmth of much of the winter, averaging 6.0F° above normal; however, April and May were each below average by about two degrees. Late April and the first half of May were particularly cold, which seemed to delay migration. Overall precipitation was close to average; notable given snowfall in the unusual cold of early May.

The highest **Tundra Swan** count at TMHW, by far, was 843 on 3/5 (NB, ZG). A flock that lingered at LP 3/5-10 reached a high of 170 (m.ob.). Mild conditions and high birder activity combined to produce a plethora of duck reports, mostly from RL and LP. Notable high counts included 60 **Redheads** at BA 3/4 (KT), 59 **Long-tailed Ducks** at LP 3/17 (SB), 162 **Buffleheads** at LP 3/23 (JK, DW), and 63 **Ruddy Ducks** at ENT 4/18 (TK, DK). The only scoters were two **White-winged Scoters** at SP 4/26 (TK, DK, GG, DG). Unusual were a drake Bufflehead and a drake Ruddy Duck that stayed through the end of the season at LP (m.ob.).

Somewhat encouraging were the 20-plus reports of **Ruffed Grouse**. However, nearly all reports were of single birds, with a maximum of two; and many reports were in the heavily-birded area of LP, leading one to wonder if the same one or two birds were being repeatedly observed and reported (m.ob.). A **Red-necked Grebe** was at ENT 4/30-5/2 (TK, DK, JK). Eight reports of **Common Nighthawk**, clustered 5/15-24, were all of singles save one report of two (SM, MM, JK, LF, DK). A record early report of **Whip-poor-will** came 4/7 with two near MF (SM). Survey results in RSF will be in the summer report.

Marsh bird surveys for PGC produced one **Sora** at CM 5/13 (GG, DG) and two **Virginia Rails** near MF 5/29 (JV). Fourteen shorebird species were recorded, including two rarely found here. A **Willet** was nicely photographed in overhead flight, one of three at AA 5/4 (KT) and the second record (first was 6/27/2018, also at RL). Also rare, a very early **White-rumped Sandpiper** was at AR 4/30 (JK, GG, DG). Other less-common shorebirds included a **Semipalmated Plover** near ORB 5/12 (GG, DG, DK, TK) and single **Dunlins** at AR 4/27 and OC 5/19-22 (m.ob.).

All four expected (though not necessarily annual) tern species were

found. Six **Caspian Tern** reports, from RL and LP, ranged between 4/30-5/8, with three storm-related reports on 4/30; the high was five at LP 4/30 (JK, SM, DK, TK, MK). Of the four tern species, **Black Tern** is probably least often seen; the only report was of one at SP 5/8 (TK, DK). One **Common Tern** was at LP 4/26 (DW), for the only report. The most frequently seen tern is usually **Forster's Tern**; there were four reports from RL and six from LP, with a high of 10 at AA 5/6 (KT).

Single **Red-throated Loons**, not annual, were at James Creek access at RL 4/18 (TK, DK) and the RL dam 5/2 (DW). **Common Loon** migration peaked in mid-Apr, with a high of 66 at LP 4/17 (JK). The count of 200+ **Double-crested Cormorants** at MAR 4/23 was well above usual highs in the county (KT).

Single **American Bitterns** were at LP 4/20 and 4/29, CM 4/22, BA 4/23, and OC 4/28 (m.ob.). A **Least Bittern**, not annual, was early at OC 4/27 (DK, DG, RF). A long-established heronry in Big Valley along Rt 655 held a minimum of 24 **Great Blue Herons** on at least 18 occupied nests 4/12, a typical count in recent years (GG). Six reports of **Great Egrets** between 3/24-5/23 was typical, with no report of more than three; of some note, one Great Egret was perched within the aforementioned Great Blue Heron colony 3/29 (GG, DG). The only **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was at OC 4/18 (CM).

At TMHW, the focal species is **Golden Eagle**, which had a down year – in fact the fourth year out of the last five below average. The total of 130 Goldens was the second lowest ever (beginning 2001); the best day saw a rather modest count of 19 on 3/12. For other species, a highlight was the final day of the season, which produced 26 **Bald Eagles**, 57 **Ospreys**, 50 **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, and 5 **Merlins**, all of these ranking among the top five one-day counts ever for the respective species. See the spring hawkwatch report elsewhere in this issue for more details. The primary counter was Zoey Greenberg. (ZG, NB, JK, m.ob.).

Away from TMHW, **Northern Harriers** were seen only twice – singles in SV 3/30 (DW) and at CM 4/23 (GG). Very surprising was a **Barn Owl** along Mill Lane, south of Cassville, 5/1 (JK). After an unusual winter season with no reports, there were about a dozen widely-scattered reports of **Red-headed Woodpecker** (m.ob.). Five **Merlins** at TMHW 4/29 was a very good number (NB); elsewhere, singles were at SF 3/3 (GG), seen from TM ridge 3/10 (NB), and at OC 4/27 (RL).

In early winter, a pair of **Peregrine Falcons** was occasionally seen around the town of Huntingdon, raising hopes of nesting. After the New Year, only one was reported, seen on many occasions, the last date being 4/2. In April, a dead Peregrine female was turned into PGC. It had been found in January, described as "sick". This female, perhaps the potential mate of the remaining Peregrine, had fledged from a cliff location in *Bucks* in 2017.

Four **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were found during a very narrow timeframe – one at SGL 112 on 5/21 (EZ), one at SGL 322 on 5/23 (LF), and two at MAS 5/23 (JK, AP). One very common species that apparently saw delayed migration due to the cold weather of early May is **Eastern Wood-Pewee**. By 5/14, only seven individuals in the county had been reported to eBird. During the third week of May, 5/15-21, as the weather turned warm, 99 pewees were entered in eBird checklists. The only **Philadelphia Vireo** report was of one at SGL 112 on 5/11 (DG). **Cliff Swallow** colonies are doing well: minimum estimates of 60 and 78 were from the Ardenheim bridge colony 5/2 (DG, GG) and at ENT 5/8 (DK, TK), respectively. It was a good spring for **Marsh Wrens** – singles were at MAR 5/1-2, OC 5/2-13, and in TCV 5/7 (m.ob.). Single **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were at MRR 5/15 (GG), Warrior Ridge Rd 5/15 (EZ, CE, Sean Lauer), and in RSF 5/24 (NB).

A modest four **American Pipit** reports were topped by 25 near MF 4/30 and 18 at PF 5/8 (JK). A half-dozen **Purple Finch** reports were all of three birds or less (m.ob.). The only **Pine Siskin** was briefly at a feeder on SCR 4/10 (GG). In contrast, **American Goldfinches** were numerous. A count of 120 on 4/20 at our feeder on SCR was surely an underestimate as birds shuttled in and out by the dozens and sunflower seed had to be frequently replenished (GG, DG).

A meager four reports of **American Tree Sparrow** were topped by nine at BA 3/6 (LF, DO); the last was a single bird at Shaver's Creek Env. Ctr. 4/4

(CM). A dozen **Fox Sparrow** reports included a high count of seven at LP 3/19 (SM). **Vesper Sparrows** were scarce as usual with less than 10 reports, all of single birds. Eight **Savannah Sparrow** entries included a maximum of five individuals at OC 5/13 (GG, DG). **Lincoln's Sparrows** are not always easy to find, including this spring, with only four reports, all of singles: at LT 5/5 (NB), a feeder on Fairgrounds Rd 5/8-13 (TK, DK), BA 5/9 (GG, DG), and Ardenheim 5/16 (GG, DG).

The **Yellow-breasted Chat** hotspot in SGL 112 reliably produced chats beginning 5/13, with a high of five on 5/17 (KT, m.ob.), likely an undercount given the difficulty of covering a huge area of excellent chat habitat on the slope of SM. Elsewhere, there were a dozen widely-scattered reports of one or two chats, providing an encouraging picture of this wonderful but uncommon and unique songster. Rare nesters here, the best **Bobolink** location is Longhorn Rd in TCV, where the first were noted 5/12; the high count was 12 (m.ob.). Eight **Rusty Blackbird** observations included no more than four in any one report (m.ob.); a late Rusty was near Alexandria 5/14 (SM, LMc).

Warbler migration was probably somewhat delayed by the cold weather during what should have been peak passage time. When all was done, however, 34 species were recorded, missing only Connecticut, a rarity in spring in any case. **Golden-winged Warblers** were widespread, reported in particular from SGL 112, 121, and 322, and from SV. The high count was seven at SGL 112 on 5/16 (GG, DG). Golden-wings reported in eBird outnumbered **Blue-winged Warblers** by a margin approaching 2:1. While there is certainly some overlap where the two species are found, there may be some separation by elevation. For example, surveys in SGL 121, on the high flank of the ridge of Sidling Hill in southern *Huntingdon*, found Golden-wings but not Blue-wings in both 2019 and 2020 (DG, GG). There were four reports of hybrids of the two species.

A **Prothonotary Warbler** was present at a private location along the JR 5/2-5 (DK, TK, GG, DG), the same location where a singing male spent a few weeks in 2018; no indication of a mated pair or nesting. An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at OC 3/22 (DK, DG, GG). Four **Mourning Warblers** were reported, better than usual: all singles, at LT 5/18 (KT), SGL 112 on 5/23 (GG, DG), near Jackson's Corner in SV 5/24 (LF), and near the town of Spruce Creek 5/27 (JK). **Kentucky Warblers** are rare nesters here so a cluster of three singing birds in SGL 322 was noteworthy (EZ, CE, MK, Sean Lauer, et al.).

Furnishing a second *Huntingdon* record, a **Summer Tanager** was photographed at a farm near Decorum in the far southeast corner of the county. It was present for about five days around 5/9 (*fide* GG). Not quite as rare, but still a good find, a **Blue Grosbeak** was at AR 5/18 (LF).

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## Indiana County

**Locations:** Blue Spruce Co. Park (BS), Conemaugh Dam (CD), Indiana (IN), Indiana University of PA (IUP), Lewisville (LV), Shelocta (SH), West Lebanon (WL), Yellow Creek State Park (YC).

It was a good season for rarities in *Indiana* with multiple county records. An **Eared Grebe** and a **Common Gallinule** were third county records. The **Ruddy Turnstone** was the eighth report in *Indiana*. The two **Upland Sandpipers** were second and third county records while the **Snowy Egret** and the **Mississippi Kite** were also second county records. The **Marsh Wren** was a sixth county record.

The last **Tundra Swan** flock, numbering 102, was noted at YC 3/3 (LC, BF, MH, RH, DK, TR, KaT). With climate change and a cold early May, we experienced many late dates for migrant ducks. A hen **Wood Duck** and 12 ducklings 5/11 (ED) on a private pond near SH were the first reported progeny this year. **Blue-winged Teal** lingered at YC until 5/13 (MH, RH), the second latest date on record with the latest occurring 5/28/2019. A drake **Northern Shoveler** appeared at YC 5/1 (MH, RH), only the third May date on record

with the previous sightings of one 5/2/2007 and a pair 5/5/15. Fourteen **Gadwalls** were last noted 4/23 (PF) at YC, the latest date on record with the previous last date of 4/22/2017. Nine **American Wigeons** remained on YC lake until 3/31 (LC, GL, MH, RH) and were unusually absent for the rest of the period. Twenty was a good last count for **Northern Pintails** 3/2 (TR). Ten **Green-winged Teal** near Blairsville 3/28 (JA) were the last reported.

Seventeen **Canvasbacks** lingered at YC through 3/31 (LC, MH, RH). Two YC kayakers had a close encounter with the season's last drake **Redhead** 5/23 (LCh, HL); this is the latest date on record with only two other May dates: 5/9/1984 and 5/12/15. Two **Ring-necked Ducks** were last seen on YC's Dragonfly Pond 5/8 (CJ). Three **Greater Scaup** lingered through 4/18 (ReH, SM) while the last **Lesser Scaup** was listed 5/2 (ReH, SM, PS) at YC. **Long-tailed Ducks** were noted on four dates: 2 on 3/3 (LC, BF *et al*); 4 on 3/27 (SM); and one adult drake on both 3/29 (LC) and 3/31 (MH, RH). Two **Buffleheads** photographed 5/14 (ReH) were late. Two **Common Goldeneyes** were last observed 4/26 (LJW), the second latest date on record as a singleton had been observed at YC 5/11/1989.

**Hooded Mergansers** have been confirmed nesting in the county so the presence of three near North Point 5/9 (NS) suggested possible breeding. Eighty was the highest **Common Merganser** count at YC 3/3 (TR), surpassing the previous high of 44 on 3/12/2019; late reports of Common Mergansers included three at CD 5/14 (JT), one at YC 5/16 (ST), and one hen on polluted Blacklick Creek 5/25 (MH, RH). Three lingering **Red-breasted Mergansers** were photographed at YC 5/9 (JaP, JP). **Ruddy Ducks** continued at YC with the best count of 356 on 4/18 (ReH, SM). An **Eared Grebe**, photographed in alternate plumage at YC 4/8 (RL), was a third county record.

A **Ruffed Grouse**, the only one noted, was heard drumming between Penn Run and Nolo 5/2 (HL). It's great to have more than one whip-poor-will report in the county. Single **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were listed at four locations: 5/2 (DB) at Nolo, 5/19 (JT) at C.F. Lewis N.A., 5/22 (LCh, HL) near Penn Run, and 5/27 (TB, MH, RH) near WL. Dates of return for **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were generally late with the earliest reports 5/1 near IN (SD), near LV (MC), and near Creekside (MA, AL, MAL) and 5/2 (SN) near Marion Center.

A **Sora** 5/9 (JT) and a **Common Gallinule** 4/23 (JT) were great finds at the Kovalchick Slough near IUP. The gallinule was still present 4/30 (JT). The highest **American Coot** tally was a mere 11 at YC 3/8 (DR). A **Sandhill Crane** was a great "yard bird" as it flew over near LV 4/11 (MC); this was a seventh county record.

Twelve shorebird species were noted. A **Semipalmated Plover** appeared at YC in the early afternoon 5/16 (CF, CrF); by late afternoon (ST) three were present. Two **Upland Sandpipers** were reported: one 4/11 (SM) near CD; the other, 4/29 (DL) near IN. Neither could be relocated the next morning. An eighth county record, a **Ruddy Turnstone** appeared on the beach at YC 5/13 (MH, RH) where it was subsequently seen by 15 others through 2:00 p.m. on 5/16 (ChF, CF). By 5:00 p.m. on the 16th, 2 turnstones were present on the beach (JH) and were eBirded by an additional four birders through 5/17 (m.ob.). Three **Dunlin** were noted 5/15 (ReH) at YC where they remained through the next day (CF, CrF, ST). A **Least Sandpiper** was found in a flooded field near WL 5/6 (MH, RH); another stopped at YC 5/14 (ReH) while three were noted along the *Indiana* section of the West Penn Trail 5/16 (MH, RH). Two **Semipalmated Sandpipers** visited YC 5/15 (ReH, SM).

Two **American Woodcocks** were still displaying near WL 5/27 (TB, MH, RH). A **Wilson's Snipe** was noted at Kovalchick's Pond 3/16 (JT) and again 5/13 (JT); the WL flooded field yielded 9 snipe 4/17 (TB) and 6 on 4/24 (MH, RH) while one was near Home 5/9 (JT). First dates include: **Spotted Sandpiper** near IN 4/29 (DL) and near IUP 4/30 (SD); 3 **Solitary Sandpipers** near IN 4/25 (DL); **Greater Yellowlegs** near WL 4/24 (MH, RH) and **Lesser Yellowlegs** near WL 5/2 (ReH, SM, PS). Yellowlegs maxima were 21 Greater and 37 Lesser 5/6 (MH, RH) on two different wet areas, both near WL.

Seven **Bonaparte's Gulls** arrived 4/7 (RL) at Margus Lake and peaked at 34 at nearby YC 4/28 (PF). Seventy was the top **Ring-billed Gull** count as they flew high over a yard near SH 4/5 (MH, RH). Single **Herring Gulls** accompanied Ring-bills at YC 3/31 (LC, MH, RH) and 4/21 (MH, RH). Two **Caspian Terns** were noted at YC 4/27 (VS) and again 5/15 (MB, CE, ReH, SM, EZ). Two to three **Forster's Terns** moved through YC between 4/18 (MK, JKe) and 5/17 (DJ, KS, ST, NV, LJW) with peaks on 5/6 of 24 near



Hemlock Lake (CL, GL) and 19 at YC on 5/6 (GL). A **Black Tern** was a great find at YC 5/6 (GL).

Gloria and Clayton Lamer were driving in northeastern Indiana County on May 6 when they spotted a flock of 24 Forster's Terns heading toward Hemlock Lake. They detoured to the lake, hoping to see the terns on the water, but the terns had not stopped. When they got home, Gloria decided that it would be a good time to check Yellow Creek. It was a wise choice as she added 19 more Forster's Terns as well as a Black Tern.

Single **Red-throated Loons** were spotted at YC 4/18 (ReH, SM) and 4/21 (MH, RH). The **Common Loon** high reached 20 on 4/19 (LJW) at YC where two remained on the lake through 5/31 (LJW). The only **Great Egrets** noted were a singleton on a private pond near SH 4/21-23 (ED) and one at YC 5/19 (JH). A **Snowy Egret**, a second county record, was a great find near CD 5/30 (TB).

**Black Vulture** reports continue to increase in the county and includes two sitting on the observer's house in IN 3/31 (BH) and one at C.F. Lewis NA 5/22 (JT). The best find of the season was a **Mississippi Kite** at the home of three young birders in IN 5/13-16 (DP, JaP, JP); this was another second county record. A **Northern Goshawk** stopped at YC 5/13 (MH, RH), the first report since 4/27/2004. The earliest date of return for **Broad-winged Hawk** was 4/15 (ReH, SM) at Blacklick Valley Natural Area.

One to two **Barred Owls** were consistently heard at Nolo (AB, DB) with as many as three on 5/6 (DB). A pair of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** arrived first near IN 3/29 (SD). More **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were reported this year than ever before – three singles, all 5/9 at three locations: along East Pike (CR), west of IN (LL), and along Laurel Road (RS); plus, another near Aultman 5/13 (MH, RH). Two **Merlins** migrated over a yard near SH 3/29 (MH); one flew over a yard near IN 4/5 (JaP, JP); another was sighted elsewhere in the county 5/9 (JT). Flying over a yard near SH was a migrant **Peregrine Falcon** 4/20 (MH, RH).

Dates of return for flycatchers, which were generally later than normal, included: 5/16 for **Eastern Wood-Pewee**, both near Smicksburg (MoM) and at YC (MeF); 5/17 (MH, RH) at BS for **Acadian**; 5/13 (DJ) at TR for **Willow**; 5/3 (MH, RH) at BS for **Least**; 3/14 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, JT, KT) at YC for **Eastern Phoebe**; 5/4 (TR) at YC for **Great Crested**; and 5/2 (SG) at YC for **Eastern Kingbird**.

Found at only six locations this spring, the first **White-eyed Vireo** appeared NW of Blairsville 4/29 (KB). The earliest **Yellow-throated Vireo** arrival occurred 4/29 (MC) near LV. The first 3 **Blue-headed Vireos** were spotted 4/13 (GL): two at YC and one nearby at Simon's Rock. **Blue-headed Vireos**, which are usually numerous in the northern part of the county were in very short supply for the Indiana Migration Count 5/9 (TG, MH, RH). The first **Warbling Vireo** was listed near IN 4/29 (DL).

Two **Red-breasted Nuthatches** stopped 3/19 (VS) at IN where one was observed again 4/4 (VS); these were the only reports. **Brown Creepers** were not numerous with reports of one to three only at YC between 3/22 (MK) and 5/17 (ST); singletons also stopped near HC (LC) and near Marion Center (SN), both 3/31. A **Marsh Wren** was unexpected at the Kovalchick Pond near IUP 4/29 (MH, RH); the last spring sighting occurred at YC 4/27/1996 (m.ob.). The only **Gray-cheeked Thrush** listed appeared at YC 5/10 (DJ).

An **American Pipit** near Brush Valley 4/11 (RH) was the only one noted. A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was at SGL 276 near Blacklick 5/16 (JKe). Amazingly, the only **American Tree Sparrow** reported was one near Marion Center 3/23 (SN); there normally are multiple March sightings. A **Fox Sparrow** lingered near Forest Manor south of IN 4/6 (SD). **White-crowned Sparrows** moved through *Indiana* between 4/29 (MH, RH) and 5/14 (ReH).

Thirty-one warbler species were sighted in the county this spring. Highlights include single **Golden-winged Warblers** near SH 5/4, 5/5 (MH, RH), at BS 5/5 (JT), and at YC 5/16 (ST) and 2 **Mourning Warblers** at BS 5/17 (JT).

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Donley, Carl Engstrom, Melissa Fabbro (MeF), Chad Fike, Crystal Fike (CrF), Patience Fisher, Barb Fletcher, Evelyn Fowles, Mike Fowles, Tom Glover, Steve Gosser, Rebecca Hart (ReH), Barbara Hauge, Anne Hedgpeth, Jared Herman, Roger Higbee, Deuane Hoffman, David Janetski, Chuck Jones, Timmi Jones, Debbie Kalbfleisch, James Kellam (JKe), Michael Kardos, Jan Kuehl, Tom Kuehl, Sue Kutch, Clayton Lamer, Gloria Lamer, Dennis Lauffer, Hunter Lieb, Amy Little, Mary A. Little (MAL), Richard Love, Steve Manns, Mark McConaughy, Flo McGuire, Jim McGuire, Donna Meyer, Molly Moore (MoM), Sandra Newell, Miriam Ohanjanyan, Dominic Pumford, James Pumford (JaP), Joseph Pumford, Theo Rickert, Debra Rittelmann, Cindy Rogers, Peter Shaver, Nancy Smeltzer, Scott Speedy, Richard Staffen, Vicki Stelma, Georgette Syster, John Taylor, Kathy Thomas (KaT), Shannon Thompson, Ken Truitt, LJ Woolcock (LJW), Eric Zawatski.

### Jefferson County

Locations: Cloe Lake (CL), Five Bridges Trail (FBT), Sandy Ridge Road (SRR).

Waterfowl numbers were limited in the county as Kyle Lake sits empty for lingering dam repair; however, 8 **Long-tailed Ducks** and 2 **Common Goldeneyes** were photographed at Cloe Lake 3/19 (J&AK). A **Black Vulture**, an unusual find in West-Central Pennsylvania, was observed near Brockway 5/21 (MKL). A **Northern Harrier** was located along SRR 5/13 (TG). A pair of **Bald Eagles** were present at CL 3/19 (J&AK).

Two **Ruffed Grouse** were heard drumming on SGL 244 on 4/7 (DR). Another grouse encounter occurred at FBT 4/25 (TG). A **Greater Yellowlegs** was present at Fordham Lake 4/22 (J&AK). An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was calling along Sandy Lick Creek before sunrise near the O'Donnell Bridge on SGL 244 5/7 (DR).

Five individual **Acadian Flycatchers** were heard vocalizing along Clover Run on SGL 195 on 5/26 (DR). A **Marsh Wren** was reported singing along FBT 5/2 (TG). A **Northern Mockingbird**, a sporadic find in the county, was discovered near Ringgold 4/28 (J&AK). A **Henslow's Sparrow** was reported along SRR 5/30 (CE).

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### Juniata County

Locations: Casner's Crossing - Juniata River (CC), East Waterford (EW), Juniata River (JR), Kratzer's Ponds (KP), Lewistown Narrows Canal Park (LNCP), Licking Creek Valley (LCV), Lost Creek Shoe Shop (LCSS), McAlisterville (MA), Metz Rd (MR), Mifflintown (MIF), Mifflintown River Access (MRA), Muskrat Springs (MS), Night Flight Call at Casner's Crossing (NFC), Oakland Mills (OM), Pine Grove Rd (PGR), Port Royal (PR).

An unusually warm 2020 spring season in *Juniata* was highlighted by two first and three second county records (in eBird) as described below.

Large numbers of **Snow Geese** are unusual in *Juniata*; notable were 150 at MIF 3/17 (CK) and 100 at MA 3/25 (JP). Eighteen duck species were reported to eBird, mostly in single-digit quantities. A good count of 40 **Wood Ducks** was made at EW 5/6 (CK). Not common in the county, 12 **Northern Pintails** were at MIF 3/4 (CK). A **Common Goldeneye** on 5/19 on the JR near MIF was late (CK, JP). Four reports of **Horned Grebe** were topped by a count of five at MIF 4/18 (CK).

A discouraging total of just one **Ruffed Grouse** was reported, in LCV 5/1 (DB). Cuckoos were even later than usual returning. The first of about 17 reports of **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** came 5/16 (m.ob.). Of five reports of **Black-billed Cuckoo**, three were detected by NFC at CC, the first on 5/14 (JG). Five reports of **Common Nighthawk** included one early 5/1 at CC (CK, NK); additional reports of 1-4 birds occurred at MIF and MA 5/19-24 (CK, JP). Among five reports of **Eastern Whip-poor-will**, the maximum count was 13 in SGL 107 on 5/3 (JP).

A float on the JR led to the second county eBird record of **Common Gallinule** at MS 4/28 (Reuban Petersheim); the first was 4/11/2011 at MA. **American Coots** were scarce, with only two reported, at Clearwater Res. in

LCV 3/28-29 (JP, CK).

The first county record of **Willet** occurred near LCSS at OM 5/11, staying only one day but seen by several birders (Paul Troyer, RD, CK, NK, JP, ph.). Taking the runner-up spot among shorebirds was the second *Juniata* record of **Red-necked Phalarope**, also staying a short time only, found at PR 5/22 (CK, NK, ph.); the first record was 5/31-6/1/2018 on a farm pond south of MA.

Twelve species of shorebirds were reported to eBird, a good showing for the county. Although reported frequently, the high count of **Killdeer** was only five, continuing a trend of depressed numbers; this species may be affected by West Nile Virus. Five **Dunlins** were at PGR 3/29-30 (JP, CK, NP, ph) and one there 4/30-5/1 and 5/11 (CK, NK). A **Least Sandpiper** was identified by NFC at CC 5/15 (JG). Normally fairly common, there were only three reports of **Wilson's Snipe** – one at PGR 3/29 (JP) and two at OM 4/30-5/2 (CK). Numerous counts of **Spotted Sandpiper** were topped by eight along the JR at MIF 5/13 (JP). **Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs** were reported about eight and 12 times, respectfully; high counts for both occurred 5/1 at Quest Dr. near MIF, with 5 Greater and 10 Lesser (CK, NK).

Terns are rarely sighted in *Juniata*. A single **Caspian Tern** was at OM 4/30 (CK, NK). At a private pond west of PR 5/6 were 3 **Common Terns** and 7 **Forrester's Terns**, providing first and second county eBird records, respectively (CK, NK). A good count of 32 **Common Loons** was made at MRA 5/6 (CK, NK).

Single **American Bitterns** were at LCSS 4/30, KP 5/2, Thompson Swamp 5/2, and MRA 5/22 (CK, NK, JP), the latter notably late. A **Least Bittern** detected by NFC at CC 5/15 provided only the second *Juniata* eBird report (JG). Three **Golden Eagles** were reported in early Apr, near the end of the expected migration; more unusual was a late Golden, nicely photographed 5/2 (Alyssa Dean) near Academia as it was being harassed by 2 **Red-tailed Hawks**.

Single **Merlins** were in the MA area 3/19 (JP) and 4/19 (CK, NK). Presumably due to the persistent cold of the first half of May, many passerines seemed slow in returning; probably the reason why the first **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was not recorded until 5/16 at LNCP (CK). Uncommon in the county, single **White-eyed Vireos** were near MA 5/3 and 5/10 (JP, CK). Over 45 **Swainson's Thrushes** and a half-dozen **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were detected via NFC 5/15 (JG). One Gray-cheek was seen on the mountain north of MA 5/22 and 5/23 (CK, AT). Seventeen **American Pipit** reports 3/30-5/9 were topped by 75 at MR 4/21 and 40 near PR 4/26 (CK, NK). **Purple Finch** reports were few; most came from a feeding station in LCV from winter through 4/11, with a maximum count of only four birds (DB). No other winter finches were noted.

