

# PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS



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**Cover:** A first for Pennsylvania, this **Brewer's Sparrow** was mist-netted at Powdermill Nature Reserve 4 November, then three more times through 10 (here 6) November; see the excellent account by Annie Lindsay in the *Westmoreland* summary. (Roger Higbee)

**Next ten new species in Pennsylvania**

The official Bird List for Pennsylvania stands at “about” 440 species. I say “about” 440, because the number is ever growing, albeit slowly, and a couple or few new species, most likely correctly identified, are generally awaiting formal acceptance to the list pending the vote of the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (“PORC”).

In this issue of *Pennsylvania Birds*, the collective predictions from 32 Pennsylvania birders of the next species to be discovered in the state are presented. It turns out there are many candidates – turn to the article to see the top choices – and with a couple exceptions, only modest consensus as to the most likely candidates. Such a survey was done once before, in 2003, the results of which are included in the current article. Of that top ten list from 18 years ago, seven species have in fact since been found at least once in the state, among the many new species added.

I invite readers to submit letters to the editor with thoughts on these predictions, and/or with your own top ten predictions. If we get enough additional lists, I will re-compute and print the list again. Send to me at [gwg2@psu.edu](mailto:gwg2@psu.edu) or the address on the Table of Contents page.

**Also in this issue...**

In my five years of editing this journal, the fall of 2020 was without a doubt the most highlight-filled season yet. Geoff Malosh does a great job of presenting all the rarities and comments on many non-rarities as well in his fall summary beginning on page 223. Included are three potential state firsts: our cover species, **Brewers Sparrow** (*Westmoreland*), already accepted by POR **South Polar Skua** (*Delaware*), and **Violet-green Swallow** (*Delaware*); the latter two still pending. In addition, there were two state second records (if accepted): **Vermillion Flycatcher** (*Philadelphia*) and **Gray Kingbird** (*Bucks*). Further, I counted some 8-10 more species that have only a few to maybe a dozen records ever in the state, and even more species that are seen in the state maybe once or twice annually and missed entirely some years. Many of these great finds were documented with photos that are included in this issue. Find details in

Geoff’s article and the various county summaries, well worth your reading.

And yet – with all those mega-rarities, what was the topic foremost in the thoughts of Pennsylvania birders? Well, it was the best invasion of **northern finches** in years; in fact, considering the overall diversity of species, the best so far in the 21st century. Probably the headliner of the group is the big, bold, dramatic **Evening Grosbeak**, found in numbers not seen in the state since the 1990s, and recorded in 62 counties as of 30 November.



**Evening Grosbeak** at East Stroudsburg, Monroe 27 October. (Nancy Tully)

**Nightjar surveys**

Based on data from the two Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlases (BBA), conducted in the 1980s and 2004-9, **Whip-poor-wills** and **Common Nighthawks** are among the fastest declining species in the state, with block detections down 42% and 71%, respectively, between the two BBAs. However, the two BBSs represent only two data points. Much-needed annual data of largely nocturnal species are scarce, as these species are not well sampled in annual Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS).

The Nightjar Survey Network (NSN) at the Center for Conservation Biology at The College of William and Mary has been in existence for over ten years. Details of the NSN and how routes are designed and conducted were described in the editorial and an article by NSN director Laura Duval in *Pennsylvania Birds* Volume 33, No. 3 and I won’t repeat all here. Information is also available at the NSN web site: <http://www.nightjars.org/>

Very briefly, routes are conducted just once per season (see 2021 dates below) and consist of ten stops, with six minutes of listening and recording. Stops are separated by at least one mile. Results are then entered

into a simple website, and for new routes GPS coordinates for each stop.

In 2020 in Pennsylvania, 12 Nightjar routes were run, up from eight in 2019. On ten of the 12 routes, at least one Whip-poor-will was recorded. In total, 191 Whips were recorded, with a range on routes of 1 – 41 birds. No Common Nighthawks were recorded. ( In Pennsylvania any route targeting nighthawks will need to be in towns or semi-barren or open areas, especially former strip mines, where some nest).

Surveys are conducted around the time of full moon. In 2021, the time periods in Pennsylvania are 19 May – 02 June and 17 June – 01 July. If you have questions about Nightjar routes, please feel free to contact me ([gwg2@psu.edu](mailto:gwg2@psu.edu)) or Laura Duval at NSN ([nightjars@nightjars.org](mailto:nightjars@nightjars.org)).

**Compiler news**

One new compiler to announce, beginning this fall season – **Rick Robinson** takes over *Chester*, succeeding **Holly Merker**, compiler there since 2010. The following counties need a compiler: *Bradford, Fulton, Luzerne, McKean, Snyder, and Union*. Contact the editor if interested.

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# Predictions for the Next Ten New Species to be found in Pennsylvania

Greg Grove, Joe Gyekis, Eric Zawatski, Dan Brauning, Carl Engstrom, Arlene Koch, and Nick Pulcinella

For those who desire the fame and glory of finding a new species for the official list of birds in Pennsylvania, opinions summarized below suggest you should study identification of cormorants and vireos, and keep watch on your hummingbird feeders.

In *Pennsylvania Birds* Volume 17, No. 3, from 2003, editor Nick Pulcinella published results of a survey of Pennsylvania birders asked to predict the **next ten new species** that would be found in the state. Nick received 33 responses from “a cross section of birders from hardcore listers and chasers to those who consistently work their local patch, and from older experienced birders to some of our state’s younger keen birders”. Respondents submitted their selections, ranked in order of likelihood from one through ten. Points were distributed according to ranking – top selection received ten points, second selection nine points etc.

Seventeen years later, this survey has been repeated. Members of the Pennsylvania birding community were invited by email to submit their predictions of the next ten previously undocumented species most likely to be added to the state list. No request was made to rank species lists. Responses were received from 32 birders, about half of the total invited.

Adding comments about why selections were included was optional. Responses were received August 18 to October 19 of 2020. During that period of data collection, South Polar Skua had already been reported in Pennsylvania but PORC had not yet considered it--participants were instructed not to include this species in their predictions. In the middle of the response collection period, Brewer’s Sparrow was found. Prior to that discovery, Eric Zawatski had submitted his prediction that this species would be among the next ten new species found.

## Results of 2003 survey

Before getting to results of the recent survey – a quick review of the 2003 results. The top ten species listed in the 2003 article are shown in **Table 1**. Seven of those ten species have, in fact, been found in Pennsylvania since 2003, with six of the seven occurring more than once (based on reports accepted by PORC and/or eBird reviewers). **White-faced Ibis** was the clear winner in that 2003 survey, but it was seven years until the first state record occurred, in *Cumberland*. Three of the top ten were hummingbirds, all of which have been found three or more times since 2003. (As seen below, it is expected that the exotic hummingbird trend will continue.) A total of 69 species received at least one vote each from 33 respondents.

**Table 1. 2003 Next ten new species predictions for Pennsylvania.**

Rank – by weighted points	Species	Number of lists	First Pennsylvania record	Number Pennsylvania records (PORC, eBird)
1	White-faced Ibis	27	<i>Cumberland</i> 2010	4
2	Allen’s Hummingbird	17	<i>Lancaster</i> 2009	5-6
3	Black-chinned Hummingbird	16	<i>Bucks</i> 2012	4
4	Western Grebe	17	<i>Cumberland</i> 2009	4
5	Fork-tailed Flycatcher	16	<i>Bucks</i> 2006	1
6	Long-billed Curlew	14	<i>Erie</i> 2005	2
6 tie	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	14	None	
8	Boat-tailed Grackle	12	None	
9	Bell’s Vireo	11	None	
10	Anna’s Hummingbird	7	<i>Berks</i> 2010	3

To build the suspense further before proceeding to the results of the 2020 survey, **Table 2** lists the *actual* next ten new species found in Pennsylvania after the 2003 article. Eight of those ten species were selected by at least five respondents in the 2003 survey, although only three were among the top ten. Two of the newcomers – **Redwing** and **Scott’s Oriole** – were foreseen by no one, flying in out of the blue, in more ways than one. Thanks to Geoff Malosh for this compilation.

**Table 2 Next ten actual new species found after the publication of the 2003 survey (from Geoff Malosh compilation)**

Species	County, Year	Votes in 2003 (of 33)
Gray Kingbird	<i>Chester</i> 2004	6
MacGillivray’s Warbler	<i>Bucks</i> 2004	6
Redwing	<i>Bucks</i> 2005	0
Long-billed Curlew	<i>Erie</i> 2005	14
Fork-tailed Flycatcher	<i>Bucks</i> 2006	16
Scott’s Oriole	<i>Cumberland</i> 2007	0
Yellow-billed Loon	<i>Dauphin</i> 2007	7
Long-billed Murrelet	<i>Bucks</i> 2007	8
Slaty-backed Gull	<i>Bucks</i> 2007	5
Western Grebe	<i>Cumberland</i> 2009	17

## Results of 2020 survey

Now, to the new survey: 74 species received at least one vote from the 32 respondents, indicative, obviously, of a wide range of opinions. Of those 74 species, 35 were included on only one list. Not surprisingly, no species made it onto to everyone’s list.

The top vote getter was included on an impressive 27 of 32 lists (84%). That species is **Neotropic Cormorant** – suggesting as already mentioned that we should be familiar with the distinctions between Neotropic and Double-crested Cormorants and look more closely at flocks of cormorants.

**Table 3** shows the top twelve (four tied for ninth) vote-getters in the survey. There is much agreement on the top two choices, with **Bell’s Vireo** not far behind the cormorant. Three more (but only three) species made at least half the lists: **Mexican Violetear**, **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper**, and **Limpkin**. No other species was mentioned on more than 41% of lists. In other words, not much consensus; perhaps not a surprising outcome, and, in fact, not so different from the distribution of votes in the 2003 survey – just a

**Table 3. Top ten (and ties) selections from 2020 survey.**

2020 Rank	Species	Votes (of 32) and % lists	% lists 2003 survey
1	Neotropic Cormorant	27 (84%)	0%
2	Bell's Vireo	24 (75%)	33%
3	Mexican Violetear	20 (63%)	33%
4	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	17 (53%)	42%
4	Limpkin	17 (53%)	3%
6	Hermit Warbler	13 (41%)	12%
7	Northern Lapwing	11 (34%)	64%
7	Smith's Longspur	11 (34%)	15%
9	Reddish Egret	8 (25%)	15%
9	Broad-tailed Hummingbird	8 (25%)	12%
9	Sage Thrasher	8 (25%)	12%
9	Virginia's Warbler	8 (25%)	3%

largely new set of species names. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Bell's Vireo are holdovers from the top ten choices in 2003.

**Table 4** on page 205 shows species that received at least three votes (i.e. over 10% of respondents), including **Boat-tailed Grackle**, a holdover from the top ten choices in 2003. Species with one or two votes are listed in **Table 5** on page 206.

Some respondents commented on their method of selection. As might be expected, the obvious "strategy", mentioned by most who commented, is to look at what species have been found in states adjacent to Pennsylvania, an easy process nowadays thanks to eBird and online species lists from adjacent states' ornithological records committees. Nevertheless, there are so many such species that settling on just ten meant choosing between a few dozen roughly equally promising (or unlikely?) candidate species.

Some commented, quite sensibly, that "detectability" should be an important factor. Species that bear significant resemblance to regularly occurring species in the state could be easily overlooked. Nevertheless, such cryptic species feature prominently among the most popular choices. Another way to look at this is that many or most of the candidate species have already occurred in the state, just not recognized – and that is why those species are still waiting to "be discovered" in Pennsylvania. How many of the top 12 in Table 3 would stand out like, say, a Roseate Spoonbill?

Some respondents relied on factors less tangible than the eBird data base. Included among comments were "going with my gut"; "If Redwing has been in *Bucks*, why not Fieldfare"; and "I like



**Neotropic Cormorant.** Wakodahatchee Wetlands, Palm Beach, Florida 1/30/2019. (Alex Lamoreaux)

small insectivores". For yet another approach, very analytical – see the strategy by Dan Brauning in the separate box on page 206.

One conspicuous and common theme in both surveys is hummingbirds. With feeders kept available after Ruby-throats have departed, out-of-season hummers are easily noticed by the army of hummingbird devotees. And, indeed, there is a talented group of banders who will travel anywhere in the state and help work-out the identity of those tiny, amazing wanderers. Three of the top ten in 2003 were hummingbirds and all have been confirmed since then, with each having at least three documented occurrences. Continuing that theme, the current survey lists two hummingbird species among the top twelve predicted new species, and one more in the top 20 (plus a couple more receiving one vote each).

Examination of **Tables 1 and 2** reveals another theme. Most of the next ten new species are likely to be found in the southeast. Of the 14 species from those tables, all first recorded after 2003, all but one came from *Cumberland* and counties to the south and east; the lone exception was the Long-billed Curlew in *Erie*. We could be even more specific and cite *Bucks*, with six of those 14 firsts, as quite likely to contribute more state firsts.

### Species Comments (# votes)

#### 1. Neotropic Cormorant (27)

Long sought after and probably the lowest hanging fruit as far as first state records go, the **Neotropic Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) has seemingly done its best to avoid crossing the Pennsylvania border. Neotropic Cormorants are widespread and often abundant throughout Central and South America, with their range extending north into southern and central United States, where their populations have grown steadily in recent decades. Correspondingly, in recent decades they have become increasingly regular vagrants throughout North America, and have become annual in the Great Lakes region, with a few recent sporadic records east of the Appalachian Mountains in adjacent states of New Jersey, Maryland, New Hampshire, and Delaware.

These Great Lakes records should be of particular interest to Pennsylvania birders, as just within the past ten years there have been double digit records along the Lake Erie and Lake Ontario shoreline in the neighboring states of Ohio and New York, as well as in Ontario just across Lake Erie. Given the number of records in this region and paucity of records east of the Appalachians, it can be posited that vagrant Neotropic Cormorants migrate up the Mississippi River and its tributaries in spring with flocks of Double-crested Cormorants, originating from their robust populations in the Gulf Coast and Louisiana delta region. Many of these records occur in April and May when cormorants are returning north, so birders should be extra diligent when scanning through cormorant flocks in spring.

Neotropic Cormorants are quite similar to their common and familiar congener, the Double-crested Cormorant, among flocks of which vagrant Neotropics are usually found, either in flight or loafing. This juxtaposition can aid in their identification by highlighting the Neotropic's longer tail, smaller body size, and short bill even at a distance. Given their recent persistent occurrence in nearby states, coupled with their steadily growing population, it seems as though it's only a matter of time before a Neotropic Cormorant is found within the commonwealth's borders. (Eric Zawatski)

#### 2. Bell's Vireo (24)

Second on the list is a species with eBird observations from every adjoining state. **Bell's Vireo** (*Vireo bellii*) is a migratory bird that nests as near as western Ohio, where it is rare but increasing. Range wide, its population has been increasing, according to Breeding Bird Surveys. More than a breeding neighbor, many records along the mid-Atlantic seaboard suggest this bird has flown

over the state repeatedly. It probably has occurred in Pennsylvania but undetected! It is one of three top ten candidates from the 2003 survey still not recorded.

Bell's Vireo inhabits brushy habitats where it can be hard to see. Lacking bold plumage features, it could be mistaken for a Warbling Vireo. But typical of songbird identification in summer, it is more often first heard than seen, so attention to its bold, finch-like song during May and June could be key to picking up a vagrant male, like those in New York and Ontario. Some observations in neighboring states occurred in June and July, as post-breeding migrants, so regular migrant hot-spots and rarity bottlenecks (Presque Isle, John Heinz Refuge) could just as easily host this bird any time from April through September. Maybe Powdermill Nature Reserve's active banding station could be the site of the state record, as it was in 2020 for the even more obscure western denizen, Brewer's Sparrow. By expansion of its breeding range or by post-breeding vagrancy, this is the top songbird on the list of likely new state records! (Dan Brauning)



**Bell's Vireo.** Green Valley, Arizona 7/19/2019. (Nick Pulcinella)

### 3. Mexican Violetear (19)

The **Mexican Violetear** (*Colibri thalassinus*, previously called Green Violetear) is a medium-large green hummingbird with violet ear patches and a bluish/purple chest mark. It primarily breeds in montane forests in central Mexico down to northern South America. But it has been recorded in many bordering states, including New Jersey, Maryland, West Virginia, and Ohio. It's believed that it overshoots to the north during migration, and it has also been seen in Michigan, Maine, and Minnesota, and as far north as Ontario and Alberta in Canada. When feeding it moves rapidly and supplements its nectar intake with copious amounts of insects.

A Mexican Violetear is easily recognized by its size and unusual appearance, and is long overdue in Pennsylvania. Since it's been seen in many of our surrounding states, it's just a matter of time before one is documented here, most likely during the summer months instead of the fall migration times of native North American hummingbirds. (Arlene Koch)

### 4. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (17)

The **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** (*Calidris acuminata*) is an Old-World species, breeding in eastern Siberia and wintering throughout Oceania, quite a way from Pennsylvania! However, like many shorebirds, the nature of their remarkable long-distance migration makes them prone to vagrancy. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper is no exception and is a regular vagrant to the Lower 48 states, particularly along the West Coast; however, there are also a number of scattered records throughout the eastern United States. In fact, the only bordering state that has no Sharp-tailed Sandpiper records is West Virginia; all other neighboring states except Maryland have multiple records. While regional records of this species span decades, there have been many recent records as well, including a



**Sharp-tailed Sandpiper.** Adak, Alaska 10/4/2018. (Frank Haas)

2017 state first in Maryland, the second and third state records for Ohio in 2019 and 2020, and a second state record for Delaware, also in 2020. This species is the highest ranked from the 2003 survey (tied for sixth) still not yet recorded in Pennsylvania.

Regional records have often occurred at known shorebird stopover locations, but have also occurred in flooded farm fields and other agricultural areas. This species also appears to be equally prone to turning up inland as coastally, something that increases Pennsylvania's chances at getting its first record. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper's similarity to Pectoral Sandpiper in size, shape, and even plumage can cause some confusion, but they can be readily differentiated by the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper's stronger, more contrasting head pattern with a rufous cap, mostly plain breast with a buff-orange tinge, streaking restricted to the sides, and distinct white eye-ring. Diligent study of shorebirds in late summer or fall will be necessary to turn up this seemingly overdue first state record! (Eric Zawatski)

### 5. Limpkin (17)



**Limpkin.** Costanera Sur Ecological Reserve, Buenos Aires, Argentina 2/10/2017. (Jeffrey Hall)

A truly unique and interesting species in a variety of facets, the **Limpkin** (*Aramus guarauna*) has recently begun to garner the attention of birders, both in Pennsylvania and continent-wide, as a potential vagrant. Limpkins have a broad geographic distribution throughout most of South and Central America, and reach their northern limit in the southeastern United States. In recent years, Limpkins have undergone a remarkable range expansion north of their historical Florida stronghold, with breeding now confirmed in

most areas of Georgia and apparent first breeding records in South Carolina and Louisiana, populations which appear to be persisting or even growing in numbers.

Corresponding to this range expansion, Limpkins have become an increasingly regular vagrant over the same time period. For instance, in 2019 Ohio had its first state record of Limpkin in July, only to have two additional records follow later that year. Additionally, in 2019, Illinois had their first state record and Virginia had their third and fourth state records, with three of their four records coming since 2017. In 2018, Maryland recorded the third state record and first in over 30 years. Finally, in 2020 a Limpkin turned up all the way into Oklahoma for their first state record, continuing what has become an obvious trend of exploration for this species.

With the recent range expansion of Limpkin showing no signs of slowing down, Pennsylvania birders should be on high alert for this distinctive species starting in early summer and continuing through the fall months. While Limpkin seemingly has the potential to show up at any wetland regardless of size and location, some potential spots for this species include John Heinz NWR, Conneaut Marsh, and Wildwood Park in Harrisburg. (Eric Zawatski)

### 6. Hermit Warbler (13)

The **Hermit Warbler** (*Setophaga occidentalis*) breeds in the Pacific Northwest, is highly migratory, and has a proven vagrancy pattern to the East in late fall (November). It has been documented in New York, Maryland, and Ontario, and is overdue in Pennsylvania. It should be looked for anywhere in the state.

Identification should not be a problem. At first glance it may be mistaken for a Black-throated Green Warbler, but the Hermit's unmarked yellow face should grab your attention. Hermit Warbler and Townsend's Warbler readily hybridize where their ranges overlap, so photos or careful notes regarding plumage would help with the identification. (Nick Pulcinella)



**Hermit Warbler.** Mt. Lemmon, Arizona 8/17/2015. (Wayne Laubscher)

### 7 (tie). Northern Lapwing (11)

The **Northern Lapwing** (*Vanellus vanellus*), a highly migratory Eurasian plover, is long overdue in Pennsylvania. There are several records from New Jersey, Delaware, New York, Ohio, and Maryland. The Maryland bird was only about 20 miles south of the Pennsylvania state line. Nearby records range from November to January.

This species has habitat preferences similar to that of Killdeer and should be looked for wherever Killdeer occur. Identification of this large, attractive, and very distinctive plover should not be difficult. (Nick Pulcinella)

### 7 (tie). Smith's Longspur (11)

An attractive yet enigmatic and fairly range-restricted species, **Smith's Longspur** (*Calcarius pictus*) received eleven votes, good for a tie for seventh place. This species breeds in the high arctic regions of Canada and Alaska, and winters exclusively in a small area of the eastern Great Plains. It comes as a mild surprise that Smith's Longspur has never been recorded in Pennsylvania given its regularity during spring migration in Ohio. There, flocks of multiple birds can be found in April in most years, with exceptional counts of nearly 100 birds in the past ten years! While these larger flocks are restricted to very furthest western Ohio, there is also a sprinkling of records of single birds further east in the state, closer to the Pennsylvania border.



**Smith's Longspur.** Shenandoah Valley Airport, Augusta, Virginia 3/1/2015. (Alex Lamoreaux)

In addition to their regular spring migration coming moderately close to western Pennsylvania, Smith's Longspur is also a rare but regular vagrant to the East Coast. Of note in nearby states, New York has had recent records in 2017, 2015, and 2007; New Jersey in 2014; Massachusetts in 2014 and 2016; and Virginia in 2015. In contrast to the Ohio birds, these records generally, but not entirely, represent wintering birds. In all seasons, they appear to be likely to be found in mixed flocks with Lapland Longspurs and/or Horned Larks in open fields or other barren habitats.