Representing the second county eBird record, a **Clay-colored Sparrow** frequented a feeder at MIF 3/21-4/23 (CK, m.ob.). Continuing the downward trend, no American Tree Sparrow reports were entered into eBird. **Lincoln's Sparrows** were in short supply, with only singles seen, at MIF 5/4-7 (CK, NK) and MA 5/16-17 (JP).

**Yellow-breasted Chat** was reported five times: at PGR 5/2 (CK, NK) and along Blacklog Rd. in Tuscarora SF with two on 5/14 (Jay Zook, Theil Kauffman) and singles 5/21 (CK, NK, JG), 5/23 (Nina Wolf), and 5/30 (CK, NK). Eight **Bobolinks** were at MA 5/5 (JP) and two were detected during NFC 5/15 (JG). High count among over a dozen eBird entries for **Eastern Meadowlark** was six at PGR 4/21 (JP, m.ob.). There were over a dozen **Rusty Blackbird** reports, with a high count of 16 at Thompson Swamp 4/4 (JP); the last report was of a single 5/9 (CK).

Warblers were well-represented, with 32 species recorded, missing only Connecticut (albeit rare in spring) among expected species. **Mourning Warbler** was detected only via NFC 5/15 (JG). There were three reports each of "pure" **Golden-winged** and **Blue-winged Warblers**, plus three more of hybrids, most of these reports coming from Tuscarora SF in western *Juniata*. A **Blue Grosbeak** was at MIF for one day only, 5/3 (CK, NK) - the fourth county eBird record, all in the last five years.

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## Lackawanna County

Locations: Chapman Lake (CL), Corby Swamp (CS), Lackawanna SP (LSP).

Winter finally caught up producing frigid temperatures on multiple occasions towards the end of the season. **Tundra Swans** didn't mind this reality; five appeared on Maple Lake west of Moscow 4/6 (POL, LN). **Gadwalls** were located only once with two at LSP 3/24 (TD). **American Wigeon** sightings were also low; one was seen in Scranton 3/8 (JN) followed by a second bird at CL 3/22 (MM). **Northern Shovelers** were more prevalent with five individuals reported from three separate locations (m.ob.). This particular species has experienced an increase in sightings within the region during recent years. A pair of **Greater Scaup** was ph. at CL 3/30 (MM). Also here were 3 **Long-tailed Ducks** 3/29 (MM).

Spring is the best time to observe **Ruffed Grouse** drumming, but only two were reported this period. One was observed from Wimmers Rd. in Jefferson Twp. 4/21 (POL, LN), followed by another single at LSP 5/3 (TD). **Ospreys** have recovered nicely within the Northeast Region; a county high of six were reported at LSP 4/29 (SP). Also of note was a county high for **Broad-winged Hawk**; a migratory kettle of 15 individuals was seen flying over Scranton 5/1 (TD).

*Lackawanna's* lack of expansive wetlands can make locating marsh birds difficult, thus the county high of 2 **Virginia Rail** at White Rd. 4/25 (TD, AL) is noteworthy. An **American Coot** was located at CS 4/1 (TD). Making this season particularly interesting were eight **Sandhill Crane** sightings 4/9-5/3 (m.ob.) from a farm on Watts Rd. near Jermyn. No more than one individual was observed at a time, but according to the farm owner this species has been breeding at this location for multiple years.

Shorebird sightings were low. A single **Greater Yellowlegs** was at CS 5/3 (TD), and a **Lesser Yellowlegs** was located from Greenfield Rd. in Scott Twp. 4/20 (RA). Two **Least Sandpipers** were at LSP 5/9 (TD). **Wilson's Snipe** were reported from four locations; the high count was 14 at the Pumphouse Rd. fields 3/26, a tally falling short of the county high of 21 found here in March of 2017 (RJ). **American Woodcock** numbers increased slightly from the 2019 spring total of twelve; this period, 18 were reported (m.ob.). The 12 **Bonaparte's Gull** ph. at CL 4/25 (MM) was a period high and just barely fell shy of breaking the county high of 15 found at LSP in March of 2017 (RA).

A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** vocalizing along Heart Lake Rd in Scott Twp. 5/24 (RA) was a great find. Also in Scott Twp. was a **Philadelphia Vireo** along Greenfield Rd. 5/24 (RA). **Purple Finches** exceeded expectations this season producing 36 sightings of at least 31 individuals (m.ob.). Warbler sightings were on par with previous years. Highlights for this period include 2 **Cerulean Warblers** at LSP 5/16 (SP), a **Wilson's Warbler** at CL 5/19 (MM), and a county high of 5 **Hooded Warblers** along the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail near Archbald 5/16 (BR). **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported in above average numbers this season resulting in a new county high of 15 at Pinchot SF 4/8 (JR).

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## Lancaster County

Locations: Alcoa Marsh (AM), Chestnut Grove Natural Area (CGNA), Conewago Recreation Trail & Wetlands (CRTW), Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (MCWMA), Noel Dorwart Park (NDP), Octoraro Reservoir (OR), Riverfront Park (RFP), Speedwell Forge Lake (SFL), Spalding Conservancy (SC), Susquehanna River Conejohela Flats (SRFC), Susquehanna River Lake Clarke (SRLC), Susquehanna River "The Rocks" (SRTR), Susquehannock SP (SSP), SGL 52, SGL 156, SGL 220, Wood's Edge Park (WEP).

It was a strangely warm start to the season, but the weather didn't change much into April which ended up being cooler than usual. This was also true for May, and as a result migration seemed to be late and protracted. Precipitation was normal. Any distribution notes (more abundant, less

common, etc.) are compared to that species' five-year eBird data trend. During the period, 243 species were recorded, well above the three-year average of 232.

Per usual, by the second week of Mar **Snow Goose** counts at MCWMA had decreased from their peak with a few **Ross's Geese** remaining among them. A **Greater White-fronted Goose** continued at MCWMA to 3/6 when two were reported (m.ob.). *Lancaster's* second **Pink-footed Goose** continued from Feb between MCWMA and WEP to 3/25 (m.ob.), pulled back and forth by Snow Goose flocks. This bird was shared with *Lebanon*. A few **Cackling Geese** could be found at MCWMA or WEP to 3/24. Judging by reports of several untagged birds, **Trumpeter Swans** appear to be continuing their expansion. One was at CRTW 4/11 (DS), and a pair hung around OR 4/24-5/13 (CG, m.ob.).

Although White-winged Scoter is typically found during this season, it was absent, but a hen **Surf Scoter** was recorded at MCWMA 4/18 (BC) on a day when this species fell out around the region. Twenty-six **Long-tailed Ducks**, mostly drakes, were counted on SRLC 3/27 (JHr). **Hooded Merganser** was confirmed breeding in at least three locations, including MCWMA and SFL (m.ob.). Excellent counts of 55 or 56 **Red-breasted Mergansers** were taken on SRLC near Columbia 3/20 and 3/24 (ZM, JHr, MS).

A **Eurasian Collared-Dove** was discovered in the backyard of a Lancaster home near the Conestoga River 4/7 (PB). It would continue at a nearby park and neighborhood to at least 5/2 (m.ob.), and several times was observed courting a **Mourning Dove**, to no apparent avail. **Common Nighthawks** were commonly found during their typical late May migration window, but it is unknown if they are still breeding around Lancaster city. **Eastern Whip-poor-will** made its annual appearance. A migrant was found day-roosting at a private camp near Ephrata 5/3 (EM, m.ob.), and another heard on a nightjar survey near Denver 5/8 (BC).

**Virginia Rail** was well-represented in all of the usual locations. In total, 3 **Sora** were found; no doubt an underreport. A **Common Gallinule** was reported at MCWMA 5/16 (AB). It seems to have spent much of its time in closed or restricted areas, but was reported again 5/28 (BC). Another was found as fresh roadkill near Manheim 5/17 (SS). The **Sandhill Crane** which overwintered at CGNA was last reported 3/15 (m.ob.). On the same date, three were seen at OR (LB), and one at MCWMA 3/14-15 (m.ob.). Finally, one was photographed at RFP 4/2 (BL).

All of the following shorebird reports were made at SRCF unless otherwise noted. The high count of **Black-bellied Plover** was six on 5/13 (JS), and up to 14 **Semipalmated Plover** were tallied 5/17 and 5/21 (JHr, EW). A **Ruddy Turnstone** was noted 5/21 (BC), with other single birds at SRTR 5/18 (BC) and 5/23 (ZM). Single **Sanderling** were seen 5/19 and 5/21 (BC, JS), possibly the same bird. The **Dunlin** high count was seven 5/20 (ML). **Least Sandpiper** remain conspicuously absent from SRCF, averaging around 15 in May with a high of 32 on 5/17 (EW). Historical spring high counts at this famous shorebird stopover were typically in the triple digits, sometimes cresting 500. However, since Brookfield Energy Corp took over maintenance of the flats from Safe Harbor Power Corp in 2017, masses of shorebirds have been absent. Brookfield is a green energy company, uses an amphibious vehicle to burn away vegetation, and does not maintain as much area as the previous managers did. **Semipalmated Sandpiper** did not mass at OR as they did last spring, numbering only 64 at their peak 5/23 (TN), and 35 back at SRCF (JHr, ZM), which is typical. Five **Short-billed Dowitchers** on 5/17 (EW) were the only report.

**Bonaparte's Gull** peaked at 650 on 3/31 (EM, ZM), which is average. Two adult **Little Gulls** were scoped on SRLC 3/24 (JHr, MS), and another 3/26 (ML). Finally, an imm. was photographed at SRCF 5/8 (ZM); likely the same bird continued around SRLC to 5/23 (m.ob.), frequently seen accompanying a dwindling group of Bonaparte's. Two imm. **Lesser-black Backed Gulls** were seen at MCWMA 3/23 (BC), and another two imm. at SRCF 4/30 (RM, ZM, TN). A slightly early **Black Tern** appeared on SRLC 4/28 (JL) with a few more individuals reported 5/18-23, typical dates. **Common Tern** and **Forster's Tern** showed up in typical numbers at SRLC and MCWMA.

**Red-throated Loon** only appeared once, a solitary bird in basic plumage found on SRLC along with a small fallout of 55 **Common Loons** on 4/21 (ZM). A large concentration of 350 **Double-crested Cormorants** filtered in to MCWMA on a fallout morning 4/18 (BC). An **American White Pelican**

was discovered at SRCF 5/18 (BC), and two more were found upriver near Falmouth 5/29 (AM). One would continue post-period.

Three **American Bitterns** were found: at RFP 4/2-3 (BL), CRP 5/2 (EW), and WEP 5/12 (FZ). Surprisingly, a male **Least Bittern** was photographed sitting out in the wide open in a wet stormwater retention basin near AM 5/3 (DHi). Another was seen at MCWMA 5/27 (JW), and one heard at CGNA 5/25 (AE). Two were then heard at that same location around the main pond 5/29-31 (TN, EB, m.ob.). Since these were not reported beyond the period, they likely represented migrants. The first **Snowy Egret** flew by SRCF 4/9 (ZM). At OR another was found 5/1 (CG, m.ob.), and later three showed up 5/23-25 (MG, RG, ZM, BQ, m.ob.). Two **Cattle Egrets** attended a herd of cattle near Marietta 5/18 (EC), and another (one of the same?) was photographed nearby 5/18 (D&PW). The best count of **Black-crowned Night-Herons** was 72 at the Ephrata Wellspan hospital rookery 4/28 (RM, ZM) where an adult male **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** returned for the season as of 3/30 (BC). A flock of 17 **Glossy Ibis** were driven to SRCF in a rainstorm 4/30 (RM, ZM), and another group of about 23 buzzed overhead heading northwest at OR 5/23 (ZM). An unidentified dark ibis flew over an Ephrata home 5/10 (EW).

The subadult **Golden Eagle** continued to 3/7 at MCWMA (m.ob.), and a **Mississippi Kite** glided over a Lancaster home 4/30 (DS). A **Barn Owl** was heard in northeast *Lancaster* gamelands 3/14 (BC), and the best count of **Short-eared Owls** was four, also on 3/14 at MCWMA (SB, BH, DHa).

Three **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were found 5/20-31 (SB, JHu MW, D&PW). Single **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were photographed at SC 5/15 (SM) and NDP 5/16 (JHu, SM). An **Alder Flycatcher** was singing at a traditional spot at MCWMA as of 5/17 (ZM, m.ob.), and three were counted 5/24 (BM). **Philadelphia Vireos** were seen at SGL 156 on 5/10 (ME) and at SSP 5/18 (CG). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was not irruptive this year. A **Black-capped Chickadee** and **Marsh Wren** were described at CGNA 4/4 (LB) and RFP 3/24 (BH), respectively. Five **Purple Finches** were encountered 4/11-20 (m.ob.) despite it being a down winter for this species.

Both Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting were missed for Mar. A **Clay-colored Sparrow** turned up at NDP 5/2-3 (SM, m.ob.), one of the better finds of the season as these are less than annual. Also, the continuing overwintering **Lark Sparrow** found on the CBC was last reported 3/6 (m.ob.). **Vesper Sparrows** were found in typical numbers in the right habitats, as were **Yellow-breasted Chats**. A healthy-sized migratory **Bobolink** flock of about 80 birds was seen in fields around OR 5/7 (EM, ZM).

May 9 was a big day for adult male **Golden-winged Warblers**, with one each at MCWMA (SF), SGL 156 (JHu), and a park near Silver Spring (EB, LK). A fourth was seen at a Lititz park 5/15 (KB). A **Brewster's Warbler** hybrid was photographed at NDP 5/12 (SM). It was a good season for **Prothonotary Warblers** which passed through in a few unexpected spots. Along the Susquehanna R. they are once again numerous at traditional breeding locations thanks to the dedicated efforts of a few volunteers who maintain nest boxes (BC, TG, EW). A singing male returned to a suitable breeding location at MCWMA, where a pair bred last year thanks to the nest box initiatives of a local Eagle scout. *Lancaster* remains a true stronghold for this species in Pennsylvania. **Orange-crowned Warblers** continue to appear in low numbers annually in spring, with birds near Bainbridge along the river 4/17 (TN) and SGL 156 on 4/29 (JL). Four **Mourning Warblers** were reported, as were about 8 **Cerulean Warblers**.

A great spring for tanagers in *Lancaster*. Three immature male **Summer Tanagers** showed up back-to-back-to-back. One was photographed at MCWMA 5/16 (CS), another at an Ephrata home 5/17-18 (LG), and one at the birdbath of a Fruitville residence 5/18 (anon.) was posted to Facebook. There is one official prior county record with PORC. Thanks to the quick notification of the homeowner, the Ephrata bird provided a new county tick for many *Lancaster* birders. The most phenomenal find of the season was an immature male **Western Tanager** photographed at the feeders of a home in Eden 4/22 (MM), a one-day wonder. This was the second county record.

The overwintering third county record adult male **Painted Bunting** was last seen by the homeowner 4/8 (anon.). Somewhere in the vicinity of 100 birders successfully chased it this spring, and a huge thanks goes out to the

homeowners for graciously hosting all of the visitors. It was truly a model of how well homeowner, birder, and photographer relations can go when everyone respectfully follows the rules. And last, but certainly not least, the overwintering immature male **Dickcissel** near Denver was last seen by the homeowner 4/12 (anon.). Six singing males were counted as of 5/20-21 (JG, JHr) at a location near Peach Bottom where the species bred last year, and likely the year before. Unfortunately, the farmer pretty quickly mowed most of the fields, reducing their number to one by the end of the month.

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### Lawrence County

Locations: Black Swamp (BS), Copper Road Marsh (CRM), Mahoning Township (MT), Plain Grove Township (PG), Shaner Road Marsh (SR), Volant Strips (VSM), Washington Township (WT).

The waterfowl flight was mostly pedestrian, but featured a few highlights. A group of 8 **Cackling Geese** were at Vosler Road in WT 3/7-10 (MV). **Blue-winged Teal** were at SR from 4/5-5/1 (m.ob.), during which time their top count was 22 on 4/24. Sixteen **Gadwall** there 4/5 (MV) was also a fair count, as was the 22 **American Wigeons** at CRM 3/8 (GK, MAK, MC). Last **Northern Pintails** were 8 at CRM 3/8 (GK, MAK). **Ring-necked Duck** flocks usually exceed 100 at least once in spring, but this year they came up short, managing just 90 at VSM 3/11 (MW). Ten were still at SR 4/26 (MV, MC, et al.), a good count that late in the season, and 4 were elsewhere in PG to 5/2 (MV). **Greater Scaup** is rare in the county, so one that lingered at SR 4/5-27 (MV, GK, MAK) was notable. The count of 89 **Lesser Scaup** at SR 3/29 (MC) was quite respectable.

Most unexpected of all was not one but two different late season **Surf Scoters**: an immature at Mason Road 4/26 (MV) and an adult male at SR 4/29-5/10 (GK, MAK). The scoter at SR was joined by 3 late **Buffleheads** 5/7 (MC) which remained to at least 5/15. Two female **Hooded Mergansers** at BS 5/31 (MK) suggested nesting in the area. Late-season **Common Mergansers** included 8 at Rogers Memorial Park 5/25 (TJ, KJ) and one on Neshannock Creek 5/30 (LC). The flock of 33 **Red-breasted Mergansers** at Edinburg Lake 3/28 (MV) was another good count for *Lawrence*.

The only reports of cuckoos were one **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** along Neshannock Creek 5/30 (LC) and one **Black-billed Cuckoo** at BS 5/31 (MK). A **Common Nighthawk** was noted at Rogers Memorial Park 5/25 (TJ, KJ). **Virginia Rail** and **Sora** are certainly present somewhere at BS every year, but are, rather often, not reported at all in spring. This year 2 of the former were there 5/5-17 (GK, MAK) and one of the latter was detected periodically from 4/27-5/17 (RN, et al.). **Common Gallinule** was noted only at BS 5/31 (MK). Last double-digit count of wintering **Sandhill Cranes** in the PG and VSM area was 10 on 3/14 (MC). Beginning 5/8 near VSM, a pair with two colts was frequently reported (DK, et al.), and a total of 7 birds were noted at SR 5/31 (MK).

SR has become a real hotspot for western Pennsylvania shorebirders, and this spring was another good one at the marsh. All reports that follow were from SR unless otherwise noted. A **Black-bellied Plover** was present 5/30 (MV), and an early **Semipalmated Plover** was found 4/24 (MV, GK, MAK). Very rare anywhere in western Pennsylvania away from Lake Erie, two different **Ruddy Turnstones** were present, one 5/13 (MC, GK, MAK) and one

5/31 (MK). An early **Dunlin** was at Vosler Road in WT 4/10-15 (MV), which was followed by 17 at SR 5/14 (GK, MAK, MC) and one there 5/24 (MJ). Counts of 25 and 26 **Least Sandpipers** on 5/14 (GK, MAK) and 5/31 (ST), respectively, were good, especially the latter date which is quite late for a flock that size. **Pectoral Sandpipers** were limited to a few singles noted sporadically 4/19-5/15 (m.ob.). **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was present 5/14-31, but the top count was just 6 on 5/24 (MJ). Four **Short-billed Dowitchers** 5/13 (GK, MAK, MC) were followed by an impressive 55 on 5/14 (GK, MAK, MC). A **Solitary Sandpiper** at Vosler Road 4/19 was early (MV). *Lawrence's* third record of **Willet** was furnished by a flock of 9 at SR 4/26 (GK, MAK). Equally exciting was a **Wilson's Phalarope** at SR 5/14 (SS), the fourth for *Lawrence*.

Good counts of **Bonaparte's Gull** included 33 at Vosler Road 3/21 (MV, AH) and 20 at the former Three Rivers gravel pond near New Beaver 4/4 (MV). Eight lingering birds were at SR 4/26-27 (MV, et al.). The 33 Bonaparte's at Vosler 3/21 were accompanied by 38 **Ring-billed Gulls** (AH), a forgettable number in most parts of the state but one not often reached in *Lawrence*. A **Black Tern** at SR 5/30 (MV, et al.) was just the third known for *Lawrence*, joining the willets and phalarope for bird of the season honors. A **Forster's Tern** was at SR 4/26 as well (GK, MAK), another species rarely reported in the county.

A **Common Loon** showed up in the vicinity of SR 4/11 and lingered around the area to the end of the season (m.ob.). Only one **Great Egret** was reported this season (surprisingly), a bird at SR 4/12 (RN). A **Long-eared Owl** was noted in the BS area 3/10-14 (MW). This species was formerly seen most years at BS in the early 2000s, but has been more or less absent from the area for about a decade. Up to three **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were at SGL 151 for most of April and early May (TD, et al.) and one attended a New Castle yard beginning 5/13 (PS). A **Merlin** was in WT 3/21 (MV, AH) and a **Peregrine Falcon** was noted at VSM 3/4 (GK, MAK).

A few highlights during a trip through Mahoning Twp. 5/18 included **Great Crested Flycatcher**, **White-eyed Vireo**, and **Yellow-throated Vireo** (CH). All of these species summer in *Lawrence* but are not often reported, since birders come to the county mostly for waterfowl, shorebirds, and field birds. Very nice were 2 **Alder Flycatchers** at VSM 5/24 (MJ) and one at SR 5/30 (ST). **Yellow-throated Vireo** was also noted at Rogers Memorial Park 5/25 (TJ, KJ). **Common Raven** continues to creep into the Glaciated Northwest region of Pennsylvania; this season one was found at Vosler Road, WT 4/24 (GK, MAK). The 180 **Tree Swallows** on Larchwood Drive near New Beaver 3/28 (MV) was a great early-season count. An early **Barn Swallow** was among them.

A **Fox Sparrow** at VSM 4/4 (MC) was the only one reported. Counts of **Bobolink** at VSM reached 28 and 32 on 5/15 and 5/29, respectively (both MC). They were also found in Mahoning Twp. 5/7 (CH). **Orchard Oriole** is another species not often reported; one was seen in Mahoning Twp. 5/7 and 5/18 (CH) and up to 3 were in New Castle 5/8-16 (PS). **Rusty Blackbirds** were limited to one at VSM 3/11 (MW), 3 at SGL 151 on 4/11 (GK, MAK, MC), and one at BS 4/27 (GK, MAK).

Reports of warblers were few, as usual. The trip through Mahoning Twp. 5/18 turned up **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, and **Canada Warbler** (CH). A **Blue-winged Warbler**, somewhat uncommon in the county, was near Neshannock Creek 5/30 (LC). A **Yellow-throated Warbler** was in Mahoning Twp. 5/7 (CH).

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### Lebanon County

Locations: Balmer Farm Pond (BFP), Camp Shand Powerline (CSP), Clear Springs Rd (CLSP), Cold Springs Rd (CSR), Elco Rd Pond (ERP), Fort Indiantown Gap (FIG), Kreider's Pond (KP), Marquette Lake (ML), Memorial Lake State Park (MLSP), Middle Creek Wildlife Area (MC), Mt Pleasant Rd (MPR), Myerstown Quarry (MQ), Pine Rd (PR), Quittapahilla Educational Wetlands (QEW), Quitty Creek Park (QCP), Snitz Creek Park (SCP), State



Dr. Flooded Field (SDFF), Swatara State Park (SSP), SGL 80, SGL 145, SGL 211, Shuey Lake (SL).

Three rarities highlighted spring birding in *Lebanon*. A **Pink-footed Goose** mingled with a flock of **Snow Geese** at MC 3/21-27 (JSt, MSc, JF, TB, KB, JH, P&RW, m.ob.). This provided a first county record for the species. A **Black-throated Gray Warbler** continued from 9/26 of the fall quarter, at the Felty home off of CLSP, until 3/26 (JF, NF, BB, BBr, JDe, JL, m.ob.). The Felty's were gracious hosts to many birders during the bird's extended stay. A **Summer Tanager** provided a fifth county record along PR 5/2 (JH, TN, ME, TB, KB, JS, VP, NM, NMc).

A **Ross's Goose** was at MC 3/24 (JHn, MSa). Two **Mute Swans** were at MPR 5/10-13 (JH, TB, KB, NM, P&RW) and one at BFP 5/23 (JH). Nine **Blue-winged Teal** were part of a waterfowl fallout at MLSP 4/18 (EF, NF, BBr, P&RW, JH, TN, MC) that also included 2 **White-winged Scoters** (JH, TB, KB, SW, P&RW, BBr). Later that month, also at MLSP, a female **Black Scoter** provided an eighth county record 4/30-5/2 (JH, TB, KB, TN, MC, NM, m.ob.). A **Eurasian Wigeon** stayed long and provided a tenth county record at MC 3/12-4/25 (JH, JHn, NF, JF, JHo, ZM, JW, m.ob.). At MLSP there were 6 **Canvasbacks** 3/23 (BW, TB, KB, SW), 28 **Redheads** 3/1 (MC), up to 8 **Long-tailed Ducks** 3/19-20 (JF, EF, JH, TN, RS), one Long-tailed Duck 3/27 (MC), up to 8 **Common Goldeneyes** 3/20-23 (SW, JH, NF, EF, JF, RS), 10 **Red-breasted Mergansers** 3/29 (JH), and 6 **Red-breasted Mergansers** 4/14 (P&RW). At ML 2 Long-tailed Ducks were seen 3/27 (TB, KB, R&PP) and 13 Red-breasted Mergansers reported 3/20 (R&PP, TB, KB, SW).

**Ruffed Grouse** were found at several locations within SGL 211 from 3/14-5/13 (JH, TB, NF) and also along CSR 4/28 and 5/7 (SW). Up to 4 **Common Nighthawks** were noted in six county locations from 5/1-25 (TB, KB, JH, JS, NM). The first **Eastern Whip-poor-will** of the spring was calling along Tomstown Rd 4/16 (TB).

Single **Virginia Rails** were found at QEW 4/4-5 (JH), SL 4/5 (JH), and MC 5/31 (JW), and 2 were reported from FIG 5/14 (JH). **Sora** were found at MLSP 4/18 (JH), South Lingle Ave 5/6 (TB), and FIG on both 4/30 (JH) and 5/14 (SW). A **Common Gallinule** was found at SL 5/10-11 (TB, KB, JH, MC, SW, TN, JF). Five **Sandhill Cranes** continued from 2/18 in the Lawn area until 3/1 (JH). A Sandhill Crane was also found at MC 3/14 (AH, CB).

A **Black-bellied Plover** was at SDFF 5/11 (JH, TN). Six were in a field along MPR 5/23-25 (JH, TB, KB, SW, BBr). Seven **Semipalmated Plovers** provided a good count at SCP 5/23 (JH, TB, KB). A calling **Upland Sandpiper** flew over Chapel Rd at MC 5/14 (JH). Two **Ruddy Turnstones** provided a 10th county record at ERP 5/17 (FH, TN, JH, ME) and an additional individual claimed the 11th county record at SCP 5/22-23 (JH, JF, SW). A **Dunlin** was seen at MC 4/13-14 (SF, JH); up to 9 were at MPR 5/22-23 (TN, JH, TB, KB, P&RW). Three **White-rumped Sandpipers** were found along MPR 5/23 (JH, TB, KB, P&RW) and 2 **Short-billed Dowitchers** in a flooded field along MPR 5/8-10 (JH, TN, TB, KB, NM).

A new county high count was provided by 117 **Bonaparte's Gulls** at MLSP 4/18 (JH, TB, KB, TN, SW, m.ob.). Single Bonaparte's Gulls were at MLSP 4/1 (TK) and SDFF 5/11 (JH) and 4 were at MC 4/1 (JB). A first-year **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was in a field along MPR, providing a new county late date 5/23-24 (JH, TB, KB, SW, BBr, JF, JDe). The previous late date was 3/7. Four **Caspian Terns** were at MLSP 4/16 (TB), with 2 there on both 4/18 (BBr, NF, P&RW) and 4/30 (TN, JF). One was also at MC 4/18 (JH, ZM). A **Common Tern** provided a 14th county record at MLSP 4/13 (JH, TB, KB, TN, SW) followed by the 15th county record there on 4/18 when 2 more were discovered (JH).

**American Bitterns** were found at MLSP 4/2 (NM) and 4/18-19 (JH, RS). One was at QEW 4/20-24 (TB, KB, TBU, P&RW). This species was also seen at SGL 80 on 4/14 (TK), FIG 4/29 (JH), and CSP 5/14-15 (JH, MH). A **Cattle Egret** was at BFP 5/6 (FH, JH). Single **Black-crowned Night-herons** were noted in five county locations between 4/16-5/27 (JH, SW, TB, KB, JDe, P&RW, SF). Seven were at MQ 4/16-18 (TN, RS).

A **Golden Eagle** flew by MLSP 3/30 (TB, KB). **Barred Owls** were well-reported, heard in various portions of SGL 211 from 4/4-5/26 (JH, NF, TB, KB) and other locations such as Waterworks 3/26 (NF), Bindnagles Rd 4/5

(TB), and MC 5/8 (NH). Birds were calling at PR 5/2-4 (ME, JH, SW), with a fledgling seen there 5/9 (NM, NMc). Two **Short-eared Owls** were seen at MC 3/4 (MG, RF, JLe), with up to 4 there 3/14 (AH, CB).

**Red-headed Woodpeckers** were plentiful and seem to be increasing in the county. They were reported from seven locations throughout the period (m.ob.). **Merlins** were found at MLSP 4/18 (JH, MS) and 5/23 (JF) and at PR 5/5 (JS). **Peregrine Falcons** were pursuing shorebirds at BFP 3/27 (P&RW), SDFF 5/14 (TB, KB), and KP 5/24 (JH). Up to 2 **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were at SGL 145 on 5/25-26 (JH, TN, PB). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at CSP 5/15 and 5/26 (JH). It was a good spring for **Alder Flycatchers**. One was at QEW 5/14 (TBU) and 5/21 (SW), one at MC 5/15-31 (JH, ME, JHo, JW), one at MLSP 5/23 (JH) and up to 2 at Rte 22 and Mill Rd 5/23-30 (MC, TB, KB).

Fourteen **Bank Swallows** provided a good count at MC 5/23 (JH). **Cliff Swallow** sightings were scarce this spring with one at MC 5/13 (SF, TN) and 2 there 5/23 (JH). The only **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** of the spring were 2 found along CSP 5/15 (JH). A single **Vesper Sparrow** was at MC 4/11 (JLf) and up to 2 were at KR 4/12-5/20 (JH, P&RW). Thirteen **Rusty Blackbirds** provided a good count at MLSP 3/21-22 (JH, FZ).

**Golden-winged Warblers** were seen at SGL 145 on 5/9 (WA) and MLSP 5/11 (GR). **Orange-crowned Warblers** were an unusual spring surprise, with one at MLSP 5/8 (JH), and another nicely photographed at a home along Meadow Ln 5/10 (MD). **Mourning Warblers** were found at MLSP 5/13-16 (JF, BW, JH), Oak St in Lebanon 5/15 (AM), QCP 5/15 (NF, JF), and SGL 145 on 5/23 (JH). **Kentucky Warblers** were found at SGL 211 on 5/16, SSP 5/28-31 (TB, SW), and SGL 145 on 5/30 (TO). **Cerulean Warblers** were found in six county locations 5/2-31 (m.ob.). Four **Bay-breasted Warblers** provided a good count at SSP 5/23 (MC). This species seemed to be plentiful this spring. A **Yellow-throated Warbler** provided a 14th county record along PR 5/2 (TN, ME, VP). The 15th county record for this species was soon added on 5/17 at CSP (JH).

**Blue Grosbeaks** were found at MC 5/4-23 (CS, JH, TB, KB), CLSP 5/7 (NF, JF, EF), and Valley Glen Rd 5/21 (TB).

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### *Lehigh County*

The total species reported from *Lehigh* this season was 212. In addition to some personal correspondence, this report benefits greatly from data posted to eBird, so many thanks to all who take the time to use this wonderful tool to share their findings! Information gathered from various listservs and social media platforms has also been considered, particularly the Facebook page of the Lehigh Valley Audubon Society (SB, moderator).

**Snow Goose** totals continued to be a bit lower in the county compared to recent winters, with a peak of 4000-6000 reported from Fogelsville Quarry the first week of March (PN, JaH). A pair remained at Leaser Lake to 5/1 (EK). Six records of one or two **Blue-winged Teal** from various locations was above average. A max count of 14 **Northern Shovelers** at Leaser Lake 3/13 was notable (JaH). A small flock of **Green-winged Teal** was noted through 4/28 at Haaf Road and Nestle Way, most likely the same group of birds moving around. Max count was 14 throughout mid-April at both locations (DA, JeH, JaH, DN). Multiple observers reported a fallout of up to 15 **Long-tailed Ducks** at Leaser Lake 3/30. The storm of 4/18

dropped up to 211 **Buffleheads** at Leaser Lake (max count JF). There were five records of **Red-breasted Mergansers** at Leaser Lake 3/30-5/1, with max of 12 on 3/30 (JaH). The same observer noted a fly over RBME from the mountain top at Lehigh Furnace Gap 3/30.

**Wild Turkey** has been scarce in recent *Lehigh* reports, with no records at all in some periods, so over forty eBird records this spring is great news. Most reports were single digits and from the north end of the county, but the max count (15) came from down in Zionsville 3/13 (JV). The rarity of the season was a **White-winged Dove** that spent about three days at a nice little suburban feeding station in Lower Macungie, 3/13-15 (EM). The gracious host promptly shared the sighting via the Lehigh Valley Audubon Facebook page, so with some patience, many local, and a few not-so-local birders were able to get very nice looks at this first county record! **Common Nighthawk** numbers were poor, with few reports, and no reports of more than two at any given location. **Eastern Whip-Poor-Will** was recorded sporadically at the northern end of the county beginning 5/2.

**Virginia Rail** was noted at Leaser Lake 4/28-30 (RW) and seen by several birders who were looking for a certain small bittern that had been found at the same location... read on. Single Virginia Rails were also heard passing over Jeff Vinosky's nocturnal flight call (NFC) station in Albutis 4/28 and 4/29 (audio), so apparently 4/28-30 was the window for finding migrant Virginia Rails in *Lehigh* this year. The same observer in Albutis reported 3 **Sandhill Cranes** passing over his yard 4/28. A **Dunlin** was found at Leaser Lake 5/10 (FD), and a dowitcher, probably **Short-billed Dowitcher**, was photographed at Upper Saucon 5/10 (JT). Neither bird is easy to find in the county. **Wilson's Phalarope** was a definite highlight at Nestle Way 5/23 (CH, JaH). There are very few county records for this species. A few productive mud flats and flooded areas produced over 40 records of **Greater Yellowlegs** 4/4-5/28, and about as many for **Lesser Yellowlegs** 3/30-5/23. Max count for Lesser (24) was at Cetronia Rd 5/10 (EK).

The 4/18 storm that dropped so many Buffleheads and Long-tailed Ducks at Leaser Lake also produced some gulls and terns. Highlights at Leaser Lake 4/18 were up to 107 **Bonaparte's Gulls** (DA), 2 **Caspian Terns** (EB), and 3 **Common Terns** (JF, TG). Elsewhere 4/18, a flock of 50 Bonaparte's Gulls was also at Fogelsville Quarry (JeH). A single **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was noted from Dorney Pond daily through 4/10. Two more Caspian Terns were at Leaser Lake 5/8 (EB), as was a **Forster's Tern** 4/24 (MB, CH). Reports of **Common Loon** came almost daily from Leaser Lake to 5/17 with max count (10) 3/21 (CH).

A breeding-plumaged **Pacific Loon** was at RVL with a group of **Common Loons** 4/21 (EH, *et al.*), providing the first *Lycoming* record of Pacific Loon. Surprisingly, another one, also in breeding plumage, dropped in during fallout conditions at RVL 4/30 (BB, DeB, BoB, *et al.*), and was reported as leaving early 5/1 (NF). The lake had been checked daily for five consecutive days after the first Pacific Loon, with no sightings. Although there were no loons at all on the lake early in the morning 4/30, that quickly grew to close to 100 Common Loons as the rain picked up, so the Pacific Loon report on 4/30 should be considered the second *Lycoming* record. A **Red-throated Loon** also dropped in at RVL 4/30 (DanB) during this fallout.

An **American Bittern** was found there 4/9 (FD), and a Least Bittern 4/28 (FD, JoH). The **Least Bittern** remained to 4/30 and was seen by many. This seems to be the first known report from Leaser Lake. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was seen 4/28 at Albutis, then heard 4/29 there via NFC recording (JV). A second NFC recording was obtained 5/3 (JV). Single birds were found 4/28 at Leaser Lake (RW, DA), and Lake Catasauqua 5/3 (MC). A trio of **Glossy Ibis** was a really cool flyover 5/10 at Macungie (JS).

A **Golden Eagle** was a nice find passing over Whitehall 3/9 (ML). **Mississippi Kite** over South Mountain near Emmaus 5/24 (JaH) was one of few county records and the first since 2015. There was a staggering 113 eBird records for **Bald Eagle** this period. Of these, about half were at Leaser Lake, with significant numbers also at Trexler Nature Preserve and along the Lehigh River near Allentown. **Barred Owl** was reported near Leaser Lake 5/6 and 5/8 (JeH, DA).

**Red-headed Woodpecker** numbers continue to be an interesting story here in *Lehigh*. There are now at least four likely breeding territories around the county, and possibly as many as six. An additional three incidental reports came from other non-territories this period. **American Kestrel** reports

continue to trend upward, with over 135 reports filed via eBird alone. I have filed a few *Lehigh* reports over the past decade with barely any kestrel reports at all, so this is great news. **Merlin** was reported at least seven times from various locations. One or two **Peregrine Falcons** were reported regularly from Fogelsville Quarry through at least 5/11, but without firm evidence of breeding.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at SGL 217 on 5/17, and at Trexler Nature Preserve and Leaser Lake 5/30 (CH, FD). Four records of **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** all came 5/17-20 (CH, FD). **Alder Flycatcher** had a similarly short window, found three times 5/21-24 (AS, FD, DA). **Common Raven** continues to be found just about everywhere. It's remarkable. There were over 100 eBird reports this spring. Breeding evidence is generally scarce in *Lehigh*, so a report of 2 birds carrying food 4/28 at Albutis (JV) is interesting.

A scout **Purple Martin** was early at Leaser Lake 3/21 (JeH), but the rest of the colony was a bit slow to return, with only a few birds present throughout the first half of April. No matter, as by the end of the month, there were dozens of pairs using the gourd structure that was placed there a few years back. Smaller colonies around Slatedale were active as well. **Cliff Swallows** nested at two farms near Leaser Lake, but did not seem to make use of recently installed nesting tubes at the Leaser Lake dam yet. This will be watched in 2021!

The only report of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was at Leaser Lake 4/6 (EK). A singing **Winter Wren** remained on territory near Leaser Lake through the end of May. Breeding seems possible, but has not been confirmed yet. This would be a first for the county. A **Marsh Wren** was a nice find at Leaser Lake 4/29 (EB), where it remained to at least 5/2. Reports of this species are scarce in *Lehigh*. **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was seen at Trexler Nature Preserve 5/11, and heard via NFC recordings at Albutis 5/17 and 5/26 (2) (JV).

This past winter was not good for "winter finches", so just one report of 3 **Purple Finches** at New Tripoli 4/29 (FD) is notable. The only **Pine Siskin** was at Albutis 4/9 to 4/28, with photos (JV). **Yellow-breasted Chat** has bred at Leaser Lake recently, but was only noted there 5/15 and 5/22 this spring (JeH, FD). **Rusty Blackbird** was reported in low numbers (max 3) around the county through 4/28.

A nice total of 31 warbler species were found, plus a **Brewster's Warbler** hybrid at Jordan Creek Parkway 5/4 (JeH). A pair of **Kentucky Warblers** was at SGL 217 5/17 (CH) to the end of May (m.ob.). **Cerulean Warbler** was reported to eBird 26 times 5/2-31 from various locations along Blue Mountain. **Wilson's Warbler** is not found annually, so seven reports from seven different locations 5/4-16 is quite good. A **Blue Grosbeak** was found at Leaser Lake 5/17 (DA) and remained through the end of the month. Another was at New Tripoli 5/23 (DA). Finally, audio of **Dickcissel** was an interesting NFC recording 5/24 at Albutis (JV).

**Observers:** Bill Etter 407 South Cigar Rd, Northampton, PA 18067, billetter01@gmail.com, Dan Altif, Mark Boyd, Liz Brensinger, Scott Burnet, Michael Cox, Frank Dickman, James Funk, Todd Gilbert, John Higgins (JoH), Jeff Hopkins (JeH), Jason Horn (JaH), Chris Hugosson, Ed Komito, Matt Loyko, Edie Meckes, Dave Neimeyer, Paul Nale, Jeff Sitko, Adam Smith, Janet Tryson, Jeff Vinosky, Rick Wiltraut.

**Luzerne County** – no compiler

**Lycoming County**

Locations: Mill Street (MS), Rose Valley Lake (RVL), South Williamsport Wetlands (SWW), Williamsport Dam (WD).

Spring migration was not particularly strong overall, especially in the first half of May, which mostly had unfavorable winds and cool temperatures. Many expected species were seen in reduced numbers. Despite that, there were quite a few rarities found, including two first and three second county records. Shorebird numbers were stronger than in most springs. In total, 211 species were reported.

**Trumpeter Swan** "V31" continued at RVL until 3/15 (m.ob.). A late pair of **Northern Shovelers** was on RVL during a fallout event 4/30 (BB, DeB, BoB), and a very late male was at MS 5/12 (BB, DeB, BoB). Late **American**

**Wigeons** were at SGL 252 on 5/3 (BB, DeB, AK). A late **Redhead** was at RVL 4/18-5/4 (BB, DeB, BoB). A **Lesser Scaup** continued at RVL through the end of the season (m.ob.). **White-winged Scoters** were reported at RVL 3/17 (EH, NF), 4/13 (BB, DeB, BoB), and 4/26 (BB, DeB, EH), with each of those sightings consisting of a single bird, and a pair were at WD 4/25 (BB, DeB, BoB). A **Red-necked Grebe** was reported at RVL 3/27 (DS), and one was at WD 4/13 (BB, DeB, BoB, *et al.*).

A **Sora** was at Myers Swamp 4/29-5/2 (DF, *et al.*), and one at SWW 5/4 (DanB). A **Common Gallinule** was at SGL 252 on 5/3 (BB, DeB, AK) and 5/13 (DanB). **American Coots** were pretty scarce during the spring, with only two reports: one at WD 3/20 (BB) and 2 at SWW 4/1 (EH). The **Sandhill Crane** in Jersey Shore that was originally found in Dec was reported as continuing through 3/1 (CH).

It was a particularly strong spring season for shorebirds. A flock of 13 **American Avocets** was at WD 4/18 (MD, JD, *et al.*), providing *Lycoming's* second record of the species. A **Dunlin** was in the big puddle at the Water St. Wetlands 4/26 (SP, *et al.*), and one was at WD 5/14-18 (MD, BB, *et al.*). **Least Sandpipers** were frequently seen during May, with a high of 13 at MS 5/15 (BB). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at MS 4/11 (BB, DeB, BoB), and another was at Water St. Wetlands 4/18-19 (SP, *et al.*). A **Red-necked Phalarope** was at RVL 4/30-5/1 (BB, DeB, BoB, *et al.*), providing *Lycoming's* fourth record of that species. RVL also hosted a **Red Phalarope** 5/24-25 (CH, *et al.*), representing *Lycoming's* second record of that species. **Greater Yellowlegs** and **Lesser Yellowlegs** were unusually abundant by *Lycoming* standards.

A **Caspian Tern** flew by WD 4/13 (BB, DeB, BoB), and 2 flew over MS later that morning (BB, DeB, BoB). All other reports of that species were at RVL, including one on 4/21 (EH, *et al.*), 3 on 4/25 (BB, DeB, BoB), and up to 6 on 4/30 (BB, DeB, BoB, *et al.*). A **Black Tern** was at RVL 5/6 (BB, DeB, BoB, *et al.*). **Common Terns** were reported at RVL twice, with 10 reported 4/26 (EH) and 2 on 5/6 (BB, DeB, BoB, *et al.*). The species was also reported several times at WD, including singles 5/8 (BB, DeB, BoB), 5/15 (BB, DeB, BoB, *et al.*), 5/17 (EH), and 5/18 (BB, DeB). Four **Forster's Terns** dropped in at RVL 4/13 (BB, DeB, BoB). Other tern sightings included an unidentified *Sterna* species at RVL 4/25 (BB, DeB, BoB), and another at WD 5/5 (BB, DeB, BoB). It was a fairly good spring for **Great Egrets**, with reports from six locations.

A **Golden Eagle** flew over RVL 3/7 (BB, DeB, BoB, NF). There were a few **Northern Harriers** seen into May, with one in Antes Fort 5/7 (BB, DeB, BoB), one at SGL 252 on 5/17 (BB, DeB, AK), and one on Ridge Rd. 5/21 (CH). A **Short-eared Owl** was seen in Antes Fort at dusk 3/27 (SP, *et al.*). **Peregrine Falcons** fledged one young at Muncy Boat Launch 5/28 (WE, *et al.*), representing the first nesting at that site in several years.

Two **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were at SGL 252 on 5/24 (BB, AK), and one was on private land on the west side of Williamsport 5/25 (DF). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at Canfield Island 5/18 (BB, DeB). A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was at Canfield Island 5/21 (BB, *et al.*). **Common Ravens** successfully fledged young in Montoursville. A singing **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was at MS 5/26 (BB). **Purple Finches** were scarce, with only a few reports.

**Grasshopper Sparrows** returned to MS again this year, with an arrival date of 4/21 (BB). It was a good spring for **Vesper Sparrows** at MS, with numerous sightings 4/8-24 (BB, DeB, BoB). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at SGL 252 on 5/3 (BB, DeB, AK), and one was at MS 5/14-16 (BB, DeB, BoB). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was seen at SGL 252 on 5/17 (BB, DeB, AK), and at least one was heard singing at the same location 5/24 (BB, AK).

A **Golden-winged Warbler** was on private land on the west side of Williamsport 5/16 (DF). A **Prothonotary Warbler** was at the pond at Indian Park 5/21 (BB, *et al.*), providing the first documented *Lycoming* record of that species. A **Kentucky Warbler** was at the Williamsport Water Authority 5/27 (DK). **Yellow-throated Warblers** returned to their normal nesting area at Trout Run Park, with sightings 5/4 (EH) and 5/7 (BB, DeB, BoB). In total, 32 warbler species were recorded during the spring. A female **Summer Tanager** visited a backyard jelly and orange feeder in Newberry 5/14 (JA, MA), providing *Lycoming's* sixth known record of that species.

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Harbach, Eric Hartshaw, Evan Houston (EvH), Duane Keefer, Andy Keister, Gary Metzger, Steve Pinkerton, David Smith.

### **Mercer County**

Locations: Big Bend (BB), Clark Area (CLR), Clark's Mills (CM), Chestnut Run (CR), Golden Run (GR), Greenville (GN), Hadley (HD), Hermitage (HE), Jamestown (JA), Ko Road (KO), Lake Wilhelm (LW), Maurice Goddard SP (MG), Mercer (ME), Otter Creek Wetland (OC), Pennsy Swamp (PS), Sharpsville Area Recreation Park (SV), Shenango Reservoir (SR), Shenango Wildlife Area Propagation Ponds (PR), Tieline Rd. Fields (TI), Transfer (TF), Triple Link (TL), West Lake Road (WL)

At the beginning of the season it appeared that migration was going to be late, but a big push came through at the end of April. Yet, some birds lingered and were still moving at the end of May. On top of an interesting migration was a large influx of new birders due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

A single **Trumpeter Swan** was found at JA 4/8 (KS, JS) providing the only record for the season. A big push of **Tundra Swans** was observed 3/5 with the high count of 64 at PR (KS, JS); the last bird was reported 3/26. Most other waterfowl came through at about their normal time, although there were some lingering birds late in the season. Among the highlights: **Blue-winged Teal** were at PS 3/14 (JMc, MW), **Green-winged Teal** peaked at GR 3/10 (MHo), **American Wigeon** lingered at PR until 4/21 (MW), and a nice count of 40 **Redhead** was seen at MC 3/5 (m.ob.).

Diving ducks are always a treat and included 3 **Surf Scoters** at SR 3/27 (KS), 13 **Common Goldeneye** at CR 3/6 (BW), and a peak of 7 **Long-tailed Ducks** at CR 3/27 (SS, MHo). This was a good year for mergansers and **Ruddy Ducks** with 114 **Hooded Mergansers** at MC 3/5 (GK, MAK), a peak of 100 **Red-breasted Mergansers** at CLR 3/12 (SS, MHo), and a surprising 650 **Ruddy Ducks** at PR 4/5 (GK, MAK). Grebes were not often reported, but the highest counts were 10 **Horned Grebes** at CLR 3/27 (KS) and 3 **Pied-billed Grebes** at two locations, SR 3/27 (JS, KS) and PR 4/5 (GK, MAK).

Cuckoos were scarce, but there were 4 **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** and 2 **Black-billed Cuckoos** at TL 5/31 (GK, MAK). Among the scarce nightjars, there were a few **Common Nighthawk** reports of single birds, with two seen at CM 5/24 (SK). The first **Virginia Rails** found were 3 at GN 4/10 (MW). They continued throughout the period with up to 4 reported several times. **Sora** was also seen throughout the period with the first 2 noted at SGL 294 on 4/17 (DH). **Common Gallinule** is infrequent, but there were several reports during May; 2 at TL 5/2 (MW) were the first reported. **Sandhill Cranes** are becoming more regular in *Mercer* and were noted throughout the period with a high of 7 at TI 5/2 (PL).

A good number of shorebirds came through. Highlights include **Black-bellied Plover** at PR 5/11 (MW), 2 **Least Sandpipers** at PR 5/1 (BW), one **Pectoral Sandpiper** at TI 4/19 (MV), 4 **Short-billed Dowitchers** at TI 5/12 (RS), 2 **American Woodcocks** at GN 3/16 (MW) with up to 9 at PR 5/21 (BW), a very good count of 40 **Wilson's Snipe** at TF 4/19 (MW), and up to 14 **Lesser Yellowlegs** at PR 4/13 (BW).

The best gull sightings were several of **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, first photographed 3/4 at MG (MW) and then seen at various locations. The high was 5 at MG 3/24 (JMc, MW). Terns were scarce with reports only of 2 **Common Terns** at MG 4/25 (CD) and a single **Forster's Tern** at PR 4/22 (KS).

**Red-throated Loons** were reported twice with single birds each time: one at LW 4/7 (RS) and one at PR 4/21 (MW). Likewise, **Common Loons** were only reported as single birds, at CL 5/7 (JS, KS) and at GN 5/14 (MW). In contrast, good numbers of **Double-crested Cormorants** were seen throughout Mar and Apr, first noted at CL 3/23 (MHo) and building to a high of 519 on 4/22 at PR (KS).

Among interesting wading birds, **American Bittern** was noted at WL 5/2 (JM) and PS 5/10 (RN). **Great Egrets** were seen throughout the county again with 2 at PR 4/5 (GK, MAK, NM). Of interest was one **Glossy Ibis** at PR 5/14 (JS, KS), but unfortunately the single photograph available to document the bird was not conclusive.

Hawks came through about on schedule with the first **Osprey** reported from SR 3/14 (KS) and a very late **Northern Harrier** photographed at JA 5/14 (MW). Owls provided some of the most notable sightings this spring. A late **Snowy Owl** was reported 3/21 with a photograph (*vide* EK). A single **Long-**

**Screech Owl** was noted at SR 3/1 (MHo, SS). One was at PS 3/9-14 (MW), and 2 spent 3/1-4/5 at JA (MW). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was at GN 3/1-2 (MW). All the falcons were reported this spring, including a **Merlin** from GN 3/19 (ZM), an historical location for Merlin, and a **Peregrine Falcon** from ME 5/4 (DS).

**Least Flycatchers** showed up in early May at GN 5/1 (MW) and at TF 5/16 (KS). **Eastern Kingbird** was first found 4/29 at OC (KS). **Philadelphia Vireos** were seen at GN 5/14 and 5/18 (MW), and 2 were at PR 5/18 (BW). The first **Warbling Vireo** was at PR 5/1 (BW). An unusual sighting was **Fish Crow** at SR 4/5 (MW). The only other county record for this species in eBird was from SV on 4/7/19 (MHo, SS, KS). **Common Ravens** are scarce in Mercer, especially now that the Game Commission is no longer using the deer dump on Reed's Furnace Road. There were three sightings: PR 3/1 (MHo, SS, MW), HD 4/10 (KS) and PR 5/11 (JMc).

**House Wren** arrived in JA 4/22 (MW), but the best wren found this season was a **Sedge Wren** at PR 5/14 (KS, JS). **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were seen until 4/13 with the best count being only 2 at TL 3/25 (MW). Everyone looks forward to hearing wonderful thrush songs. **Veery** were noted the first two weeks of May with the first at ST 5/5 (MHo, SS). **Swainson's Thrush** appeared mid-May at PS 5/10 (RN), and **Hermit Thrush** was at HD 4/10 (KS). The wet farm fields at TI produced good numbers of **American Pipit**, seen 4/5-5/2 (m.ob.); the high was 40 on 4/19 (MV). Only one **Pine Siskin** was reported, coming to a feeder in TR 4/18 (KS).

Sparrows seemed late and in low numbers; 13 species were observed. The first **Chipping Sparrow** was at ME 3/21 (JP). **Grasshopper Sparrow** was noted at TI 4/26 (KS), a single **Lincoln's Sparrow** at GN 5/15 (KS, JS), and **White-crowned Sparrows** at HE 5/5 (BW) and KO 5/7 (MW).

It was an interesting year for blackbirds. **Bobolink** seemed to be low in numbers; three represented a good count at TI 5/13 (GK, MAK). **Eastern Meadowlark** arrived at GN 3/6 (MW). **Orchard** and **Baltimore Orioles** arrived at TF 4/29 (KS). Good numbers of **Rusty Blackbirds** were seen 3/10-4/15; the highest count was 150 at JA 3/31 (MW). The most unusual sighting, which remains unconfirmed, was a possible **Brewer's Blackbird** at LW 4/10 (KS).

Considering the weather this year, with warm days in late Apr to early May and then very cold weather over the migratory bird count weekend, there were good numbers of warblers seen. Highlights of the 29 species include: 7 **Northern Waterthrush** at TL 4/29 (MW), 2 **Prothonotary Warblers** at CR 5/1 (KS), **Mourning Warbler** at WR 5/17 (KS), **Kentucky Warbler** at SGL 130 during May (HT, pers. comm.), **Cerulean Warbler** at BB 5/13 (MW), **Yellow-throated Warbler** at TL 4/29 (MW), **Wilson's Warbler** at PR 5/16 (BW), and **Canada Warbler** at PR 5/16 (BW).

Joining the ranks of multiple reports from across the state, a **Summer Tanager** visited a private feeder in HE. Originally reported 5/9 (MHo), it stayed until 5/12 (m.ob.). Although **Northern Cardinals** are common, a leucistic female at TF throughout the period was an interesting observation (KS). **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** arrived pretty much on time with the first noted in TF 4/10 (KS).

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### Mifflin County

Locations: Back Mountain Road Belleville (BMRB), Belleville area (BA), Cooper's Gap Road (CGR), Licking Creek Road (LCR), Roy I Road (RIR), South Hills Lewistown (SHL).

The spring season ended with 104 species, significantly lower than the 186 species reported in spring 2019. The year to date total as of the end of May stood at 177 species, 17 less than 2019.