While adult males of this species are distinctive in spring in their bright orange alternate plumage, they are quite drab and nondescript in all other plumages and careful separation from other longspur species is necessary. Agricultural areas in the western half of Pennsylvania in April, as well as any barren landscape in winter with Horned Lark and Lapland Longspur likely offer the best chance of locating a potential state first. (Eric Zawatski)



**Northern Lapwing.** New Egypt, New Jersey 3/3/2013. (Nick Pulcinella)

**9. Broad-tailed Hummingbird (8)**

The **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** (*Selasphorus platycercus*) is a common nester from Wyoming south through Guatemala. This medium-sized *Selasphorus* species has a long tail and a straight black bill. Adult males have a rose/red iridescent gorget and are known for their loud buzzy trills made during their territorial displays. Adult females, unlike those of many other hummingbird species, may also show several rose/red marks in their throat. Because it's a *Selasphorus*, it shows rufous along its flanks and on the base of its tail, which is often more easily seen in the female than the male.

Although Broad-tailed Hummingbirds primarily winter in Mexico, they are often found along the Gulf Coast in the cold months. But as vagrants, especially during their migration period, they've been documented in many states including Tennessee and Oklahoma and further east in New Jersey and Delaware. To positively identify this hummingbird out of its normal range, it must be looked at very closely. However, it is a species expected to soon be found in Pennsylvania, although it may take a licensed hummingbird bander to positively identify it. (*Arlene Koch*)



**Broad-tailed Hummingbird.** Madera Canyon, Arizona 3/12/2014. (Jeffrey Hall)

**9. (tie) Reddish Egret (8)**



**Reddish Egret (Ad.).** Aransas NWR, Texas 3/21/2009. (Jeffrey Hall)

The **Reddish Egret** (*Egretta rufescens*) came very close to not qualifying for this exercise. An immature bird seen for one day only by an observer at Conneaut Harbor, Ohio 5 June 2008, just a couple miles from Erie County, was accepted as Ohio's first record. A

second Ohio record occurred near Columbus in 2014. As expected, however, most records in the northeastern United States are coastal, with eBird reports from New York (1991), New Jersey (2012, 2016), Delaware (1991, 1993, 2018), and Maryland (2015, 2020).

In the eastern United States, Reddish Egret is an uncommon nester of coastal Florida and the Gulf Coast. As with other herons and egrets, some birds wander north after nesting season or as non-breeding immatures. Such records are numerous as far north as Nags Head, North Carolina, but are rare in Virginia and northward.

This species received fairly strong support in the current poll (8/32), finishing in a tie for ninth, and also in the 2003 poll. Identification is not especially difficult, but it could be easily overlooked where not expected. In Pennsylvania, Reddish Egret seems most likely on the lower Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers in summer and early fall. (*Greg Grove*)



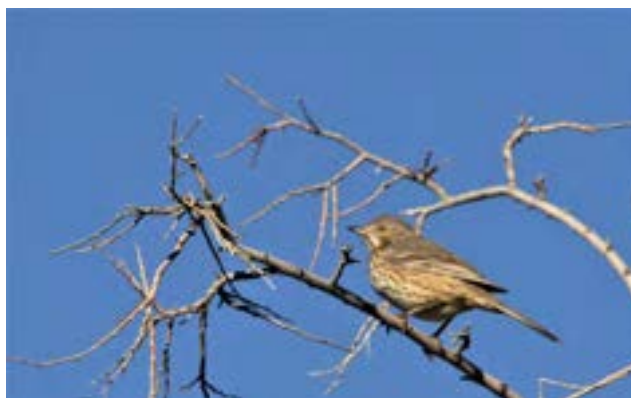
**Reddish Egret (Imm.)** Grand Turk, Turk and Caicos Islands 8/5/2015. (Rob Dickerson)

**9. (tie) Sage Thrasher (8)**

**Sage Thrasher** (*Oreoscoptes montanus*) is a bird of the interior western plains, nesting east as far as Colorado and Wyoming, and wintering in the southwest and Mexico. They have some history of vagrancy to the eastern United States and Canada. From eBird, there are at least seven records in southern Ontario (1965-2012). Towards the coast, New York has two records (2014, 2020), and Delaware (1985) and New Jersey (2009) one each.

With their grey upper parts, they are fairly readily distinguished from Brown Thrasher but their ground-loving, skulking habits may hamper detection. Their grey plumage and long tail may also cause to be passed off as Northern Mockingbird.

They seem most likely to be found in relatively open spaces rather than heavily forested, mountainous counties. Of 12 records referred to above, there are two distinct clusters of occurrence in time. Five records are from May and six from the fall, September-November; there is one February record. (*Greg Grove*)



**Sage Thrasher.** Catalina State Park, Arizona 12/24/2011. (Jeffrey Hall)



## 9. (tie) Virginia's Warbler (8)

Receiving eight votes, good enough to tie for tenth place, **Virginia's Warbler** (*Leiothlypis virginiae*) was viewed by many as one of the more likely new additions to the Pennsylvania list. This tiny warbler breeds across the American southwest and is a short distance migrant to its wintering grounds in western Mexico. Despite not being found close to Pennsylvania and not having the long-distance migratory patterns of some of the more expected western vagrants, occurrences for this species are not unheard of on the East coast. There are five records from border states, including three from New York (2012, twice in 2016), one from Maryland (2012), and a record from the West Virginia panhandle (2007) less than 25 miles from the Pennsylvania border. Records from New England and eastern Canada, including one from Newfoundland (2013), highlight this species capacity for vagrancy.

As with other western warblers in Pennsylvania (ex. MacGillivray's, Townsend's, Black-throated Gray) and other East coast locations, the most likely time to turn up a Virginia's Warbler in the state is in the late fall into the early winter. This species could appear anywhere with good brushy habitat but is probably more likely in the southeast corner of the state where the winters are milder and there is more birder coverage. My personal prediction is for one to be found at the Northeast Philadelphia WTP in November. Possible identification problems could arise with the similar Nashville Warbler, but good looks and photos should be enough to resolve any identification confusion. (*Carl Engstrom*)

### Additional Species receiving at least three votes

#### Fulvous-Whistling Duck (7)



**Fulvous Whistling-Duck.** Brazos Bend State Park, Texas  
12/22/2010. (Jeffrey Hall)

**Fulvous Whistling-Duck** (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) just missed Top Ten status in the 2003 survey, and the same is true in the current survey. Compared to many candidate species, Fulvous Whistling-Duck has a rather strong record of vagrancy to our neighboring states and Ontario, with at least 30 eBird reports. It seems likely this species has already visited the state; in fact, there are two hypothetical records from the 1970s - one each in York and Lancaster, the latter apparently photographed but that evidence no longer exists (*Birds of Pennsylvania*, McWilliams and Brauning 2000); in any case there was speculation, as always with unusual waterfowl, that the birds were merely escapees. Most existing records in neighboring states occurred prior to 2000; in fact, many are from the 1960s and 70s. This may reflect a declining population from which vagrants may be drawn; or perhaps, that fewer are kept by waterfowl collectors, with resultantly fewer escapees and thus reports from the field of possible vagrants. Only three eBird reports are from later than 2000 (all 2004-06).

Maryland has at least ten eBird records, but none since 1993. New Jersey has at least five, most recently in 2004, including one in 1965 from Trenton, just across the Delaware River from Pennsylvania. Delaware, New York, Ohio, and southern Ontario all have multiple records.

Most records cluster in March-May or late fall, mainly November. Interestingly, though with the caveat of small sample size, most records to our west (Ohio and Ontario) have occurred in spring whereas records to our east and southeast tend to occur in late fall. This dichotomy in pattern of occurrence suggests two routes of vagrancy - one up the east coast and one the Mississippi flyway. It also hints that most records are indeed of wild origin because we might expect escaped birds to occur randomly in location and time.

This species has a limited range in the United States, nesting mainly along the western Gulf Coast, reaching the northern edge of its range there. Given the occurrence patterns described above, it seems that late fall on the lower Susquehanna might provide the best opportunity to find, but that must be tempered by the apparent population decline in recent decades. (*Greg Grove*)

#### Garganey (6)

**Garganey** (*Spatula querquedula*) breeds over most of northern Eurasia and winters in India and sub-Saharan Africa. It is highly migratory with vagrancy patterns on both North America coasts, but has also occurred in several inland states. With a few exceptions, east coast records are predominately in spring (March into early June).

Garganey has occurred nearby in New Jersey (twice), Delaware, New York, Ohio, and Ontario, and seems overdue in Pennsylvania. Similar in habits to Blue-winged Teal, this small teal prefers to conceal itself within reeds and marsh grasses. Identification of males in any plumage should not be a problem because of the wide, white eye stripe. Females closely resemble female Green-winged Teals in size and shape, with subtle plumage differences.

Look for Garganey anywhere in the state, especially in ponds and marshes where Blue-winged Teal gather. (*Nick Pulcinella*)

#### Clark's Grebe (5)

**Clark's Grebe** (*Aechmophorus clarkii*) was split from Western Grebe as a separate species in 1985. Both species are primarily birds of the west, nesting as far east as Nebraska and the Dakotas. There is a strong resemblance between the two, with the primary field distinction being facial pattern, something not conspicuous at a distance.

Clark's Grebe has a limited history of eastern vagrancy. The only record in a neighboring state is of one in upstate New York in February 2017. There are two reports from Maine, including a recent one in August 2020. Virginia has a report from 2003. On the other hand, records of Western Grebe in the east are numerous, both at the coast and on Lakes Ontario and Erie. Is it possible that some of these Western Grebe reports were in fact Clark's? Probably a few but seemingly likely not the majority. With such a scant number of established eastern records, Clark's Grebe seems quite a long shot here; nevertheless, it received five votes.

We can presumably use Western Grebe vagrancy patterns to predict where and when Clark's might be found in Pennsylvania. Most records of Western are in winter with some into late spring. Summer records of Western are few, thus we should look for Clark's in Erie in winter/spring, and secondarily, perhaps, the lower Delaware River. It should be noted, however, that three of four Pennsylvania records of Western Grebe are from central Pennsylvania. (*Greg Grove*)

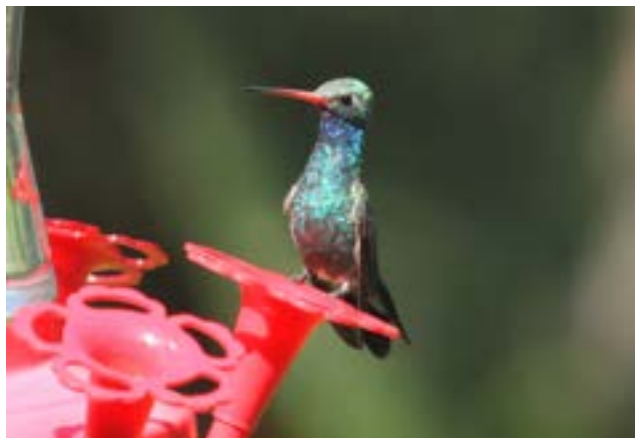


**Clark's Grebe.** Bosque del Apache NWR, New Mexico  
6/28/2008. (Jeffrey Hall)

### Broad-billed Hummingbird (5)

The **Broad-billed Hummingbird** (*Cynanthus latirostris*) breeds in desert scrub, washes, and riparian areas of the extreme Southwest down into Central America. Adult males are easily identified by a green body, long bright and broad reddish bill, and blue gorget. The females and immatures are light gray on the front and green on the back, and their bill is blackish with an orange/red blush on the lower mandible and at the base of the upper mandible. This small to medium sized hummingbird constantly flicks its tail while hovering and/or feeding.

Although Broad-billed Hummingbirds are indigenous to warm southwestern climates, migrant stragglers have been documented in more than 30 states, from Oregon across to Iowa and New York, up into Michigan, and also in Nova Scotia. This species will undoubtedly be found somewhere in Pennsylvania, probably during fall migration time. (Arlene Koch)



**Broad-billed Hummingbird.** Madera Canyon, Arizona  
8/16/2015. (Wayne Laubscher)

### Wood Sandpiper (3)

The **Wood Sandpiper** (*Tringa glareola*) is a highly migratory wader that breeds in Eurasia and winters in sub-Saharan Africa, southern Asia, and Australia. It occurs regularly in Alaska, and there is an infrequent but documented vagrancy pattern in eastern North America. It has occurred nearby in New Jersey, Delaware, New York, and Rhode Island. Records have occurred in May and October-November. There was an unusual *Tringa* in Delaware Co. in November 1997 that may have been this species (Pulcinella, N. 1997. An unusual *Tringa* in Delaware County. *Pennsylvania Birds* V11:4 p. 227.)

It can occur anywhere in the state where shorebirds gather. This species most closely resembles a Lesser Yellowlegs and particular attention should be focused on wing length of standing birds. Wood Sandpiper has a blunt-end appearance while Lesser Yellowlegs is longer-winged. (Nick Pulcinella)

### Little Stint (4)

This Eurasian peep is a rare vagrant to northeastern North America. In our neighboring states, New York has reports of **Little Stint** (*Calidris minuta*) from 1983, 1987, and 2007; New Jersey from 1999, 2003, and 2020; Delaware 1996; and Maryland 1987. Note there are few recent records. There are another half dozen or more reports in New England and eastern Canada. All of the aforementioned records cluster in July-September.

Little Stint (and Red-necked) will most likely be found in summer at Presque Isle S.P. or at shorebird hotspots in the southeast. Proving the case will be a challenge, and not just between the two stints species, but sorting out from other peeps, likely to out-number any stray stint. Adults are somewhat distinctive, but nevertheless small and not easily observed in detail; juveniles will be an even tougher problem, with the two stints not easily separable. And of course, how many of us think "stint" when we are trying to see distinguishing features on small, distant shorebirds. (Greg Grove)

### Red-necked Stint (5)

**Red-necked Stint** (*Calidris ruficollis*) is long overdue in Pennsylvania. This highly migratory shorebird from Eurasia has a well-documented pattern of visiting eastern states in May and from late-June through November. Red-necks have occurred multiple times in New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, New York, and Ohio. Red-necked Stint migrates south in early June and it is during this time that identification should not be difficult. Adults in June still show a large amount of reddish on the neck and head. As the fall migration progresses into October-November, adults begin to lose their redness and dull plumaged juvenile birds join the mix. (Nick Pulcinella)

### Ivory Gull (6)

The first sentence of Nick Pulcinella's 2003 summary on **Ivory Gull** (*Pagophila eburnea*) is worth repeating: "There is something about this species that conjures up fantasies that are nearly mythical". Ivory Gull was not far out of the top ten in 2003; and the same is true again, with this far-northern, all-white gull receiving six votes. The desire to see an Ivory Gull (without going to the Arctic) may supersede the actual likelihood of seeing one in Pennsylvania, and thereby optimistically influence voting.

Residents of the Arctic, Ivory Gulls do occasionally wander south, even as far as the United States. Giving encouragement to Pennsylvania birders are the more than one dozen records each in New York and southern Ontario. However, the majority of those reports are still a long way from our state - the upper Champlain Valley or the north shore of Lake Ontario, a long way from Lake Erie. Nevertheless, there are New York records from the lower Hudson River valley (1995, 2007) and Long Island (1976). New Jersey has several old accepted records, as far back as 1940, and most recently at Cape May 2009. Ohio has one record nearby, in Cleveland 1975 and relatively recently in Columbus 2016.

Nearly all strays to our neighboring regions have occurred November-February; and given the preponderance of Great Lake records, it would seem that winter on the lake shore in Erie County would be the place to look. Dress warm! (Greg Grove)

### Bridled Tern (3)

The **Bridled Tern** (*Onychoprion anaethetus*) is strictly pelagic, with a pantropical distribution, coming to land only to nest,



**Ivory Gull.** Cape May, New Jersey 11/29/2009. (Wayne Laubscher)

spending the rest of their lives in the open ocean. The nearest Bridled Terns to Pennsylvania likely breed in the Bahamas and Greater Antilles, then disperse into the Gulf Stream off the coast of the southeastern United States. While sharing a similar life history and range with their congener and quintessential hurricane bird Sooty Tern, Bridled Tern has yet to be documented in Pennsylvania. This likely owes to differences in their behavior, as Sooty Terns spend almost all of their time at sea on the wing, rarely alighting and even sleeping in flight using unihemispheric slow-wave sleep. This leaves them susceptible to the strong directional winds of tropical cyclones, whereas Bridled Terns often perch on floating debris and sargassum on the water surface, and therefore are far more resistant to being storm blown.

As a result, there are few well documented records of Bridled Tern from land in the Northeast, with most of those coming in the wake of Hurricane Irene in 2011, and all from the immediate coast. While it may seem impossible for a Bridled Tern to make it across the Pennsylvania border, there are a few documented records of this species well inland in the middle of the country after strong hurricanes (i.e., Category 4-5 hurricanes), so a Pennsylvania Bridled Tern may require the “perfect storm”. The most plausible location in Pennsylvania seems to be the lower Delaware River after a strong storm that tracks just west of the Delaware Bay.

Great attention to detail and some documentation (both often difficult in the middle of a storm!) will be needed with this species given its rarity and similarity to Sooty Tern. Bridled Terns are relatively pale above, appearing brown as opposed to the jet black of Sooty Terns, have paler undersides to their primaries, extensive white in the tail, and more extensive white on the forecrown and crown in all plumages. Juveniles of the two species are easier to differentiate, with juvenile Sooty Terns nearly completely sooty black, and juvenile Bridleds more closely resembling the adults, white below and brown on the wings and mantle. (Eric Zawatski)

#### **Little Egret (5)**

**Little Egret** (*Egretta garzetta*) is an Old-World species with an increasing pattern of vagrancy (or detection) to northeastern North America; most records are from the last 15 years. Close to Pennsylvania, Delaware has records in April 1999, May 2011, May 2017, and July 2017; New Jersey in May 2017; and New York in May 2015 and July 2017. Given similar timing, it seems possible that a couple of these reports refer to the same bird. Most other reports are from maritime Canada and coastal New England; furthest south was one from the Outer Banks, North Carolina.

Given the almost complete coastal element in the reports mentioned, Pennsylvania is at a disadvantage in attracting a Little Egret. However, our part of the lower Delaware River is not far from coastal Delaware and thus seems the place to hope for a Little

Egret. Many North American records are from spring, when Little Egret is in breeding plumage and most readily (if still not necessarily easily) separable from the similar Snowy Egret. (Greg Grove)



**Little Egret.** Bombay Hook NWR, Delaware 6/12/2017. (Pat Williams)

#### **White-tailed Kite (5)**

One of the most regal and elegant of North American raptors, the **White-tailed Kite** (*Elanus leucurus*) is a resident of grasslands, marshes, and open savannas throughout Central and South America. This species reaches the northern limits of its range in the United States, where they are fairly common in south Texas, south Florida, and along the West Coast. While White-tailed Kites struggled greatly in the early 20th century owing to habitat loss and human persecution, their numbers have since rebounded and are still on the upswing, with recent attempts to expand into the central United States.

While primarily a year-round resident through their entire range and not a well-known or established vagrant species, there is however some small precedent for vagrancy into the Northeast and nearby states. Just last year, Ohio had their first state record, Virginia had their third state record in 2015, and in 2010 both New Jersey and Connecticut had single records, potentially of the same individual. Pennsylvania has no shortage of open areas and agricultural lands, so a potential vagrant could conceivably show up anywhere in the state. One thing that can aid in detection is that White-tailed Kites are by nature conspicuous birds, usually perched high in the open or hovering over a field. This coupled with their bright and distinctive plumage make them relatively easy to locate, which could one day be to the benefit of a lucky birder who first comes across one in Pennsylvania. (Eric Zawatski)

#### **Burrowing Owl (6)**

When we think of vagrancy among birds, owls are certainly not a group that comes immediately to mind. This seems especially true for a species like **Burrowing Owl** (*Athene cunicularia*), primarily a resident of western North America. But, of course, a subspecies of Burrowing Owl is resident in Florida and some Caribbean Islands, including Cuba, a region from which Burrowing Owls have presumably occasionally wandered to northeastern North America.

New York has three eBird records, including one in Queens 2019; Bombay Hook in Delaware hosted one in April 2015; and in May 2020 one was found on the Chesapeake Bay in southern Maryland. Amazingly, at least three Burrowing Owls have gotten as far north as interior Quebec, hundreds of kilometers north of Ottawa and Montreal.

Most northeast records have occurred April-June, but others are scattered throughout the year. Given the preference for open

habitat and the tendency of many reports, including several in New England and Maritime Canada, to be coastal, Pennsylvania's first Burrowing Owl seems most likely to be found in open areas of the southeast. (Greg Grove)



**Burrowing Owl.** Tucson, Arizona 8/12/2015. (Wayne Laubscher)

### **Cassin's Kingbird (6)**

The duskier cousin of the Western Kingbird, the **Cassin's Kingbird** (*Tyrannus vociferans*) is a yellow-bellied kingbird that normally nests from eastern Montana south through central Mexico, with a side population nesting in the Central Valley of California. While many of the birds in southern Mexico may be resident, those in northern Mexico and the United States migrate south each winter. Vagrants have shown up at migrant traps along coastlines throughout the northeast. Sometimes the birds show up in spring and summer, when records are mostly along the Great Lakes. However, the majority of the eastern records are in the fall, and by far the most likely along the Atlantic Coast. Reports from Cape May to Massachusetts are concentrated in October and November.