A first county record **Marsh Wren** was found outside of Belleville RIR on 5/1 (CY). A report of a third county record **Virginia Rail** came from a small

wetland bordering a small stream at a private residence near Belleville 5/5-5/7 (JDB, TB, CY). A **Peregrine Falcon** was reported at a private farm at BA on 5/1 (JZ).

**White-eyed Vireos** were reported from two locations at BA; one 5/6 (JZ) and a pair 5/9 (CY). A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was found on Cooper's Gap Road 5/23 (AK). Twenty-eight species of warblers were recorded, three less than in 2019. Highlights include **Cerulean Warbler** and **Prairie Warbler** 5/14 on LCR within Tuscarora SF (JZ, TK). A **Kentucky Warbler** was found on LCR 5/23 (NW). **Yellow-breasted Chat** were reported from LCR for the fifth consecutive year 5/14 (JZ, TK) and 5/23 (BH, BH, JL, MS, NW). Multiple **Bay-breasted Warblers** were seen 5/15-17 at a private residence SHL (RD).

Shaver's Creek Environmental Center provided a live feed of nesting **Barn Owls** from a undisclosed location for the second year. The first egg was laid 3/3, which is about 18 days earlier than last year. Hatch date was 4/5 and official fledge date 6/6, but the young remained in the area for quite some time. Five out of the eight eggs laid were successful (JK). Five nestlings were banded 5/27. Two other nests were also monitored. Four nestlings were banded 5/27 at the second site (JK). Four nestlings and the adult female were banded on 6/2 at the third site. The site was visited again 7/14 with four fledglings observed in the box (JK). A single male was observed 5/26 at a fourth location (JK). All locations are undisclosed to maintain landowner privacy and to reduce disturbance to the birds and nest sites.

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### Monroe County

Locations: Brodheadsville (BV), Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge (CV), Mount Pocono Airport (MPA), Saylor's Lake (SL), Trout Lake (TL).

The season started with the weather on the mild side for the most part of March and April, with May spinning on a dime and starting out very cool and unseasonable, culminating with a May 9th half-inch of snow in the higher elevations of Monroe. The highly-anticipated storm-related activity for waterfowl was at a minimum, especially in the primetime months of March and April. None-the-less, the month of May did not disappoint, with some hard-to-find surprises and firsts for the county that would be the envy of even seasoned birders.

Starting off the season, an early **Broad-winged Hawk** was identified in CV 3/4 by an expert birder and ornithologist (TM). An **American Coot** 3/8 (SL) was the only one found for the season (KF, YL, JO, PN). A **Northern Goshawk** was scored in Kresgeville 3/14 (LWC), and to add to the mix, a **Red-headed Woodpecker** was nailed down in the Snydersville area 3/26 (NF, m.ob.). Waterfowl enjoyed the spotlight on only a few occasions during the expected window of time, beginning with 3 **American Wigeons** at MPA 3/8, 2 **Redheads** at MPA 3/12, and 2 **Northern Shovelers**, 2 **Long-tailed Ducks**, 18 **Greater Scaup**, 13 **American Wigeon**, and 80 **Ring-necked Ducks** on a fog-shrouded TL 3/13. April was very quiet; the only early find was of 10 **Common Loons** after a rainstorm on TL 4/9. Rounding out the end of the month were six **Blue-winged Teal** at MPA 4/28. Outside of BV, two **Ring-necked Pheasants** put in an appearance 4/6 (PN). To sweeten the pot, 3 **Common Terns** put on a good show for a visiting birder at Penn Forest Reservoir 4/18 (JH).

May turned out to be borderline insanity, at least for one particular birder. The day of birding infamy was 5/13. Two Monroe rarities, both county firsts, were recorded and photographed within minutes of each other while kayaking in a hard-to-reach wetland in BV. The first one on the menu was a **Least Bittern**; and if that wasn't enough, in flew a **Glossy Ibis** from out of nowhere, and alighted right on cue in perfect light for a quick snap of the camera (PN). The next day, the bittern was re-found (Jon, SK) and a **Common Gallinule** and **Black-crowned Night Heron** were also discovered nearby by the same



birders (Jon, SK; Jon respectively). Also 5/13, two **Sandhill Cranes** flying over Long Pond were observed by a kayaker and captured on camera (BJ).

To round out the season of COVID-19 hysteria, MPA produced 10 **Greater Yellowlegs**, 17 **Lesser Yellowlegs**, and one **Semipalmated Plover** all 5/3 (BJ). There was one **Pied-billed Grebe** there 5/7 (BJ), and two **Double-crested Cormorants** at Pocono Summit Lake 5/6 (BJ). A known, but hard-to-find breeder, a family of **Hooded Mergansers**, was found in the Saylorsburg area 5/14 (NF). Long Pond held four **American Bitterns** pumping at one time 5/14 (BJ), with two being photographed together on 5/16 (BJ). A **White-eyed Vireo** was found at CV headquarters 5/24 (FZ); 13 **Cerulean Warblers** were counted along the Delaware River 5/25 (NS); and a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was seen at Skytop 5/26 (RK) and an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was photographed on the Delaware SF (BF).

Special mention should be made of the continuing on-again, off-again **Trumpeter Swan** pair that comes and goes to about three different bodies of water in the vicinity of Pocono Summit. They were seen periodically 3/9-5/28 (m.ob.). A half-hearted nest building attempt was observed at one point on a small dirt mound island on Lynchwood Lake for one day, but they never returned.

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### Montgomery County

Locations: Dixon Meadow Preserve (DMP), Evansburg S.P. (ESP), Fort Washington S.P. (FWSP), Green Lane Park (GLP), Haverford College (HC), Lorimer Park (LP), McCarthy Park (MP), Norristown Dam (ND), Trewey Farms Trail (TFT), Twining Valley Park (TVP), Unami Creek Valley (UCV), Upper Schuylkill Valley Park (USVP), Valley Forge National Historical Park (VFNHP), Wissahickon Waterfowl Preserve (WWP).

Normal, spring 2020 was not. Beyond the weather, which certainly had its own quirks - a polar vortex plunging temperatures to the freezing point in the second week of May, for example, and multiple mid-Mar days in or near the '70s F - the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing statewide lockdown made for a decidedly different season. Not to diminish the more serious impacts of the pandemic, the very real deaths and financial hardships that occurred, but our shared hobby was impacted as well.

For much of this period, we were instructed to stay home when possible, to try to slow the spread of the virus and prevent hospitals from being overwhelmed. Outdoor activities, like birding, were permitted if done in a responsible manner. Responsibility involved staying a recommended six feet from every other person not in one's household, and avoidance of crowds. As the season wore on, mask use grew increasingly prevalent in public spaces as well. Travel options disappeared.

The virus also caused significant changes to public land availability. With each governmental entity making up its own safety rules, we were left with a confusing hodgepodge of park closures and conflicting policies, with minimal consistency between the assorted township, county, state and national governments. GLP, a *Montgomery* county park, was closed to public access by order of the county commissioners Mar 13. It remained in that state into Jun. Plenty of people still birded the park anyway, from non-gated areas, but the shuttering of GLP certainly had an impact on its availability for birding purposes. Some birds were very likely missed that wouldn't have been otherwise. State parks, like FWSP, remained open for the most part. Local parks were a mishmash of closures, varying wildly from municipality to municipality and often week to week as well.

One thing that was consistent was the abundance of humans that could be found at just about any birding site. The population was in lockdown, a population that included many students dismissed from school months early and adults either newly unemployed or telecommuting with new-found free time, and they needed something to do. With many of the usual entertainment options outside the home eliminated, the people turned to the outdoors in their boredom. Interest in jogging, hiking, kayaking and biking exploded. While the masses experiencing nature can only be seen in positive terms in the fight to

preserve what remains of our natural world, the inescapable throngs of humanity were a source of annoyance for some, used to relative solitude when birding.

Despite the weirdness of COVID-19, and probably, at least in part, *because* of the virus - some folks were able to devote some serious time to local birding - a lot of birds were found this period - 212 species in fact, our best spring tally since 2015. Several new high counts and early date records were set as well. (As always, we're defining records based on data that has been uploaded to eBird.)

Twenty-five thousand noisy **Snow Geese** remained at GLP 3/1 (GF, PH). By the following day, the group had diminished to 5000 (AH, DD). No further counts exceeded 1000 (m.ob.). A **Cackling Goose** was sighted among the **Canada Geese** at GLP 3/9 (PH). A trio of **Blue-winged Teal** lingered at WWP through 5/4 (DK, m.ob.), about a week later than is typical. Also at WWP and clocking in at about two weeks late was a **Ring-necked Duck** 5/16 (DB, BHo). Seven **Greater Scaup** were noted at GLP 3/13 (PD, m.ob., ph.). A **Lesser Scaup** was present at GLP through 4/29 (ML, m.ob.).

**Long-tailed Ducks** were viewed at GLP, in singles or pairs, 3/13-27 (PD, m.ob., ph.). **Common Goldeneye** continued at a couple of Schuylkill R. sites, numbering as many as 3, through 3/12 (m.ob.). Two female goldeneyes were reported at GLP 3/13 (SGr). The longest-staying goldeneye of the period was present at WWP 3/4-26 (JM, AM, m.ob.). A **Hooded Merganser** stayed at WWP until 5/20 (CD, m.ob.), and 1-2 others, new local breeders, were noted in Franconia Twp. through to the end of the period (SG). A **Red-breasted Merganser** was seen at GLP 3/13 (PD, m.ob., ph.), as were three more 4/18 (SGr, DM, ph.).

One of the brand new high count records, teased in the intro, was set for **Common Nighthawk**: 61 were counted from Pennsburg 5/25 (PH), representing a new county spring high. Thirty-seven nighthawks were also noted from the same location 5/16 (PH). An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was heard calling from Elkins Park 5/15 (PD).

Prior to 2020, there had been only 2 Mar records of **Virginia Rail** in *Montgomery*, neither of them earlier than 3/26. That changed this year when a vocal Virginia was found in the wetland preserve at Germantown Academy 3/10 (AA). It remained there until 3/31 (m.ob., vr.). That's just one of the Mar rails. Another one-two were in Lower Moreland Twp. 3/12-5/16, one-two were at MP in Plymouth Meeting 3/15-5/20 or later, and one-six at Bethayres Swamp 3/29-4/22 (all PD, vt.). Single **Sora** were noted at SGL 234 4/18 (PD) and McCarthy Park 5/8 (DB). **American Coot** was scarce again, with the only individuals reported consisting of one at GLP 4/18-25 (SGr, m.ob., ph.) and a second at WWP 3/5-16 (AA, m.ob., ph.).

A flock of 35 **Black-bellied Plovers** flew over Pennsburg 5/27 (PH). Nocturnal **Semipalmated Plover** migrants were heard over Elkins Park 5/14 and 5/16 (PD, vr.). Three of these little plovers were on the mud at WWP 5/23 (DB, m.ob., ph.). Single **Dunlin** were located at GLP 4/18-20 (PD, m.ob., ph.), GLP again 5/23 (PD, ph.) and WWP 5/25 (JHe, m.ob., ph.). Solo **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were reported at GLP 5/20-24 (BHo, m.ob.) and WWP 5/11-12 (SGr, m.ob.), with 1-2 at WWP 5/23-25 (DB, m.ob.). A **Short-billed Dowitcher** was heard calling from Elkins Park 5/14 (PD, vr.). A **Spotted Sandpiper** appeared at WWP 4/8 (JM, m.ob.), a week early.

Of a small number of **Bonaparte's Gull** reports at GLP 3/29-5/1 (m.ob.), the largest group, seen 4/18, consisted of 50 individuals (PD, m.ob.). A straggler Bonaparte's was noted at GLP 5/21 (PB, ph.). A **Laughing Gull** was seen from the canal area of the Schuylkill R., south of Mont Clare, 4/30 (PD). Another vocal pair was listed at ND 5/15 (SGr). **Herring Gulls** were spied as flyover migrants in small numbers through Apr (m.ob.), with one final late immature Herring seen from Pennsburg 5/5 (PH). Defining a new Mar record, beating an old record set by the same observer on the same day, one year earlier, 132 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were counted at GLP 3/8 (GF). That previous Mar high count was 90, so we are talking about a fairly significant gain. **Great Black-backed Gulls** were detected from the Main Line only: 2 from Bala Cynwyd 4/4 (GG, et al.) and one from Narberth 4/12 (GG).

A **Caspian Tern** made an appearance at Ambler's small Loch Alsh Reservoir 4/13 (AA, ph.). Caspians made sporadic visits in ones and twos to GLP 4/18-5/6 (PD, m.ob., ph.), while another was seen from ND 4/10 (MR). Four **Forster's Terns** were present at GLP 4/18 (PD, m.ob., ph.).

Eighty-six **Common Loons** flew over Pennsburg 4/21 (PH), the largest quantity of this species counted in *Montgomery* since 2005. The same conditions on 4/21 also pushed 159 **Double-crested Cormorants** past PH's

Pennsburg yard/hawkwatch.

**American Bitterns** were seen at GLP 4/7 (JH, MS) and again 4/18 (PD, m.ob., ph.), SGL 234 from 4/16-18 (JHa) and on multiple dates 4/12-5/11 at MP (DB, PD, m.ob., ph.). Another was heard as a nocturnal flyover from Elkins Park 4/20 (PD, vr.). A female **Least Bittern** was present in the reeds at MP 5/8 (DB), while a male was spotted in flight at GLP 5/13 (ML). A **Great Blue Heron** colony at Evansburg S.P. hosted 23 individuals 4/12 (JHa), and another 23 flew over PERT 3/30 (MG). Single **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were heard from Elkins Park 4/20 (PD, vr.), then seen at King of Prussia 5/30 (SGr) and HC 5/13 and 5/23 (both SJ, KJ). The 2 **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** sightings for the period did not occur at ND, the location of nearly all other sightings of this species within the past few years. Instead, both came from Willow Grove. An adult was witnessed in a yard there 4/28 (MH, ph.). Nearly a month later, 5/24, an adult, perhaps the same one, was at an apartment complex pond 1.25 miles north of the 4/28 yard (SS, ph.). Single **Glossy Ibis** were noted at WWP 4/13 (AA, SeG, ph.) and at a small Fort Washington wetlands area 4/23-24 (DB, m.ob., ph.). Eighteen Glossy Ibis flew over a Franconia Twp. yard 5/26 (SG, ph.).

Seventy-five **Black Vultures** were at Souderton 4/25 (ZM), residents attracted by meat processing plants, and 139 migrant **Turkey Vultures** passed over Pennsburg 3/20 (PH). PH, it should be noted, took advantage of the COVID-19 lockdown to conduct a dedicated, one-man hawkwatch over his Pennsburg yard. As extended hawkwatching is something only rarely undertaken (or, at least, reported) in spring in *Montgomery*, it resulted in a number of interesting sightings as well as some record-breaking raptor counts. Sixteen **Osprey** were counted 4/25, for example, which turned out to represent the second highest ever Apr total of this species for the county, after only a weather-related 20-count at GLP in 1992. Also notable was an early Osprey was spied from the hawk watch deck at FWSP 3/9 (RC). An adult **Mississippi Kite** was photographed over HC 5/29 (SJ, KJ, ph., doc. submitted). **Northern Harriers** were noted in quantities of 6-8 flying past Pennsburg on 4 days 4/7-25, and a late harrier was also detected from this site 5/15 (all PH).

The Pennsburg hawkwatch's biggest **Sharp-shinned Hawk** day occurred 4/12, when 23 were counted (PH). A new overall county high count of **Bald Eagle** was set at Pennsburg: 21 eagles were observed 5/10, mostly immature, 19 of which were deemed to be northbound migrants (PH). This number tops even the high counts of Militia Hill Hawk Watch at FWSP. The county spring **Broad-winged Hawk** record was also broken twice over. On 4/19, 388 Broad-wings flew over Pennsburg, and then 185 more did the same 4/23 (both PH). The old spring season record, set Apr 2019, was 109.

A **Long-eared Owl** was noted at ESP 3/26 (BHo). Of overwintering Long-ears in the GLP area, 3 remained through at least 4/6 (LH, ph.). Single **Short-eared Owls** were reported at VFNHP 3/15 (SGr) and ESP 4/4 (JHa, vt.).

The **Red-headed Woodpecker** at USVP, present since 12/7 (KCa), stayed until 3/11 (m.ob., ph.). Another was found on private property in the UCV 4/28 (AH, vr.) and remained at the site through, at least, 5/24 (m.ob., ph., vr.), a date with potential breeding implications. Larger falcon numbers for the period included 12 **American Kestrels** grounded at PERT 3/30 (MG), 10 kestrels over Pennsburg 4/25 (PH) and 3 **Merlins** at Pennsburg both 4/19 and 4/25 (PH).

A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was recorded singing at FWSP 5/24-25 (DB, PD, vr.). Vocal **Alder Flycatchers** were reported in Franconia Twp. 5/19-20 (SG, vr.), Mont Clare 5/30 (SaS) and GLP 5/30 (PD, vr.). **Least Flycatchers** were far more abundant than typical this season, with mostly well-documented reports of at minimum of 38 individuals spread out across the county 5/3-22 (m.ob.). This includes accumulations of 4 at Gwynedd Wildlife Preserve 5/3 (JG, ph., vr.), 3 at Franconia Twp. 5/16 (SG) and 5 at PERT 5/16 (MG, AnM). A **White-eyed Vireo**, more likely to have been overwintering in the neighborhood than to be a month-plus-early migrant, was sighted at FWSP 3/7-8, and again 4/1-7 (DB, m.ob.). The initial date range there represents a first Mar county record of this species.

Though it was not a banner year for **Blue Jay** migration, a few larger migrant flocks were seen from the Pennsburg hawkwatch in spring 2020: 54 jays on 5/15 and 40 on 5/3 (PH). **Common Raven** cast aside any claims to rarity, becoming only "uncommon", with more than 200 reports of the species logged countywide in eBird for the period (m.ob.); most reports were of singles or pairs only. A group of 13 ravens was seen at VFNHP 3/16 (KeJ, BM), for

instance, and 10 were seen over Plymouth Meeting 4/5 (DB).

Late, potentially breeding **Horned Larks** were present in Franconia Twp. to the end of the period (AH, m.ob., vr.), in Palm 5/21 (PB) and Pennsburg 4/23-5/22 (PH). A couple unusually large conglomerations of **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were noted this period: 100 were estimated near Mont Clare 4/26 (PD) and 60 at GLP 4/18 (KC). Thirteen or more **Cliff Swallows** were observed between 4 locations 4/23-5/21 (m.ob.). This included 4 over Pennsburg 5/5 (PH).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** showed up several days earlier than typical this season, with the first three reports on the final day of Mar, 3/31: one each was observed at Sweetbriar Park in King of Prussia (SGr), USVP (BM) and TFT (PM). These all represent a shared first Mar record in eBird. Single **Marsh Wrens** were found in Lower Moreland Twp. 3/14, Bethayres Swamp 4/22 and TWT 5/12 (all PD, vr., vt.).

Several known or presumed overwintering **Gray Catbirds** were (re)found in Mar, at Kenealy Nature Park in Lower Merion Twp. 3/10 (BHo), Skymount Park in the UCV 3/17 (WBH), TVP 3/19 (TG) and Harriet Wetherill Park in Plymouth Twp. 3/22 (DB). There were 11 solid reports of **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** 5/12-22 (m.ob.). High volume **Cedar Waxwing** migration days over Pennsburg included 153 on 5/15 and 235 on 5/23 (PH). Single **American Pipits** were encountered at GLP 3/5 (SG), Salford Twp. 3/14 (WBH, KH, vr.) and Pennsburg 4/29 (PH), with groups of 4 at DMP 4/23 (DB) and 6 at Pennsburg 4/28 (PH).

A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was heard singing at ESP 5/14 (PB), where they are not known to breed, while one-three were noted by many at their traditional Fruitville Rd. field breeding site near GLP starting 5/16 (m.ob.). A Grasshopper Sparrow at PERT from 5/29 to the end of the period appears to represent the first spring record for the park in decades (AnM, m.ob., ph., vr.). Groups of **Chipping Sparrows** stuck out the entire winter at a couple of locations: 7 were still hanging around at TVP 3/2 (TG), and 9 were sighted at PERT 3/14 (FB, HB).

TVP's celebrity, county-first **Lark Sparrow**, originally found 1/24 (TG), remained at the former golf course through 3/22 (m.ob., ph.). **American Tree Sparrows** were sparsely reported through 3/12, just 5 mentions of 1-2 individuals (m.ob.). Seven **White-crowned Sparrows** were found May 1-12, all singles (m.ob.). Eight **Vesper Sparrows** were observed from 5 locations 4/5-28 (m.ob.). **Lincoln's Sparrows** seen at PERT 3/15-4/1 (AnM, m.ob., ph.) and Fulshaw Craeg Preserve in the UCV 3/27 (WBH, ph.) probably overwintered in the vicinity of those locations, based on the dates. There is only one prior Mar record of the species, from PERT in 2018. At least 7 more Lincoln's turned up during migration, with observations occurring during a more typical 5/8-16 window (m.ob.).

A **Yellow-breasted Chat** found at ESP 4/25 (PB) easily set a new county early date record, besting its predecessor by more than a week. It follows, logically, that the sighting also represents a first county Apr record. A **Baltimore Oriole** made a one-day appearance at bird feeders in West Norriton 3/2 (Ade, ph.), while another was briefly viewed in Blue Bell 3/31 (SA). A third Baltimore Oriole, at Lower Merion Twp.'s Shortridge Memorial Park, was observed multiple times over several weeks 3/22-4/14 (JW, m.ob., ph.).

The only sizable report of **Red-winged Blackbirds** also came from Lower Moreland Twp., when 900 were noted coming in to roost in a wetland 3/29 (PD). No other report of this species topped 250. Speaking of roost sites, a huge roosting group of **Rusty Blackbirds** was an exciting discovery at MP this spring. A group numbering as high as 121 on 4/6 (DB) and 119 on 3/28 (PD) used the park for nightly lodging 3/28-4/24 (m.ob., ph., vr.). These numbers double the old high count record for *Montgomery*. Beyond MP, the declining boreal blackbird species was credibly reported from 20 additional locations 3/7-4/29 (m.ob.), all in single digits, save for 11 at a King of Prussia Mall retention pond 3/20 (SGr, MR) and 33 in Lower Moreland Twp. 4/1 (PD).

Thirty-four species of warbler and two warbler hybrids were found: no mega-rarities, but 34 means the full gamut of eastern species is otherwise covered. A well-described early **Ovenbird** was seen and heard singing in Schwenksville 4/8 (MC). Male **Golden-winged Warblers** were found at the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove 5/10 (BD, BaH, LP, ph.) and FWSP 5/13 (DB, m.ob.). Members of both of the named Golden X **Blue-winged Warbler** hybrid flavors were observed as well: a **Brewster's Warbler** in the UCV 5/22 (BHo, SGr) and a **Lawrence's Warbler** at TFT 5/12 (BHo, KR). A **Prothonotary Warbler** was photographed at Pottstown Riverfront

Park 5/1 (DM, ph.).

It was a very good season for several species bound for northern boreal forests, including **Tennessee Warbler**, which were particularly dense at FWSP, where counts of 3-5 were noted on 6 days 5/8-22 (m.ob.). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was an unusual find in Franconia Twp. 5/7 (SG), representing only *Montgomery's* fourth record in spring migration. A **Mourning Warbler** was at LP on the fairly early dates of 5/8-9 (MG, PD). Another Mourning was reported at TFT 5/30 (MLa). **Kentucky Warblers** were noted at FWSP 5/9 (AF, SGr), in the UCV 5/21 (PB) and at LP on 3 separate instances 5/15-20 (PD, m.ob., vr.). Song spectrogram analysis by PD confirmed that the three LP Kentucky Warbler observations were of unique individuals.

While not a boreal species, it was a decidedly good season for **Hooded Warbler** as well, with the species noted from 16 locations 4/26-5/17, often lingering several days (m.ob.). **Cape May Warblers** were heavily reported 5/3-25 (m.ob.). A **Cerulean Warbler** was at LP 5/7-8 (PD, m.ob., vt.). Of all the boreal warblers (or "borblers", as nobody is calling them), **Bay-breasted Warbler's** season was the most incredible. They were seemingly everywhere 5/8-25, often in large groups (m.ob.). There were 17 reports featuring Bay-breasted Warbler counts ranging from 4-9 (m.ob.). Later **Pine Warblers** included one that lingered at FWSP through 5/14 (m.ob.), and another spotted in Franconia Twp. 5/20 (SG). **Yellow-throated Warblers** were spied at Pottstown Riverfront Park 5/1 (PD, m.ob., vr.) and FWSP 5/12-13 (DB, m.ob.). There were tons of reports of **Wilson's Warbler**, spanning 31 locations 5/1-24 (m.ob.).

**Blue Grosbeaks** were first detected at mostly-annual breeding sites in Franconia Twp. beginning 5/3 (WBH, KH, vr.), VFNHP 5/7 (KeJ, m.ob., ph.) and DMP 5/29 (BM, m.ob., ph.). They continued at all three locations through the end of the period. A couple of others were noted elsewhere, in migration: at USVP 5/18 (BM, ph.) and Pottstown Landfill 5/22 (SSt).

**EXOTICS:** A **Mandarin Duck**, almost certainly an escapee, was seen on Skippack Creek in or near the north end of ESP 4/22 (JWa) and 5/3 (AD, ph.).

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### Montour County

Locations: Montour Preserve (MP)

This season's most exciting news was a successful **Long-eared Owl** nesting where at least two young fledged. Duck migration was mostly lackluster, including no scoters of any species. High counts included 47 **Gadwall** (AK) and 150 **Lesser Scaup** (MH) at MP 3/13. The **Peregrine Falcon** nest at the Montour Power Plant had at least three chicks as of 5/21 (AK).

Vireo reports included a **Philadelphia Vireo** at MP 5/18 (AK) and a **White-eyed Vireo** at the same location 5/17 (AW). Up to 2 **Marsh Wrens** were at Kelly's Dam Marsh 5/11-14 (EH, AK, MH).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch** has been scarce this year, but one was at MP through the spring. In contrast, some migrant sparrows were abundant and included a **Lincoln's Sparrow** at MP 5/20 (EH) (many reports statewide this spring) and strong numbers of **White-crowned Sparrows** with a high count of eight at MP 5/9 (DI). A count of 200 **Rusty Blackbirds** at MP 4/9 was notable (AK).

Warbler highlights were an **Orange-crowned Warbler** at MP 5/11-18 (EH, m.ob.), and a **Golden-winged Warbler** at the North Branch Canal Trail 5/10 (AK). Two hybrid **Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warblers** were at the MP 5/8 (AK), one of which resembled a Lawrence's in most, but not all, respects.

Observers: **Evan Houston, evanghouston@gmail.com**, Matthew Heintzelman, Deepak Iyer, Andrew Keister, Amanda Wydra.

### Northampton County

Locations: East Bangor Dam (EBD), Jacobsburg State Park (JSP), Martins Creek Environmental Preserve (MCEP), Minsi Lake (ML), Nazareth Quarry (NQ).

There were 218 species reported during the period. The big highlight was the sighting of a **White-faced Ibis**. It was not the only great find as birders found a **Laughing Gull** and a **Summer Tanager**.

Waterfowl reports were about average with a few highlights. A **Ross's Goose** was at MCEP 3/6-8 (MSa, JH). **Northern Shoveler** was common at NQ 3/6-4/25 with a high of 28 on 3/15 (SA). There was a high count of 21 **Long-tailed Ducks** at NQ 3/20 (MS). Two **Red-necked Grebes** were at the Albert Rd. ponds 5/1 (MSa). A **Virginia Rail** was heard at Bear Swamp 5/12 (JH) and one to three **Virginia Rails** were at EBD 4/11-5/3 (MSa). A **Common Gallinule** was at ML 5/9 (SK).

It was not a good spring for uncommon shorebirds. The only highlight was 2 **Red-necked Phalaropes** at MCEP 5/29 (MSa). An impressive 420 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were loafing in the grass at Braden Airpark on a rainy 3/29 (MS). Weather had birds on the move on 4/18 with some nice birds dropping in at NQ throughout the day. In the early morning of 4/18, a **Common Tern** joined some **Bonaparte's Gulls** at NQ (MS, MSa, JM). An hour after the tern left, an adult **Laughing Gull** and a **Forster's Tern** flew into the quarry (JM, AM). Four **Caspian Terns** were at ML 4/13 (JM, MSa), and a one was at ML 4/25 (SA).

Water levels were back to normal at ML with the completion of dam repairs. The lake still had lots of cattails and grasses along the edges. **American Bittern** was at found ML 4/1-10 (BS), at EBD 4/19-5/9 (MSa), at Twin Lakes 5/1 (SK), and at Christian Springs Rd. pond on 5/8 (BE). **Black-crowned Night-heron** was observed at Green Pond 3/29 (MS) and at Hanoverville Canal Park 5/3 (MC). Another highlight for ML was on 4/30 when groups of 2 and 6 **Glossy Ibis** flew over the lake (JM, MSa, JH). A Glossy Ibis was seen flying over Housenick Memorial Park 5/3 (LF). An adult **White-faced Ibis** made a brief stop at Green Pond 5/1 (JM). This is the third state and first *Northampton* record. The bird took off shortly after being found but was discovered a mile away on Nulton Ave. where a few more birders got to see the bird before it flew east into NJ.

A **Golden Eagle** was seen soaring over MCEP 3/5 (MSa). Two **Long-eared Owls** were at an undisclosed area 3/6 (MSa). **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was reported from JSP 5/18 (DD) and along National Park Rd. 5/17 (MS, JM, AM, SK). Another good bird at JSP was a **Philadelphia Vireo** 5/4 (DD). Several **Marsh Wrens** were at EBD 4/23-5/9 (m.ob.).

A **Golden-winged Warbler** found 5/2 (JY) and an **Orange-crowned Warbler** found 5/3 (JH) were seen along National Park Rd. Another **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at MCEP 4/29 (MSa). *Northampton's* second, third, and fourth records of **Summer Tanager** occurred Nulton Ave. 5/1 (JM, MSa), at a private feeder in the Martins Creek area 5/11 and another **Summer Tanager** was heard and briefly seen at Bear Swamp 5/15 (MSa, JH).

Observers: **Michael Schall, mdtjschall@yahoo.co, 610-737-5275**, Scott Angus, Michael Cox, Dave DeReamus, Bill Etter, Linda Freedman, Jason Horn, Stephen Kloiber, Jon Mularczyk, Adam Miller, Matt Sabatine (MSa), Brandon Swayser, Joe Yuhas.

### Northumberland County

Locations: Paradise Road – Turbotville (PRT), Plotts Road (PR), Riverside (RIV), Snyder Road – Turbotville (SRT).

A relatively mild and storm-free winter produced few notable sightings

this season. **Short-eared Owls** are typically regular in the county each winter, but this season the only report was of 3 seen along SRT 2/23 (MB). **Wilson's Snipe** are annually reported from a few reliable locations across the county. This season up to 3 were reported feeding along the limestone springs near PR 12/8-2/25 (AK, BS, LS).

The only report of **Snow Bunting** was of 2 seen along PRT 1/21 (KP). The highlight of the season was the unusual sighting of a **Scarlet Tanager** in RIV 2/24 (SF). This represents the only Feb eBird report of this species in the state. There are other winter records in Pennsylvania so it's not unprecedented.

Observers: **Andy Keister, 110 Hawk Ridge Road, Bloomsburg, 17815, (570) 337-3802, akeister110@gmail.com**, Mary Bogert, Steph Fullmer, Karol Pasquinelli, Lauren Shaffer, Bill Snyder.

**Perry County** – no report

### **Philadelphia County**

Locations: Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), Awbury Arboretum (AA), Bartram's Garden (BG), Carpenter's Woods (CW), Cobbs Creek Park (CCP), Delaware River (DR), Delaware River Trail (DRT), Discovery Center - East Park Reservoir (DCEPR), East Fairmount Park-Boxer's Trail (BT), Franklin D. Roosevelt Park (FDR), Glen Foerd (GF), Fort Mifflin (FM), Independence National Historic Park (INHP), Island Green Country Club and Golf Course-abandoned (IGCC), John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge (JHNWR), Navy Yard (NY), Pennypack on the Delaware (POD), Pennypack Park (PP), Poquessing Creek Park (PCP), Rittenhouse Square (RS), Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education (SCEE), Somerton Woods (SW), Southwest Water Treatment Plant (SWTP), Temple University (TU), Upper Roxborough Reservoir (URR), Wissahickon Valley Park (WVP).

What a difference a pandemic makes! Despite the all-too-familiar initial gut-feeling that spring migration was late and numbers of birds low, *Philadelphia* birders had a pretty good season and found an all-time high of 225 species. The previous high was 218 species in 2014. The new high is not really surprising considering that a lot of folks unwillingly had a lot of time on their hands due to Covid-19-related shutdowns of businesses and general life. This becomes evident just by looking at the numbers of submitted eBird checklists in spring over the last five years: 2016 - 1,345; 2017 - 1,683; 2018 - 2,087; 2019 - 2,635; 2020 - 4,095. A very consistent annual increase of around 25% turned into a 55% bump this year, even though many field trips and events were cancelled or modified. For example, participants of the World Series of Birding, including our very own team of next-generation birders stayed local. Please check out a brief summary that team member Victoria Sindlinger provided below.

There were a great number of highlights, beginning with the first confirmed breeding pair of **Barred Owls** at CW. Almost all previous observations were made at WVP a little further north, especially since 2016. However, there was no record in 2019, except for a carcass found in April. So it was a great surprise when a pair was discovered at CW on 3/1 (LV). The birds were enjoyed by many throughout spring, and the first of two owlets popped up its head from the nest hole 5/27 (LV).

Two pairs of **Gadwalls** lingered at ACE 5/17 (HP) with one drake still among the plentiful **Mallards** on 5/31 (GA, HP). Up to 8 **Redheads** were at JHNWR and 7 at DCEPR until mid-Mar (m.ob.). Three **White-winged Scoters** were at the NY 4/26 (LH, PM). One **Long-tailed Duck** was at GF 3/7 (LH) and 7 were at NY 3/27 (LH, PM). Eight **Buffleheads** were late at JHNWR 5/7 (BK, PS) and so was one male **Common Merganser** at Fort Mifflin 5/31 (GA). **Red-breasted Mergansers** were frequently observed flying upriver along the DR this spring with a maximum of 12 on 3/30 both at POD and GF (GA, LH). Two birds stayed at GF until the end of May (LH). A beautiful male **Ruddy Duck** in alternate plumage was at the Race Street Pier along the DR 5/29 (SB, AD).

**Wild Turkeys** have not been confirmed breeding since 2017, so it was nice to see a displaying male with 2 females on 56th St., actually in the middle of the road, near BG 5/7 (GA). **Black-billed Cuckoos** appeared to be present in more locations than usual, with two at CW, JHNWR and URR throughout May (m.ob.). Single **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were at CW 4/30 (JG) and,

surprisingly, POD 4/29 (KS). To the delight of many birders, two birds stayed at AA 5/1-10 (BR *et al.*). This location has become a reliable spot for this species in spring.

After 27 years, another **Clapper Rail** found its way to the city and remained alive. (There was a window strike victim at 33rd and Race Street in 2013.) While the last one was found in 1993 on a window ledge at the Franklin Institute, this year's one-day-wonder was in more appropriate habitat along the DRT 4/19 (AZ). **Virginia Rails** are much more regular and were seen at JHNWR 4/19 (JM, PW) and 5/6 (PM). One was recorded during nocturnal migration over the city 4/20 (HP). The possibly overwintering **Sora** was last seen at JHNWR 3/2 (AD). Another bird was seen at POD from 4/24-5/8 (PM, HP). While the overwintering **Common Gallinule** at JHNWR had not found a mate by end of May yet, the resident pair at FDR was back at Meadow Lake 4/28 (BQ, MT). Hopes are high that they will breed successfully again after last year's failure. Individuals were also seen at another breeding site, SWTP, starting 4/26 (HP) and oddly enough, likely for the first time, along the creek at PP 4/30 (SR, PK). An **American Coot** joined the Gallinules briefly at FDR 5/22-27 (HP, BQ), which is pretty rare that time of the year. Over the last few years, observations of flyover **Sandhill Cranes** have become more regular, though still limited to only a few occasions. One was at POD 4/12 (MD, LW) and another over a private backyard in NW *Philadelphia* 5/16 (KB). Up to three were seen over the impoundment at JHNWR 5/13-17 (m.ob.).

An awesome 16 shorebird species were recorded, that number equaling all observations combined from the previous ten years. Very rare was an **American Oystercatcher** flying south along the DR at NY 3/29 (LH, GA). Up to 2 **Black-bellied Plovers** on the DR mudflats at POD 5/21-22 were only the second record in eBird (LH *et al.*). **Semipalmated Plovers** were numerous at ACE with 39 counted 5/17 (HP). The nocturnal flight call of an **Upland Sandpiper** was recorded in the wee hours of the morning in NW *Philadelphia* 4/18 (LH). One of the more peculiar observations of a **Dunlin** came from POD 3/29 (BQ, PM, ZM). The bird was standing in a small puddle along the main trail right at everyone's feet unfazed even by dogs with one observer almost stepping on it. Another was in more appropriate habitat in the tidal marsh at POD 4/27 (JJ) and up to 3 Dunlin were at ACE 5/17-31 (HP, GA).

Feeding among about 250 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were 3 **White-rumped Sandpipers** at ACE 5/24 (GA, HP). Eighteen **Wilson's Snipe** were at JHNWR 4/28 (PM). Ten years have gone by since **Red-necked Phalaropes** were discovered in *Philadelphia*; this time on the DR at Penn's Landing on 5/28 (BH). The two birds stuck around another day to the delight of many observers. Nine **Spotted Sandpipers** and 11 **Solitary Sandpipers** at JHNWR 5/14 both represented unusually high numbers (GA).

**Bonaparte's Gulls** were frequently seen flying north along the DR at various locations 3/25-4/25. Seventy-two at POD 4/13 (PM) and 85 at NY 4/14 (GA, LH) were great numbers for *Philadelphia*. A first cycle **Black-headed Gull** was on the DR flats at POD 3/30 (GA). **Iceland Gulls** were seen at the usual spots (GF, NY, POD) among migrating gulls including an unusual 5 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** at POD 3/28 (PM). A total of two **Glaucous Gulls** migrating at DRT 3/29 and FDR 4/12 (GA, LH) can be considered "numerous". **Common Loons** can be regularly seen migrating north in spring, but 48 birds in groups of up to 12 over FDR 4/12 were exceptional (GA, LH).

An **American Bittern** was a surprise at CCP 4/16 (DE). This species can be reliably seen at IGCC with one there 4/15-19 (LH). There were no records from JHNWR. "Shocked!" was the observer of a **Least Bittern** when he flushed the bird from a wet area along the creek in PP

5/1 (PK). This must have been the first observation for that location. A pair was seen nest building at JHNWR in May (m.ob.). Three occupied **Great Blue Heron** nests were discovered at JHNWR 4/25 (MH, JW). However, no update on breeding success has been reported since.

Adult **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were seen at DRT, FDR, IGCC and JHNWR (m.ob.). One immature **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was at JHNWR 5/10 (FW *et al.*). An unusually large number of **Glossy Ibis** was at JHNWR with a maximum of 38 on 5/29 (AS). With some luck this species can be seen flying over anywhere in the city just like the 21 birds at BT 5/15 (SG).

**Bald Eagles** successfully nested again at POD with two fledglings visible 4/11 (IS). No success was reported from JHNWR so far this year. The red-phase **Eastern Screech-Owl** at POD had company from a gray-phase bird as early as 3/20, but no nesting was confirmed. Elsewhere, nesting is likely at PP and WVP. **Great Horned Owls** successfully raised young at three



sites in PP, at one site in WVP, and at JHNWR. A bright adult **Red-headed Woodpecker** was a nice surprise at JHNWR 5/13-14 (RZ *et al.*). **American Kestrels** were numerous again at IGCC with 13 birds 4/5 (HP) and at least nine 4/11 (GA, HP). There were also two reports of courtship behavior and mating from two residential neighborhoods (AZ, BB). Two new probable nesting sites of **Peregrine Falcons** were reported, from TU (MP) and a church close to CCP (TC, DE).

One **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at FDR 5/23 (GA, PM). An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was early at FDR 4/29 (BQ, HP). **Alder Flycatchers** are generally infrequently seen or heard in *Philadelphia*, so single birds in the SCEE/JRR area 5/24-26 (GA, PM) and at JHNWR 5/25 (LH, GA) provided a welcome opportunity to practice distinguishing this species by its call from the identical-looking **Willow Flycatcher**. A new high count for **Least Flycatchers** was reached when 5 were recorded at BG 5/16 (GA) and for **Eastern Phoebes** when 32 were seen at FDR 3/30 (HP).

A pair of **White-eyed Vireos** was observed nest-building at JHNWR 5/13 (PM), but the nest was discovered destroyed 5/21 (RZ). This would have been the first confirmed breeding in a long time. Extremely rare in spring, a **Philadelphia Vireo** was photographed and recorded singing at FDR 5/16 (BD, ED, MD). Thirty **Red-eyed Vireos** at CW 5/16 were a new high count (KRu). The only **Horned Lark** was not seen in typical habitat at POD or the airports, but flying upriver at NY 4/9 (GA, LH). A melanistic **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** at FDR from 5/6-12 (HP *et al.*) had folks think twice about calling it a male **Purple Martin**. The latter was found at POD on 4/11 (GA) and on and off at JHNWR (m.ob.). Forty-five **Bank Swallows** at JHNWR 5/25 was a number not seen in spring for the last five years (GA, LH). Up to 12 at GF in late May were part of the colony on the *New Jersey* side of the river (LH).

A new high count of **Hermit Thrushes** was reached at FDR 4/18 when 36 were seen, mainly in the wooded southwest section of the park (HP). This portion will soon be dug up to create a wetland mitigation site as development at the Philadelphia Airport will impact a nearby wetland there. The species can also be found at many inner-city parks such as INHP where a maximum of 6 were observed 4/6 and 4/18 (KRa). An **American Pipit** foraged on the ball fields at POD 3/22 (MD *et al.*) and one flew over IGCC 4/19 (LH).

A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was recorded over a residential neighborhood in NW *Philadelphia* in the early night 4/19 (LH). Large flocks of **Chipping Sparrows**, totaling 105 birds, were found at FDR 4/18 (HP). IGCC remains the undisputed capital of **Field Sparrows** with a maximum of 22 seen 4/15 (LH). If anyone needs **Savannah Sparrows** for their list, POD is the place to be in spring (and fall). About 25 were seen 4/12 (MD, PM, LW), but there are always at least a handful there in April. **Lincoln's Sparrows** were much more numerous than in previous years, seen at 10 different locations with one surprising bird at RS in the city's center 5/15 (MD). **Eastern Towhees** were abundant at FDR 4/18, with a highly unusual 23 birds seen mainly in the golf course section (HP). **Yellow-breasted Chats** were at POD 5/24 (JE *et al.*) and SCEE 5/27 (DB).

The absolute star of this spring was a **Seaside Sparrow** discovered in the reeds of North Meadow Lake at FDR 5/9 (CH). A first for *Philadelphia* and (about) the eighth for the state, the following day many people spent blood, sweat and tears standing in the mud waiting, some all day, for this skulking bugger to show his face. Only a handful were lucky enough to get a mere second-long glimpse of the bird.

It never gets old writing about **Ovenbirds'** affinity for our inner-city parks. The top three locations, "Red Square" at 18th and Cherry St, INHP and RS, each held at least 20 birds at one point. Red Square shattered all records for a single site with 36 birds working the flower beds 5/4 (MD). A rare male **Golden-winged Warbler** was singing at PP 5/8 (HP). Aside from the usual records at JHNWR, a female **Prothonotary Warbler** was noteworthy at PP 5/10 (CC). All three common *Leiothlypis* warblers were more frequently observed than in previous years, even after factoring in the increased number of submitted eBird checklists. The **Tennessee Warbler** maximum count was 7 at WVP 5/18 (DB). **Orange-crowned Warblers** were seen at five different locations with a maximum of 2 each at FDR and AA, and **Nashville Warbler** tallied a max. of 5-6 CW (m.ob.). **Mourning Warblers** were at CW 5/15-17 (JG *et al.*), SCEE 5/16-18 (LH *et al.*) and at PCP 5/30 (HP). Single **Kentucky**

**Warblers** were found at AA, CCP, FDR and WVP (m.ob.), more than in the previous five years combined.

Outstanding numbers of **American Redstarts** were seen at PP (32) and BG (30) on 5/16 (HP, GA). Nesting activity was noted only at TCP 5/21 (BM). A singing adult male **Cerulean Warbler** showed nicely at SW 4/25 (HP). This species used to breed in the WVP until the late 1990's. Nowadays it is very rarely noticed during spring migration; this bird represents the first record since 2016. Observations of **Magnolia Warblers** were down compared to previous years. Exceptional numbers of **Bay-breasted Warblers** were recorded in all corners of *Philadelphia* with a maximum of about 30 birds at JHNWR 5/16 (JF). As this species' numbers correlate with the spruce budworm population, it was interesting to note that numbers of another budworm specialist, **Cape May Warbler**, remained similar to previous years, maybe even a little lower. Overall numbers were also slightly up for **Blackburnian Warblers** (3-4 birds at once at five locations) and **Chestnut-sided Warblers** (6-9 birds at once at four locations). **Blackpoll Warblers** were numerous at FDR and JHNWR with a max. of 37 at JHNWR 5/25 (GA, LH). The peak of migration was about a week later than in previous years. High numbers (10) of **Black-throated Green Warblers** not seen since 2016 were recorded at CW 5/8-10 (JG, NS).

This season, **Summer Tanagers** kept showing up, raising hopes that a pair might stick around. Up to 2 were at JHNWR 4/22-5/9 (DL *et al.*), CW 5/4-7 (JG *et al.*), and AA 5/9-12 (BR *et al.*). Singles were found at INHP 5/5-7 (KRa, VS), DRT 5/12 (AE), and FDR 5/14-16 (RK *et al.*). Twelve **Scarlet Tanagers** at BG on 5/16 were a personal daily high count for the observer and almost a new high count for *Philadelphia* (GA). **Blue Grosbeaks** were again a reliable spring migrant, seen on breeding grounds at IGCC and POD as well as at new locations such as AA and FDR (m.ob.). A first for the city, a spring record of a **Dickcissel** came from a nocturnal migrant during the night of 5/3 (HP).

On Saturday, May 9th, the Sudden Stops and Terns set out for their fifth consecutive World Series of Birding. The team consisted of Victoria Sindlinger, Elliot Dziedzic, Nancy Armstrong, Daniel Long, and Janie Hill, along with their adult family members. Due to the danger of COVID-19, rather than having all teams bird in New Jersey, birding was restricted to the local area. Even so, one family drove 70 miles just that one day! The team spent about 15 hours birding. It was a bitterly cold day, and so windy that Victoria's scope blew over on the banks of the Delaware River. Despite the weather, some nice birds were seen including a **Great-horned Owl** at Rushton Woods Preserve, a **Wilson's Warbler** at Shortridge Park, a **Blue Grosbeak**, and **Eastern Whip-poor-will** at Awbury Arboretum, and even a flyby **White-winged Scoter** from a team member on the Jersey coast! The final count was 126 species. As fun as it is seeing all these wonderful birds, for me the true value of the World Series lies in the sense of community. I love having support from friends and family and sharing Big Day sagas with them. There is nothing like spending a whole day out birding, bumping into birders from near and far, trading sightings, telling stories, and making memories. (Victoria Sindlinger)

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## Pike County

Locations: Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DWG), Lake Wallenpaupack (LW), Pecks Pond (PP).

Birding was very good in *Pike* during the migration period with plenty of uncommon species reported. Waterfowl variety was above average compared to recent spring seasons. This may be a result of increased observers and observation time. It was also a warm winter, and the ice was gone by early March. Dam repairs were completed at PP by early spring and the lake began filling back up.

A group of 10 **Tundra Swans** was at PP 3/1-8 (RJ). A male **Northern Shoveler** between 3/17-28 and one-four **Northern Pintails** 3/8-27 were also seen at PP (BW). **Green-winged Teal** were especially fond of the shallow water and large expanse of cattails there. On 4/11, there were an estimated 200 Green-winged Teal present (MS), and a **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** was observed 3/19-22 (MS). There were 3 **Redheads** at Porter's Lake 3/1 (MS). On 3/22, a **White-winged Scoter** was found at LW (AM). Five **Surf Scoters** and 2 White-wings were seen from Tafton Dike at LW 4/16 (BW). **Long-tailed Duck** was reported from LW 3/21-22 and 4/16 with a high of 9 on 3/21 (BW). **Horned Grebe** was regular at LW 3/19-4/18. There were also one-three **Red-necked Grebes** at LW 4/16-18 (BW).

**Virginia Rail** was reported from multiple locations - at PP 4/16 (MS, CCS), Camp Hidden Falls 5/2 (RJ, PS, GP), Shohola WMA 5/26 (MG), and at SGL 209 on 5/31 (NS). Perhaps the most viewed birds were 3 **Sandhill Cranes** at PP 3/18-28 (YL, JO). Once word got out, many birders and locals went to see the cranes.

Maybe the rarest bird reported was **Little Gull**. Two were seen from Tafton Dike at LW, whose waters span both *Wayne* and *Pike*, 4/18 (MS); photos of both were obtained. Little Gull was actually first reported in *Wayne* 4/16 (JD). This is the second consecutive year for Little Gull at LW. There were around 400 **Bonaparte's Gulls** at LW on 4/18 (MS). **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was at LW 3/17-22 (KJ). Two **Forster's Terns** spent a couple hours at LW 4/18 before moving on (MS). At Porter's Lake there were 2 **Red-throated Loons** on the morning of 4/9 (BW), and another was at LW 4/18 (BW).

**Red-headed Woodpecker** was seen in the Greentown area on private property 5/7-29 (KJ) and at Delaware SF along Highline Rd. 5/15 (AE). **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen on Highline Rd. 5/17 (BW), on Tarkill Demo Trail 5/17 (MT), and at the Old Heller Farm in the DWG 5/24 (MS, CCS). **White-eyed Vireo** is rare in *Pike*, but a male was singing on Highline Rd. 5/20 (MSa, JH) and then at nearby Hay Rd. 5/24-26 (MS).

At the Bushkill Access area of the DWG, a **Lincoln's Sparrow** was found 5/15 (BW), and another was seen on Pine Flats Rd. 5/18 (CCS). In the Dingmans Falls area, a **Yellow-breasted Chat** was photographed on private property 5/20 (BW). A few **Rusty Blackbirds** were hanging out near the LW swim beach in a patch of flooded woods 4/11-16 (MS).

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## Potter County

Locations: Castle Hollow Road (CHR), Coudersport (CO), Cross Fork (CF), Galeton (GA), Galeton Lake (GL), Lyman Run SP (LRSP), North Fork Dam (NFD), Ole Bull State Park (OBSP), Oswayo (OSW), Shinglehouse (SH), Sinnemahoning SP (SISP), Slate Quarry-Wharton (STrout Run Road (TRR).

Reports to eBird for the spring season were low in individual numbers, with 136 species listed. Waterfowl highlights included: one **Tundra Swan** at GL 3/10 (ML), a female **Wood Duck** with 6 ducklings at SISP 5/27 (CD) and 5 **Gadwalls** off Ole Bull Rd, north of CF 3/25 (SL). In addition, a high of 24 **Ring-necked Ducks** were at Lake Lloyd 3/21 (KR), one **Lesser Scaup** at GL 4/4 (KR), and one **Long-tailed Duck** at CO 3/19 (AS). One **Bufflehead**, 2 **Hooded Mergansers**, and 9 **Common Mergansers** were also observed on GL 4/4 (KR).

Four **Ruffed Grouse** reports were topped by a hen and 6 young on Cherry Springs Rd. 5/30 (HW). **Spotted Sandpipers** included up to 3 at GA 4/23-24 (Tabitha Bezael) and 2 at NFD 5/2 (KR). Migrating sandpipers included 2 **Solitary Sandpipers** at OBSP 4/20 and 5/11-12 and one at at NFD 5/2 (KR), and one **Greater Yellowlegs** at Beaver Swamp, OBSP 4/20-21 (SLi). One **American Bittern** was reported from Hemlock Hollow Rd near OSW 4/19 (EK).

Raptors included 5 reports of **Osprey** and one **Northern Harrier** at NFD 5/2 (KR). **Bald Eagle**, **Broad-winged Hawk**, and **Red-tailed Hawk** were widely reported. **Red-shouldered Hawks** were at Lyman Run 3/15 (AS, Michael Dello Russo) and Sweden Valley 5/26 (Kenn Faccenda). A **Long-eared Owl** was found 5/27, location undisclosed (CD) and a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was at CO 3/14 (AS, Michael Dello Russo, Carolyn Degurski).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen near the intersection of McConnell Rd and HRR 5/25 (LW). One **Swanson's Thrush** was banded at Cheswick Camp, TRR 5/25 (SL). One **Bobolink** was observed from Short Run Road, GA 5/30 (HW), and a single **Rusty Blackbird** was seen along the Assembly Park Trail, SH 5/7 (KE). Wood warblers of note included single **Louisiana Waterthrush** at OBSP 5/3 (SLi) and CF 5/27 (AL), a **Northern Waterthrush** at OBSP 5/3 (SLi), single **Blue-winged Warblers** at Karr Hollow 5/7 and CHR 5/20 (KE), 4 reports of **Cape May Warbler**, and **Bay-breasted Warbler** at SQWH 5/24 (LW).

A **Merlin** was reported from the Karr Hollow/Horse Run area north of SH3/24 and 5/7 (KE). Merlin activity has been reported from the Shinglehouse area previously, but no confirming observations for nesting have been reported on eBird as of this report. In PA Birds Vol. 33 No.4, *Potter* was listed as "Probable" for Merlin breeding, giving two observations from Coudersport, June 2017 and 2018. Shinglehouse, as well, seems to be a good location where Merlin might successfully breed in 2020.

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**Snyder County**— no report

## Somerset County

Locations: Berlin Area (BA), Bluebird Hill Farm (BHF), Buffalo Creek (BC), Flight 93 National Memorial (FLT 93), Great Allegheny Passage (GAP), High Point Lake (HPL), Indian Lake (IL), Kimberly Run Natural Area (KRNA), Laurel Hill State Park (LHSP), Payne Property (PP), Quemahoning Reservoir (QR), Somerset Lake IBA (SL), Youghiogheny/Casselman Rivers – Confluence area (CA)

The season could be described as the "spring that wasn't after the winter that wasn't" due to the generally cold and often snowy conditions well into May that delayed leaf development and insect emergence until late May. There were some nice county rarities however, including **Hudsonian Godwit**, **Wilson's Phalarope**, **Willet**, **Glossy Ibis**, and **Sedge Wren**.

Overall, waterfowl numbers were down with fertile SL being drained for dam repairs, but a reasonable 26 species of swans, geese, and ducks were found. A call to an Amish farm to identify a white goose resulted in finding the season's only **Ross's Goose** which was present 3/15-21 (JP, m.ob.). One **Mute Swan** was present on a private, protected lake near Jennerstown (SM). Large groups of **Tundra Swans** rested on QR including 131 on 3/5 (LG) and 240 on 3/8 (PH).