With those patterns as a guide, the best bets for finding this bird in Pennsylvania would be spring at Presque Isle or later fall near the lower Delaware River. The main identification challenge is separation from the Western Kingbird, mainly based on Cassin's darker head, more contrastingly pale moustache, and the lack of white outer tail feathers. Since these differences are a matter of degree and influenced by lighting, good quality photographs may be required to confirm ID. Vocalizations are also fairly similar to Western, but clear audio recordings can help to distinguish the two as well. (Joe Gyekis)

### **Couch's Kingbird (3)**

The **Couch's Kingbird** (*Tyrannus couchii*) is a Tropical Kingbird look-alike with a much smaller range in Latin America, but a similar pattern of vagrancy. This species is found year-round in the Yucatan peninsula, but breeds along the Gulf Coast up into central Texas. Most birds in the northern portion of the range migrate down into the Gulf coastal plain of Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala for the winter. However, some migrate the wrong direction, arriving in the fall and winter scattered across the continent from California to the Great Lakes and New England. Spring vagrancy is less frequent, mostly concentrated around the Gulf Coast. A fall record in Massachusetts in September 2001 and a winter 2014-2015 record in New York City might have passed over Pennsylvania if they flew straight from Texas. Most tantalizing, a late November 2014 bird north of Cumberland, Maryland, was within 2 miles of Pennsylvania for about 2 weeks.

If you ever bump into a large yellow-bellied kingbird, immediately start the audio recording function on your cell phone, because a few peeps might be the difference between a first state record and settling for a Tropical/Couch's designation. Silent birds can sometimes be identified with good photos showing the shorter, heavier bill of the *couchii*. Timothy Brush's Birds of the World account notes, "The slowly repeated "pit" (or "kip") and "pitweeewer" of Couch's are easily distinguishable from the rapidly repeated, metallic-sounding "pit" calls of Tropical Kingbird." The bird is most likely to show up where coastal barriers stop a long-flying bird, so like many other extreme vagrants, the Pennsylvania segment of the Erie lakeshore deserves as much attention as we can give it. They prefer open habitat like our usual kingbirds. (Joe Gyekis)

### **Yellow-green Vireo (4)**

The **Yellow-green Vireo** (*Vireo flavoviridis*) is a close relative of Red-eyed Vireo, but as the name suggests, is yellower and greener. It nests from Mexico to Panama and winters from Colombia to Bolivia. There's an extensive pattern of vagrancy across the southern United States, and up both the Pacific and Atlantic Coasts. The records in the northeast have generally occurred at banding stations in coastal scrubby habitat in September and October, recently making appearances in the mist nets in several consecutive years at South Cape May Meadows.

Separating Yellow-green from Red-eyed Vireo is challenging, especially because some lighting conditions (such as a bird perched in the shade beside a sunlit leaf) can make color interpretation challenging. The paler facial pattern and extra massive beak coupled with the bright yellow flanks and greener back should be noticeable in good viewing conditions. However, since these identifiers are all a matter of degree, it would be a tough sell for the ornithological records committee if only a written description was offered. If a misaligned fall migrant decided to sing, the song sounds like House Sparrow notes forced into a vireo pattern. Interestingly, fairly distinct populations within this species are candidates for a future split, which could complicate species-level identifications further. (Joe Gyekis)

### **Fieldfare (4)**

**Fieldfare** (*Turdus pilaris*) is a large Old-World thrush, of which there are few North American records, mostly in northeastern Canada. Closer to Pennsylvania, single records are from New York (1973), Delaware (1969), and southern Ontario (1975). In New England, Massachusetts has two records (1986, 2013) and Maine one (2017). Fieldfare vagrants originate from Eurasia and Greenland; their nesting range spans Scandinavia and Russia and they winter as far south as extreme northern Africa.

Most records in North America are from mid-winter through spring. They are fairly distinctive, featuring much grey in their plumage. One could probably show up anywhere in the state, but seem most likely to be found in spring in heavily birded southeastern Pennsylvania. (Greg Grove)

### **White Wagtail (3)**

There are no records in any neighboring state of the long-tailed, mostly Eurasian **White Wagtail** (*Motacilla alba*), and with very few anywhere in eastern North America, this species seems one of the more unlikely among those receiving multiple votes to actually show-up in Pennsylvania. Nearest records in eBird are one in New Hampshire in 2016 (the most recent), one in southeastern Michigan, two in North Carolina, and two in Quebec. Nesting is in eastern Russia, western Alaska (rare), and Greenland and Iceland, the latter two being the likely origin, we may speculate, of eastern North American vagrants.

This is a rather distinctive species that should stand out as something "different" when found, even if the finder can not

immediately put a name to the bird without consulting a field guide. The few eastern United States eBird records mentioned above cluster in April-May and October-November. (*Greg Grove*)

### Black-throated Sparrow (3)

The handsome and distinctive **Black-throated Sparrow** (*Amphispiza bilineata*) is a resident of dry southwestern United States and Mexico, and has only a weak record of vagrancy to the northeast. Three times, however, it has come close to Pennsylvania: at Cherry Hill, New Jersey 1992 (likely flying over Pennsylvania en route), in Ontario 2009 directly across Lake Erie from Presque Isle SP, and east of Cleveland 1998. In addition, they have been found in New Jersey (1974) and twice in Virginia (1971, 1967); the most recent northeast report was from Toronto in November 2019.

There is little to go on for predicting where and when a Black-throated Sparrow might appear in Pennsylvania, but the heavily birded southeast and Erie are the logical suggestions. Of the seven reports mentioned above, five occurred in November-January and two in summer. (*Greg Grove*)

### Boat-tailed Grackle (7)

A common, widely distributed resident of the Eastern seaboard, **Boat-tailed Grackle** (*Quiscalus major*) shows almost no vagrancy! Almost no records of this large, distinctive species have been documented away from the coast, except in Georgia. So, even though the Boat-tailed Grackle is relatively common year-round along the Delaware Bay in New Jersey, just 30 miles from our state line, not a single verifiable report has come from the most heavily birded region of Pennsylvania! “Verifiable” is the key. If you search the bird chats and pages, you’ll find frequent inquiries about this species, mistaken for the abundant Common Grackle. This is one of three Top Ten vote-getters from the 2003 survey still to be documented in Pennsylvania.

Boat-tailed Grackles do move south during the winter, although the extent of such movements isn’t well understood. But the more likely event that would bring a Boat-tailed Grackle wandering into Pennsylvania: Dispersal. Young birds, particularly males, disperse from their natal area in search of their own territory. So, *Lancaster, Delaware, and Philadelphia* residents – be on the lookout in late summer for that young male wandering up the Delaware or Susquehanna Rivers. This may be the species with a large population closest to Pennsylvania that has not yet been documented here - it will happen eventually! But a word of caution: the widely distributed western counterpart is the Great-tailed Grackle, a “partial migrant” across the western states. If migratory status is such an important factor in vagrancy, which will be seen here sooner – the closer stay-at-home Boat-tailed or the migratory Great-tailed Grackle? Let the games begin! (*Dan Brauning*)



**Boat-tailed Grackle.** Ocean City, Maryland 7/3/2019. (Barry Blust)

### Hooded Oriole (4)

Only receiving four votes, **Hooded Oriole** (*Icterus cucullatus*) is viewed as a long shot to be recorded within the state. Given that Pennsylvania already has some mind-boggling oriole species on its state list (Scott’s, Black-backed, and a bird in December 2019 in *Juniata* that was either Hooded or Orchard), it does seem plausible that one day one could be confirmed here. There is only one record for this species from border states, an adult male in Ohio (April 2020), a bird re-found in Michigan a few days later (also a state first). Unlike most other western passerine vagrants, there is no real tendency for this species to be found in November or December. Interestingly, most records east of the Mississippi are from April-May of birds that likely tracked too far east on their spring migration paths.

Detection rates for this species are aided by the fact that it is such a striking bird and has been known to visit oranges and jelly put out for migrating Baltimore Orioles. As a result, one could be discovered by even the most casual of birders just photographing orioles in their backyard. An adult male Hooded Oriole would pose no identification problems, but some confusion could arise around the identity of female or immature birds, especially with separation from Orchard Oriole. The state first is most likely to be found in April after someone posts photos to Facebook celebrating the return of “Baltimore” orioles to their backyard orange and jelly feeder setup. (*Carl Engstrom*)

**List of respondents:** Andy Keister, Tim Becker, Bill Etter, Eric Zawatski, Carl Engstrom, Jonathan Heller, Holger Pflücke, Ken Rieker, Dick Williams, Chad Kauffman, Michael David, Deb Grove, Marg Higbee, Jeff/Chris/Rebecca Payne, Zachary Millen, Dan Brauning, George Armistead, Mike Fialkovich, Ross Gallardy, Holly Merker, Nick Pulcinella, Ian Gardner, Dave DeReamus, Bobby Brown, Greg Grove, Eric Witmer, Sheryl Johnson, Adrian Binns, Billy Weber, Joe Gyekis, Jason Horn, and Ted Nichols II.

**Table 4 Species named by 3-7 respondents in 2020 survey**

	Votes
Fulvous-Whistling Duck	7
Boat-tailed Grackle	7
Garganey	6
Ivory Gull	6
Burrowing Owl	6
Cassin’s Kingbird	6
Clark’s Grebe	5
Broad-billed Hummingbird	5
Red-necked Stint	5
Little Egret	5
White-tailed Kite	5
Fieldfare	5
Little Stint	4
Yellow-green Vireo	4
Hooded Oriole	4
Wood Sandpiper	3
Bridled Tern	3
Couch’s Kingbird	3
White Wagtail	3
Black-throated Sparrow	3

**Table 5. Species named by only one or two respondents in 2020 survey**

	Votes		
Gray-headed Swampen	1	Sooty Shearwater	1
Smew	1	Gray Heron	2
Green-breasted Mango	1	Ferruginous Hawk	2
Green Violetear	1	Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher	1
Vaux Swift	1	Black Phoebe	1
White-collared Swift	1	Western Wood-Pewee	1
Lesser Nighthawk	2	Gray Flycatcher	1
Common Crane	1	Dusky Flycatcher	1
Whooping Crane	1	Canada Jay	1
Greenshank	1	Brown-chested Martin	2
Lesser Sand Plover	1	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	1
Common Ringed Plover	1	Sprague's Pipit	2
Terek Sandpiper	1	Chestnut-collared Longspur	2
Bar-tailed Godwit	2	Cassin's Sparrow	1
Razorbill	2	Brewer's Sparrow	1
Black-tailed Gull	2	Cassin's Finch	1
Western Gull	1	Bronzed Cowbird	1
Glaucous-winged Gull	1	Great-tailed Grackle	1
Yellow-legged Gull	1	Grace's Warbler	2
Brown Noddy	1	Painted Redstart	1
White-faced Storm Petrel	1	Hepatic Tanager	1

My approach followed the data, along the lines of the October 2020 article, "Patterns and Probability of bird detection." The ideas are simple: common birds are more likely to be found closer to where they naturally occur; migratory species are more likely to wander out of range, particularly if their range extends north of the state; and a species' innate "detectability" - the most interesting feature, affects their observation! "Detectability" of a species includes aspects of identification, size, habitats, and behavior, although regrettably I reduced that to just the species' size. In this era of "big data", widely-available sources cover these ideas (primarily Partners in Flight and "State of the Birds" summaries) for the 400+ land birds categorized.

The following features were compiled, with categorical values shown: Migratory Class (MC, 1,2); Population Size (PS, 1-10); Birds' Size Class (SC, 1-3); Minimum Distance to established population (MD, 1-5).

To test the importance of these variables, the number of actual occurrences of rare species previously detected were compared with these features using stepwise regression, and an equation developed to project the "likelihood" of other North American land birds being observed in Pennsylvania.

The equation: Likelihood of Occurring in PA = 2.25\*MC + 0.4\*MC\*PS - MD .

To explain: "migratory class" influences a bird's chances of wandering into the state, along with the size of the population, and the farther away, the less likely! Obvious, eh? The "likelihood" scores of songbirds not yet reported in PA ranged from 0 to 8.5. The result isn't great at predicting the number of "casual" and "accidental" bird observations here, but that's different than a first-time occurrence! And, 2 of the past 4 songbirds added to the state list (Varied Bunting and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch) were nowhere near predicted, so I wouldn't put money on this list... But more refinement could provide better results and waterbird data are now available. So, I tried to "follow-the-data", to see where it would lead.

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Dan Brauning

**Twenty-sixth Report of the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**  
**2019 Records**  
**February 2021**  
**Mike Fialkovich for the Committee**

The Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (hereafter "PORC" or "the committee") evaluates and archives documentation it receives of any species or recognizable form that is on the official Review List for Pennsylvania. In addition, the committee reviews documentation for species or subspecies that were previously unrecorded in the Commonwealth. This report covers submissions for 2019 that include 67 records of 43 species. The 56 accepted records represented an 84% acceptance rate. Reports were received from 28 counties.

Highlights include: Several Black-bellied Whistling Duck submissions, first state record of Common Shelduck, second and third state records of Brown Booby, several records of Mississippi Kite, third record of Anna's Hummingbird, first state record for Corn Crane and Snail Kite, three records of Varied Thrush, a belated report of Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, Western Meadowlark and Harris's Sparrow.

PORC encourages observers to document their sightings with photos, video, or audio whenever possible. Even poor photos can be diagnostic and elevate a report from Class III to Class I. However, written documentation is also extremely important, as there have been instances where a photograph was not diagnostic, but the report was still accepted as a Class III (sight record) based on the supporting information of the observer's written account.

Documentation can be submitted on the PORC section of the PSO Website at this address <http://pabirds.org/records/> Click on **Submit A Report**.

#### **The Committee**

Committee Members and terms for 2019 are as follows:

Holly Merker – Chair, second term (2018-2021)  
George Armistead – first term (2018-2022)  
Dave DeReamus – third term (2016-2019)  
Devich Farbotnik – third term (2016-2019)  
Mike Fialkovich – third term (2016-2019)  
Ian Gardner – Non-voting Secretary (2015 – 2019)  
Greg Grove – first term (2018–2021)  
Billy Weber – second term (2019-2021)

The committee meets face to face annually to discuss committee activities, procedures, second round voting, etc. Ongoing business is covered through email exchanges throughout the year as necessary.

#### **Committee News**

While this report covers 2019 records, there were changes to committee members in 2020 that I would like to mention in this report.

In January 2020 Dave DeReamus rotated off the committee after eight years of service. Dave provided thoughtful analysis to evaluations and his contributions were highly valued. The committee thanks Dave for serving three consecutive terms. He was replaced by David Yeany II from Allegheny County.

Ian Gardner served as Non-voting Secretary since 2015 and decided to leave the committee during in the summer of 2020. Ian maintained the website, organized and sent submissions to the

committee for voting, tabulated the votes and performed numerous other essential duties. The committee thanks Ian for all the work he has done, particularly keeping us on schedule and assisting the incoming secretary during the transition. He was replaced by Tessa Rhinehart from Allegheny County.

#### **Classification of Records**

**Class I:** An accepted record based on an existing identifiable specimen, a diagnostic photograph, or a diagnostic recording. Abbreviations are (P) photograph, (R) sound recording, (V) video clip, (S) specimen.

**Class II:** An accepted sight record written up independently by two or more observers.

**Class III:** An accepted sight record documented by one observer.

**Class IV-A:** A record for which there exists a majority of evidence in support of the observer's identification: the record is probably correct, but not beyond reasonable doubts.

**Class IV-B:** A record for which there exists insufficient evidence for evaluation.

**Class IV-C:** A record for which there exists a majority of evidence in favor of an identification other than what was submitted.

**Class V:** The identification is correct, but the bird represents or may represent an escapee from artificial aviculture or an introduced bird not yet established in Pennsylvania.

**Class I-Pe\*:** A record accepted through the ebird expedited review process.

\*Class I-Pe is new for 2019 and was added to the Bylaws. See the Procedures <<https://pabirds.org/records/index.php/purpose/#procedures>> for an explanation of the new classification.

#### **Format of This Report**

The records in each section are arranged taxonomically following the 2017 American Ornithological Society Check-list of North American Birds. The number in parentheses after the species name represents the number of accepted records, including those in this report, since the establishment of PORC in 1989. A (+) after the number signifies accepted historical records prior to the formation of PORC. Each accepted record includes the location, county and date(s) when known. In some cases, dates are taken from the seasonal reports published in Pennsylvania Birds, and from incidental information gleaned from the PABIRDS email listserv, the Pennsylvania Birders Facebook Group, the PARBA GroupMe text message alert service, and its regional sub-groups and the eBird database. Enclosed in parentheses following the date are the name(s) of the observer(s) who submitted documentation. Following the list of observers is the PORC record number, the record's classification and the votes for/against. Records submitted from previous years are indicated in the description. All photographs, video, and sound recordings are currently being held with the Secretary and archived on the PORC section of the PSO Website.

Abbreviations: N (Number), PB (Pennsylvania Birds), Twp. (Township), V (Volume).

## 2019 ACCEPTED RECORDS

### **Black-bellied Whistling Duck** (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) (18)

A flock of 37 at the Route 54 Wetlands in Turbotville, *Montour* 18 May 2019 (Bobby Brown; 102-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

Eight at Newmanstown, *Lebanon* 20 May 2019 (Jonathan Heller; 102-02-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

Eleven at Leesport, *Berks* 4 July 2019 (David Robson; 102-03-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

One at Central Mountain High School Wetlands, Mill Hall, *Clinton* 12 July 2019 (Brian Schmoke; 102-04-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V33:N3.

Four at John Heinz NWR at Tinicum, *Philadelphia* 21 July 2019 (Martin Dellwo; 102-05-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

It was quite a year for this species in the state.

### **Barnacle Goose** (*Branta leucopsis*) (40)

One at Yardley Corners Pond, *Bucks* 11-12 December 2019 (August Mirabella (p), William Kein (p), Mark Gallagher (p); 115-01-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0.

One at Coatsville Res., *Chester* 1 January 2019 (Joe Sebastiani (p), John Daniel (p); 115-02-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0.

### **Green-winged Teal (Eurasian)** (*Anas crecca crecca*) (36)

A male at Peace Valley Park, *Bucks* 8 February 2019 (August Mirabella (p) 119a-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. The photograph submitted clearly shows the horizontal white line on the side and the lack of a short vertical white stripe on the side of the breast. American Green-winged Teals are also in the photograph for comparison.

### **Common Shelduck** (*Tadorna tadorna*) (1)

One at Plymouth Flats/Hanover Nursery, Route 11 *Luzerne* 16 September 2017 (Rick Koval; 117-01-2017; Class I-P). 6/1. Record submitted 11 March 2019. An adult was photographed and noted to be wary of people. In addition there was no evidence of captivity based on the plumage, lack of a leg band and lack of a clipped toe. Also of note, an individual was photographed earlier in the month in New Hampshire. There are several previous records from Northeastern North America including Newfoundland, Quebec, New Brunswick, New York, Vermont, and Massachusetts. This species was added to the ABA Checklist in 2017. See the 28th ABA Checklist Committee Report in *Birding* Vol. 49, No. 6, December 2017.

### **Harlequin Duck** (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) (35)

An immature male on the Susquehanna River in Williamsport, *Lycoming* 13 November 2019 through the end of the year (Bobby Brown (p); 149-01-2019; Class I-P). 6/0. Photo published in PB V33:N4.

A female or immature at Blawnox, *Allegheny* 16 November 2019 (Michael David (p); 149-02-2019; Class I-P). 6/0.

One on the Susquehanna River at Pittston, *Luzerne* 25-26 November 2019 (Rick Koval (p), Eric Zawatski (p), Jonathan DeBalko (p); 149-03-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0.

### **Barrow's Goldeneye** (*Bucephala islandica*) (16)

A female at Nockamixon SP, *Bucks* 22 January 2019 (August Mirabella (p) 155-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.



Image 1. **Harlequin Duck**, Blawnox, *Allegheny* 16 November 2019. Photo by Michael David.

### **Eared Grebe** (*Podiceps nigricollis*) (97+)

One at Moraine SP, *Butler* 2 March 2019 (Glenn Koppel (p), Mary Alice Koenke, 009-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

One at Presque Isle SP, *Erie* 11 May 2019 (Michael David (p); 009-02-2019; Class I-P). 6/0.



Image 2. **Eared Grebe**, Presque Isle SP, *Erie* 11 May 2019. Photo by Michael David.

### **Anna's Hummingbird** (*Calypte anna*) (3)

One in West Chester, *Chester* 9 November 2019 (Pamela Fisher; 490-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. Not only was this bird photographed, it was also banded, confirming the identification. It was observed and photographed by many. Photo published in PB V33:N4.

### **Corn Crane** (*Crex crex*) (1)

One collected in Honesdale, *Wayne* 1 January 2016 (Benjamin Van Doren; submitted by George Armistead; 233-01-2016; Class I-S). 7/0. Record submitted 4 February 2019. The bird was found by a cat and brought to the owner. The bird did not have any external injuries but was very weak. Efforts to take it to a wildlife rehab center were in progress but the bird died before efforts to save it could be attempted. The specimen is housed at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.

### **King Rail** (*Rallus elegans*) (27)

One at Dixon Meadow Preserve, *Montgomery* 31 August 2019 (Zach Millen (p), Kenneth Rieker, (p), Jason Horn (p), Michael



Rosengarten (p); 235-01-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0. Good photographic documentation of this elusive species was entered into ebird.



Image 3. **Corn Crake** specimen tag showing the collection date and location. Photo courtesy of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia.



Image 4. **Corn Crake** specimen. Photo courtesy of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia.

**Purple Gallinule** (*Porphyrio martinica*) (11)

An immature at John Heinz NWR, *Philadelphia* 16 September 2019 (Michael David (p); 242-01-2019; Class I-P). 6/0.

**Piping Plover** (*Charadrius melodus*) (24+)

Two at Presque Isle SP, *Erie* 1 June 2019 (Eric Zawatski (p), Carl Engstrom; 261-01-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0. A mated pair observed at Gull Point.

Two at Presque Isle SP, *Erie* 1 June 2019 (Eric Zawatski (p), Carl Engstrom; 261-01-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0. A mated pair observed at Gull Point.

Four at Presque Isle SP, *Erie* 16 July 2019 (Justin Berkheimer (p); 261-02-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0. An adult and three juveniles at Gull Point.