The high count for **Blue-winged Teal** was 10 in a flooded pasture in BA 4/8 (JP). A nice high of 21 **Northern Shovelers** was at QR 3/9 (PL), and a late male was at Glenmoor 5/5 (LG). **Gadwall** numbers were low compared to recent years with a high of only 10 on 3/27 at QR (LG) with 3 remaining until 5/2 (RH, SM, PS). **American Wigeon** likewise were sparse with 8 at QR 3/3 (LG). **American Black Ducks** were thinning out by the beginning of the

season after a very mild winter resulting in a high count of only 4 at QR 3/28 (CP, JP, RP). **Northern Pintail** bucked the trend with a nice count of 28 at QR 3/8 (PH). Ten **Green-winged Teal** were in BA 3/20 (KH).

At QR, 3 **Canvasbacks** 3/28 (CP, JP, RP) and 10 **Redheads** 3/9 (LG) were low max. counts. Counts of 87 **Ring-necked Ducks** 3/28, 27 **Greater Scaup** 3/15 (CP, JP, RP), and 31 **Lesser Scaup** 3/15 (PL) were respectable but nowhere near SL counts in previous years. A nice find was 2 **White-winged Scoters** at North Fork Res. 4/27 (LG). There were many reports of **Long-tailed Ducks** with 12 both at QR 3/27 (LG) and also at North Fork Res. 3/28 (AM) being the largest numbers. The highest species count were the 154 **Buffleheads** 3/27 at QR (LG). There were 2 locally uncommon **Common Goldeneyes** at QR 3/23 (IR). **Mergansers** were well represented with 50 **Hoodeds** at Deer Valley Lake 3/21 (JP, CaP), 33 **Commons** at HPL 3/21 (CaP, JP), and 21 **Red-breasteds** at QR 4/5 (PH). Forty **Ruddy Ducks** 4/6 at QR (LG) was a rather anemic high.

There were 4 reports of single **Ring-necked Pheasants**, showing a few survive the extended hunting season. There were, likewise, just 4 reports of single **Ruffed Grouse**, a bird in trouble; all the dedicated grouse hunters known to this compiler would be content to see a closed season until they can recover. **Wild Turkeys**, on the other hand, were very widely reported with a group of 25 at QR 3/24 (IR) being the largest flock mentioned. Four reports of **Common Nighthawk** were received: from BC, SL, and 2 from QR. The earliest reported **Chimney Swift** was 4/20 at Markleton (TO) and an impressive 200 were reported in Somerset 5/7 (KH). **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** made a timely entrance in CA 4/30 (TO, BO). One **Virginia Rail** at BC 4/24 (JP) became two 5/11 (LB, JP). Two **Soras** at BC 4/30 (JP) likewise doubled to four 5/11 (LB, JP) with one still present 5/12 (LG) and there was an additional report from BHF 5/16 (PL).

Somerset Lake may be enjoying its last year of being a shorebird magnet. Starting with partial drawdowns in 2012, there have been eight years of varying degrees of mud that have attracted an incredible 33 species of shorebirds, sometimes in very large numbers. This high elevation lake, surrounded by mountain ridges, seems to be geographically located in a favorable migration route. The lake is now completely drained for dam repairs, and the mud is quickly vegetating with mostly alien invasives. There is still hope that some habitat work can be done with bottom contouring to produce a shorebird-friendly area in the future.

In what may be the last big hoorah for the last eight-year shorebird spectacle, SL again had some shorebird surprises. The first basic plumaged **Black-bellied Plover** showed up 4/28 (JP, LB) followed 5/22 by 3 alternate plumaged birds (JP). **Semipalmated Plover** were present from 4/28 (LB, JP) through the season with a high of 70 on 5/16 (MD). There was a single **Upland Sandpiper** 5/19 on the northern county border in Gallitzin SF (JP, LB). An excellent find was *Somerset's* first **Hudsonian Godwit** 4/25 at SL first found by BF, and then seen by many. **Dunlin** were present periodically at SL including 10 both 5/11 (JP) and 5/13 (KL) and eight 5/22 (JP). There were many reports of **Least Sandpipers** with a max. of 75 on 5/13 (JP). **White-rumped Sandpipers** were present 5/11–30 with high counts of 4 both 5/11 (JP) and 5/16 (MD). There were at least 10 reports of **Pectoral Sandpipers** with 15 present 4/26 (JP). Two early **Semipalmated Sandpipers** arrived 4/27, but higher numbers, up to 32, were at the end of the period as expected (RM, JH, NL). **Western Sandpiper** is more expected in fall so individuals 4/27 (JP, MD) and 4/29 (ST) were appreciated.

**Short-billed Dowitchers** started with a single 4/25 (BF), reached a max. of 17 on 5/11 (JP, LB), and 2 were last seen 5/16 (MD, C&CF). The first-reported and highest count of **American Woodcock** were the 5 in the BA 3/7 (KH). This year's high count of **Wilson's Snipe** in a BA wet meadow was 40 on 3/15 (JP), and numerous records of 10 or less came from SL. A **Wilson's Phalarope** first found at SL 5/26 (JP) stayed through at least 5/29 (m.ob.) and completed the phalarope trio for the lake. There were many reports of **Spotted Sandpipers** with the earliest 5/18 in BA (TM) and a high of 12 at SL (5/1). Of the many reports of **Solitary Sandpipers**, most were at SL, but the high was 8 at BC 4/30 (JP). **Greater Yellowlegs** at SL peaked at 37 on 5/1 (MP). A good bird for the county was a **Willet** of the Western subspecies at a small dam in MacDonaldton 4/27 (TM, JP). **Lesser Yellowlegs** put in an amazing showing at SL with many reports of 100 between 4/13–5/16, the

winning high count being 125 on 4/27 (MD).

The 58 **Bonaparte's Gulls** that settled into the mud at SL 3/28 (CP, JP, RP) surpassed the 23 **Ring-billed Gulls** at QR 5/12 (EG). **Herring Gulls** are less common, so five at QR 3/28 were nice; the last was 4/29 at SL (ST). A nice group of 8 **Caspian Terns** set down at SL 4/30 (RH, SM). **Black Terns** were spotted twice, first at SL 4/30 (JP, m.ob.), then at QR 5/11 (LB, JP). An uncommon **Common Tern** was at QR 5/21 (MD). **Forster's Terns** were found four times starting 4/27 at SL, but the 52 at QR 5/11 (JP, LB) on a windy, snowy day were impressive. Twelve **Common Loons** were at QR 3/28 (CP, JP, RP) for the highest seasonal count. A similar high of 12 **Double-crested Cormorants** at QR 4/5 (PH) was actually lower than in recent years. **Green Herons** were a bit sparse with the largest group of four at SL 5/16 (MD). The second *Somerset* record for **Glossy Ibis** was a bird in a flooded pasture north of Berlin 4/30 (JP); it persisted until at least 5/2 (LG, MD).

**Black Vultures** are still uncommon in the county, so one bird roosting with about 15 **Turkey Vultures** near Fairhope in April was noteworthy (JP). There were about seven reports of one or two **Osprey** widely scattered, including a bird on a nest at Cranberry Bog Lake 5/11 (LB, JP). A rather late **Golden Eagle** was spied over Laurel Mountain 4/19 (SC). **Northern Harriers** were widely reported including at FLT 93 and Gallitzin SF where they are known to breed. **Bald Eagles** had many reports including nesting in Confluence and Meyersdale and a new, apparently unsuccessful, nest near SL. In the last decade, **Eastern Screech-Owls** have become much harder to find; the only reports were of two at Addison 3/26 (RH) and one at Mt. Davis 5/19 (LG). **Great Horned Owls**, likewise, seemed scarce, with two at Addison 3/26 (RH) and one at SL 5/1 (JL). **Barred Owls** were reported from at least six locations. **Belted Kingfishers** were reported widely with one to three birds per report. The stronghold for nesting **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** is along Laurel Mt. where several were reported. A somewhat late bird was drumming at PP along Allegheny Mt. on 4/12 (JP). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were enjoying a good spring with reports from eight locations. All the expected woodpeckers were well-represented, including seemingly higher numbers of **Pileated Woodpeckers** and birds visiting suet feeders – could Emerald Ash Borers be causing a population spike? **Merlin** was spotted 4/12 at Glenmoor (LG) and 4/29 at SL (ST). Two **Peregrine Falcons** were near Gallitzin 4/22 (JMCF).

A cooperative **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was near QR 5/22 (JP, LG, PL *et al.*). **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was first found at North Fork Res. 5/12 (EG). **Acadian Flycatchers** were especially numerous in CA with seven heard 5/31 (JP). **Alder Flycatchers** garnered only two reports with two near KRNA (JP) and one at SL 5/26 (LG). **Least Flycatchers** were found at PP 5/15 (JP), CA 5/23 (SL) and LHSP 5/25 (ST). **White-eyed Vireos** were uncommon and mostly found at lower elevation corners of *Somerset* such as CA 5/18 (JP) and 5/31 (JPo, NJ), and New Baltimore 5/28 (RJ). Likewise, **Yellow-throated Vireos** were found in CA 5/11 (LB, JP) and New Baltimore 5/28 (RJ). **Horned Larks** breed sparingly in the county, but the 15 in a field in CA 5/11 (JP, LB) may still have been migrating.

The only report for **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was a single bird in BA on MacDonaldton Rd. 3/22 (TM). Ten reports of up to 4 **Brown Creepers** fell during the period. **Winter Wrens** were reported on Laurel Mt. and a remarkable five probable migrants were along a trail at IL 3/29 (CP, RP). Completely unexpected was a rather cooperative **Sedge Wren** at PP 4/28 (JP). The bird was in a small shrub at a moist field edge, and its call was recorded on its second visit to the shrub to scold. The first report of **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was at PP 4/12 (CaP, JP). The high for **Golden-crowned Kinglets** was 11 at the IL trail 3/29 (CP, RP). **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were very numerous in migration with reports of up to 10. Spot-breasted thrushes, including **Veery**, **Swainson's** and **Wood** were among the species reported along road berms during the snowfalls prior to May 11. Some were apparently found dead. **Northern Mockingbirds** remain uncommon in the county with just five lists reporting them. **American Pipits** were also noted on five lists in small numbers. **Cedar Waxwings** were found widely with 22 on Laurel Summit being the highest count (JK). **Purple Finches** were present in small groups, but only one **Pine Siskin** was found at SL 3/20 at SL (KH).

**Grasshopper Sparrow** reports were scant with three individuals reported from at different locations (LG) and several at Gallitzin SF 5/11 (LB, JP). **American Tree Sparrows** were in short supply; the last departed Glenmoor 4/3 (LG). **Fox Sparrows** were reliable at PP in ones or twos

through 4/12, other reports came from IL and the GAP trail (CN). **White-crowned Sparrows** had a good migration as did **White-throated Sparrows** from 3/5-5/25. **Vesper Sparrows** were reported from four locations; **Savannah Sparrows** were found in a half-dozen different areas. **Henslow's Sparrow** was reported only once in an overgrown field near Fairhope 5/26 (JP). Uncommonly located in spring migration, **Lincoln's Sparrows** were at PP 5/8-14 (m.ob.), with two on the later date. Unusual was one bird that was visiting a feeder throughout the above dates, a behavior not seen in the fall when this species is fairly common at PP. **Swamp Sparrows** were very common this season in many habitats, up to 25 were singing at BC 4/17 (JP). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** in CA 5/18 (JP) was relocated 5/19 (LG). Both **Bobolinks** and **Eastern Meadowlarks** seemed to be in good numbers; likewise for **Orchard** and **Baltimore Orioles**. **Rusty Blackbirds** were mentioned on eight reports at five locations with seven birds being the largest group.

Thirty-one species of warblers were found this spring. Mentioned below are those less common or with notable numbers. **Worm-eating** were found at QR 5/13 (PH, KL), Allegheny Mt. 5/17 (JP), and Fairhope 5/30 (PLu). **Northern Waterthrush** was at Jennerstown 5/9 (KC), QR 5/12 (LG), and two were at KRNA where they breed (JP). **Golden-winged Warblers** were at five locations, two in CA (JP), two at QR (LG, JP), and one in Allegheny Twp. (JP). **Blue-winged Warbler** was at QR 5/24 (LG), and two were in CA 5/25 (MD). **Tennessee Warblers** garnered mention on six reports. **Orange-crowned Warblers** had a great spring with one cooperative bird at SL 4/26 (JP) and one voice-recorded at QR 5/23 (LG). **Nashville Warbler** migrants were reported five times, singly or in pairs. **Kentucky Warbler** was photographed at QR 5/14 (LG), and two were in CA 5/31 (JPo, NH). **Cape May Warbler** had four reports as did **Cerulean Warbler**. **Bay-breasted** reports were way up this spring with up to nine reported at QR 5/16 (PH, KL). **Blackpoll Warblers** in contrast, were sparse with only two reports, at SL 5/16 (PH, KL) and CA 5/16 (BO). **Palm Warblers** were noted seven times with up to five at QR 5/13 (PH, KL). **Pine Warblers** were only found on four dates in April. **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were widely found, but the 33 found at QR 5/13 were notable (PH, KL). **Yellow-throated Warblers** are a specialty of the CA where they were found three times. **Canada Warblers** were found six times mostly at breeding spots in LHSP and PP. **Wilson's Warbler** migrants were in CA 5/11 (LB, JP) and at Glenmoor 5/24 (LG). **Scarlet Tanagers** were found where expected, though early May had many trying to find food along road berms.

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### **Sullivan County**

Locations: Beech Glen Flats (BGF), Briskey Mtn (BM), Connell's Dam (CD), Dutch Mtn (DM), Deer Lake (DL), Eagles Mere Lake (EML), Ganoga Lake (GL), Hillsgrove Covered Bridge (HCB), Kinsley's Corner (KC), Lake Jean (LJ), Lake Makoma (LM), Litzelman Rd Cherry Township (LR), Ricketts Glen SP Hayfields (RGH), SGL 13 Splashdam Pond (SDP), SGL 66 Shady Nook (SN).

The spring season was fairly typical in terms of weather. There was an early May storm that coincided with Global Big Day. Although snow amounts were low, strong winds and cold temperatures made for difficult birding. There were a number of excellent reports for the season. The number of species reported seems higher than average but may be attributable to more reports being submitted to eBird. It is nice to see the county receiving more coverage. All reports are from the author except where noted.

Water was mostly open throughout the period. The better waterfowl reports include **Northern Shoveler** found at DL 3/27 (WE). There were

several reports of **Green-winged Teal** from SDP including a high of 16 on 3/28 (AK). A pair was still present as late as 5/15. Two **Greater Scaup** were at SN 4/5. A **Long-tailed Duck** was present on EML 4/4. A female **Red-breasted Merganser** was seen at LJ 4/29 (DG). **Horned Grebe** was reported from DL 3/27 (WE) and LaPorte 4/24 (SM).

A lone **Common Nighthawk** was a flyover on DM 5/23. **Sandhill Crane** was confirmed as a nester again with 2 fledged young seen with 2 adults at LR 5/16. A report of another nesting location further west in the county is unconfirmed but probable. There were several additional individuals found alone, in pairs, or larger groups (RM).

The water level at SDP is once again low making it the best place in the county to find shorebirds. Notable sightings included a high of 13 **Lesser Yellowlegs** 5/16, **Greater Yellowlegs** 5/10 and 5/19 (DG) and 2 **Least Sandpiper** 5/19 (DG). Two **Wilson's Snipe** were observed at LR 4/11. Perhaps the best bird of the season was an **American Avocet** present at LM 5/29 (SM) and 5/30. Single **Ring-billed** and **Herring Gulls** were reported at EML 3/28 (AK).

An **American Bittern** was found near CD on the evening of 5/27 (RM), calling and still present the next day. Although there were a good number of **Northern Harrier** sightings during the period, no nesting activity was observed. An immature **Golden Eagle** was seen near KC 4/11. Another good find was a **Short-eared Owl** seen at dusk 3/15 near the Lopez Winery. An **Eastern Screech-Owl** was reported at GL 4/5 (JH). **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard on DM 4/4. A **Merlin** was found at EML 5/9 during the Global Big Day, observed devouring prey that could not be identified.

A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was singing at DL 5/27 (WE) and still present in the following days. A **Philadelphia Vireo** was well-seen at close range on DM 5/25. One **Horned Lark** was seen at BGF 4/4 (AK). A **Cliff Swallow** colony continues near HCB with several birds seen 5/26. Two separate **Swainson's Thrush** were found on DM on successive days 5/24 and 5/25. A **Northern Mockingbird**, still not a common species in *Sullivan*, was found at SN 4/25 and at the same location again 5/17.

Three **Vesper Sparrows** were at SN 4/25, with a fourth found in Cherry Township north of Route 87. These birds marked a county first for the author. A fifth individual was at RGH 5/1 (DG). Several **Fox Sparrows** were observed digging in leaf litter on DM 3/14. A **White-crowned Sparrow** visited a feeder 5/10 (SS).

Twenty-five species of warbler were reported. The highlights include a breeding plumage male **Tennessee Warbler** on DM 5/24. **Cape May Warbler** was seen on BM 5/17. A **Bay-breasted Warbler** was on DM 5/24. A **Wilson's Warbler** was in the same location 5/26, and a bright male **Pine Warbler** in the same location on 4/25.

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### **Susquehanna County**

As the migration season began, it became clear that a novel coronavirus would be a factor in spring birding this year. Organized bird walks were cancelled, and a number of local birders restricted their "ranges" to their yards. A few informal, small-group walks took place utilizing the "turkey vulture wingspan" standard for distancing. Most camaraderie and experience-sharing occurred via Facebook. In such uncertain circumstances, it was reassuring to note that species returned to the region in their expected sequence and numbers. For many, birding became therapy for trying times. In spite of the unusual situation, the season was an excellent one for finding birds. A total of 183 species were reported, the highest seasonal number ever, comparing favorably to the five-year average of 170 and ten-year average of 160. Most exciting was that among the 183 species were four first eBird records for the county: **Forster's Tern**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, **Yellow-throated Warbler**, and **Summer Tanager**.

March 2 opened the season with strong southerly winds, deep blue sky, and many skeins of overhead geese. Attempts to pick **Snow Geese** from the **Canada Geese** proved problematic. A single Snow was detected among 130 Canadas (EM) and four among 300 over Thompson (PH). Five **Northern Shovelers** were spotted hiding behind their bills on the Lindaville wetland 5/14 (JS), the only sighting of this uncommon species. Four **Gadwall**, infrequent spring visitors, were present on Lake Montrose 3/29 (TN), and a



pair was at the same location 4/16 (m.ob.). There were two reports of **American Black Ducks**, 2 on Lord Pond 3/11 (KJ) and one on Lakeside Pond 5/14 (JS). Two **Northern Pintails** graced Cranberry Lake with their handsome plumage 4/17 (SZ).

A male **Surf Scoter** brought his clown-face costume to Lake Montrose for many to enjoy 4/16 (m.ob.). Runner-up status for most photogenic birds went to a pair of **Long-tailed Ducks** on Lake Walter 3/23 (JS) and 3/25 (JS, JSt). Four **Common Goldeneyes** were golden finds on Elk Lake 4/16-19 (JS, JSt). A **Red-breasted Merganser** was seen on a private pond in New Milford Twp 3/21 (BS), and a pair was photographed on the Susquehanna River 5/17 (BS, GS). A pair of **Red-necked Grebes** prompted a caravan of cars to appear on the shores of Quaker Lake 4/26-27 (EM, TN, JS, BS, GS, JSt).

An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** serenaded outside a window in New Milford Twp 5/26 (SF). The astute observer captured the song on her phone thereby confirming the first observation of the species since 2012 and the second record ever. A pair of **Common Gallinules** was present on Bendix Swamp 5/12-14 (JS, TN) and another at Mack Rd Wetland 5/14 (m.ob.).

The best mud-edged body of water, Hollister's Pond, proved difficult to bird undisturbed this year as nearby gas well activity and heavy truck traffic coincided with peak shorebird migration. The only reports of **Semipalmated Plover** and **Least Sandpiper** occurred there 5/16 (JS, JSt). Single **Greater Yellowlegs** and **Lesser Yellowlegs** were present there during the same week (m.ob.). Another county-first sighting occurred 4/18 when a **Forster's Tern** visited Hollister's Pond (TN). Given that the observer was recently returned from three months of birding at one of the east coast's winter gull capitals, his photographs only confirmed what we knew must be true.

**American Bitterns** were seen at three locations on five different dates, which is a nice increase for this elusive species (m.ob.). **Great Egrets** are expected post-breeding visitors, but this year three spring reports occurred. One was along the Rails to Trails, Ararat Access 4/20 (BS, GS), one near the river in Great Bend Twp 5/11 (BS), and one at a New Milford Twp wetland 5/28 (NVC).

The sense that we are on the northern cusp of the slowly advancing range of **Black Vultures** was reinforced by the fact that three spring reports came from the southernmost area of *Susquehanna*. Two were spotted near Hop Bottom 5/12 (KF), one in South Auburn 5/17 (TB), and one on Troy Road 5/29 (NB). A **Merlin** made a beeline across the sightline of three birders in Great Bend Twp for the briefest sighting of the season 5/2 (EM, BS, GS).

Serendipity is required for occasional views of **Olive-sided Flycatchers** here. Nice photos were taken of one in New Milford Twp 5/19 (LN, NVC), and another was clearly heard "placing his order" in SGL 35 on 5/24 (EM). Our only reliable location for singing **Acadian Flycatcher** is in SGL 35 at a newly-named spot, "The Pizza! Shop (curbside pickup only)." The bird was heard on four separate visits 5/22-30 (EM, BS). **Cliff Swallows** returned to their colony of mud-glued nests on the understructure of the Hallstead river bridge with up to 6 in view at once 5/15-30 (EM, BM, BS).

**Red-breasted Nuthatches** were present in pleasantly strong numbers across the county throughout the period (m.ob.). It was as if a tin horn band had taken up residence. A **Marsh Wren** was heard at Mack Rd. Wetland 5/23 (JS) for the only report of the species. **Purple Finches** were active at *Susquehanna* feeders in unusually high numbers. Not only were overall "feeder bird" numbers up, but so were birdwatcher numbers as many household families discovered the enjoyment and educational benefits of watching backyard bird species. Welcome to the club friends and neighbors!

A **Vesper Sparrow** appeared in New Milford Twp at the location where they are observed annually during fall migration 4/29 (BM). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was present on Troy Road 5/16 (NB). A flock of birders crossed paths with a flock of 20 **Rusty Blackbirds** that were moving through the county at Rails to Trails, Ararat Access 3/26 (EM, LN, TN, BS, GS, NVC).

A total of 29 species of warblers were identified, including two county firsts. One was a **Prothonotary Warbler** photographed at East Great Bend Swamp 5/11 (BS). The other was a **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Florence Shelley Preserve 5/16 (CF). For a number of years, the go-to spots for **Mourning Warblers** were two post-timber harvest parcels in SGL 35. The residual understory has reached a level of maturity no longer suitable to that species. A single bird was heard there 5/19 (EM, BS). The area has recently been control-burned so it will be interesting to see what next spring brings. SGL 35 continues to host another uncommon warbler - **Hooded Warblers** were present first 5/13 (DD, JM) and then 5/17, 5/19, and 5/24 (EM). A

beautiful photograph of another was taken near Troy Rd 5/17 (NB). That same location was visited by the county's only discovered **Bay-breasted Warblers** 5/16 and 5/18 (NB). A county-first **Summer Tanager** was photographed in Forest Lake Twp 5/9 (KH).

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**Union County** – no report

### **Tioga County**

Locations: Asaph (AS), Colton Point SP (CPSP), Dean Hill (DH), Hills Creek Estates (HCE), Hills Creek SP (HCSP), Knapp (KN), Leetonia (LEE), Liberty Twp. (LIB), Mansfield (MAN), Marsh Creek/The Muck (MCM), Muck Railyard (MUR), Nessmuck Lake (NL), Owassie Road (OWR), Roseville (ROS), Rexford (REX), Sheer Road Swamp (SRS), Stokesdale (STO), Tauscher Pond (TAP), Tioga-Hammond Lakes--Ives Run Rec. Area (THL), Webster Road rail trail puddles (WRD), Wellsboro (WEL).

Data in eBird from eighteen observers reported 192 species during the spring season. Spring waterfowl sightings were abundant. One hundred **Snow Geese** were observed at Woodland Park, WEL 3/19 (RH). **Tundra Swans** were reported eight times, topped by 110 at THL 3/2 (GT). **Blue-winged Teal** had at least 10 reports, **Northern Shovelers** 6 reports, and **Gadwalls** 11 reports. **American Wigeons** included 2 at TAP 3/17 and 3 at HCSP 4/8 (LD), with 2 more seen at MUR 4/18 (MV). Five **Northern Pintails** were observed at MUR 3/3 (LD) and **Green-winged Teals** were topped by 20 at MUR 3/27 (JC).

**Ring-necked Ducks** were reported over 20 times, with the largest concentrations during March: 127 were seen at TAP 3/17 (LD) with 25 at NL 3/20 (DKP) and 35 at MUR 3/27 (JC). A **White-winged Scoter** was at NL 3/31 (LD) and 2 were at HCSP 4/8 (LD). Top count for **Long-tailed Ducks** was 75 on NL 3/20 (DAP). Three **Common Goldeneyes** were seen at MUR 3/27 (JC) and 6 were at HCE 3/11 (SM, JC). All three merganser species were widely reported and there were over a dozen reports of **Ruddy Duck**. Two large rafts of **Horned Grebes** were recorded: 35 at MUR 3/27 (JC) and 45 at THL 4/23 (JC).

Single **Common Nighthawks** were reported near WEL 5/16 (LD) and 5/23 (RH), and at AS 5/25 (JC). An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was at AS 5/6 (JC). **Virginia Rails** and **Soras** were concentrated at MCM as expected. Notable sandpiper sightings included 15 **Solitary Sandpipers** and 40 **Lesser Yellowlegs** at MUR 5/3 (RH). One **Common Gallinule** was at MCM 5/16 (JF).

A half dozen **Caspian Terns** reports were topped by 16 at THL 4/27 (JC). Eleven **Common Terns** at NL 4/30 was a very good count (JC).

Six **Red-throated Loons** were seen at THL 4/23 (JC) and one at NL 5/1 (DKP). Nine **Common Loons** reported from NL 4/30 was the high count (JC). Single **American Bitterns** were at MCM area 3/25 and 4/30 (LD), and near AS 5/17 (JC). **Great Egret** was reported at least 6 times, all singles. Numerous raptor reports are available in eBird.

There were many **Barred Owl** reports, but only 3 of **Great Horned Owl**, and none of Eastern Screech-Owl. A **Peregrine Falcon** was at THL 4/20 (DKP). One **Northern Shrike** (ph.) was found at Bryant Road, MAN 3/25 (DY).

Two **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were seen at Brion Hill Road, LIB 5/16 (BN), and one **Swainson's Thrush** was observed at KN 5/18 (DKP). Twelve **American Pipits** were seen at MUR 5/3 (RH), and one **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at HCE 5/13 (GT). There were many sightings of **Rusty Blackbird**, mostly in Apr, with a high count of 25 near AS 4/1 (JC).

**Worm-eating Warbler** was noted at CPSP 5/28 (KC). **Northern Waterthrush** was reported a half-dozen times mid-May, though an early report came from WEL 4/30 (LD). Other warblers of note included **Golden-winged Warbler** seen along the Pine Creek Trail at STO 5/16 (MW), and a **Brewster's Warbler** hybrid (ph.) in Woodland Park, WEL 5/13-14 (RH, SM).

**Bay-breasted Warblers** were observed at five locations: two at Woodland Park, WEL, 5/14 (RH, SM), one at THL Rte. 287 on 5/16 (KB), three in ROS 5/20(BS), two at Bryant Rd., MAN 5/24 (DY), and one at a cabin southeast of COWL 5/24 (DW). One **Blackpoll Warbler** was in WEL 5/5 (MM) and 5/23 (LD), and at Bryant Rd, MAN 5/24 (DY). A **Yellow-throated Warbler** was in Leetonia 5/24 (LS). **Wilson's Warblers** were reported from six locations (m.ob.).

A rare bird, more likely to be found in the southeast of Pennsylvania than in the northern tier, a single **Blue Grosbeak** was seen near the intersection of Rte. 287 and DH 5/22 (description given, no ph., DKP). After checking the PSO county list for *Tioga*, Blue Grosbeak was not recognized as being seen in the county. In *Tioga*, this species was first reported to eBird in 5/25/2018 (Lamb's Creek and Bike Trail; KC). It would appear, that the bird found in 2020 is the second county record. Could this be the beginning of northward expansion of the Blue Grosbeak in Pennsylvania?

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### Venango County

Locations: Barkeyville Fields (BF), Buttermilk Hill Nature Sanctuary (BHNS), Franklin area (FA), Kahle Lake (KL), Oil Creek SP (OCSP), Sandy Creek Trail (SCT), Two Mile Run County Park (TMRP).

It was rainy and cold through the season with four snowfalls in May, but 176 species were still recorded. The following waterfowl were present during the indicated interval: **Northern Shoveler** 3/8–28, **Northern Pintail** 3/8–29, **Canvasback** 3/21, **Redhead** 3/11–28, **Surf Scoter** 4/8–9, **White-winged Scoter** 5/1–11, **Long-tailed Duck** 3/17–4/6, and **Ruddy Duck** 3/21–4/30.

**Ring-necked Pheasant** was sighted in the KL area 3/23 (RS) and in Titusville 5/9 (TF). **Common Loons** were present in low numbers 3/19–5/9. **Horned Grebe** reached a max. of 18 at Wyattville Pond 3/29 (JH), and there was one **Red-necked Grebe** sighting, at KL 3/27 (GE). **Double-crested Cormorants** were recorded 3/30–5/19. A **Great Egret** was at KL 4/21–23. Migrant **Osprey** were observed at four locations 4/16–5/5, as well as a late bird at SCT 5/24 (DS).

The first **Broad-winged Hawk** appeared over BHNS 4/12 (JS, KG). A **Virginia Rail** was spotted at the shallow end of Justus Lake at TMRP 5/1–16 (JH). The shallow end of the lake developed a nice mudflat resulting in a decent *Venango* shorebird season. Sightings from there included: **Semipalmated Plover** 4/30–5/14, up to 3 individuals; **Least Sandpiper** 4/30–5/19, with a max. of 7 on 5/12 (JH); **Short-billed Dowitcher** 5/12 (RS, JH), **Spotted Sandpiper** 4/20–5/29, **Solitary Sandpiper** 5/4–29, up to 4 individuals; a max. of 6 **Greater Yellowlegs** 5/3 (JH); **Lesser Yellowlegs** 4/20–5/16, with 4 on 5/5 (SG). **Black-bellied Plover** was at KL 5/11–12 (GE, RS).

Gulls and terns are never common in *Venango* so 50 **Bonaparte's Gulls** 3/29 (JH) at Wyattville Pond and 54 at Riverfront Park, FA 4/18 (JH) were good counts. The latter location held a mixture of **Common** and **Forster's Terns** 5/11 (JH). Common and **Black Terns** were also at KL 5/11 (JS; RS, GE) and **Caspian Tern** was reported there 4/30 (JS).

Cuckoos were in low numbers, with **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** seeming to be the more common. A **Snowy Owl** made an appearance near Reno and perched on an industrial building and telephone poles 4/8–9 (m.ob.). Fifty-seven **Common Nighthawks** were observed at BHNS 5/24 (JS, KG) and 10 were seen the following day. A **Merlin** was at BHNS 4/16 (JS, KG). Flycatchers were scarce, but arrival dates were: **Eastern Kingbird** at KL 5/9 (RS, GE), and **Eastern Wood-Pewee** and **Great-crested Flycatcher** both at SCT 5/15 (JH). An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at KL 5/16 (DK). An **Eastern Phoebe** was at OCSP as early as 3/14 (TD).

**Warbling Vireo** was first reported from SCT 4/28 (JH), while **Yellow-**

**throated Vireo** and **Red-eyed Vireo** arrived 5/2 (JH; GT). **Horned Lark** was observed at KL from 3/15 (GE) to 4/30 (JS). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was seen at OCSP 3/15 (RS). **Winter Wren** remained through the end of the period, and **Swainson's Thrush** were noted as expected mid-May. **Brown Thrasher** began singing 3/30, and **American Pipit** was at KL 4/10–12 (GE, JS).

Thirty species of warbler were noted. **Worm-eating Warbler** was first found 4/29 and remained through the end of the period. **Northern Waterthrush** was reported 4/30 and 5/17 (RS, JS) and **Golden-winged Warbler** 5/15 (JS, KG). **Cape May Warbler** was noted 5/1–16 (m.ob.); **Blackpoll Warbler**, only on 5/16 (JS, WDD); **Prairie Warbler** 5/2–16, and **Canada Warbler** was at OCSP from 5/19 on. **Wilson's Warbler** passage was 5/16–25.

A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was detected 5/19 (NK, MK). **Fox Sparrows** were seen at FA 3/29–4/25 (NB). **White-crowned Sparrow** reports ranged from 5/3–17. The last **American Tree Sparrow** was 4/9 (JS), while the only **Savannah Sparrow** reported was at KL 4/5 (RS). **Scarlet Tanager** first appeared 5/1, **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** 4/22 (NK, MK), and **Indigo Bunting** 4/29 (BJ). Scarce **Bobolinks** were first recorded at Barkeyville Strips 5/2 (RN) where there was a flock of 13 males seen 5/9 (JH) and there was also a report from 5/19 (GE, RS). Other reports came from Venus 5/13 (DS), Oil City 5/31 (DS), and Harrisville 5/31 (MH). **Orchard Oriole** was observed at BHNS 5/12 and 5/23 (JS, KG) and Venus 4/30 (DS). **Purple Finch** was seen through the end of the period at BHNS (JS, KG).

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### Warren County

Locations: Akeley Swamp (AS), Allegheny National Forest (ANF), Anders Run Natural Area (AR), Benson Swamp (SGL 306), City of Warren (CW), Chapman State Park (CD), Cherry Grove Road (CG), Dew Drop Campground, ANF (DD), Economite Road (ER), Game Lands 86 (GL), Hatch Patch (HP), Hearts Content Natural Area (HC), Hickory Creek Wilderness Area (HW), Hillside Acres Tidioute (HA), Kinzua Point (KP), Kinzua Road (KR), Locey Road (LR), Longhouse Drive (LH), Newbold Estate (NE), North Country Trail south of Sheffield (NC), Route 337 (R3), Russell (RU), Sugar Grove (SG), Swede Hill (SH), Tidioute (TI), Tidioute Trail (TT), Wenzel Road (WR), Yankee Bush Road (YB).

Crazy, roller-coaster ride weather patterns mirrored the crazy COVID situation this spring, but neither kept *Warren* birders inside. Extremely unusual for *Warren* were a well-documented (with definitive photos) individual **Cackling Goose** among Canadas at AS 4/6, and a young **Tundra Swan** at BS 4/12 (both: BC, TS).

While **Wood Ducks** are fairly common locally, an incredible flock of 126 flying in to roost at AS 4/2 was noteworthy (BC, TS). Akeley Swamp proved itself once again to be the premier waterfowl site for *Warren*, with high counts of 10 **Blue-winged Teal** spotted 4/19 (BC, TS), 8 **Northern Shovelers** 3/24 (EN, KN), 12 **Gadwalls** 3/9 (BC, TS), 8 **American Wigeons** 4/6 (BC, TS), a pair of **Northern Pintails** 3/29 (BC, TS), 13 **Green-winged Teal** 3/29 (BC, TS), a single **Redhead** 4/2 (BC, TS), 35 **Buffleheads** 4/2 (BC, TS), and 24 **Hooded Mergansers** 3/7 (BC, TS). A flock of 18 **Greater Scaup** was spotted on the Allegheny River at TT 3/20 (EN, JN), and four **Horned Grebes** were seen from the nearby boat launch 3/30 (JN).

Cuckoos arrived rather late to *Warren* this year: the first **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was not reported until 5/27 at SR (EN, KN), and the first **Black-billed Cuckoo** 5/29 at ER (CW). Multiple snows and hard freezes in mid-May might have had something to do with their delays. **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** are rarely encountered in this heavily-forested county, so a single individual 5/1 was unusual, as was its downtown location in CW (TS). An impressive flock of 37 **Chimney Swifts** were seen in CW 5/4 (BC, TS). **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were also rather late in arriving this year, with the first *Warren*

reports 5/3 at KR (SG) and at TT (KN).

Rails tend to be sparse in *Warren*, so a high count of 7 **Virginia Rails** at BS 5/3 was impressive; their primary location here is AS, where a high of 3 was recorded on multiple days (m.ob.). Four **Soras** were recorded from AS 5/2 (BC, TS); and one seen at CP 4/27 was noteworthy (MD). Three **American Coots** were seen at AS 3/31 (EN, KN). The pair of **Sandhill Cranes** that has bred at or near AS for several years was seen courting there 3/28 (BC, TS). The species may be expanding in *Warren*: three were seen at BS throughout the day 4/14 (m.ob.), while what was likely a different pair were courting nearby at LR (TS).

An impressive 12 **American Woodcock** were seen and heard at BS 3/11 (BC, TS). Pairs of **Wilson's Snipe** were seen at AS 4/4/ and BS 4/8; both sightings likely represent breeding pairs (BC, TS). A high count of 6 **Solitary Sandpipers** were seen at AS 4/29, along with 3 **Lesser Yellowlegs** (MD, ALM, ANM). An amazing 117 **Bonaparte's Gulls** were observed feeding in a partly flooded field at HP 3/30 (BC, TS). A single **Forster's Tern** showed up at KP 5/16 (M). Up to 6 **Common Loons** stuck around CD for much of April (m.ob.). An **American Bittern** was spotted at AS 4/22 (KE); hopefully some will eventually stay to breed. On 3/30, a **Great Egret** was spotted from both TI and R3 (JN; EN, KN).

A single **Black Vulture** was spotted from CW, overhead amongst migrating **Turkey Vultures** 3/16 (TS); there are very few records from *Warren*, despite a small population breeding near Buffalo, NY, just to the north. A late imm. **Golden Eagle** was seen soaring over AR 4/30 (BC, TS). **Northern Goshawks** have experienced drastic declines and a northern contraction of their range in Pennsylvania over the past decade, so multiple active nests in ANF this year is encouraging (m.ob.).

**Great Horned Owls** were spotted at NE 5/16 (EN, KN) and in CW at a nest in a pine (multiple dates, DW). Highly unusual for spring was a late **Snowy Owl** seen in and near TI 4/5 (m.ob.). Perhaps even more unusual for *Warren* was a pair of courting **Short-eared Owls** seen consistently and videotaped between 3/15 and 4/1 at WR (RC, TS); unfortunately, they seemed to have moved on. Several apparently breeding **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were heard and seen this spring: one at HA 3/8 (EN, JN, KN), and 2 at HC 4/27 (MD). Single **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were seen at ANF 4/27 (MD), at a feeder in SG 5/12 (SS), at HA 5/13 (EN, JN, KN), and in RU 5/14 (AM). Whether any of these represent breeders is unknown. In addition to our now regular urban-breeding **Merlins** in CW, additional birds seen at AS 4/29 (MD, LM, AM) and YB 5/29 (SS) may represent expansion of breeders into rural areas. A passing **Peregrine Falcon** was spotted 3/14 in CW (TS).

A singing **Willow Flycatcher** at AS 5/21 is noteworthy as Alders are much more common locally (BC, TS). A high count of 4 **Eastern Kingbirds** came from AS 5/16 (BC, TS). A **Northern Shrike** that had been hunting WR much of the winter was spotted yet again 3/14 (JN). A flock of 20 **Bank Swallows** at SE 4/12 was unusual (CW); when seen at all locally, this species typically occurs as single birds. **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** tend to be restricted to bottomlands in *Warren*; a high of 4 was reported from GL 5/4 (SS).

**Brown Thrashers**, never common here, seemed unusually abundant with many records from across the county (m.ob.). Sharp ears counted at least 5 **Gray-cheeked Thrush** migrating overhead on the night of 5/15 in CW (TS). A high count of 4 **Swainson's Thrushes** were reported from NC 5/30 (CW); this thrush is a common breeder in *Warren*. The sole report of **Lincoln's Sparrow** this spring was from AS 3/9 (BC, TS). A maximum of 10 **Bobolinks** were seen in fields along WR 5/29 (BC, TS). **Orchard Orioles** are becoming increasingly regular though still rare in *Warren*; singles were reported at HA 4/30 (EN, KN) and AS 5/21 (BC, TS). **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported throughout the first half of the spring, with an impressive high of 57 at AS 4/2 (BC, TS).

This spring produced a number of rare warbler sightings. A **Worm-eating Warbler** was reported from HW 4/27 (MD), and 4 **Golden-winged Warblers** were observed at a clear-cut on CG 5/23 (JW). A lovely **Prothonotary Warbler** was seen in good breeding habitat at AS 5/21 (BC, TS). In contrast, **Tennessee Warblers** normally are a common and conspicuous migrant, but seemed sparse this year: a maximum of just 4 were seen at HC 5/18 (LS). A seasonal high count of 6 **Cape May Warblers** were seen at NE 5/16 (EN, KN). **Cerulean Warblers** tend to be very local in *Warren*, so high counts of 8 at DD 5/19 (BC, TS) and 9 at LH 5/20 (SS, JE) are noteworthy. Normally a sparse migrant, **Bay-breasted Warblers** seemed exceptionally numerous this spring, with a high of 14 seen in one mixed flock

at GL 5/20 (SS, JE). **Blackpoll Warblers**, another boreal spruce budworm specialist, tend to greatly outnumber Bay-breasts in migration, but this year very few were seen in *Warren*; the only report of multiple birds was of 3 from CW 5/18 (LS). A group of 5 **Palm Warblers** seen at AS 5/5 was unusual (TS). A single report of a **Yellow-throated Warbler** came 5/3 from NE (JN), one of their traditional sycamore-dominated breeding sites in *Warren*; this represents one of the northernmost breeding locales for this southern species.

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### *Washington County*

Locations: Buffalo Creek IBA 80 (BC), Canonsburg Lake (CL), Cross Creek County Park (CC), Ginger Hill area ponds (GHP), Greencove Wetlands (GCW), Hillman State Park (HSP), Mingo Creek County Park (MC), Peters Lake (PL).

Dabbling ducks were not well reported. Counts of **Blue-winged Teal** at CL 3/27-5/16 maxed out at just 4 (m.ob.). Four **Northern Shovelers** were at CL 4/15 (RI), and one **American Wigeon** was at GHP 3/12 (JF). GHP was a hotspot for bay ducks in mid-March, though, where records included 2 **Canvasback** 3/12-15 (JF), 2 **Redhead** 3/15 (JF, JP, MM), and up to 170 **Ring-necked Ducks** 3/12-15 (JF, JP, MM). A **Greater Scaup** was at PL 3/17-20 (JM, ST) and one was at CL 4/16-19 (MV). Very nice were 4 **Long-tailed Ducks** at PL 3/17 (JF) that were seen by a few lucky chasers. Thirty **Common Mergansers** at Boone Res. 3/8 (LC) was a nice count, and they were noted nesting again in the BC area 5/13 (RI). Three **Red-breasted Mergansers** at CL 4/17 (JL) represented the only report.

A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at SGL 232 on 5/25 (FK). **Common Nighthawk** was noted at a residence in Washington 5/20 and 5/23 (LC) and one was seen off US-22 in Robinson Twp. 5/23 (MD). Up to 3 **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were at HSP beginning 5/16 (JP), where the species has long been a summertime fixture.

A **Virginia Rail** was found at GCW 4/27 (RI, LC) and 2 were there 5/13 (RT). A **Sora** was also noted at GCW 4/27 (RI, LC). A **Sandhill Crane** at GCW 4/29 (JF, JP) represented the fourth for *Washington*, all since 2011.

A small mudflat at the CL dam provided surprisingly good shorebirding. All shorebirds that follow were reported from CL. Two early **Semipalmated Plovers** were present 4/23 (MJ). Very surprising was a **Sanderling** 5/2-4 (MJ). This species is very rare in sw. Pennsylvania, but this was, remarkably, the ninth record for *Washington*, all since 2007. Most previous records are from the fall, and mostly from a non-public location near Bentleyville; this was the first for CL. Also very nice for spring were 2 **White-rumped Sandpipers** 5/15 (MJ). Two early **Pectoral Sandpipers** were noted 4/7 (JF). **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were there 5/11-22 (m.ob.), with top count of 10 on 5/15 (MJ). **Solitary Sandpipers** were ubiquitous beginning with an early bird 4/7 (MJ). They were noted in at least three other locations this spring as well. Seventeen **Lesser Yellowlegs** 5/13 (JF, LF) was a good count, and **Greater Yellowlegs** lingered to 5/12 (m.ob.). Best of all, though, by far, was *Washington's* first **Wilson's Phalarope**, a beautiful male enjoyed by several observers 5/22 (JF, m.ob.).

Another surprising and delightful bird was the **Red-throated Loon** that appeared at PL 3/21-24 (JF), the third for the county, and the first that was easily chased, so it was seen by many. But this record did not stand long, as another Red-throated appeared at CC 4/23 (RI), the county's fourth, all since 2015. A calling **Common Loon** was at CC 5/7 (RI). This species is rare in sw. Pennsylvania in May but one or two birds per year can usually be counted upon around here in May, almost always adults in crisp breeding plumage and giving the haunting vocalizations they normally reserve for the boreal forests of the north. Very surprisingly, there were only two records of **Great Egret** for the entire season, both at CL: one 4/17, submitted anonymously to eBird but supported by photo, and one there 5/25 (RB). An amazing encounter with a **Great Blue Heron** was described at a private residence 5/5: the heron was observed very close to the homeowner's backyard deck

stalking a chipmunk, which it caught and flew off with. But it somehow dropped its prey while in flight, and the chipmunk ultimately was able to escape. Great Blues are known to stalk mammals on land like this from time to time, but it is rarely witnessed (BZ).

An **Osprey** at CC 4/11 (RI) was likely a passage migrant. The **Bald Eagle** nest at CL was active again this year. Eggs were laid by 2/25, and one eaglet, dubbed "CL6" (the sixth eaglet hatched at this nest), was first seen 4/21. It was still doing well as of 5/3 (all info *vide* LC). A **Red-headed Woodpecker** graced an East Washington yard 5/8-9 (RI, LC) and another was seen at Washington Park 5/9 (LC). Yet another was seen on Covered Bridge Road 5/12 (RI). **Merlin** was noted at CC 3/11 (GG), and a **Peregrine Falcon** was noted along I-79 near Washington 3/16 (JeF).

**Philadelphia Vireos** were at BC 5/13 (RI) and at MC 5/18 (JP, JF). **Common Raven** was reported at eight locations (m.ob.). **Bank Swallow** and **Cliff Swallow** are both uncommon in the county; the former (7 birds) was at CL 5/12 (JF, JP) and the latter was noted twice, one at PL 4/26 (JF) and 2 at CL 5/12 (JF, JP). HSP continues to be the most reliable location for **Red-breasted Nuthatch** in sw. Pennsylvania, where daily counts of up to 12 were made beginning 4/22 (KD, KS, et al.). A single **Marsh Wren** was at GCW 5/13. Quite late was a **Golden-crowned Kinglet** at Washington Park 5/16 (LC).

Another major rarity for *Washington* was a **Clay-colored Sparrow** in a Washington yard 5/16 (SG), probably just the second for the county. The one known previous record was one at GCW 9/30/2006. A **Vesper Sparrow** was on Glass Hill Road near Muse 4/8 (FK). Uncommon in spring, a **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at CC 5/7 (RI). **Yellow-breasted Chat** was found at six locations in May (m.ob.). A superb count of 25 **Bobolinks** was made at Glass Hill Road near Muse 5/17 (FK). The only report of **Rusty Blackbird** was one at Cecil Township 4/28 (FK).

Like elsewhere in western Pennsylvania, warbler migration was rather dismal through the first half of May due to very cold temperatures and lack of south winds. The second half was much better, though. At least 10 **Ovenbirds** were on territory at HSP 5/13 (KD), and first **Louisiana Waterthrush** appeared 3/31 at MC (JF). A **Northern Waterthrush** at CL 5/16 (ST) was a nice find. **Mourning Warblers** arrived on a warm front beginning 5/15, and were noted at Washington Park 5/16-17 and at Washington Park School 5/18 (LC, SG, RI). **Kentucky Warbler** was noted at four locations (m.ob.). Sightings of **Bay-breasted Warblers** were limited to 5/16-21, but they were very commonly found during this stretch (m.ob.). A wintering **Pine Warbler** lingered in Washington to 3/22 (LC), and first returning bird was at MC 3/28 (GG). **Wilson's Warblers** were found at Washington Park 5/16 (LC), at MC 5/22 (GG), and near Burgettstown 5/23 (MD).

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## Wayne County

Locations: Hankins Pond (HP), Lake Wallenpaupack (LW).

Spring reports generated the first county eBird records of two scoter species. Five **Surf Scoters** were photographed at LW 4/16 (JD). Up to 2 adult male **White-winged Scoters** were photographed at LW 3/22-4/25 (JD, CF, RJ, MS), along with another male on the Delaware River near Narrowsburg Access 5/27-28 (KC, CF). **Red-necked Grebes** were spotted at two locations, one at Long Pond 4/8 (CF) and up to 2 at LW 4/15-19 (CF, RJ, MS).

A **Sandhill Crane** was sighted on annual breeding grounds, a farm along Avoy Rd, 4/9-10 (CF, RJ). A single **Little Gull** was photographed flying over LW 4/16-17 (JD, CF). The first eBird record of **Least Bittern** in *Wayne* was of one heard and photographed at HP 5/21-27 (CF, JH). County-rarity **Marsh Wren** was also reported at HP 5/12-21 (CF, JH).

Twenty-eight warbler species were tallied. A **Worm-eating Warbler** was heard in the county's southwestern corner along Hazleton Rd 5/18 (CF). **Mourning Warblers** were reported at dense wetland edge breeding locations

throughout central *Wayne*, particularly SGL 159 (m.ob.).

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## Westmoreland County

Locations: Beaver Run Reservoir (BRR-380), Cedar Creek County Park (CCCCP), Conemaugh River Lake /Livermore-West Penn Trail (CRL), Crabtree Farm Area (CFA), Donegal Lake (DL), Ethel Springs Reservoir (ESR, more commonly known as Derry Lake), Hunters Lane(HL), Kuehl Property – Murrysville (KP), Latrobe Reservoir (LR, also known as Trout Run Reservoir), Laughlin Farm Road near Blairsville (LFR), Love Hollow – Andy Mack location north of Ligonier (LH), Mammoth Park (MP), Morosini Reserve (MR), Murrysville Community Park (MCP), Northmoreland Park (NP), Powdermill Nature Reserve (PNR), Sewickley Wetlands (SW), Spruce Flats Bog (SFB), St. Vincent Lake/Wetland (SVW), Tubmill Reservoir (TR), Turner's Pond (TP), Twin Lakes Park (TLP), Westmoreland Heritage Trail locations: MAWC Beaver Run property (WHT - BRR), Delmont (WHT-D), Sarah Steel Trailhead to Saltsburg (WHT-SST), Saunders Station to Trafford (WHT-SS).

For the first time in its roughly 60 years of operation, bird banding at Powdermill Nature Reserve was suspended during the spring migration season due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Banding operations resumed in June. Fortunately, Banding Program Manager, Annie Lindsay, did extensive field birding and some netting that provided reports from PNR, which did include some of the species that in most cases are only reported as captures.

Although the Pennsylvania Migration Count was discontinued in favor of the Global Big Day, over 50 participants decided to continue the tradition in *Westmoreland*. Despite the cold, unfavorable conditions, and with some travel restrictions under the stay-at-home orders, effort and results on 5/9 were respectable with a total species count of 131 versus the 29-year average of 145, and total ticks of 9877, versus the 29-year average of 8085. Of note is that *Westmoreland* led the Commonwealth Global Big Day effort with 313 submitted checklists. Three records were tied this year: **Blue-winged Teal** 4, **Bank Swallow** 10, and **Marsh Wren** 2. Fourteen records were high counts: **Wood Duck** 89, **Ring-necked Duck** 3, **Common Merganser** 14, **Turkey Vulture** 94, **Osprey** 9, **Bald Eagle** 10, **Downy Woodpecker** 81, **Hairy Woodpecker** 28, **Purple Martin** 151, **Barn Swallow** 438, **Tufted Titmouse** 158, **White-breasted Nuthatch** 63, **Carolina Wren** 142 and **White-crowned Sparrow** 43. Unfortunately, a super-cold probably resulted in high Purple Martin mortality.

A **Greater White-fronted Goose** reported at DL 3/15 (EB) was photographed 3/20 (AL). A remarkable 21 **Wood Ducks** were observed at TP 5/9 (JLK, TK). **Blue-winged Teal** were widely-reported, including a late report of a pair at MP 5/31 (BM, NL). With those previous exceptions, overall reporting for both dabblers and divers was very modest for the season. The high count for **Northern Shoveler** was only 7 at BRR-380 3/22 (DM). The only significant reports for **Gadwall** and **American Wigeon** were at DL, with high counts of 9 Gadwalls and 8 Wigeons, both 3/21 (AM; AL). Reported from fewer locations than usual, a high count of 27 **American Black Ducks** came from CLR 3/18 (KB). The only **Northern Pintail** report was of a pair at DL 3/22 (BB). **Green-winged Teal** were hard to find this year - among the few reports were 2 at CRL 3/18 (KB) and 2 at DL 3/27 (AM).

Canvasback was not reported. The high report for **Redhead** was 10 at TP 3/6 (SM). **Ring-necked Duck** was more widely-reported than other divers, the highest count being 28 at TP 3/19 (KB). **Greater Scaup**, were only reported from the BRR-380 area: 3/15 (MM), 4/14 (MVT), and 4/16 (RH, SM). The season high count of 12 **Lesser Scaup** came from LR 3/21 (AL). There was one **Long-tailed Duck** at TR 3/21 (AM). Unusual were quite a few reports of **Red-breasted Merganser** from BRR-380, DL, LR, and PNR with a high of 9 at LR 3/28 (AM) and 4/4 (SM, RH). Limited reports for **Ruddy Duck** included 3 at LR 3/21 (ToC, AL) and a substantial report of 40 at BRR 4/18 (PF), a day on which fall-out numbers were reported across the Commonwealth.

It was disappointing that no Ruffed Grouse were reported, but there were several large flocks of **Wild Turkeys**, including one with 44 birds at



WHT-SS 3/1 (KB). Though most **Horned Grebe** reports were of single birds, 6 were at DL 3/27 (AM). **Common Nighthawk** was seen at LH 5/17 (AM), Ligonier 5/23 (AL), and in Rector 5/23 (AN) when 2 were reported. As expected, there were more reports of **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** than of **Black-billed Cuckoo**, but one of just 3 for Black-bill was of 2 at the Ackermann Nature Reserve 5/17 (MB, TC).

Field birding by at PNR provided several reports of **Virginia Rail** 5/5-15 (AL). Both Virginia Rail and **Sora** were reported at the Youngwood Swamp on the Five Star Trail 5/10 (RH, SM) and one Sora was found there 5/20 (JK). Two were calling from two locations in Lowber, 5/9 (m.ob.). Continuing as reliable locations for **American Coot**, reports included 4 at ESR 3/8 (MM) and 4 at BRR-380 on 3/19 (KB). The only report of **Sandhill Crane** was a bird nicely-photographed in a cornfield along Rte. 130 just east of Pleasant Unity 5/27 (ME).