**Ruff** (*Philomachus pugnax*) (11+)

One at the Balmer Farm Ponds in Heidelberg Twp., *Lebanon* 23 April 2019 (Ted Nichols II; 321-01-2019; Class III). 6/1.



Image 5. **Purple Gallinule**, John Heinz NWR, *Philadelphia* 16 September 2019. Photo by Michael David.

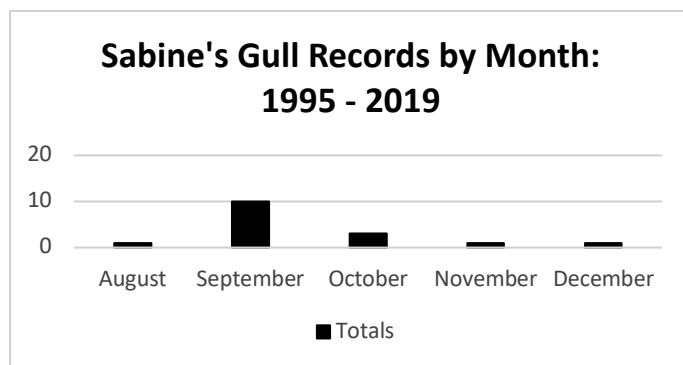
**Franklin's Gull** (*Larus pipixcan*) (21+)

One at Pymatuning SP, *Crawford* 31 May 2019 (Mark Vass (p); 338-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. One in a large flock of Ring-billed Gulls loafing on a breakwater. Several ebird checklists also contained photographs of this individual. Photograph published in PB V33:N2.

One at the Route 15 Overlook, *Lycoming* 4 October 2019 (Bobby Brown (p); 338-02-2019; Class I-P). 6/0. Not an expected rarity on top of a ridge at a hawk watch site, but the Susquehanna River is in the valley below.

**Sabine's Gull** (*Xema sabini*) (17+)

One at the Conejohela Flats, *Lancaster* 2 September 2019 (Zachary Millen (p); 360-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. This record falls right in line as most records of this species are from September. Photo published in PB V33:N4.



**Least Tern** (*Sternula antillarum*) (28)

Two at Marsh Creek SP, *Chester* 15 June 2019 (Michael Hartshorne (p); 372-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

**Pacific Loon** (*Gavia pacifica*) (17)

One at Beltzville SP, *Carbon* 23-26 April 2019 (Billy Weber (p), Bert Filemyr (p); 002a-01-2019; Class I-P). 6/0.

**Wood Stork** (*Mycteria americana*) (10)

One at Haldeman Island, *Dauphin* 29 May 2019 (Clay Lutz (p); 099-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. This is the second year in a row this species was found in *Dauphin*.

One in Jackson Twp., *Luzerne* 22 September 2019 (Annette Parmelee (p); 099-02-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.



Image 6. **Least Tern**, one of two at Marsh Creek SP, *Chester* 15 June 2019. Photo by Michael Hartshorne. The photo shows the yellow bill, black legs and feet and white forehead patch.

**Brown Booby** (*Sula leucogaster*) (3)

One in Easton, *Northampton* 20 August 2019 (Jessie Serry (p); 063-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. A surprising discovery just about four years after the first state record.



Image 8. **Brown Booby**, Easton, *Northampton* 20 August 2019. Photo by Jessie Serry. The bird was discovered resting on a stump along the Delaware River. The mottled breast and gray bill indicates this individual is immature.

One on the Susquehanna River near the Isle of Que, *Northumberland* 6 July 2019 (Jeanetta Wanner (p); 063-02-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0. This bird approached the observer's canoe and followed it for a short distance, allowing photographs to be taken.

**Tricolored Heron** (*Egretta tricolor*) (45)

One at Octoraro Res., *Lancaster* 27 July 2019 (Pamela Fisher (p); 087-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.



Image 7. **Pacific Loon**, Beltzville SP, *Carbon* 26 April 2019. Photo by Bret Filemyr.

**Cattle Egret** (*Bulbicus ibis*) (151)

One at Middle Creek WMA, *Lancaster* 18 May 2019 (Pamela Fisher (p); 089-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

One in Jackson Twp., *Luzerne* 22 September 2019 (Annette Parmelee (p); 099-02-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

**Swallow-tailed Kite** (*Elanoides forficatus*) (30)

One at Trexler Nature Preserve, *Lehigh* 28 August 2019 (Pamela Fisher; 168-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. One of the few occurrences of this species remaining at a location for several days allowing numerous people to observe it.

**Snail Kite** (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) (1)

An immature at Presque Isle SP, *Erie* 22 October 2019 (Connor Vara; 170-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. A stunning first state record. The bird was only seen twice the day it was discovered and never seen again. Photo published on the cover of PB V33:N4.

**Mississippi Kite** (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) (117)

One in Doylestown Twp., *Bucks* 19 June 2019 (Karin Isett; 171-01-2019; Class III). 6/1.

One in Montoursville, *Lycoming* 28 June 2019 (Bobby Brown; 171-02-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. Discovered while the observer was playing tennis! Fortunately a camera was available and good photographs documented the sighting.

One at Chickies Rock County Park, *Lancaster* 20 May 2019 (Meredith Lombard (p); 171-03-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0.



Image 9. **Mississippi Kite**, Chickies Rock County Park, *Lancaster* 20 May 2019. Photo by Meredith Lombard. The banded tail indicates this bird is a sub-adult and the short outer primaries can be clearly seen in the photo.

One in Mehoopany, *Wyoming* 7 September 2019 (David LaVerne (p), David Trently; 171-04-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0. This individual was an immature; excellent photographs on ebird.

One in Bethel Springs, *Delaware* 31 May 2019 (Brian Quindlen (p); 171-05-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0. Another individual well-photographed from various angles showing the gray head, black tail, short outer primaries and white secondaries.

One at Haverford Reserve, *Delaware* 22 May 2019 (Liam Hart (p); 171-06-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0. Another sub-adult with photographic documentation.

**Ash-throated Flycatcher** (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) (8)  
One in Breinigsville, *Lehigh* 17 November 2019 (James Funk; 545-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

**Western Kingbird** (*Tyrannus verticalis*) (31+)  
One at Chestnut Grove Natural Area, Manor Twp., *Lancaster* 4-6 November 2019 (Randall Nett, Pamela Fisher (p), Kim Morelock (p); 557-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

**Loggerhead Shrike** (*Lanius ludovicianus*) (68)  
One in Lock Haven, *Clinton* 1 May 2019 (Brian Schmoke; 699-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. Photograph published in PB V33:N2.

**Varied Thrush** (*Ixoreus naevius*) (28)  
A male in Bethlehem, *Northampton* 26 February and 3 March 2019 (Jeff Hopkins (p), Ian Gardner (p), Bert Filemyr (p); 666-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. Found in a row of ornamental trees in an industrial park, far from the expected woodland habitat. The bird was associating with American Robins. Photo published on the cover of PB V33:N1.

One at Spring Valley Road, *Lancaster* 4-11 December 2019 (Jack Reese, Pamela Fisher (p) (v); 666-02-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

One visiting a feeder at a home near Hills Creek SP, *Tioga* 8 December 2019 (Michael David (p); 666-03-2019; Class I-P). 6/0.



Image 10. **Varied Thrush**, *Tioga* 8 December 2019. Photo by Michael David.

**Green-tailed Towhee** (*Pipilo chlorurus*) (5)  
One at Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust, *Montgomery* 7 December 2019 (Michael David (p); 799-01-2019; Class I-P). 6/0.

**Lark Sparrow** (*Chondestes grammacus*) (25)

One at Pennypack on the Delaware, *Philadelphia* 17 August 2019 (Holger Pflücke (p); 820-01-2019; Class I-Pe). 7/0.

**Harris's Sparrow** (*Zonotrichia querula*) (37+)  
One at Lykens, *Dauphin* 13 February 2019 (Ian Gardner (p); 839-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0. A bird in basic plumage was feeding with a flock of various sparrows



Image 11. **Harris's Sparrow**, Lykens, *Dauphin* 13 February 2019. Photo by Ian Gardner.

**Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch** (*Leucosticte tephrocotis*) (2)  
One visiting a feeder in Kempton, *Berks* 12-19-2009 (Janina Brown (p); 878-01-2009; Class I-P). 6/0. Record submitted 10 February 2020. This surprising discovery was made only recently by a relative of the original observer who is now deceased. Several diagnostic photos were submitted as well as a short video of the bird at a feeder. The bird was present for four days. So this was actually the first state record and the one in *Crawford* in 2018 was the second.



Image 12. **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch**, Kempton, *Berks* 19 December 2009. Photo by Janina Brown. The discovery of this individual establishes this as the first documented state record for Pennsylvania.

**Yellow-headed Blackbird** (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) (51)  
One in Little Britain Twp., *Lancaster* 28 January 2019 (Zachary Millen; 859-01-2019; Class III). 7/0. An adult male in a mixed flock of blackbirds.

**Western Meadowlark** (*Sturnella neglecta*) (6+)  
One in Belleville, *Mifflin* 27 June 2019 (Rob Dickerson (p) (r); 858-01-2019; Class I-R). 7/0. While the photograph is not diagnostic the recording certainly is, so the evaluation of this record is based on the recording. Photo published in PB V33:N3.

**Summer Tanager** (*Piranga rubra*) (46)

A male in Linden, *Lycoming* 1 May 2019 (Mark Lengel; 780-01-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

A first spring male in Montoursville, *Lycoming* 3 May 2019 (Bobby Brown; 780-02-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

A first spring male at a private residence on Park Road, *Chester* 6 May 2019 (Evan Coates; 780-03-2019; Class I-P). 7/0.

**RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED, identification not established.**

(Votes are listed as for/against. A vote of 6/1 or 7/0 is required for acceptance).

**American Oystercatcher** (*Haematopus palliatus*)

One at John Heinz NWR, *Philadelphia* 26 August 2019 (266-01-2019; Class IV-B). 0/7. Observer expressed uncertainty on identification due to a very brief view of bird in flight. The bill was not visible which leaves a large gap in the features of this species. Due to the brief view, uncertainty, and lack of details in the description the committee unanimously agreed the identification of such a rarity requires more than what was provided.

**Yellow Rail** (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*)

One at Lake Somerset, *Somerset* 25 August 2019 (231-01-2019; Class IV-C). 0/7. Committee members noted the description mentioned an unstreaked back which is uncharacteristic of this species, the date is not consistent with the known time this species moves through the state, and the view was apparently brief. Committee members thought this was a misidentification as the observer also mentioned the bird hopping that is inconsistent with the mobility of a rail.

**Parasitic Jaeger** (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)

One at Presque Isle SP, *Erie* 2 September 2019 (333-01-2019; Class IV-A). 5/2. This record went through two rounds of voting. The description submitted led some committee members to vote to accept the record while some thought the distance was too great for a conclusive identification to species.

**Ivory Gull** (*Pagophila eburnea*)

One at Beaver Run Reservoir, *Westmoreland* 18 September 2019 (361-01-2019; Class IV-C). 0/7. Unfortunately, photos submitted were taken in harsh lighting conditions at some distance from a side and rear angle so the bill is not clearly visible and the distance makes details nearly impossible to determine. In addition, the time of year is not that expected for this species this far south. Acceptance of a first state record of such a rare species requires conclusive details.

**Least Tern** (*Sternula antillarum*)

An immature at Shenango Reservoir, *Mercer* 12 August 2001 (372-01-2001; Class IV-B). 2/5. Unfortunately, photographs were taken in harsh light and from a distance, so an evaluation could not be made based on the photographs. The written description lacks several critical details for Least Tern plumage characteristics at the time of year and age.

**Anhinga** (*Anhinga anhinga*)

One observed in flight at the intersection of Route 202 and Morris Road, *Montgomery* 29 August 2019 (074-01-2019; Class IV-B). 1/5. While the observer mentioned experience with this species (which was acknowledged by the committee) the observation was made without optics and lacked details, leading most committee members to vote against the record through two rounds of voting.

**Mississippi Kite** (*Ictinia mississippiensis*)

One at Pennypack on the Delaware, *Philadelphia* 22 May 2019; 171-07-2019; Class IV-B). 1/6. The identification may very well be

correct but very limited details were submitted and the photographs show the bird from behind that made identification nearly impossible. Unfortunately, the circumstances for photography were less than ideal.

**Swainson's Hawk** (*Buteo swainsoni*)

One at Stone Mountain Hawk Watch, *Mifflin* 15 October 2019 (186-01-2019; Class IV-A). 5/2. Some committee members would have been more comfortable accepting if the description included more plumage details, leading some committee members to vote against acceptance. This record went through two rounds of voting.

**LeConte's Sparrow** (*Ammodramus leconteii*)

One at Dixon Meadow Preserve, *Montgomery* 6 October 2019 (829-01-2019; Class IV-A). 3/4. This one had the committee split. Some members voting against it thought the identification was probably correct but some fine details were lacking in the description to conclusively separate it from Sharp-tailed Sparrow.

**Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco** (*Junco hyemalos oregonus*)

One at Townville, *Crawford* 7 November 2019 (840a-01-2019; Class IV-C). 1/6. The committee carefully thought this out due to the difficulties identifying an intermediately plumaged female junco. Most of the committee members noted the definition and contrast of the hood did not appear strong enough for Oregon and thus could be a female Cassiar junco. The difficulty of this subtle identification was noted by all committee members. Often birds in this group can't be identified with certainty.

**The PORC would like to thank all the observers for submitting rare bird documentation to the committee for review.**

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## Plover Palooza!

Frank Haas

Starting on or about Sept 4, 2020, several American Golden-Plovers (*Pluvialis dominica*) were found on a field on Voganville Road northwest of New Holland, Lancaster County by Zach Millen. This was the beginning of a plover bonanza over the next two months.

The number of plovers increased more-or-less steadily until close to 100 were seen in mid-October. At the beginning of this event, most of the birds were molting out of breeding plumage, but still had a lot of black and white on them. As the season progressed, more juveniles showed up and the adults completed their molt into non-breeding plumage.

In September, the flock was joined by other passing shorebirds, including most notably, Buff-breasted Sandpipers. The following were also seen during this two-month span – Pectoral, Solitary, Semipalmated, Least, and Upland sandpipers, Greater and Lesser yellowlegs; Semipalmated and Black-bellied plovers; and Killdeer.

The flock did not always stay in the first field in which they had been initially reported. They often flew away to feed in other areas that we could not find. But they always seemed to eventually return to the original field.

The field in which they were first spotted was a 9-acre harvested potato field. Over the course of this event, the field was plowed, tilled, and sown. Nearby fields had various farming functions performed on them as well. The fields did not appear significantly different than the hundreds of other fields nearby. There was a flooded portion out near the road that the birds visited occasionally, but most of the time the birds spent on the drier portions of the fields, usually far from the roadside. It is unclear what attracted them to this field initially. However, once the shorebirds started congregating there, they attracted other passersby.

For much of the time, they kept to the far end of the 9-acre field just over a small rise, making them not visible from the road. The local farmer gave approval for birders to walk out along the hedgerow to see over the rise. Occasionally they fed closer to the road and it was serendipity that they were found at all. In October, after the first field had been plowed and sowed, the plovers started spending more time in the 11-acre field to the north.

Many observers arrived to find no birds at all, but a few hours later, a large flock would be there. Patience was a virtue.

Some other fields in the county also hosted a few plovers, but not in the numbers seen at Voganville Road.

Three were in a field on California Road in Caernarvon Township, and up to a dozen were on Peters Road, about 2.5 miles south of the Voganville Road site.

Although this was the first time that *I* had seen such large numbers of Golden-Plovers in one spot, it *has* happened before.

McWilliams and Brauning in *The Birds of Pennsylvania* (2000) state:

“Flocks containing 100 or more have been recorded at various sites on several occasions. Three hundred were seen at Leola in Lancaster Co. on 20 Oct 1981, and, the same year, 350 were counted in a pasture near Mascot in Lancaster Co. on 28 Oct (Morrin et al. 1991). Most have left the state by the first week of November. Stragglers remain to the last week of November.

History: American Golden-Plovers were reported to have been abundant during some years before 1890. In 1860 flocks of hundreds covered the fields in the "Great Valley" and around West Chester (Warren 1890). Warren (1890) told of seeing flocks of 50-100 in plowed fields and grass fields around West Chester during the fall of 1880. Todd (1940) considered these plovers to be quite rare in western Pennsylvania but mentioned S. E. Bacon's report of flocks containing of 25-50 seen every season in the plowed fields west of the city of Erie.”

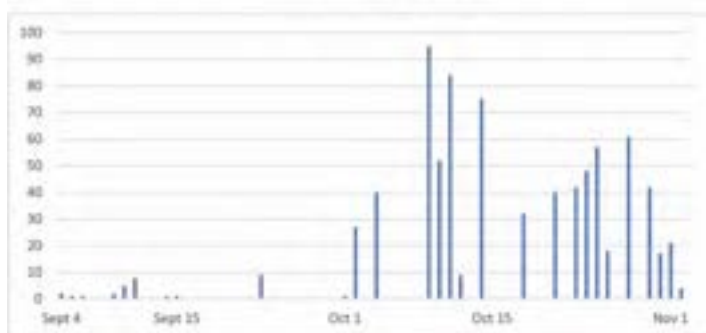
This was a very enjoyable event for many birders, who might see only a couple Golden-Plovers a year (if any!).

I thank Ervin Martin and Zach Millen for their contributions to this article.

### References

- Morrin, H.B. et al. 1991. *A Guide to the Birds of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*.  
Todd, W.E.C. 1940. *Birds of Western Pennsylvania*.  
Warren, B.H. 1890. *Report on the Birds of Pennsylvania*, 2nd ed.  
McWilliams, G.M. and D.W. Brauning (2000). *The Birds of Pennsylvania*.

American Golden-Plovers at Voganville Road  
Sept 4 to Nov 4, 2020



American Golden-Plovers. Voganville Road, Pennsylvania. 10/24/2020. (Frank Haas)

# Pennsylvania Autumn Raptor Migration Summary 2020

David R. Barber

Counting hawks can be serious business, adhering to strict count protocols, taking hourly weather data, and striving to identify each and every raptor; but hawk watching is also a social activity. There is a camaraderie among hawk watchers; it's about sharing big flights or unusual sightings, and catching up with old friends. The covid-19 pandemic threw a wrench into the system this Autumn; some watch sites didn't allow visitors, others required masks, and social distancing was the norm, but hawk counters persevered. While some watch sites reduced their effort, other increased theirs, breaking count records along the way.

## Migration Summary

In Autumn 2020, 14 Pennsylvania watch sites counted 107,909 raptors in 7486 hours and 1114 days, for an average of 14.4 hawks per hour (Table 1). Statewide counts were 6% below the 10-year average of hours of coverage and the total raptor count was 13% below the 10-year average of 123,335 (Table 1). Above average counts were observed for Turkey Vulture, with 9417 counted, up 16% from the 10-year average; Bald Eagle, 3472, up 24%; Red-shouldered Hawks, 1562, up 35%; American Kestrel, 1956, up 7%; and Peregrine Falcon, 441, up 17% (Table 1).

Seven of 16 species had counts below their 10-year averages. The largest dips were seen in Northern Goshawk, a total of 39, 65% below average and Osprey, 1444, 32% below average. Pennsylvania's two most abundant migrants were below average: the total of 51,920 Broad-winged Hawks is 20% below the average of 64,635 and 18,864 Sharp-shinned Hawks is down 19% from the average of 23,364. Other species with below average counts include Black Vultures, 774, 35% below average; Golden Eagle, 1037, down 10%; and Merlin, 628, down 3% (Table 1).

## Site Highlights

**Allegheny Front** (*Somerset/Bedford*) – Allegheny Front counters recorded 12,132 raptors in 720.5 hours on 113 days for an average of 16.8 hawks per hour from August 15 to December 30. Effort was 8% below average. Total raptors were 19.5% above the 10-year average due largely to the large Broad-winged Hawk count of 9326 that was 47% above average of 6324 and the third largest count total. The count of Red-shouldered Hawks, 67, was the highest in the last nine years and 54% above average.

Most other species were below the 10-year averages, including, notably, all accipiters and falcons (Table 1). Counts of

American Kestrels, 31, and Merlins, 13, were 47% and 52% below their 10-year averages, respectively, and were the lowest counts in 24 years. The total of 54 Ospreys was 36% below the 10-year average of 85 and the second lowest count in Allegheny Front history.

Counters recorded a season high 4758 Broad-winged Hawks and 16 Bald Eagles on September 15, adding to the previous day's total 2754 Broad-wings and 10 Balds. The Bald Eagle flight continued on the 16th for a three-day total of 46 Bald Eagles. The first Golden Eagle of the season was spotted on September 7 and the count peaked on October 31 with 32 (Table 2). November's high day of 100 raptors on the 4th, the only triple digit count in the month, included 67 Red-tailed Hawks and 11 Golden Eagles. A season high six Red-shouldered Hawks were recorded November 3 and 6.

**Bake Oven Knob** (*Lehigh/Carbon*) – Counters tallied 10,035 raptors in 756.3 hours on 99 days for an average of 13.3 raptors per hour from August 15 to November 27. Effort was slightly below the average of 789 hours. The total count was 23% below the 10-year average of 13,014. The Bald Eagle count was 455, which set a new season record and was 32% above the average of 346. American Kestrels also were above average with a total of 171, 26% above average. Counts for nine of 15 species were below average. Northern Goshawk counts were 66% below average, the second straight year with only seven goshawks counted, the lowest since 1979. While this year's count of 191 Ospreys was slightly higher than last year's 183, it was still 39% below the 10-year average of 313. Other species with below average counts include Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, and Merlin.

A season high 38 Bald Eagles were recorded on September 18, along with 508 Broad-winged Hawks and 17 American Kestrels. The first Northern Goshawk and Golden Eagle of the season were seen on October 8, along with season highs of eight Northern Harriers and eight Peregrine Falcons. The Golden Eagle count peaked on November 2 with 21 recorded (Table 2).

**Council Cup** (*Luzerne*) – Council Cup watchers recorded 881 raptors in 81 hours over 23 days from September 9 to November 16 for an average of 10.9 raptors per hour. Effort was 18% above average.