Mammoth Park provided for substantial shorebirding opportunities. Some of the rarer species seen 5/23 included 3 **Semipalmated Plovers**, **Dunlin**, 2 **Least Sandpipers**, **White-rumped Sandpiper**, 2 **Semipalmated Sandpipers**, and **Spotted Sandpiper** (MM). A **Short-billed Dowitcher** was first reported at MP 5/11 (AL) and likely the same bird continued to 5/13 (RC, RH, SM). Three **Wilson's Snipe** were likely hold-overs at the reliable wintering Helen Rd location in the CFA 3/6 (SM). Also, reported early in the season, one Wilson's Snipe was seen at SW 3/7 (MF). The more common Spotted Sandpiper, **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, and **Lesser Yellowlegs** were widely-reported. Not exactly a snipe hunt, however apparently on a mission, one or 2 **American Woodcock** were noted at five locations (Bush Run Recreation Area, the Hart Farm near Latrobe, West Penn Trail, the MR, and on Puckety Drive in Export) over the time-frame of 4/1-5/4 (RH, SM).

An estimated 50 **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at LR 4/5 (DS) and 20 at BRR-380 that same date (PF). The latter location held 2 **Ring-billed Gulls** 3/15 (MM) and one **Herring Gull** 4/3 (JK). Herring Gull was also reported at TLP 4/20 (PC), with 28 counted there 4/5 (Natalie Donofrio). The high count from several reports at BRR-380 was of 10 **Caspian Terns** 5/11 (RH) and one **Common Tern** 4/30 (KB).

There was significant reporting of rare wetland birds this season. In an example of "build-it-and-they-will-come," an **American Bittern** flushed from the MCP wetland 4/29 (SuM). An American Bittern was also reported at PNR 5/1 and 5/2 (AL). Also from PNR was a report of **Least Bittern** 5/19 (AL). There were several reports for **Great Egret** beginning 4/12 at TLP (anon., ph.) and including one at SVL 4/16 (JK), one photographed in flight at CRL 5/2 (JLK, TK), and one at the Youngwood Swamp 5/20 (JK). Two **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were observed flyovers at LH 3/3 (AM) and one was at for TLP 4/24 (anon., ph.).

Four of the six reports of one or two **Black Vultures** were in the Ligonier Valley, the traditional hot spot for the species in *Westmoreland*. The one Black Vulture tallied for the 5/9 Migration Count was found on the west side of Chestnut Ridge just north of Derry (RH, SM). **Osprey** were widely-reported including at DL (which is refilling with water after completion of the dam work) where they have long-nested on the erected tower, the first report being of two 3/21 (AM). One of just 3 reports of **Northern Harrier** was 3/5 in the favorable habitat on Helen Road in the CFA (JK). A reliable location for **Bald Eagle** is the CRL area, where there are at least two known nests; there were 2 adults reported 4/25 (JLK, TK). Widely-reported **Red-shouldered Hawk** was first found 3/2 and apparently nesting near the KP.

One **Eastern Screech-Owl** was seen during a hike of the WHT-SS on 4/20 (KB). A photograph confirmed 3 **Great Horned Owl** owlets with an adult in a nest near the Loyalhanna Dam (*vide* MM). Two Great Horned Owls were reported at Shield's Farm 5/4 (KB). There were several scattered reports for **Barred Owls**, which were active near the KP where they were first heard 3/3 and continued with regularity through 5/31. There were a half-dozen **Red-headed Woodpecker** reports. As expected, **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was widely-reported in the Laurel Highlands but low elevation report 4/5 were near the KP on Hilty Road (JLK, TK) and in KSP (Kristin Zagorac).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** was reported 5/21 at PNR (AL) and 5/22 at LH (AM). As in often the case, **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was only reported at PNR with five records 5/14-25, while **Alder Flycatcher** garnered 6 reports 5/15-25 (AL). In addition, 2 Alders were on Umhey Road near Ligonier 5/23 (AM) and one at HL 6/1 (JP). There were many scattered reports of **Least Flycatcher** in the Laurel Highlands and a low elevation report of 2 on the

WHT-BRR 5/27 (KB). The best location for the elusive **Great Crested Flycatcher** was PNR with five records from 5/14-23 (AL).

**Philadelphia Vireo** was only reported at PNR 5/15 and 5/18 (AL). A late **Horned Lark** report from Helen Rd 5/9 (MM) provides speculation that they could be breeding. The highest count for **Bank Swallow** was 22 at TLP 4/22 (PC). A **Cliff Swallow** colony at MP held an estimated 17 birds 5/2 (AB); a few more reports of lower counts were made elsewhere in the county.

In this non-irruption year, one **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was at LH 5/9 (AM) and SFB 5/14 (JK). **Brown Creeper** was reported from six locations, including 2 each at HL 4/30 (RH, SM) and Forbes SF 5/31 (Frank Izaquirre). The **Winter Wren** high count was 3 in LRSP 5/16 (JLK, TK), and there were 2 **Marsh Wrens** tallied on the 5/9 Migration Count at Lowber Wetlands (JP-WB&NC, DK).

**Gray-cheeked Thrush** were reported at PNR (AL), first on 5/16, a high of three 5/18, and then in smaller numbers on several dates through 5/25. A nearby home in Stahlstown tallied 2 on 5/20 (DB). Likely overwintering birds, 2 **American Pipits** were in the Helen Rd seep in the CFA 3/1 (JLK, TK, MM) and 7 were reported there 3/6 (SM).

A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was reported along with 2 **Field Sparrows** at the Livermore Cemetery in the CRL area 4/12 (JK). Single Grasshopper Sparrows were reported from the Rector area 5/2 (JL) and 5/15 (AL), and 2 were heard near TR 5/17 (AM). There were only three reports of **Fox Sparrow**: one near Laughlinton 3/22 (AM), one at LH 3/25 (AM), and one at PNR 4/10 (AL). By contrast, **White-crowned Sparrow** was widely-reported, especially during migration in early May, setting a new record for the Migration Count with 43 tallied 5/9. **Lincoln's Sparrow** was observed at just two locations: PNR 5/10, 5/14, and 5/18 (AL); and one on Baxter Dr outside of New Kensington 5/15 (Amber Treese). Now quite a rarity in *Westmoreland*, it was good to have three reports of **Yellow-breasted Chat**: one at SW 5/14 (MF), one at LH 5/17 (AM), and 4 in the Laurelville area near Mt. Pleasant (Derek and Laurie Yoder). **Bobolink** was reported from seven different areas with a high of 11 from Mountainview Rd, New Florence, 5/17 (AM). They also continue to be reliable in the fields at the intersection of Rt. 381 and Allen Road where 5 were noted 5/2 (JL) and 4 for the 5/9 Migration Count (AL). This location also provided 2 **Eastern Meadowlarks** 3/20 (DB). Another good grassland location is LFH, where there were 3 **Bobolinks** and 4 Eastern Meadowlarks 5/15 (RH, SM). There were early-season reports of **Rusty Blackbird** at LVT 3/21 (AL, TC), along Sewickley Creek 3/22 (RH, SM), in Stahlstown 3/25 (DB), and four 4/4 (SM) at the McBroom Farm off Pizza Barn Rd north of New Derry; but the species was reported through May with four 5/16 in Latrobe (Kristy Planinsek).

OK, so we dipped on Connecticut, Orange-crowned and Kirtland's (we always dip on Kirtland's) Warblers; however, 32 warbler species for the season is outstanding. The only report of **Worm-eating Warbler** was at TR 5/22 (AM). There were multiple reports of **Northern Waterthrush** and **Blue-winged Warbler**, but the only report of **Golden-winged Warbler** was from SFB 5/17 (AB). It was unusual to get two reports for **Prothonotary Warbler** - one at CRL 5/5 (KB), and one at MP 5/31 (JH, NL, BM, ph.). The elusive **Mourning Warbler** was only reported at PNR, the earliest 5/13 (Tomas Carlo) and then one or 2 on four days from 5/16-23 (AL). Consistent reports of **Kentucky Warbler** came from PNR 5/2-25 (m.ob.), and from at least a half-dozen other locations during that time frame.

Limited reports for **Cape May Warblers** came from TR 5/9 (AM), Starboard Villa 5/17 (Sean Mueseler, Lydia Klimchock) and PNR where there were three 5/15 (AL). **Cerulean Warbler** was reported at several reliable locations including 3 at CRL 5/2 CRL (JLK, TK) and 2 at LRSP 5/18 (Paul and Susan Gerlach, vr.). The many scattered reports for **Bay-breasted Warbler**, including a stunning 24 at PNR 5/16 (AB), documented a strong migration for this species. There were more than a half-dozen reports of **Blackpoll Warbler** and **Palm Warbler** including 5 Palms that were very co-operative bike-trail birds at CLR 5/2 (JLK, TK). Of note among the many **Yellow-rumped Warbler** reports was a productive walk at CLR 5/5 (KB) with a count of 20. **Yellow-throated Warbler**, long reliable at CCCP and CRL, where 5 were reported from the West Penn Trail 4/25 (TK, JK), is now also established along WHT-SS, which provides access to appropriate habitat of sycamores along the creek. Three were reported there 4/27 (RH, SM). As is often the case, PNR was the only location for **Wilson Warbler** with one reported 5/15 and 5/18 (AL).

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### Wyoming County

Locations: Brown's Farm (BF), Davis Crossing (DC), Lake Carey (LC), Lake Winola (LW), Nesbitt Road (NR), Oxbow Lake (OL), Russell Hill (RH), Scavazzo's Pond (SP), Sharpe's Lake (SL), State Gamelands 57 (SGL), Vago Road (VR), Vosburg Neck, including the Endless Mountains Nature Center and the Howland Preserve (VN).

I've included herein all the records (that I'm aware of) of migrating species that visited Wyoming County on their way to their breeding grounds.

**Snow Goose** was recorded several times during Mar-Apr in small numbers at SF, with a high of 14 on 4/2 (DT, DL, JDB). A single bird, with a seemingly injured wing, continued throughout May. A first record for *Wyoming* occurred at NR 4/22 when a **Trumpeter Swan** was observed (JH, RK).

Several species of transient, migrating waterfowl were recorded during the period, most in small numbers. For example, 2 **Blue-winged Teal** made an appearance at OL 4/6 (JD). A pair of **Gadwall**s was recorded at DC 4/28 (MC). Three **American Wigeons** were at OL 3/24 (MC). A **Northern Pintail** was at LC 3/3 (JS). There were two records of **Green-winged Teal**: 8 at DC 4/8 and 4 at LC 4/18 (both JD). By contrast, **Ring-necked Duck** was recorded in six different locations - SL, LW, OL, LC, SP, VR - in numbers from one to 152 from mid-Mar through mid-Apr (m.ob.), and there was a lone bird on a small pond on Crow Hill Road 4/21 (JD). Two **Greater Scaup**, infrequent here, were reported at SF 4/2 (DL, DT). This is the first confirmed record in the county in two years. **Lesser Scaup**, recorded most years in small numbers, also visited with 2-5 present at OL 3/24-4/4 (MC, JD), and one at SF 4/2 (JDB).

A **Long-tailed Duck** was reported from LC 3/7 (JS). **Bufflehead** was recorded often and in many locations from mid-Mar to the first few days of May at eight locations, almost always in single numbers (m.ob.). The only two-digit counts included 17 at OL 4/23 (MC) and 11 at LC 4/6 (JD). Finally, **Ruddy Duck** was reported four times at LC: one 3/20 (MC), 4 on 3/31 (JD), 6 on 4/13 (MC, JD), and 4 on 4/18 (JD). A **Pied-billed Grebe** was at LC 4/18 (JD) and **Horned Grebe** was found there on two occasions: two 3/23 (MS) and one 3/31 (JD). A single Horned Grebe was also at LW 3/31 (SB). Pied-billed Grebe was identified as a possible breeder during the last atlas, but there has been no additional evidence to elevate its breeding status.

Among migrating sandpipers, single **Solitary Sandpipers** were seen 5/9 along East Lemon Road in the vicinity of Tunkhannock Creek (MC), 5/9 at the Wyoming County Fairgrounds (RL), and 5/16 at VN (RL). A **Lesser Yellowlegs** was recorded at the pond at BF 5/1 (JD). This is the first record since the fall of 2017 and only the third in at least the last ten years. Occasionally *Wyoming* is visited by something other than Ring-billed Gulls, as was the case when 2 **Bonaparte's Gulls** were reported from LC 5/1 (JD).

**Common Loon** is a regular visitor during migration, and 2-4 were recorded at OL 4/22-27 (MC, JD); one was recorded at LW 4/25 (SB). **Double-crested Cormorants** seemed to be everywhere. Six birders reported them from six different locations, from late Mar through the end of May, mostly in single digit numbers, although OL hosted numbers as high as 28.

**Osprey** was reported during migration near Meshoppen 4/16 (RL), at LC 4/25 (MC), near Falls 5/12 (LJ), near Noxen 5/9 (JD), and at RH 5/11 (RL). There was also a single bird at OL 4/14-22 (MC, JD), 2 at OL 4/23 (MC), and 3 at OL from 4/27-5/1 (MC, JD). Two **Peregrine Falcons** were observed 3/7 in the vicinity of a nesting ledge that was used last year near Laceyville (JD); however, there were no other records of the species at this site or any other site through the end of May.

Fifteen **American Pipits** were reported foraging in the high grass at the end of Mason Road 3/31 (JD). Finally, an apparent first record for *Wyoming*

occurred 5/17 when a **Wilson's Warbler** was observed along the Susquehanna River near Laceyville (JD).

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### York County

Locations: Codorus SP (CSP), Fairview Twp. (FVTP), Gifford Pinchot SP (GPSP), Green Lane Farms (GLF), Hopewell Twp. Park (HTP), L. Redman (LR), L. Williams (LW), Shepperd-Myers Res. (SMR), Spring Valley C.P. (SVCP).

The county's 207 species equaled last spring's total. Based on the period's volume of eBird entries, with number of birders and widespread locales reporting, there is strong evidence of an appreciable increase in birding hours over prior spring seasons. The COVID-19 pandemic has people exploring safe options to get out of the house. Better highlights include a **Eurasian Collared Dove** sighting; elevated **Common Nighthawk** reporting; three and two locales reporting **Virginia Rail** and **Sora**, respectively; a fairly cooperative and lingering **Least Bittern**; a brief **Glossy Ibis** visit; multiple **Lincoln's Sparrow** reports; and strong warbler reports led by a **Lawrence's Warbler** sighting.

A clear moonlit evening allowed a lucky viewer to see 200 **Snow Goose** fly overhead at Ski Roundtop 3/5 (CH). Less common in the east, a flock of 75 Snows at HTP 3/1 (DF) were mainly "blue phase." High count for **Tundra Swan** was 150 at CSP 3/5 (BR). **Blue-winged Teal** saw much wider reporting 3/24-4/28 (m.ob.) than normal; six locales produced birds with high count limited to 6. Seventeen **Northern Shovelers** and 35 **American Wigeons** came from CSP 3/5-9 (DK, BR) and L. Lea 3/19 (DN, NN), respectively. Four sites reported typical **American Black Duck** 3/2-20 (m.ob.) with a max count of 10.

Not as prevalent as last spring nor with as large flock sizes, *Aythya sp* had a good spring showing for *York*. Most notable in this group was a late **Redhead** at CSP 4/30 (CB) and a tardy **Ring-necked Duck** at SGL 243 on 5/8 (SB). A **Long-tailed Duck** was at CSP 3/9 (CB), and LW produced a nice 7 count 3/13 (JB). A **Common Goldeneye** was at Long Arm Res. 3/8 (P&RW), 4 were at GPSP 3/13 (DN), and LW had 5 on 3/29 (JB). **Common Merganser** and **Ruddy Duck** both had late showings, with 2 mergansers at GPSP 5/12-16 (DA, KA, TB) and a Ruddy at LW 5/23 (JB). Seven sites held **Common Loon** with a nice 18 count from LW 3/29 (BR).

A single report of **Ring-necked Pheasant** came from GPSP 4/22 (AS). A **Eurasian Collared-Dove** was found at CSP 4/5 (HM) but no additional detail was provided. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was regularly found, and four sites holding **Black-billed Cuckoo** 5/15-25 (J&WH, CrM, RS, NZ) were more than normal. A very strong spring reporting period for **Common Nighthawk** was rewarding to see. Eight sites reported flights 5/15-25 (m.ob.) with high counts being 5 over Mt. Wolf 5/21 (FW) and 6 over GLF 5/25 (RK). As the last two years at the Rocky Ridge C.P. hawk migration site have shown increased numbers of nighthawks in the fall, it has provided a decent opportunity to add this species to annual lists.

Up to 4 **Virginia Rails** were detected at Marsh Run 4/16-5/29 (DA, DN, NN, BR, DT), up to 2 were at Nixon County Park 5/2-25 (CB, DC, AP, BR), and one was at Brunner Island 5/14 (CB). Marsh Run also held 2 **Soras** 4/16-5/29 (m.ob.) and Nixon C.P. produced one 5/14-16 (CB, DC, AP). High water levels continue to make shorebirding challenging. Up to 3 **Semipalmated Plover** were at SMR 5/24-25 (DA, CB), A **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at SMR 4/26 (CB), and LR had a pair 5/13 (DN). SGL 243 produced a trio of **American Woodcock** 3/11 (DT) for the only report. Pairs of **Wilson's Snipe** were found at SMR 3/11 (CB) and Marsh Run 4/18-5/3 (DA, DN, NN). HTP claimed "favored status" with the snipes as it held birds 3/14-4/28 (m.ob.) and produced an impressive high of 30 on 4/1 (AM, RS).

**Bonaparte's Gull** was detected 3/23-5/7 (m.ob.) at six sites. Nice counts came from LW 3/29 (BR) with 25 birds and up to 36 were at GPSP 3/23-4/24 (DA, DN, NN). **Herring Gull** continues to make sporadic inland trips from the Susquehanna R. GPSP had a single bird 4/23 (DN, NN), Long Arm Res. held up to 3 birds 3/24-29 (J&SD, HM) as did CSP 3/5-4/25 (MC, MaH, BR). **Caspian Tern** was well reported 4/16-28 (m.ob.), and **Forster's Tern** sightings included a pair at CSP 4/18 (DA) and singles at Shrewsbury and LR 4/30 (DA, JB, BR).

The **Least Bittern** at LR 5/1-14 (m.ob.) was a treat for the many who saw it. The bird was typically in vegetation within 15 feet of the boardwalk, producing some nice views and photograph opportunities. The bird was true to its cryptic nature, but a little patience was typically rewarded as it moved in and out of view. High counts at the Kiwanis L. rookery were 28 **Great Egrets** and 13 **Black-crowned Night Herons** 4/26 (DN, NN). What was likely the same bird, a **Yellow-crowned Night Heron** was found at Jacobus, LR, and LW 4/18-25 (m.ob.) These sites are within five miles of each other with LR and LW being adjacent water bodies.

A **Black Vulture** flock of 102 birds joined 10 **Bald Eagles** on the rocks below Holtwood Dam 4/20 (TA). A **Northern Harrier** at LW 5/5 (CK) was a little late, but one at HTP 5/31 (AM, RS) was decidedly late. An impressive **Broad-winged Hawk** spring-migration kettle of 55 was over GPSP 4/29 (DN, NN). High count was 5 birds at HTP 5/16 (DF). Singles of **Eastern Screech Owl** were found at Dover 5/17 (DCa) and at Lock 12 on 5/16 (DH). A **Short-eared Owl** was at HTP 3/27 (DF), and a pair of **Northern Saw-whet Owls** was at Ski Roundtop 3/23 (CH). **Red-headed Woodpecker** reporting from 25 sites was noteworthy. Four reports of single **Merlin** spanned 3/6-4/25 (CB, JB, DF, NF). A **Peregrine Falcon** visited HTP 3/21 (DF).

Flycatcher highlights included three reports of **Olive-sided Flycatcher**. One was near Stoney Run along Siddonsburg Rd 5/21 (KAt, JR), one at Warrington Twp Park 5/21 (DN, NN), and a third report came from GPSP 5/27 (SM). A good find was an **Alder Flycatcher** at Sunnyside Rd 5/24 (CB). **Least Flycatcher** saw a high level of reporting from nine locales 5/1-27 (m.ob.). Vireo species reporting was widespread. Notable for being early were a **White-eyed Vireo** at LR 4/14 (BR) and a **Warbling Vireo** at LR 4/13 (BR). Always a highlight, a **Philadelphia Vireo** was at GPSP 5/2 (DT). Small numbers of less than 6 **Horned Lark** were found at 10 sites 3/1-5/21 (m.ob.).

**Cliff Swallows** were at the established nesting grounds at CSP 5/9-30 (m.ob.) with a high of 23 birds 5/23 (DN). Also nice to report was a good Cliff Swallow showing at LR 4/25-5/20 (m.ob.) with a high of 25 on 5/9 (CM). A **Tufted Titmouse** was pulling/gathering hair from a groundhog carcass at Tuscarora Dr. 5/15 (AP). Peterson's *A Field Guide to Bird's Nests* notes that the bottom of the titmouse cavity nest is "... padded with hair, fur, bits of string, cloth." GPSP was alive with **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** 4/25 (RK, AM) with a 46 count, mostly in pairs. High counts for **Golden-crowned Kinglet** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** were 20 birds at SVCP 4/4 (DA) and 20 at GPSP 4/20 (DA), respectively.

A nice **Veery** count of 5 birds came from GPSP 5/20 (DCa) and GPSP produced double digit counts of **Swainson's Thrush** 5/16-19 (DA, KA, DN, NN). A single **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was at GLF 5/25 (RK) and up to 2 were at GPSP 5/16-19 (DA, KA, RK). A great count of 200 **American Pipits** came from a field along Dairy Rd 3/26 (CB). The only other pipit report was a pair at SVCP 5/3 (DA). **Cedar Waxwing** counts were 46 at GLF 5/23 (RK) and 50 along the Rail Trail 5/23 (CB). **Purple Finch** reports were sparse; one was at Stillmeadow Park 3/24 (TK), and another at FVTP 4/1 (DN).

**Grasshopper Sparrow** was first reported at HTP 4/25, and the high count of 9 was on 5/16 (DN); a pair were found at Highpoint Scenic Vista Area 5/13 (DA), and the Airville area held a trio 5/23 (DA). The few **American Tree Sparrow** found were last reported 4/4 (JC, DL, DT). **Fox Sparrow** reports spanned 3/15-4/21 (m.ob.) with a high of 6 at Rocky Ridge C.P. 3/31 (AW). Single **Vesper Sparrow** at HTP 4/19 (RS) and SVCP 4/20 (DA) were nice finds. **Savannah Sparrow** reports (m.ob.) came from six sites with a 5-high count at HTP 3/1 (DN, NN) and 5/16 (DN). Receiving a **Lincoln's Sparrow** spring report is rare for the county, so four reports is certainly noteworthy. Singles were at LR 5/2 (DF) and 5/13 (AW), at GLF 5/8 (RK), and at Rocky Ridge C.P. 5/16 (JC). **Swamp Sparrow** was well reported, from 17 sites.

Six sites reported **Yellow-breasted Chat** and up to 5 were at SVCP 5/5-31 (DA, CB, J&WH). The only site holding **Bobolink** was HTP 4/28-5/18 (m.ob.). **Eastern Meadowlark** was found at six sites with the HTP stronghold producing up to 25 on 4/12 (AS). Solid oriole reporting was paced by an

**Orchard Oriole** high of 7 at the Lock 12 site 5/16 (DH) and up to 20 **Baltimore Orioles** at GPSP 5/12 (DN, NN). Six sites reporting **Rusty Blackbird** 3/16-5/5 (m.ob.) was a positive, but no count exceeded 4 birds.

A **Golden-winged Warbler** was found at SGL 243 on 5/9 (ANON). An adult female **Lawrence's Warbler** allowed for some decent photos at GPSP 5/16 (DA, KA). To this viewer, the eBird photos seem to suggest a hint of rufous spotting/streaking on the forehead, probably temporary from foraging and not aberrant plumage or further hybridization. **Prothonotary Warbler** was found at four Susquehanna R. sites: Gut Rd, Lock 12, Brunner Island, and Saginaw 4/27-5/24 (m.ob.). GPSP produced the inland sightings with up to a pair of birds 5/3-27 (m.ob.). GPSP had nice 7 counts of **Tennessee Warbler** 5/15-20 (DA, AW) and a 5 count of **Nashville Warbler** 5/14 (RK, AM); that same 5/14 visit produced the only **Mourning Warbler** sighting (RK, AM). A **Kentucky Warbler** at GLF 4/23 (RK) was a bit early.

Usually challenging to find, **Cerulean Warbler** was at four sites: FVTP, GPSP, Lock 12, and Saginaw 4/29-5/31 (DA, JC, J&WH, MaH, MO, AW). A nice 18-plus count of **Black-throated Blue Warblers** came from Rocky Ridge C.P. 5/13 (DN, NN). A dozen **Palm Warblers** were foraging in a grassy area at LW in the company of 4 **Pine Warblers** and 2 **Chipping Sparrows** 4/12 (BR). Single **Yellow-throated Warblers** were at GPSP 4/20-5/23 (RK, JSt, RSt) and the Airville area 5/31 (DA). Sixteen sites reporting **Canada Warbler** were paced by a 5 count at GPSP 5/17 (AW). **Wilson's Warbler** was found at Lock 12 on 5/11 (J&WH) and Long Level 5/13 (DA). **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** made another strong showing this spring. A bird at Goldsboro 4/18 (BS) was early and 10 at FVTP 5/8 (DN) was the high count. The seven reports of **Blue Grosbeak** from seven locales were all singles in a very tight window 5/10-18 (m.ob.).

With 34 species of warbler found, it would certainly be termed a good showing for the county. Traditionally, Rocky Ridge C.P. is the recognized "go to" spot in the county to take in both spring and fall warbler migration. This spring it did not produce anything approaching typical numbers. As the migration progressed birders regularly visited the park but, finding low numbers and variety, frequently moved on to other sites. Fortunately, the birds still graced the county at various sites. In particular, Gifford Pinchot SP saw many birding hours and produced some solid days watching warblers and other passerine.

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**Pink-footed Goose** from winter staying until at least mid-March, seen here at Wood's Edge Park, Lancaster 4 March. (Dean Newhouse)



**Dark-eyed Junco x White-throated Sparrow** hybrid present for a few days at Decorum, Huntingdon, seen here 8 April; was this the same individual as the hybrid in Cumberland, last seen 1 April, about 30 miles to the east? (James Hamilton)

**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

**SUBMISSION OF MATERIALS FOR PUBLICATION:** We welcome submission of feature articles, artwork, or photographs focusing on any aspect of Pennsylvania birds or birding. We strongly encourage that submissions be sent in electronic format by email but will accept handwritten or typewritten material if necessary.

For articles, the Microsoft Office suite (any version) is preferred; however we will accept any popularly used format, or plain text. Please email written materials in an attached document in its original source format (i.e., no PDF files, please).

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## IN FOCUS – Spring Waders



This **American Bittern** at New Milford, *Susquehanna* was first heard after a 5" snow-fall 18 April; then found and photographed while attempting, not entirely successfully, to camouflage 25 April. (Nancy VanCott, Laura Nichols)



A fairly cooperative **Least Bittern** was at Lake Redman, York 1-14 (here 5) May. (Dale Bicksler)



**Cattle Egrets** were found in *Berks* and *Lebanon*, and also in *Lancaster*, where there were two or three birds, including this individual at Garber Road 18 May. (Patricia Williams)



Relatively rare in western Pennsylvania, compared to the southeast, this **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was at Wingfield Pines Conservation Area, *Allegheny* 12-18 (here 12) May. (Joe Papp)



**Black-crowned Night-Heron** at the "Duck Pond", a favorite birding spot near State College, *Centre*, for one day only, 18 April; Black-crowns are annual in central Pennsylvania, but if they nest here, they are keeping the secret well. (Debra Grim)



**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** from the long-established nesting colony in Harrisburg, *Dauphin*; these birds were on Hamilton St. 3 May. (Dale Bicksler)