The raptor total was 13% above the average of 783.

Counters tallied a high of 299 raptors on September 14, including a season high 291 Broad-winged Hawks, along with two Ospreys, two Bald Eagles, two Sharp-shinned Hawks, and two American Kestrels. Season highs of 11 Bald Eagles and 137 Red-tailed Hawks were recorded on November 2.

**Hawk Mountain** (*Berks/Schuylkill*) – Hawk Mountain counters tallied 12,961 raptors in 1086 hours over 118 days from August 15 to December 27 for an average of 11.9 raptors per hour. Effort was similar to the average of 1101 hours. The overall count was 25% below the 10-year average of 17,285 and the lowest in 24 years. The three most abundant migrants, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Broad-winged Hawks, and Red-tailed Hawks, were 15%, 48%, and 17% below average, respectively (Table 1). Other species below average included Osprey, down 29%, Northern Goshawk, down 69%, Golden Eagle, down 7%, and Merlin, down 17%.

Both Turkey Vultures and Bald Eagles set new season count records, with 997 and 559, and were 52% and 35% above the 10-year average, respectively (Table 1). The count of 216 Red-shouldered Hawks, was 30% above the average of 166 and the highest in 13 years. The Peregrine Falcon count of 83 was 32% above average and was Hawk Mountain's second highest seasonal count.

Strong northwest winds on September 18 produced 32 Bald Eagles, including 18 after 6:00 pm, Hawk Mountain's third highest single day count. Counters tallied 15 Peregrine Falcons on October 7, the third highest single day count. A light morph Rough-legged Hawk was spotted November 7, along with 99 Turkey Vultures, the sixth highest single-day vulture count.

**Jacks Mountain** (*Mifflin*) – Jack's Mountain counters tallied 9158 raptors in 621 hours on 96 days from August 31 to December 28 for an average of 14.8 hawks per hour. Effort was 25% above the 10-year average of 496 hours and the total count was 44% above the average of 6353. Most species had counts above their 10-year average and new seasonal records were set for Golden Eagle with 162 and Peregrine Falcon with 47. Counts of Merlins and Sharp-shinned Hawks were 104% and 47% above average, respectively, and were each second highest in Jacks Mountain history. Only Black Vulture, 22, and Osprey, 43, were below the 10-year average. The

**Table 2. Peak One-day counts at watchsites in Autumn 2020**

Site Name	Sharp-shinned Hawk		Golden Eagle	
	Peak Count	Date	Peak Count	Date
<b>Allegheny Front</b>	4758	9/15	32	10/31
<b>Bake Oven Knob</b>	760	9/15	21	11/2
<b>Council Cup</b>	291	9/14	2	11/2
<b>Hawk Mountain</b>	760	9/12	15	11/3
<b>Jack's Mountain</b>	2707	9/15	16	11/16
<b>Little Gap</b>	1492	9/14	4	10/31
<b>Militia Hill</b>	4871	9/19	2	11/2
<b>Rocky Ridge</b>	613	9/18, 9/19	1	10/16, 10/24
<b>Rose Tree Park</b>	368	9/18	-	-
<b>Second Mountain</b>	881	9/12	8	11/4
<b>Stone Mountain</b>	524	9/15	23	11/16
<b>Summit Mountain</b>	691	9/15	-	-
<b>TLC's Bucktoe Creek Preserve</b>	538	9/20	-	-
<b>Waggoner's Gap</b>	1167	9/12	30	11/3

Osprey total was the third lowest total in 26 years of counting.

Two adult Golden Eagles tallied on September 7 were the earliest recorded Golden Eagles at Jack's Mountain. September counts peaked on the 15th with 2719 raptors, including 2707 Broad-winged Hawks, the second highest daily count. The 15 Peregrine Falcons recorded on October 2 shattered the previous daily record of eight set in 2003.

**Little Gap (Northampton)** – Little Gap observers counted 8257 hawks in 347.5 hours over 50 days from August 30 to November 24 for an average of 23.8 birds per hour. Effort was 35% below average. The overall total was 37% below the average of 13,008. Counts for most species were below average, likely due in part to the decreased effort. Nevertheless, Bald Eagles were 11% above average and Red-shouldered Hawks 30% above average.

The Broad-winged Hawk flight peaked September 14 with 1492 recorded along with season highs of 25 Bald Eagles and 18 American Kestrels (Table 2).

**Militia Hill (Montgomery)** – Militia Hill counters recorded 10,363 raptors in 411.5 hours across 69 days from September 1 to November 15 for an average of 25.2 raptors per hour. Effort was 7% below the 10-year average of 441 hours. The overall count was slightly below the average of 10,673. Counts of Turkey Vultures and Red-shouldered Hawks were 116% and 183% above average respectively, and were new season total records. The count of 206 Red-tailed Hawks was 91% above average and the largest count in the last 15 years. Osprey and American Kestrel continued short-term declines with counts 29% and 13% below average, respectively. Counts of Sharp-shinned Hawks were below average for the second straight year.

A Mississippi Kite was spotted on September 9, the sixth time in the last seven years the species was recorded at Militia Hill. The high daily count for the season occurred September 19 with 4930 raptors, including a season high 4871 Broad-wings (Table 2). Flights of Turkey Vultures peaked at the end of October with 280 counted October 31. A light morph Swainson's Hawk was recorded November 2.

**Rocky Ridge Park (York)** – Rocky Ridge counters tallied 4686 raptors in 364 hours on 66 days from August 26 to November 17 for an average of 12.9 birds per hour. Effort was an all-time high, 160% above average. The total count was 11% above the 10-year average of 4215. Due to the increased effort, virtually every species with the exceptions of Northern Goshawk and Broad-winged Hawk was above average. New count records were set for Osprey, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, American Kestrel, and Merlin.

Moderate northwest winds on September 18 produced a season high 780 raptors that included season highs of 18

Ospreys, seven Northern Harriers, 613 Broad-winged Hawks, and 56 American Kestrels. The count of 56 Kestrels was highest ever and the seven Harriers represent the third highest day. Counts of Sharp-shinned Hawks were steady throughout October and peaked on the 14th with a count of 80, a new high day.

**Rose Tree Park (Delaware)** – Rose Tree Park counters recorded 2921 raptors in 389.5 hours over 76 days from September 1 to November 20 for an average of 7.5 hawks per hour. Effort was 18% below the 10-year average of 472 hours. The overall count was 42% below the average of 5052. Eleven species either had counts below the 10-year average or were not sighted at all this year.

Counts of Northern Harriers continue to decline at Rose Tree Park; this year's total of 36 was an improvement over last year but was still 31% below average and the third lowest count in Rose Tree Park's 22-year history. The total of 103 Ospreys was 33% below the average of 154. All accipiters and falcons were below average. Turkey Vulture was the only species above average with 704, up 28% from average. Counts of Bald Eagles, Red-shouldered Hawks, and Golden Eagles were similar to the 10-year averages.

Counts of Broad-winged Hawks peaked on September 18 with 368 (Table 2), but was followed by several days of cloudless skies which hampered counting as birds disappeared as they gained altitude. The first Red-shouldered Hawk was recorded September 15 and counts peaked in mid-November with a season high 19 on the 8th. October's high count of 277 on the 27th included season high counts for Turkey Vulture, 178; Northern Harrier, 4; and Red-tailed Hawk, 70.

**Second Mountain (Lebanon)** – Second Mountain hawk watchers counted 6843 raptors in 784.8 hours across 118 days from August 15 to December 15 for an average of 8.7 per hour. Effort was similar to the 10-year average of 796 hours. The overall count was 24.8% below the 10-year average of 9094. Counts of Black and Turkey Vultures were 76% and 54% below average, respectively. The total of 60 Ospreys was 40% below average and the second lowest seasonal total for the site. Counts of Bald Eagles continue to increase; this year's total of 261 was 24% above average and the second highest season count. Northern Harriers rebounded from last year's historic low; the total of 79 Harriers was 11% above the average of 71. Other species with above average counts included, Cooper's Hawk, up 15%; Red-shouldered Hawk, up 13%; Red-tailed Hawk, up 23%; American Kestrel, up 7%; and Merlin, up 7%.

August ended on a high note when easterly winds on the 31st produced a season high 17 Bald Eagles. Flights of Broad-winged Hawks peaked early with 881 on September 12 (Table 2). The next six days saw triple digit Broad-wing flights most days and a seven-day total of 2448, 89% of the season's flight. Counts of Red-tailed Hawks peaked on November 5 with 87 Red-tails along with 22 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 11 Red-shouldered Hawks, and four Golden Eagles.

**Stone Mountain (Huntingdon/Mifflin)** – Stone Mountain counters recorded 5351 raptors in 548 hours over 91 days from August 30 to December 12 for an average of 9.8 raptors per hour. Effort was 20% above the 10-year average and the total count was 22.3% above the 10-year average of 4376. Counts of Turkey Vultures, 871,

and Bald Eagles, 231, set new seasonal records and most species had above average counts. Most notable were counts of Red-shouldered Hawks, 85, 65% above average; Red-tailed Hawks, 829, up 38%; and American Kestrels, 115, up 39%. Broad-winged Hawks, 1584, were 15% below average, and the 40 Ospreys recorded for the season was 38% below average and the lowest total since 1992.

The bulk of the Broad-winged Hawk flight passed the lookout between September 13 and 17, with a peak of 524 Broad-wings on the 15th (Table 2). West-southwest winds on September 30 produced a new single-day count record for Bald Eagles of 19. October's high day saw 441 raptors on the 14th, including 155 Turkey Vultures, 193 Sharp-shinned Hawks, the second highest single day sharpie count, and the first Golden Eagle of the season. Golden Eagles peaked on November 16 when 23 were recorded (Table 2).

**Summit Mountain (Fayette)** – Summit Mountain watchers counted 2069 raptors in 74.8 hours over 14 days from August 17 to October 8 for an average of 27.7 hawks per hour. The total raptors counted was much greater than the previous two years, likely due to the concentrated effort during peak Broad-winged Hawk migration. Effort was intermediate between the last two years.

An early Northern Goshawk was counted on August 30. Consistent effort during the third week in September produced a count of 1890 Broad-winged Hawks with a high of 691 on the 15th.

**The Land Conservancy of Southern Chester County's Hawk Watch at Bucktoe Creek Preserve (Chester)** – Bucktoe counters tallied 2673 raptors in 276 hours over 43 days from August 23 to October 7 for an average of 9.7 birds per hour. Effort was well below the 5-year average of 644 hours. In contrast to previous years, counting stopped in October, so counts for most species aren't comparable to previous years with the exception of Broad-winged Hawks. The Broad-winged Hawk count of 1440 was 59% below the average of 3547 and can't be explained by reduced effort, since effort in August and September was just 30% and 15% below average, respectively. The first large Broad-winged Hawk flight occurred on September 15 with a count of 302 and peaked on September 20 with 538 (Table 2). A season high 13 Bald Eagles was tallied on September 8.

**Waggoner's Gap (Cumberland)** – Waggoner's Gap counters recorded 19,579 raptors in 1026 hours over 138 days from August 1 to December 31 for an average of 19.1 birds per hour. Effort was similar to the 10-year average of 1036 hours. The overall count was 8% below average. For the

second straight year, Bald Eagles had a record flight. The total of 723 was 28% above the average of 568. Turkey Vultures also set a new count record with 2268, 29% above average. Monthly totals of Red-tailed Hawks in August and September set new records and were due to a large number of immature birds. The total of 3669 Red-tails was 23% above average and the highest since 2009. The total of 318 Red-shouldered Hawks was 57% above average and the highest since 2003. The Red-shouldered Hawk flight this year was composed of a higher proportion of immature birds than usual. The Peregrine Falcon count of 81 was one shy of the record and 32% above average. Black Vulture, Osprey, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Northern Goshawks, Broad-winged Hawks, and American Kestrels were all below their 10-year averages.

A cold front on August 30 produced the second highest August count in Waggoner's Gap history with 193 raptors tallied including ten Ospreys, 25 Bald Eagles, 109 Broad-winged Hawks, and 37 Red-tailed Hawks. Counts of Turkey Vultures started building the second week in October and peaked on October 24 with 508 recorded, a new high count. A light morph Rough-legged Hawk was recorded on October 31, the first of five. A string of triple-digit Red-tailed Hawk flights from November 2 through 9 produced 1152 Red-tails with a high of 211 on the 7th. The season ended on a high note with 11 Bald Eagles on December 31, establishing a new seasonal record.

## Conclusions

In Autumn 2020, hawkwatchers battled not only the pandemic, but also haze from western wildfires and clear blue skies during the peak of Broad-winged Hawk season. Bald Eagles enjoyed another excellent year with the second highest count for Pennsylvania, but Osprey counts continued to decline with all sites recording below average counts. Accipiters bounced back from their dismal flights of 2019, but Sharp-shinned Hawks and Northern Goshawks were still below average at most sites. A couple western watch sites enjoyed good Broad-winged Hawk flights, but most sites were below average. Cloudless skies during the peak Broad-wing migration likely hampered spotting high flying migrants. Red-tailed Hawks in the eastern half of the state seemed to be moving early; many early birds were hatch-year birds, so it appears that Red-tails had a successful reproduction year. Red-shouldered Hawks also appeared to have a banner reproduction year with above average counts recorded at nearly all sites. Falcon flights were variable across the state; Kittatinny Ridge sites enjoyed above average counts of American Kestrel, while most others sites were below average and while some sites had record or

near-record counts of Peregrine Falcons, several sites had below average counts. Of course, variation among years and sites is expected given the influence environmental variables and geography can have on raptor migration. It is the long-term trends that are relevant and let's hope the positive trends continue and the negative trends reverse.

## Acknowledgements

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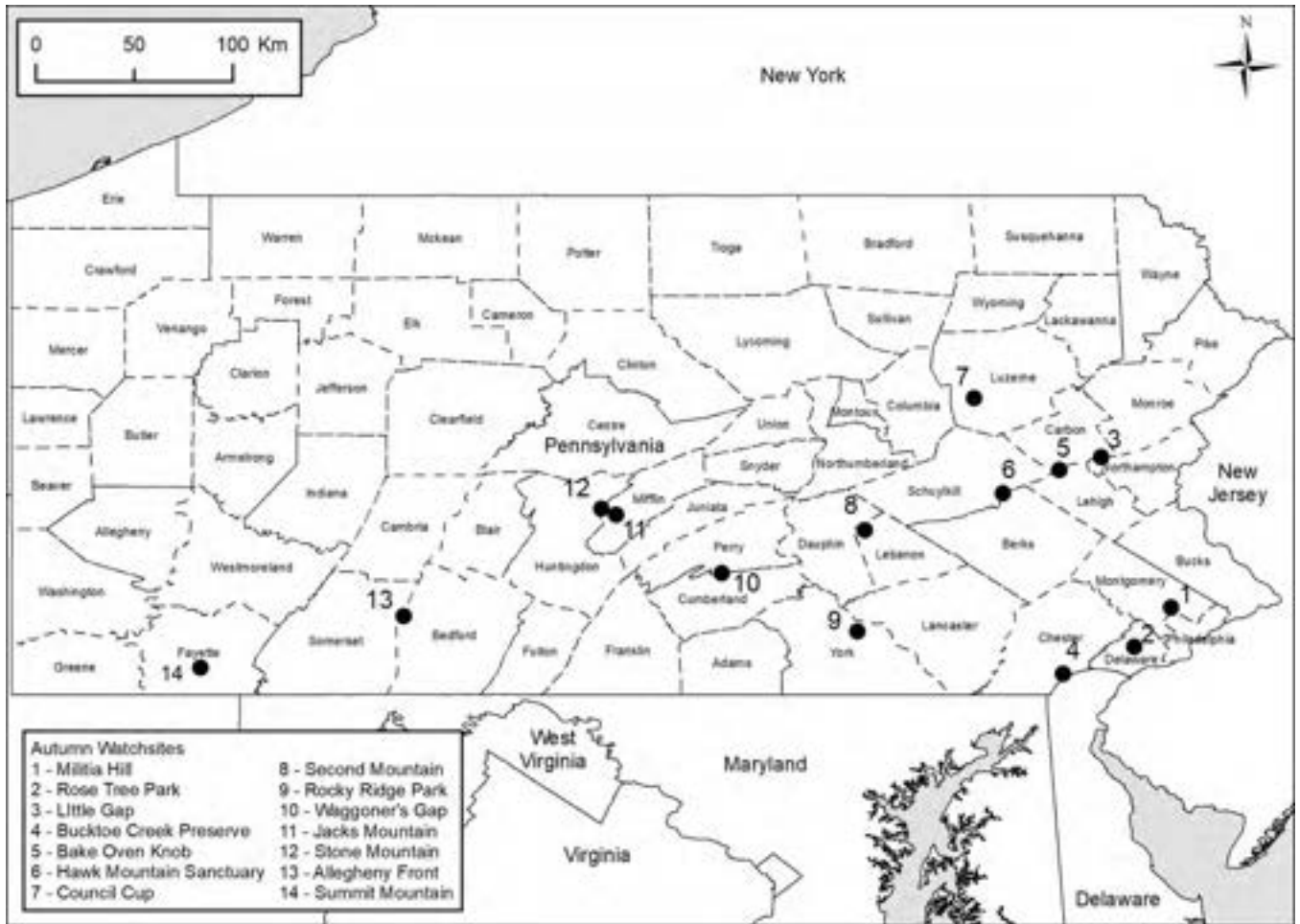


Table 1. Autumn 2020 count results for Pennsylvania watchsites.

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

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	17	109.3	0	0	4	8	1	11	6	0	1	125	21	0	0	4	1	0	0	7	189
September	28	193.3	6	0	45	97	16	155	35	0	13	9199	237	0	1	7	4	6	0	39	9860
October	29	179.3	0	173	5	26	13	475	33	2	23	2	565	0	42	18	8	15	0	24	1424
November	27	185.5	5	109	0	20	10	16	8	0	30	0	284	2	133	2	0	0	0	22	641
December	12	53.3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	5	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>720.5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>9326</b>	<b>1112</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>12132</b>
Total per hr			0.02	0.39	0.07	0.21	0.06	0.91	0.11	0.00	0.09	12.94	1.54	0.00	0.26	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.00	0.13	16.84
% of flight			0.1	2.3	0.4	1.2	0.3	5.4	0.7	0.0	0.6	76.9	9.2	0.0	1.5	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.8	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	116.8	783.0	34.3	431.5	84.7	151.4	38.0	1193.6	149.1	5.9	43.5	6324.1	1275.9	1.6	210.1	58.0	27.2	29.4	0.0	93.9	10152.2

**BAKE OVEN KNOB (Lehigh) - Bob Hoopes, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	17	129.1	50	107	52	84	3	26	10	0	5	200	94	0	0	9	0	3	0	47	690
September	28	220.3	81	217	109	165	12	397	60	2	16	3634	189	0	0	74	12	13	0	63	5044
October	28	211.1	73	284	30	101	43	1834	147	3	49	22	369	0	8	88	55	32	0	63	3201
November	26	195.8	73	159	0	105	11	52	14	2	60	0	509	0	78	0	2	4	0	31	1100
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>756.3</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>2309</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>3856</b>	<b>1161</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>10035</b>
Total per hr			0.37	1.01	0.25	0.60	0.09	3.05	0.31	0.01	0.17	5.10	1.54	0.00	0.11	0.23	0.09	0.07	0.00	0.27	13.27
% of flight			2.8	7.6	1.9	4.5	0.7	23.0	2.3	0.1	1.3	38.4	11.6	0.0	0.9	1.7	0.7	0.5	0.0	2.0	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	103.9	788.8	286.9	937.7	313.4	345.6	77.2	2701.3	231.2	20.3	123.4	5887.7	1465.3	0.1	104.2	135.5	82.8	53.3	0.1	247.1	13014.1

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

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
September	11	29.5	0	0	5	16	2	11	1	0	0	295	0	0	0	11	0	1	0	3	345
October	5	22.5	0	66	2	18	4	46	7	0	1	2	71	0	0	15	1	0	0	6	239
November	7	28.5	0	34	0	21	4	16	4	0	2	0	210	0	3	1	1	1	0	0	297
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>80.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>881</b>
Total per hr			0.00	1.24	0.09	0.68	0.12	0.91	0.15	0.00	0.04	3.69	3.49	0.00	0.04	0.34	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.11	10.94
% of flight			0.0	11.4	0.8	6.2	1.1	8.3	1.4	0.0	0.3	33.7	31.9	0.0	0.3	3.1	0.2	0.2	0.0	1.0	100.0
Average for 10 yrs	15.4	68.0	1.0	116.4	7.1	25.5	6.5	79.9	8.0	0.0	1.1	333.7	171.3	0.0	1.3	20.6	0.6	1.0	0.0	7.6	782.6

**HAWK MOUNTAIN (Berks and Schuylkill) - David Barber, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	17	161.1	2	2	59	87	5	8	13	0	3	309	65	0	0	29	3	4	0	6	595
September	30	310.7	2	20	193	164	26	648	122	1	6	3652	91	0	0	185	53	12	0	41	5216
October	27	262.1	7	279	36	107	65	2563	412	2	52	17	471	0	10	199	80	56	0	85	4441
November	29	244.8	137	628	0	136	37	238	41	4	146	0	924	1	99	3	6	11	0	31	2442
December	15	107.3	65	48	0	65	2	0	3	1	9	0	61	0	12	0	0	0	0	1	267
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>1086.0</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>977</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>3457</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>3978</b>	<b>1612</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>12961</b>
Total per hr			0.20	0.90	0.27	0.51	0.12	3.18	0.54	0.01	0.20	3.66	1.48	0.00	0.11	0.38	0.13	0.08	0.00	0.15	11.94
% of flight			1.6	7.5	2.2	4.3	1.0	26.7	4.6	0.1	1.7	30.7	12.4	0.0	0.9	3.2	1.1	0.6	0.0	1.3	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	123.6	1100.8	136.8	641.5	407.1	414.5	134.3	4072.3	504.2	25.8	166.0	7672.3	1932.2	0.8	19.8	368.3	170.8	63.0	0.3	170.8	17284.8
Average for 10 yrs	17.3	81.3	1.3	122.6	12.6	32.1	6.4	92.8	8.4	0.0	1.0	345.5	177.2	0.0	0.7	23.5	0.4	0.8	0.0	10.1	836.5

**JACK'S MOUNTAIN (Mifflin) - Darrell Smith, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	1	6.0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
September	26	166.8	0	0	38	74	12	125	25	0	1	6010	65	0	3	27	9	10	0	6	6405
October	28	183.5	0	248	5	86	37	938	79	2	8	1	461	0	27	38	22	34	0	10	1996
November	26	174.8	22	91	0	48	8	38	14	0	24	0	326	0	102	2	1	2	0	6	684
December	15	89.8	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	1	0	0	14	0	30	0	1	1	1	1	61
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>620.8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1101</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6017</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9158</b>
Total per hr			0.04	0.55	0.07	0.36	0.09	1.77	0.19	0.00	0.05	9.69	1.40	0.00	0.26	0.11	0.05	0.08	0.00	0.04	14.75
% of flight			0.2	3.7	0.5	2.5	0.6	12.0	1.3	0.0	0.4	65.7	9.5	0.0	1.8	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.3	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	76.2	495.7	34.3	186.3	60.0	144.1	43.8	750.5	94.5	3.6	22.4	4180.0	607.7	0.4	118.2	56.9	16.2	19.2	0.0	16.1	6352.6

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

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	1	8.8	0	0	19	27	0	2	1	0	0	89	11	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	153
September	21	166.3	12	42	126	116	14	467	64	0	4	4980	80	0	0	94	28	15	0	16	6058
October	14	89.0	19	217	16	53	34	501	49	2	65	4	211	0	7	18	25	23	0	12	1256
November	14	83.5	20	48	0	91	13	30	12	1	47	0	461	0	46	2	4	4	0	11	790
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>347.5</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>5073</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>8257</b>
Total per hr			0.15	0.88	0.46	0.83	0.18	2.88	0.36	0.01	0.33	14.60	2.20	0.00	0.15	0.34	0.16	0.12	0.00	0.12	23.76
% of flight			0.6	3.7	1.9	3.5	0.7	12.1	1.5	0.0	1.4	61.4	9.2	0.0	0.6	1.4	0.7	0.5	0.0	0.5	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	76.8	523.1	76.2	396.7	265.1	252.6	79.8	2517.6	269.7	12.7	86.1	7315.5	1209.5	0.4	73.2	161.4	89.8	40.8	0.0	78.7	12925.8

**MILITIA HILL (Montgomery) - Rich Conroy and Jamie Stewart, co-compilers**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	*Total
September	29	183.8	0	0	123	92	14	192	28	0	8	6496	0	0	0	100	15	10	0	12	7091
October	26	155.3	0	1270	38	52	32	382	129	0	132	41	122	0	0	97	23	17	0	48	2383
November	14	72.5	1	566	0	25	7	66	23	1	82	0	84	0	2	7	6	5	1	13	889
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>411.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1836</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>6537</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>10363</b>
Total per hr			0.00	4.46	0.39	0.41	0.13	1.56	0.44	0.00	0.54	15.89	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.11	0.08	0.00	0.18	25.18
% of flight			0.0	17.7	1.6	1.6	0.5	6.2	1.7	0.0	2.1	63.1	2.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.7	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	60.7	440.5	21.1	851.4	228.4	125.9	53.7	854.8	135.6	1.1	78.5	7842.9	107.9	0.2	3.4	233.3	40.2	26.0	0.4	67.2	10672.5

\* Including Mississippi Kite on 9/5/2020

**ROCKY RIDGE (York) - Brandon Pentz, compiler**

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	3	13.3	0	1	6	8	0	5	0	0	1	4	3	0	0	6	1	0	0	0	35
September	26	173.0	0	2	65	41	34	301	12	0	3	2791	23	0	0	163	4	0	0	33	3472
October	28	138.0	21	118	11	23	27	516	38	0	16	14	46	0	2	99	9	9	0	35	984
November	9	40.0	18	22	0	10	7	30	10	0	19	0	70	0	0	2	4	0	0	3	195
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>364.3</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>2809</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>4686</b>
Total per hr			0.11	0.39	0.23	0.23	0.19	2.34	0.16	0.00	0.11	7.71	0.39	0.00	0.01	0.74	0.05	0.02	0.00	0.19	12.86
% of flight			0.8	3.1	1.7	1.7	1.5	18.2	1.3	0.0	0.8	59.9	3.0	0.0	0.0	5.8	0.4	0.2	0.0	1.5	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	27.3	140.2	14.9	50.5	41.0	29.0	17.7	338.9	16.7	0.1	9.4	3553.9	42.1	0.0	0.6	77.3	5.1	3.6	0.0	13.6	4214.5

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

Month	Days	Hours	BLVJ	TUVJ	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
September	29	164.3	0	0	74	65	4	80	27	0	7	908	2	0	0	48	5	4	0	10	1234
October	28	143.5	0	603	29	23	21	268	56	0	54	27	143	0	2	55	10	8	0	16	1315
November	19	81.8	0	101	0	22	11	56	16	0	95	0	54	0	1	5	2	0	0	9	372
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>389.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2921</b>
Total per hr			0.00	1.81	0.26	0.28	0.09	1.04	0.25	0.00	0.40	2.40	0.51	0.00	0.01	0.28	0.04	0.03	0.00	0.09	7.50
% of flight			0.0	24.1	3.5	3.8	1.2	13.8	3.4	0.0	5.3	32.0	6.8	0.0	0.1	3.7	0.6	0.4	0.0	1.2	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	79.6	472.3	33.1	549.0	154.1	115.5	52.4	779.2	130.2	0.8	152.8	2617.5	226.8	0.1	2.4	150.8	24.7	16.4	0.0	45.5	5051.5

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

Month	Days	Hours	BLVJ	TUVJ	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	17	94.3	0	0	8	39	4	3	4	0	0	118	16	0	0	4	2	0	0	1	199
September	30	209.5	0	0	38	58	17	297	48	1	5	2602	91	0	0	38	11	5	0	9	3220
October	29	201.8	26	160	14	87	37	1380	158	1	36	16	316	0	9	62	23	7	0	45	2377
November	28	191.8	42	127	0	65	19	86	21	0	70	0	486	0	68	6	0	6	0	9	1005
December	14	87.5	3	7	0	12	2	0	2	0	0	0	9	0	6	0	0	0	0	1	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>784.8</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>1766</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>2736</b>	<b>918</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>6843</b>
Total per hr			0.09	0.37	0.08	0.33	0.10	2.25	0.30	0.00	0.14	3.49	1.17	0.00	0.11	0.14	0.05	0.02	0.00	0.08	8.72
% of flight			1.0	4.3	0.9	3.8	1.2	25.8	3.4	0.0	1.6	40.0	13.4	0.0	1.2	1.6	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.9	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	120.9	795.6	292.2	632.2	100.5	209.9	71.3	1795.7	203.2	10.5	98.6	4633.6	748.6	1.9	89.3	103.2	33.5	23.7	0.2	48.6	9094

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

Month	Days	Hours	BLVJ	TUVJ	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	1	4.0	0	0	1	7	0	5	0	0	0	6	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	22
September	28	151.0	14	0	21	75	6	129	16	0	3	1576	47	0	0	40	8	10	0	12	1957
October	27	184.0	4	790	18	89	31	955	76	1	40	2	457	0	12	73	34	25	0	18	2625
November	25	152.0	40	81	0	45	12	33	12	1	41	0	301	2	102	1	1	2	0	9	683
December	10	57.3	0	0	0	15	2	0	0	0	1	0	22	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>548.3</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>1122</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>1584</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>5351</b>
Total per hr			0.11	1.59	0.07	0.42	0.09	2.05	0.19	0.00	0.16	2.89	1.51	0.00	0.25	0.21	0.08	0.07	0.00	0.07	9.76
% of flight			1.1	16.3	0.7	4.3	1.0	21.0	1.9	0.0	1.6	29.6	15.5	0.0	2.6	2.1	0.8	0.7	0.0	0.7	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	81.3	458.2	20.3	351.2	64.4	145.4	43.9	837.3	104.4	4.0	51.4	1856.9	598.6	1.3	129.9	82.8	35.1	22.5	0.0	26.3	4375.7

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

Month	Days	Hours	BLVJ	TUVJ	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	4	19.0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	11	5	0	0	1	1	0	0	4	26
September	8	46.8	3	0	7	12	3	17	5	0	0	1890	30	0	0	6	3	0	0	11	1987
October	2	9	0	30	0	1	0	5	4	0	1	0	13	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1901</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2069</b>
Total per hr			0.04	0.40	0.09	0.17	0.04	0.31	0.13	0.01	0.03	25.43	0.64	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.21	27.68
% of flight			0.1	1.4	0.3	0.6	0.1	1.1	0.5	0.0	0.1	91.9	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.8	100.0

TLC's S. CHESTER COUNTY HAWKWATCH AT BUCKTOE CREEK PRESERVE (Chester) - Larry Lewis, compiler

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total	
August	9	41.5	0	0	2	4	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	11
September	28	195.5	0	401	46	109	10	107	60	0	42	1431	75	0	0	73	2	3	0	0	0	2359
October	6	39.0	0	97	4	37	0	62	20	0	22	9	25	0	0	21	4	2	0	0	0	303
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>276.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>1440</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2673</b>
Total per hr			0.00	1.80	0.19	0.54	0.04	0.62	0.30	0.00	0.23	5.22	0.36	0.00	0.00	0.35	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.68
% of flight			0.0	18.6	1.9	5.6	0.4	6.4	3.1	0.0	2.4	53.9	3.7	0.0	0.0	3.6	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Average for 5 yrs	86.6	644.4	266.4	1574.4	127.4	305.4	32.6	784.2	291.2	0.4	199.8	3546.8	416.0	0.0	4.0	168.4	25.6	6.6	0.0	4.0	7755.6	

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

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	28	149.5	0	0	33	85	2	7	7	0	10	211	111	0	0	14	0	2	0	9	491
September	26	209.3	0	0	111	207	39	879	100	1	15	5208	359	0	0	95	19	16	0	33	7082
October	29	241.5	28	1981	50	206	85	4184	504	1	80	12	1299	1	16	103	115	60	0	115	8840
November	29	245.0	0	284	1	153	32	217	42	7	211	0	1791	4	166	3	8	2	0	31	2952
December	26	180.3	0	3	0	72	2	2	2	0	2	0	109	0	16	1	2	1	0	2	214
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>1025.5</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>2268</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>5289</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>5431</b>	<b>3669</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>19579</b>
Total per hr			0.03	2.21	0.19	0.71	0.16	5.16	0.64	0.01	0.31	5.30	3.58	0.00	0.19	0.21	0.14	0.08	0.00	0.19	19.09
% of flight			0.1	11.6	1.0	3.7	0.8	27.0	3.3	0.0	1.6	27.7	18.7	0.0	1.0	1.1	0.7	0.4	0.0	1.0	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	136.8	1035.5	54.2	1756.2	305.9	564.8	168.2	6463.8	534.7	27.1	203.2	7855.6	2471.0	1.8	222.2	265.0	98.1	61.2	0.1	136.6	21189.7

2020 TOTALS FOR ALL WATCHSITES

Month	Days	Hours	BLVU	TUVU	OSPR	BAEA	NOHA	SSHA	COHA	NOGO	RSHA	BWHA	RTHA	RLHA	GOEA	AMKE	MERL	PEFA	SWHA	Unid	Total
August	115	736	52	110	184	354	16	69	44	1	21	1079	328	0	0	73	8	9	0	75	2423
September	348	2420	118	682	1001	1291	209	3805	603	5	123	50672	1289	0	4	961	173	105	0	288	61330
October	306	2059	178	6316	258	909	429	14109	1712	14	579	169	4569	1	135	887	409	288	0	478	31440
November	253	1696	358	2250	1	741	171	878	217	16	827	0	5500	9	800	34	35	37	1	175	12050
December	92	575	68	59	0	177	8	3	7	3	12	0	220	0	98	1	3	2	0	5	666
<b>Total</b>	<b>1114</b>	<b>7486.0</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>9417</b>	<b>1444</b>	<b>3472</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>18864</b>	<b>2583</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1562</b>	<b>51920</b>	<b>11906</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1037</b>	<b>1956</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1021</b>	<b>107909</b>
Total per hr			0.10	1.26	0.19	0.46	0.11	2.52	0.35	0.01	0.21	6.94	1.59	0.00	0.14	0.26	0.08	0.06	0.00	0.14	14.41
% of flight			0.7	8.7	1.3	3.2	0.8	17.5	2.4	0.0	1.4	48.1	11.0	0.0	1.0	1.8	0.6	0.4	0.0	0.9	100.0
Average last 10 yrs	1174	7977	1182	8123	2131	2791	832	23364	2578	112	1160	64635	11391	9	1150	1837	648	376	1	1013	123334
% compared to average	-5.1	-6.2	-34.5	15.9	-32.2	24.4	0.2	-19.3	0.2	-65.1	34.7	-19.7	4.5	11.1	-9.9	6.5	-3.1	17.3	-9.1	0.8	-12.5

KEY TO TABLE HEADERS

BLVU	Black Vulture	RSHA	Broad-winged Hawk
TUVU	Turkey Vulture	BWHA	Red-tailed Hawk
OSPR	Osprey	RTHA	Rough-legged hawk
BAEA	Bald Eagle	RLHA	Golden Eagle
NOHA	Northern Harrier	GOEA	American Kestrel
SSHA	Sharp-shinned Hawk	AMKE	Merlin
COHA	Cooper's Hawk	PEFA	Peregrine Falcon
NOGO	Northern Goshawk	SWHA	Swainson's Hawk
RSHA	Red-shouldered Hawk	Unid	Unidentified

# Pennsylvania's American Kestrel Nest Box Numbers from 2020

Excerpts below are reproduced from annual report of Steve Eisenhauer of The Natural Lands Organization. For copies of Steve's full report, contact the editor (gwg2@psu.edu) or contact Steve at eisenhauer@natland.org .

Again this year, thanks to Steve Eisenhauer, we are pleased to report the very impressive numbers of American Kestrel nestlings banded in the state. We have featured the Kestrel in these pages in recent years, and most birders know there are concerns about the population status of kestrels, particularly in the northeastern and mid-Atlantic states, including Pennsylvania, especially the eastern part of the state.

## Pennsylvania 2020 total banding age nestling count : 1279 (up 379 from 900)

59 by Emily H. Thomas and Don Watts in northwest PA (down 3 from 62 in 2019)

226 by PA Game Commission, Southeast Region, led by Lauren Ferreri & Dan Mummert (up 56 from 170 in 2019)

196 by Paul Karner and Jere Schade in Northampton County (up 47 from 149 in 2019)

294 by Steve Eisenhauer in Centre, Mifflin, Huntingdon & Juniata Counties (up 164 from 130 in 2019)

29 by Shaver's Creek Env. Ctr., State College area, led by Jon Kauffman (up 17 from 12 in 2019)

26 by Jim Moffett in Chester & Berks Counties (up 12 from 14 in 2019)

88 by Hawk Mt. Sanctuary in Berks County, led by JF Therrien (up 8 from 80 in 2019)

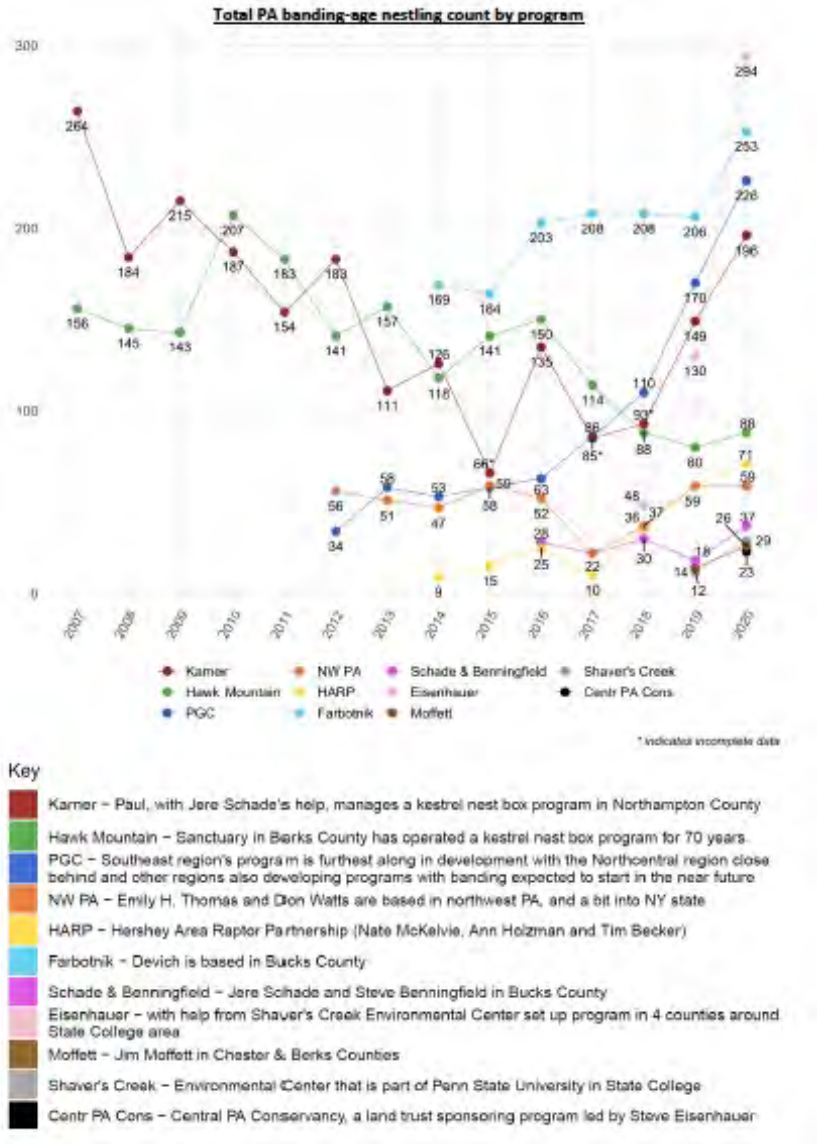
71 by Hershey Area Raptor Partnership, led by McKelvie, Holzman & Becker (up 12 from 59 in 2019)

253 by Devich Farbotnik in Bucks County (up 47 from 206 in 2019)

37 by Jere Schade and Steve Benningfield in Bucks County (up 19 from 18 in 2019)

23 by Central PA Conservancy (first year program led by Steve Eisenhauer and Ben Mummert)

34 by PA Game Commission, Northcentral, led by Mario Giazzon (incomplete count, first year)



## Summary of the Season: Fall 2020

### Geoff Malosh

The fall of 2020 was a remarkable season, in many ways recalling memories of the legendary fall of 2012. In the summary of that fall migration in this journal, I wrote the following: “*The fall of 2012 was truly one for the ages, and one the likes of which have never been seen before in Pennsylvania. It was a season that had a little bit of everything: great shorebirding and passerine migration, an invasion of western hummingbirds, a hurricane unlike any other ever seen, the beginnings of a winter finch invasion, and rarities galore. In very much the same way that Hurricane Sandy was a unique and unprecedented storm, so too was the entire fall 2012 season a unique combination of events unlikely to be repeated any time soon.*” Although it is true that the fall of 2020 didn’t quite match the “unique combination of events” of 2012, the similarities could not be missed.

There was no western hummingbird “invasion” in 2021, with only a “paltry” 12 Rufous Hummingbirds found, but there was a winter finch invasion, including what was probably the best showing of Evening Grosbeak since the early 1980s. Moreover, this time, many of them stuck around throughout the state deep into the winter. Red Crossbills, too, passed through in impressive numbers. There was great shorebirding in a few areas, the passerine migration was better than recent years in many parts of the state, and the list of rarities in 2020 was about as impressive as it gets. The fall 2020 *Erie* report alone reads somewhat like a recitation of an average fall’s Birds of Note.

Two tropical systems affected Pennsylvania, one each at the extremes of dates that past hurricanes have historically passed through the state. The first was Isaias, a category 1 storm that made landfall in North Carolina late in the evening 8/3, and moved north-northeast along the eastern coast of the United States, passing through Pennsylvania on the afternoon of 8/4 generally along the border with New Jersey. The storm brought several rarities to the state, most of which were found along the lower Delaware River near Philadelphia. The second storm was Zeta, a Caribbean-originating storm that peaked at Category 2 intensity and made landfall in Louisiana early on 10/29 and very quickly moved through the southeastern United States, before exiting to the Atlantic off the coast of Delaware by the end of the day 10/29. The center of Zeta never actually crossed into Pennsylvania, but the passage of the center of its remnants not far south of Pennsylvania on the afternoon of 10/29

triggered heavy rains throughout the state and grounded many migrants on lakes and rivers. Zeta reached its closest point to Pennsylvania almost exactly eight years to the day after the famed Hurricane Sandy reached the Commonwealth (10/30/2012). Having approached from the Gulf of Mexico rather than the Atlantic, Zeta brought none of the same pelagic species as Sandy, but there were some commonalities between the storms nevertheless, both in their late-season origination in the Caribbean Sea, and in the species they both grounded in Pennsylvania that were migrating from interior North America in late Oct. Both storms brought torrential rains, especially Isaias, which also touched off a few tornados, themselves something of a rarity in Pennsylvania. Each storm brought one potential new species for the state with it, and a third potential first for the state appeared quite unexpectedly at Powdermill Nature Reserve in Sep.

Aside from the tropical events, weather was warm, especially in August. Temperatures in September moderated, and the month was generally calm statewide, with many days of favorable winds for passerine migration. October and especially November were both warmer than average, a departure from the past two years, in which November was decidedly colder than average each year. Two dates figured heavily in reports of waterfowl and many other birds—10/29, of course, with the passage of Zeta, and 11/12, when a strong cold front brought the first serious wave of birds that ride such November storms on their way south.

**Ross’s Goose** used to be considered a major rarity in the state, but birders have more or less figured them out, it seems. They were found in no fewer than six counties this season, east, central, and west, beginning with one in *Montgomery* 10/15, a somewhat early date. Fall migration typically sprinkles a handful of **Snow Geese** across western Pennsylvania; larger flocks of them are typically a spring phenomenon in the west. Therefore some larger western flocks this fall were notable: 35 in *Armstrong* 10/28, up to 68 in *Clarion* beginning 10/31, 35 in *Crawford* 11/12, 60 in *Erie* 10/27, 35 in *Mercer* 10/28, and 50 in *Westmoreland* 10/30. A flock of 115 in *Juniata* 10/28 was also unusual for central Pennsylvania. Note how closely all of these were associated with either Zeta or the 11/12 cold front. The only **Greater White-fronted Goose** of the season was one in *Montgomery* 11/5-15. **Brant** was one of the iconic species of Hurricane Sandy in 2012, owing to Sandy’s passage in late Oct during the peak of Brant

migration through Pennsylvania. A weak echo of that historic fallout occurred around the time of Zeta’s passage; all told, Brant were found in 14 counties this season, most of which occurred +/- three days of Zeta and especially on 10/30. Most remarkable was the flock of 650 reported in *Wayne* 10/24. **Cackling Goose** was likewise reported in 14 counties, a well-above average showing.

**Trumpeter Swan** is slowly but steadily increasing in Pennsylvania, with reports this season mostly in the south and east, but also from *Crawford* and *Cambria*. Some early **Tundra Swans** appeared with or on the heels of Zeta, but the first very large push through Pennsylvania was ushered in by the 11/12 cold front; as usual several flocks, especially in the west, exceeded 100 birds.

It was generally a very good season for ducks, boosted of course both by the passage of Zeta 10/29 and the 11/12 cold front, but even aside from these storms, many counties enjoyed a nice waterfowl flight. For some inscrutable reason, **Blue-winged Teal** showed exceptionally well in western Pennsylvania, including counts of 35 in *Armstrong* 8/30, 51 in *Beaver* 9/27, 52 in *Washington* 9/27, and 64 in *Westmoreland* 10/7. Best of all was a count of 200 in *Lancaster* 9/18, however. Five **Northern Shovelers** in *Armstrong* and one in *Washington* 8/30 were rather early. Impressive fallouts of **Gadwall** in eastern Pennsylvania included 300 in *Delaware* 11/12 and 114 in *Montgomery* 11/11, with up to 105 of the latter remaining to 11/22. **American Wigeon** were widely reported in smaller numbers, and a **Eurasian Wigeon** was described in *Philadelphia* 10/11. The enigmatic **American Black Duck** seemed to have an “up” year, rather widely reported throughout the state. **Northern Pintail** frequently fails to appear in numbers before the end of Nov, but this season small numbers were widely reported, mostly beginning with Zeta, but a few appeared earlier in Oct, and one exceptionally early bird was in *Montgomery* 9/5. Excellent counts of **Green-winged Teal** were made in eastern Pennsylvania on disparate dates: 210 in *Bucks* 11/16 and 250 in *Lancaster* 10/7.

Bay ducks were not as well reported as dabblers. A female **Redhead** that summered in *Lawrence* remained the entire fall, and an early Redhead was in *Washington* for much of Sep. **Greater Scaup** is the more unusual of the two scaup in fall, so widespread reports from at least 13 counties was somewhat notable. Nearly all of these sightings were made in Nov. A fallout of 600 **Lesser Scaup** occurred in *Lancaster* 11/12, and

smaller flocks were noted in a few other eastern counties that same day. One Lesser Scaup remained from the summer to mid-Oct in *York*.

Scoters were in the best numbers since 2012, with **Surf Scoter** reported in 18 counties, **Black Scoter** in 22, and **White-winged Scoter** in 19. The vast majority of reports were clustered around the passage of Zeta 10/29, and all three were reported from every corner of the state. Just like during the passage of Sandy in 2012, high counts of each species topped out only in the low double-digits, but there were several such reports. In fall, **Black Scoter** is often confined to *Erie* and the eastern counties, and that was true again this season, despite the high count of 22 reporting counties and the influence of Zeta. Indeed, one of the few birds seen in the west away from *Erie* was one late season bird in *Allegheny* 11/26. A few early **White-winged Scoters** beat the Zeta rush and appeared in the northeastern counties of *Carbon* 10/13 and *Pike* 10/16. **Long-tailed Duck** followed along with the scoters, appearing in somewhat small but widespread numbers beginning with the passage of Zeta and throughout Nov. Two **Harlequin Ducks** passed Beach 8 at Presque Isle, *Erie* 11/18. The 11/12 cold front brought the largest numbers of **Buffleheads**, as might be expected, with 124 in *Bucks* and 205 in *Somerset* on that day, along with many other reports of smaller numbers in between. Small numbers of **Common Goldeneyes** appeared in at least 10 counties; like Greater Scaup, this was a little better than average for the fall.

Some remarkable counts of **Common Merganser** were made in late Nov: 100 in *Adams* 11/22, 322 in *Armstrong* 11/21, and 165 in *Tioga* 11/26. Perhaps even more notable for the early date were the 97 in *Forest* 10/5. **Red-breasted Merganser** followed along with Greater Scaup and Common Goldeneye. All three species are more common generally in spring, but all three appeared in small but better than average numbers this fall. Despite a few appearing the last week of Oct prior to Zeta, the vast majority of reports of Red-breasted Merganser commenced with the passage of Zeta and continued throughout Nov. Another of the more notable results of Hurricane Sandy in 2012 that Zeta was able to somewhat duplicate was the fallout of **Ruddy Ducks**; high counts in 2020 included 379 in *Butler* 10/30, 300 in *Cambria* 10/29, 193 in *Somerset* 10/29, 59 in *Washington* 10/29, and 268 in *Westmoreland* 10/29-31. At Prince Gallitzin SP in *Cambria*, Ruddy Duck numbers built to as high as 600 by late Nov.

Most compilers who mention them lament the decline of **Ruffed Grouse**, but they were widely reported once again, this season in about 30 counties. Among these

was a report of a gray morph bird in *Bucks* 10/18, rare both for the county and the morph; the latter is rare for anywhere in Pennsylvania. They do apparently remain in at least fair numbers in the under-birded northern tier of the state, where this season they were reported from 24 locations in *Tioga*, for example. They were also well-reported in *Warren*. **Eared Grebes** preceded Zeta by a few days in *Butler* and *Erie*, one was in *Lycoming* on the early date of 9/15, and another appeared in *Erie* 11/16. **Red-necked Grebe** appeared in 10 counties, boosted by the passage of Zeta 10/29, a common theme so far in this report. A bird in *Montgomery* 10/29 provided that county its first Oct report since 1983.

**Eurasian Collared-Doves** continued at established areas in *Berks* and *Franklin*, and they were also noted in two different locations in *Cumberland*. Compilers continue to juxtapose the occurrence of Yellow-billed Cuckoo with that of Black-billed. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** continued to be very well reported in the fall season; *Bucks* for example mentioned reports from 28 locations of at least 45 birds. Late Yellow-bills appeared in *Adams* 10/26 and *Montgomery* 10/25. **Black-billed Cuckoo** continued its trend into uncommon status, though this season it was perhaps somewhat better reported than usual. Many reports were of birds continuing in breeding areas (or potential breeding areas) from summer, however, and very few were detected after mid-Sep. **Common Nighthawks**, likewise, continued to receive special attention from compilers and birders alike. This season was much like the last, with dedicated “nighthawkwatch” sites having either a below average season or their outright worst on record, but reports were made in at least 38 counties nevertheless, including a handful of one-off totals of more than 100 birds seen variously in migration in late Aug and early Sep. As usual a handful of lingering **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were noted in seven counties, up to the last in *Somerset* 10/1.

Late **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** included one in *Center* to 11/12, one in *Delaware* to 11/21, and two others that hung on until the last week of Oct in *Bucks* and *Montgomery*. It was no repeat of 2012 for **Rufous Hummingbird**, but it was a great season nevertheless, with 12 birds across 10 counties. Among these were a banded bird in *Somerset* that eluded recapture, and a second bird that was captured and banded, and later recaptured in *Delaware* (the state). A **Calliope Hummingbird** was present in *York* 10/23-12/19, providing the sixth record for the state and the fifth since 2012.

One of the more fascinating reports of the season was the discovery and tracking of a **Yellow Rail** in *Chester* 10/7 by way of an infrared camera. See the *Chester*

report for more information. **Virginia Rails** lingered into Nov in *Bucks*, *Chester*, and *Northampton*. Unfortunately dead birds (victims of window strike, undoubtedly) were found in different areas of Pittsburgh 8/26 and 10/26, providing an interesting, if grim, insight in to the protracted timing of their migration in western Pennsylvania. **Soras** were fairly widespread once again, another species that birders are generally more tuned in to these days than in the past. Late birds lingered into early Nov in *York* and *Blair*. **Common Gallinule** sightings in the eastern counties continued this fall, with one in *Bucks* to 8/9, one in *Delaware* to 11/13, and one that nearly made it to the last day of the season in *Philadelphia*, where they were present 10/19-11/29. **Sandhill Cranes** were widespread again, the new normal for them in the state. Quite interesting was a flock of 63 in *Lancaster* 10/31, a few days after Zeta's passage. Only the long-standing *Lawrence* Sandhill stronghold was able to top this count, barely, where the season max was 67 on 11/3.

There were pockets of good shorebirding in atypical locations around the state, for example, a farm pond in *Chester* and low water levels at Yellow Creek State Park in *Indiana* both provided county listers in those areas with some exciting birds. Even the famed Imperial Pond in *Allegheny* had something of a throwback season this year, due to excessively dry conditions in Aug that created some habitat at the pond edges. But many of the more famous sites, such as the Conejohela Flats, John Heinz N.W.R., and Shenango River Reservoir had very unfavorable conditions. Gull Point remains a difficult area to visit, but birders who did make the effort were rewarded with the usual good birding the Point always has on offer. **American Avocet** had an amazing flight, with sightings in nine counties. Almost all of these passed through in August, and Gull Point, as usual, led the way with a season total of 36. **Black-bellied Plover** also had a nice showing in 10 counties. Interesting among these were one detected by nocturnal flight call at Little Gap, *Carbon* 11/14, and late birds were in *Northampton* 11/14 and in *York* to 11/15. **American Golden-Plover** put in a downright amazing show, with reports in 20 counties. Best of all was a flock of variable size that collected in *Cumberland* on Duncan Road and nearby for most of Oct, which topped out at 107 birds 10/17. One very late bird appeared in *Lycoming* 11/12 with the strong cold front that day, which was also bringing large waves of birds not typically seen alongside golden-plovers in Pennsylvania, like Tundra Swan. A very late **Semipalmated Plover** was in *Indiana* 11/10. **Piping Plovers** continued at Gull Point from the summer



to the end of Aug. Best of all shorebirds was a **Wilson's Plover** reported at Gull Point 8/15, but unfortunately documentation had not been submitted to PORC as of this writing.

**Upland Sandpipers** were limited to the Lancaster Airport in *Lancaster*, where they are annual, and Dixon Meadow Preserve, *Montgomery*, where one was detected 8/30. Besides the season total of 9 at Gull Point, the only other **Whimbrel** was one in *Bucks* 8/4 during the passage of Isaias. Four **Hudsonian Godwits** at the aforementioned farm field in *Chester* 10/12-15 were a nice treat for birders in that area, and quite accommodating with their four-day stay. One was also in *York* 10/6-21. The only **Marbled Godwit** was one at Gull Point for a few days in early Aug. Besides *Erie*, where they are relatively common, the only other **Ruddy Turnstones** were located in *Delaware* around the time of Isaias (but not during) and in *Lancaster*. *Erie* also hosted the only **Red Knots**, where the season total was 6 from 8/8-9/13. A few **Purple Sandpipers** were noted during the Sunset Point waterbird count in *Erie* in Nov. The Imperial Pond gifted *Allegheny* with its first **Stilt Sandpiper** since 2008, one of 13 counties reporting the species. Away from *Erie*, **Sanderling** was seen in seven other counties, including, again, *Allegheny* (although not at Imperial), providing that county with its fifth record. There was a significant spike in sightings of **Dunlin** around the state beginning a few days ahead of the arrival of Zeta, interestingly. They were found in 16 counties on 10/26 alone, and although a few of those records were of birds already in place by that date, many of them were new arrivals. Top count was 104 in *McKean* 10/27. Their appearance *en masse* at the end of Oct was another echo of the passage of Hurricane Sandy, although why they preceded Zeta by a few days is something of a mystery. It was not merely the "weekend birding" phenomenon either, since 10/26 was a Monday. There was a weak cold front that passed through the state 10/25, but not one nearly as powerful as are usually associated with huge statewide fallouts.

**Baird's Sandpiper** was found in just nine counties, something of a surprise considering generally good season for shorebirds generally. Flooded conditions at the Conejohela Flats and John Heinz N.W.R. meant no exceptionally large counts of **Least Sandpiper**. One Least lingered in *York* into the winter period. **White-rumped Sandpiper** had a modest showing in eight counties, including late birds in *York* 11/14 and *Crawford* 11/24. The much sought after **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was noted also in eight counties, including one in *Montgomery* that garnered much attention 10/10-11. A **Pectoral Sandpiper** was quite late in *Washington* 11/3, but this bird was bested

by 2 in *Crawford* that tarried to 11/19. Like Least Sandpiper, reports of **Semipalmated Sandpiper** were underwhelming, except for the 765 that were counted on the Delaware River in *Delaware* during the passage of Isaias 8/4. **Western Sandpiper** was found in *Berks*, *Delaware* (the day after Isaias), *Franklin*, and *Philadelphia*.

A late **Short-billed Dowitcher** was confirmed by call in *Bucks* 10/26; otherwise most every other report was made in Aug as usual. In both of the latter counties, the sighting was made on 8/22. **Long-billed Dowitcher** was noted in seven counties, including long-staying birds in both *Allegheny* and *Indiana*, which delighted many western Pennsylvania birders. An **American Woodcock** was still in *Sullivan* 11/8. Very late **Spotted Sandpipers** have been noted more often than not in recent years; this year the trend continued with birds in *York* 11/1 and in *Montgomery* on the heels of the 11/12 cold front. Also quite late were a **Solitary Sandpiper** in *Lycoming* to 11/8 and a **Lesser Yellowlegs** in *Crawford* 11/5. **Willetts** in *Centre* 8/4 (following Isaias) and in *Westmoreland* 8/30 both caused local excitement. The only other reports were of two different birds in *Erie*. Many **Greater Yellowlegs** lingered into Nov, with Nov reports in at least nine counties.

All three phalaropes showed exceptionally well, though interestingly, only a **Red Phalarope** in *Lycoming* 10/29 (Zeta) was associated with any of the three major weather events of the season. **Wilson's Phalarope** was at Gull Point in Aug, where the species is relatively rare, and also in *Lancaster*, *Lebanon*, and *Mercer*. **Red-necked Phalarope** was noted in six counties, including one in *Washington* that represented the third for that county. Besides the *Lycoming* bird, **Red Phalaropes** were also noted in *Bucks*, *Clearfield*, and *Erie*. Both birds in *Erie* appeared a few days after the 11/12 cold front, but not during.

Hurricane Isaias's potential contribution to the official Pennsylvania state list came in the form of a **South Polar Skua** photographed at Hog Island, *Delaware* 8/4. The record is under PORC review. Jaegers were few, with none noted at the Sunset Point waterbird count this season. One **Parasitic Jaeger** was at the Conejohela Flats 8/29, and the remains of an immature **Long-tailed Jaeger** were found at Gull Point 9/18. *Erie* hosted the exceedingly rare **Black-legged Kittiwake** this year, with sightings around Presque Isle on three dates 10/27-11/18. The state's potential 27th and 28th **Sabine's Gulls** were represented by single birds at Presque Isle 9/18 and Green Lane Park, *Montgomery* 10/10. *Erie* also hosted the only **Little Gulls** of the season, with reports from Presque Isle 11/1 and 11/17-

18. A **Franklin's Gull** in *Centre* 10/30-11/2 was somewhat late but not radically so, but one at the Conejohela Flats 8/3, around the time of Isaias, was very early. **Laughing Gulls** were in *Crawford* 9/5 and in the last week of Oct; otherwise all reports were from the southeastern counties as usual. Early arriving **Iceland Gulls** included one very early bird in *Delaware* 10/25 and another more on-time individual in *Dauphin* beginning 11/25. Glaucous Gull was unreported; sightings of either of these white-winged gulls before the end of Nov are rare, but of the two, Glaucous is far more unusual. Interesting was the sighting of a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary 11/23, as was a **Great Black-backed Gull** there 11/1. Another quite astray Great Black-back was in *Tioga* 10/13, just the second for that county.

Terns took to the spotlight this season, especially in early Aug during and after the passage of Isaias. Most interesting among many reports of **Caspian Tern** were the count of 174 birds heading to roost along the Delaware River in *Philadelphia* the evening of 8/29, 13 at Peach Bottom, *Lancaster* 10/12, a late date for such a number, and 5 in *Fayette* 10/27, curiously a few days ahead of the arrival of Zeta. **Least Tern** is recorded far less than annually these days, so reports from *Bucks* 8/4, *Delaware* 8/6, and *Philadelphia* 8/4 were noteworthy, all obviously associated with Isaias. Unfortunately only the *Philadelphia* bird was submitted to PORC. Another exceptional find was the 3 **Gull-billed Terns** on the Delaware River in *Delaware* 8/8, seen by independent observers in two different locations on the river. In the early 2010s, reports of **Black Terns** seemed to drop off from typical numbers, but they have put in solid showings more often than not in the past 6-8 years. The fall of 2020 was another good one, with sightings in 11 counties, nearly all of which were made in Aug or the first week of Sep. One somewhat late bird was in *Somerset* 9/29. **Common Tern** also showed well, with reports in 12 counties, while **Forster's Tern** was noted in 10. Notable among the Commons was a report of 25 in *Cambria* 10/29 during the heavy rain brought by Zeta, and among the Forster's were very high late-season counts at Peach Bottom, *Lancaster*, where a count of 84 on 10/16 swelled to 145 birds by 10/27. As many as 22 hung on until 11/8. **Royal Terns** were found several times on the Delaware River, beginning with one in *Bucks* during Isaias 8/4 that was followed by one in *Delaware* 8/11. Very interesting were three late season sightings, probably all of the same bird, in *Delaware* and *Philadelphia* 10/21-25, again curiously a few days before Zeta. Fortunately, two of these sightings were submitted to PORC for review.

It was a phenomenal season for **Red-throated Loon** with reports in no fewer than 15 counties. Nearly all sightings were in Nov. A fascinating report of at least 3500 **Common Loons** flying inland off Lake Erie was made at Walnut Creek, *Erie* 11/17, and this was no all-day event—all 3500 moved overhead in the span of just 20 minutes! A much smaller but still impressive count of 276 Common Loons was made at the Stone Mountain hawkwatch, *Huntingdon* 11/2. The spate of recent sightings of **Brown Booby** in the Commonwealth continued this fall, with one in *Bucks* 8/2 and another (or the same) in *Philadelphia* 8/21-22. One of the most random (and unfortunate) records in recent years came in the form of a juvenile **Northern Gannet** found wrecked in the parking lot of a food processing facility in *Lancaster* during heavy fog the morning of 10/22. It had an injured shoulder and was unable to fly, and was taken to a rehabber later that day, but unfortunately it eventually succumbed. **Great Cormorant** returned to the Delaware River in *Philadelphia* as early as 10/4, but they were curiously not reported in *Bucks* at all prior to the end of Nov. There were three sightings of **Brown Pelican**, beginning with one photographed at Prince Gallitzin State Park, *Cambria* 8/1. Next was a sight report of one by non-birders in the waters off Gull Point 8/24, then another sight report of one flying toward Pittsburgh on the Allegheny River in *Allegheny* 9/11. The *Allegheny* bird was not photographed, but interestingly, a Brown Pelican was photographed on the Ohio River near Parkersburg, West Virginia just three days later on 9/14. Nor was the *Erie* bird photographed, but one had been frequently reported earlier in the summer at a few locations along Ohio's long Lake Erie shoreline. An **American White Pelican** in *Crawford* 10/14 represented the only report.

**American Bittern** was reported in 10 counties over a wide span of dates, the latest of which was one in *Chester* 11/16. A **Least Bittern** that lingered at Gull Point, *Erie* for about three weeks beginning in late Aug was the only one reported. A **Great Egret** in *Crawford* 11/14 was quite late for the far northwestern part of the state. Also notable was another procrastinating in *Allegheny* to 11/7. It was a relatively poor year for **Snowy Egret** for whatever reason, with sightings in only five counties and none after the end of Aug, though one in *Huntingdon* in mid-Aug was a notable rarity for the area. **Little Blue Heron** was seen in seven counties, and in better numbers. The most far afield from their usual range in the southeastern counties was one in *Northampton* 8/3. Quite unusual was the fact that **Cattle Egret** managed to outdo both of these species this season, a rare occurrence

indeed, with sightings in eight counties, though two counties (*Dauphin* and *Cumberland*) shared the same flock of 11 in late Oct. Most unexpected were one in *Warren* 10/25 and one that stayed quite late in *York* to 11/27. A very late **Green Heron** in *Crawford* 11/9 bested the handful of birds that stayed into the second half of Oct in three other counties. **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** were limited to a few in *Chester*, *Cumberland*, and *Lancaster*, the latter of which stayed well into Oct. Two different **White Ibises** were seen in three counties: one at Long Arm Reservoir in both *Adams* and *York* 8/22-25, and one in *Cumberland* 8/6-8. Reports of **Glossy Ibis** were also somewhat off (like *Snowy Egret*), this season found just a few times in four southeastern counties, though one of those was a continuing bird from summer in *Franklin*, a little farther west than they are usually found.

**Black Vultures** have for a while been making inroads into counties west of their normal range, and that trend seemed to accelerate this season. *Allegheny*, *Washington*, *Fayette*, *Indiana*, *Jefferson*, and *Somerset* all had at least one sighting, as did *Warren* in the far northwest. One in *Montgomery* 8/28 was wearing a wing tag so old that the numbers had disappeared, but the color of the tag indicated origination in West Virginia. **Osprey** was seen in the second half of October in six far western counties, noticeably more than usual. Most interesting among **Golden Eagles** was one in *Somerset* 11/26 wearing a cellular transmitter that it had been fitted with several years ago in Alabama; it was also seen to migrate through *Somerset* the year it was tagged, though in spring. **Northern Harrier** was reported away from traditional wintering areas a bit more often this year than usual, though in no discernable pattern. A **Northern Goshawk** was seen chasing a **Peregrine Falcon** in *Mifflin* 10/29, one of the few species that can actually contend with a Peregrine, the world's fastest bird. Two **Swallow-tailed Kites** entertained dozens of birders in both *Bucks*, where one continued from the summer to 8/8, and in *Cumberland* where one spent a week near Shippensburg 8/14-21. A late **Broad-winged Hawk** was noted in *Bucks* 11/8. **Rough-legged Hawks** showed quite well prior to the end of Nov, with reports away from hawkwatches in 12 counties, including an early bird in *Warren* 10/28.

**Barn Owls** were noted in *Centre*, *Crawford*, *Cumberland*, *Greene*, and *Lancaster*, and notably, were confirmed breeding in both *Greene* and *Crawford*. Five **Snowy Owls** appeared in Nov, in *Cameron*, *Erie* (2 birds), *McKean*, and *Northampton*, but it did not turn into a major invasion year as winter wore on. The bird in *Northampton* was found dead the day after it was first sighted. Like

**Northern Harrier**, **Short-eared Owl** was seen more frequently than usual, and in a few cases in some very unusual circumstances. One chose a townhouse balcony in Malvern, *Chester* as a day roost 11/21, and another spent time in a backyard in the city of *Erie* 10/25. Another struck a window in *Philadelphia* 11/20, but fortunately was rehabbed and released. All told they were reported in at least 16 counties. It was expected to be an "up" year for **Northern Saw-whet Owl**, and returns from Pennsylvania's banding stations bore this out. It was not a record-setting year by any means, but season counts were good nevertheless, for example, 97 at the Allegheny Front, 84 in *Chester*, and 191 in *Schuylkill*. Birders generally are much better at detecting this species than in the past, and this fall's widespread reports of one or 2 here and there across the state were another indicator of a good flight. Quite out of place were Saw-whets in the Philadelphia city center in Nov, where they apparently took advantage of the prodigious rodent population there.

**Red-headed Woodpeckers** were again well-reported, welcome news for this much-beloved species. As happened in 2018 for inscrutable reasons, another large flight of southward-heading **Red-bellied Woodpeckers** was noted at Pennypack on the Delaware in *Philadelphia*, where 61 were counted 10/1 and 93 flew past 10/3. In 2018, the big day was 114 on 10/12, which at the time was the third-highest count ever submitted to eBird anywhere in the United States. This phenomenon is more than intriguing, and makes one wonder if it might happen, as yet undetected, at other sites around the state. Two **Monk Parakeets** were also at Pennypack on the Delaware 9/14; this species is not on the official Pennsylvania state list nor is it even a review species at present, despite a handful of past records in the state and a large, well-established population nearby in the greater New York City area. **Merlins** were all over the place, and as far south as *Allegheny* and *Bucks* 8/1.

Flycatchers made big news, with potential second-ever Pennsylvania records of two different species, unfortunately neither of which proved to be "chasable". First was a remarkable male **Vermilion Flycatcher** photographed at John Heinz N.W.R., *Philadelphia* 10/9, apparently (to the disappointment of many chasers) not just a one-day wonder, but a one-hour wonder. The other was a **Gray Kingbird** photographed at the Penn-Warner Tract in *Bucks* 10/2; similarly, it was not seen after its initial discovery. The state's previous Vermilion Flycatcher was present for two days in late Oct 1991 at Job's Corners, *Tioga*, and the previous Gray Kingbird was present for about a week in Dec 2004

in Pomeroy, *Chester*, the latter likely succumbing to harsh weather that set in near the end of its stay.

A late **Great Crested Flycatcher** was in *Montgomery* 10/3. Another *Myiarchus* yet a month later than that was photographed in *Juniata* 11/1, but unfortunately could not be identified to species, nor was it recovered. An **Eastern Kingbird** in *Bucks* 10/3 was extraordinarily late, and the latest ever for *Bucks*. **Western Kingbirds** were reported in *Crawford* (no doc), *Lebanon* (no doc), and *Delaware* at the Philadelphia International Airport on both 8/22 and 9/19. Another yellow-bellied *Tyrannus* flycatcher was photographed in *Berks* 9/13 but it also could not be identified to species. In keeping with the general theme of potentially rare flycatchers photographed but identified only to genus, an *Empidonax* flycatcher was photographed in *Bucks* 11/26, and was certainly either a “Western” flycatcher or a Yellow-bellied, but final determination was not made in this case either. Speaking of **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers**, they were widely reported once again, and are mentioned here with the usual disclaimer that juvenile *Empidonax* can be extremely confusing in the fall, even for seasoned birders. A late **Eastern Wood-Pewee** tarried in *Bucks* 10/17, and one was also in *Greene* 10/15. Very late, especially for a western county, was an **Eastern Phoebe** in *Beaver* 11/28. A prized species in fall, **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was noted in at least 30 counties, but among all these only one in *Indiana* 10/3 was even mildly late.

In a season when many species invaded from the north, it was not unsurprising that a handful of **Northern Shrikes** appeared before the end of Nov. Among reports in five counties were rather early birds in *Erie* 10/26 and *Clearfield* 10/17. There is usually not much to report among vireos, and that was the case again this fall. The only significantly late birds were **Red-eyed Vireos** in *Delaware* 11/1 and *Huntingdon* 11/7. Also notable was a record-shattering season total of 641 newly banded Red-eyes at Powdermill Nature Reserve, *Westmoreland*, which more than doubled the previous top season count of 304 in 2004. Birders usually focus on finding **Philadelphia Vireo** in the fall, since they are so difficult to come by in the spring, and the widespread reports in 32 counties indicated another successful effort. Many compilers mentioned a particularly good season for them this fall.

Fall **Blue Jay** migration is most easily visible in some southeastern counties (or at least most frequently sought in those counties); this year the top count was 1176 in *Montgomery* 10/5. The **Fish Crow** population in Pittsburgh continues to grow, however they are still mostly confined to the eastern side of the

city. Many double-digit counts were made in that area, topping out at 56 on 8/21. The massive expansion of **Common Raven** throughout the state is so established at this point that it's not worth much further comment, except in the extreme northwest where they are still relatively uncommon. Nevertheless, *Lawrence*, *Mercer*, and *Crawford* all saw multiple reports. Only *Erie* remains as the lone holdout county not reporting the species with great regularity, though there are certainly more than a few reports even in *Erie* over the past five years or so.

A **Horned Lark** was heard in Schenley Park, *Allegheny* 10/30. One might think this is one of only a handful of records for this very un-lark-like urban park, but in fact the species not only occurred there in the early 20th century, but they actually nested on the infield of the racetrack (which still exists) in those years, and indeed the Schenley larks were the subject of an early paper on the species' nesting behavior, authored by George Sutton in 1927 and published in the *Wilson Bulletin*. Noteworthy records among swallows are typically mostly in the form of late birds, but there was one giant exception this year: the season's other tropical storm-induced potential first for Pennsylvania, a **Violet-green Swallow** that passed Hog Island, *Delaware* 10/29 during the passage of Zeta. Documentation was submitted to PORC. Reports of late fall **Cave Swallows** have dropped off in recent years, but one was nicely photographed in *Centre* 10/26 this season. **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** was present in *Montgomery* through the season, and late birds were also in *Bucks* 11/16 and *Franklin* 11/2. A **Bank Swallow** in *Philadelphia* 10/9 was also rather late, as was a **Cliff Swallow** noted at Sunset Point, *Erie* 10/18, which set a new late date for the waterbird count there by 17 days. A straggling **Barn Swallow** was still in *Bucks* 11/13, the day after the big 11/12 cold front.

There was a minor irruption of **Black-capped Chickadees** into typically Carolina-only areas in the southeast. This being an even-numbered year, the once-every-two-years push of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** was expected, but the magnitude of the irruption this year was nevertheless quite impressive, easily their best showing since the memorable fall of 2012. All told the species was reported on a whopping 7610 different eBird checklists, and in all 67 Pennsylvania counties. They appeared as early as the first week of Aug, and showed a clear peak in mid-Oct. Hopefully birders got their fill of them this year, because if their long-standing, on-one-year, off-the-next pattern holds, the fall of 2021 will bring slim pickings nuthatch-wise. A **House Wren** was still in *Philadelphia* 11/24, and

an early **Winter Wren** appeared in *Montgomery* 9/15. The nomadic and unpredictable **Sedge Wren** was found in six counties, including in *Erie* were two pairs that very likely bred this summer continued, and in *Lebanon*, where up to 3 singing birds also continued from the summer. **Marsh Wrens** were widespread and continued into Nov in a few areas, including Wingfield Pines, *Allegheny* where they have frequently stayed late in recent years. A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was quite late in *Philadelphia* 11/8-10.

The Great Rarity Parade of Fall 2020 included the thrushes (and their near relatives) as well. No fewer than four headliners were comprised of the following: 2 **Mountain Bluebirds** photographed at Karthus Elk Refuge in *Clearfield* 11/21, a **Townsend's Solitaire** at Caledonia State Park 11/12 that stayed well into the winter (and in just about the exact same location that a Varied Thrush wintered in 2004-05), a **Bicknell's Thrush** recorded on nocturnal migration over Elkins Park, *Montgomery* 10/3, and the biggest surprise of all, a one-day wonder **Northern Wheatear** beautifully photographed at Gull Point, *Erie* 9/18. Aside from this (admittedly, a pretty big “this”), reports of thrushes were fairly unremarkable. An **Eastern Bluebird** was observed apparently nest building in *Mercer* 10/14. Nocturnal migration was monitored once again by the *Clarion* compiler, who reported the biggest night this season was 9/23, when as many as 1400 calls were heard in just 20 minutes during the pre-dawn hours. A **Veery** in *Bucks* 10/31 was quite late, as was a **Swainson's Thrush** in *Franklin* 11/15. On the other end of the season, a **Hermit Thrush** in *Philadelphia* 8/28 was early by about a month. **Gray Catbirds** lingered into the last week of Nov in *Beaver*, *Crawford*, and *Montgomery*, and **Brown Thrashers** were still in both *Lycoming* and *Montgomery* 11/30. It was an excellent season for **American Pipit**, with dozens of double-digit and several triple-digit counts from most areas of the state. The earliest birds arrived by the first week of Sep.

The irruption of **Evening Grosbeaks** was, as mentioned, probably the most extensive for Pennsylvania since the heydays of the 1970s and early 1980s. In all they were recorded in 62 counties; the unlucky five that missed, at least as of the end of Nov, were *Beaver*, *Mifflin*, *Union*, *Venango*, and *Wyoming*. Since comparisons to the fall of 2012 have been apt throughout this report, we'll note that in their amazing flight of 2012, Evening Grosbeaks were found in “only” 33 counties, certainly impressive, but a far cry from the 2020 flight. The vanguards of 2020 were 3 birds at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary 10/5, which were followed by a 9-day gap, and then the invasion started in

earnest the week of 10/14-21, during which they were sighted in eight counties. Only a handful of flocks statewide exceeded 50 birds, but grosbeaks were so widespread that birders certainly didn't mind. The top report was 130 at Colyer Lake, *Centre* 10/29, curiously enough during the passage of Zeta. Hurricane Sandy passed through Pennsylvania on 10/30/2012, and that particular day also saw many sightings of Evening Grosbeaks by hurricane chasers. Quite a few of the reported birds were one-and-done sightings, but enough of them stuck around in various places, and well into the winter, that just about everyone had the opportunity to add them to their lists.

Evening Grosbeak, of course, was not the only northern species to invade. There were also big movements of **Purple Finch**, **Common Redpoll**, **Pine Siskin**, and **Red Crossbill**. The **Purple Finch** flight was more or less typical compared to other good years for them. **Common Redpolls** were reported in an impressive 46 counties and in every corner of the state, but mostly in small and frequently fleeting numbers. Many of those 46 counties saw just one or two reports. There were some large flocks, but the only ones that exceeded 100 birds were noted in *Luzerne* (in multiple locations) and *Wyoming*. **Pine Siskin** was another story altogether; like Red-breasted Nuthatch, they were found in all 67 counties, and in truly impressive numbers. To quote the big numbers, they were included on over 8100 eBird checklists, 15 of which had totals in excess of 300 birds. Top count of all was 505 at Hawk Mountain 10/24, which was right in the thick of the flight's peak.

The final big newsmaker was **Red Crossbill**, noted in 34 counties around the state. Like Common Redpoll, many of these counties had just one or a handful of sightings, and not many saw birds linger in one place for extended periods of time. Again like redpolls, most of the biggest flocks were found in northern counties, especially *Centre* and *Luzerne*. Widely interspersed among the Red Crossbills were small numbers of **White-winged Crossbills**, noted in 13 counties primarily in the north, but they were also found in *Berks*, *Cumberland*, *Chester*, and *Montgomery* in the south. Both species moved through almost exclusively in Nov. Rarities were not to be left out either. Sight reports of **Pine Grosbeak** were made at Little Gap, *Carbon* 10/31 and 11/4, though neither was submitted to PORC for review. Perhaps surprising considering the number of Common Redpoll sightings was just one of **Hoary Redpoll**, photographed in *McKean* 11/3. The only other note of any curiosity among finches was the two separate abnormally high counts of **House Finch** on opposite sides of the state: 185 in

*Allegheny* 9/15 and 179 in *Philadelphia* 11/3.

**Snow Buntings** and **Lapland Longspurs** were not to be left out of the bonanza from the north. The former were noted in 18 counties by the end of Nov, an exceptional season, and the latter in eight counties, also an above average flight. A very early longspur was in *Monroe* 9/25-28, otherwise nearly all of both species did not appear until Nov. **Clay-colored Sparrow** was found in *Chester*, *Indiana* (where it stayed all winter), *Luzerne*, *Montgomery*, *Philadelphia*, and *Pike*. One may argue which of the potential state firsts this season was the most remarkable—the South Polar Skua, the Violet-green Swallow, or the **Brewer's Sparrow** that was captured and banded at Powdermill Nature Reserve 9/4. See the excellent commentary on this bird in the *Westmoreland* report. The bird stayed until 9/10 and was seen by many happy birders during that week. Another rare species that not only showed up in 2020, but showed up in numbers, was **Lark Sparrow**, with single birds recorded in five counties, three of which (*Clinton*, *Luzerne*, and *Washington*) were in Aug. Not one but 2 **White-winged Juncos** were banded at Presque Isle, *Erie* 10/24. A few compilers specifically noted a good season for **Vesper Sparrow**, especially in the southeast. A **Le Conte's Sparrow** in *Bucks* 10/10 seemed to be still wearing ratty juvenile feathers and still showed what appeared to be a fleshy gape. Seeking **Nelson's Sparrow** is now an annual ritual for Pennsylvania birders, and traditional locations once again contributed most of the season's sightings in eight counties, all in Oct except for singles that lingered to early Nov in *Lancaster* and *Lehigh*. Both **Fox Sparrow** and **Lincoln's Sparrow** had better than average seasons; perhaps along with Vesper, these good flights were more a function of the number of hours birders spent in the field this season than anything else. A very late Lincoln's was in *Allegheny* 11/26. A **White-throated Sparrow** tagged in New Brunswick 10/15 was detected by MOTUS towers in Maine 10/18, Connecticut 10/30, and finally at Nockamixon State Park, *Bucks* 10/31. A late, window-killed **Yellow-breasted Chat** was found in *Berks* 10/19.

Most notable among blackbirds was a very early **Yellow-headed Blackbird** in *Bucks* 8/17; another was in *Cumberland* 10/4. Latest **Bobolink** was one in *Lycoming* 10/31. November **Baltimore Orioles** were found in *Bucks*, *Montgomery*, *Philadelphia*, and *York*. Three total orioles were seen in Nov in *Montgomery*, one of which was seen only briefly such that Bullock's could not be ruled out. In this crazy season of rarities, perhaps Bullock's was the more probable of the two. **Rusty Blackbird**, like a lot of

species, was reported better than usual, though as usual the majority of reports were of fewer than 10 birds at once.

Of course, warblers hopped on the rarity train as well this season. A **Swainson's Warbler** continued from the summer to 8/7 in *Indiana*, and no fewer than 4 **Black-throated Gray Warblers** were found, all photographed, one each in *Fulton*, *Lebanon*, *McKean*, and *Philadelphia*. The *Lebanon* bird returned to the same yard in which it spent last winter, first seen this fall 9/15. All the others appeared after mid-Oct. Overall, more compilers praised a good fall migration for warblers than cursed a bad season.

A late **Louisiana Waterthrush** was still in *Allegheny* 9/16. **Northern Waterthrush** was well-represented in several counties, and included a late bird in *Monroe* 10/1. Evidence of both the generally good flight and many birders in the field were the reports of the typically uncommon **Golden-winged Warbler** in 18 counties, by far the best season in this editor's 14-year tenure. Among them were three **Brewster's Warblers**, and one **Lawrence's Warbler** in *Delaware* 8/27. Late **Black-and-white Warblers** were in *Bucks* 11/4, *Monroe* 11/12, and two separate birds were in *Philadelphia* 11/25 and 11/26. Even **Prothonotary Warbler** was noted in eight counties, far more than usual for this early-departing breeder. The budworm warblers—**Tennessee Warbler** (especially), **Bay-breasted Warbler**, and **Cape May Warbler**—all had fine seasons in most counties. A few Tennessee Warblers tarried into Nov in southeastern counties, a Cape May was still in *Montgomery* 11/23-27, and a Bay-breasted, the least likely of the three to linger, was still in *Allegheny* 11/14.

**Orange-crowned Warbler** was widespread, including several Nov birds; the usual disclaimer that also goes along with Yellow-bellied Flycatcher is reiterated here. A **Nashville Warbler** appeared in *Somerset* 11/12 (day of the big cold front) and in *Monroe* 11/14. Both **Connecticut Warbler** and **Mourning Warbler** had their best seasons in memory too, in this case probably more a function of hours in the field than anything else. Among reports of **Kentucky Warbler** in seven counties were one late-singing bird in *Allegheny* 9/10-11 and one far north of their usual range in *Warren* 8/16. A **Common Yellowthroat** in *Lawrence* 11/20 was exceptionally late for the west. Similarly, a **Northern Parula** in *Bedford* 11/9 was quite late for that part of the state. *Philadelphia* often hosts late warblers, so a **Magnolia Warbler** there 11/8 was unexpected only for the date, not the county. Several **Yellow Warblers** lingered into Oct, including birds in *Beaver* 10/11, *Crawford* 10/5,

*Huntingdon* 10/22, and *Montgomery* 10/7 and 10/11. Another extreme outlier was a **Chestnut-sided Warbler** in *Lycoming* 11/21, later than the latest **Blackpoll Warbler** (a species that frequently makes it to November), which was in *Delaware* 11/13. A **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was found foraging around residence hall buildings at Delaware Valley Univ. in *Bucks* 11/4, but later birds were seen in both *Delaware* and *Philadelphia*. A **Palm Warbler** was still in *Montgomery* 11/27, and an **Eastern Palm Warbler** was found in *Somerset* 10/11. A few **Pine Warblers** remained in *Montgomery* deep into Nov, a sign of things to come later in the winter in that area of the state. An anomalously high count of 10 **Yellow-throated Warblers** was made (with photographs)

in *Huntingdon* 9/1. Last **Black-throated Green Warblers** were in both *Lancaster* and *Bucks* 11/6. **Canada Warbler** was not well reported for whatever reason, but **Wilson's Warbler** was, including very late birds in *Lancaster* 11/22 and *Monroe* 11/24.

**Summer Tanagers** were found in Sep in *Adams*, *Clarion*, *Montgomery*, and *Northampton*. There was a sight report of a **Western Tanager** in *Crawford* 9/11, but it was not submitted to PORC for evaluation. Late **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were found in *Butler* 11/5-13 and *Montgomery* 11/29, but much more interesting was a bilateral gynandromorph banded at *Powdermill*, *Westmoreland* 9/24. **Blue Grosbeak** was found in 10 counties, the majority of which were birds

continuing from summer, including in *Allegheny* where they summered for the second straight year. In *Lancaster*, a **Painted Bunting** returned to a Mohnton yard for the fourth winter out of the past five, this year beginning 11/29. **Dickcissel** is usually recorded on the order of about 5-6 times in the fall season. As a fitting cap to a wild season, at least 20 different birds were found in 11 different counties, and at least four of these were detected by nocturnal flight call.

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**Baird's Sandpiper** at Imperial Grasslands, *Allegheny* 25 August. (Mark Vass)



**Semipalmated Plover** at Beaver Run Reservoir, *Westmoreland* 29 August. (Mark McConaughy)



**American Golden Plover** at Metz Rd., *Berks* 29 August (Matt Wlasniewski)



**Forster's Tern** at Colyer Lake, *Centre* 4 August (Debra Rittelmann)

## Birds of Note – August through November 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** – *Bucks*: one at Pine Run Dam 10/20 (ph. August Mirabella); *Butler*: one at Lake Oneida and Thorn Res. 11/23-27 (Kimberly Berry); *Lehigh*: one at Albutis Road 10/31 (Jeff Vinosky) and 11/8 (James Funk) and one at Fogelsville Quarry 11/20 (Sara Busch); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 10/15-17 (Paul Heveran, m.ob.); *Northampton*: one at the Greinar Rd. ponds 11/22 (Billy Weber); *York*: one at Lake Redman 11/9-15 (David Arrow, Chad Ehrhart, et al.).

**Greater White-fronted Goose** – *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 11/5-15 (Len Hillegass, m.ob.).

**Brant** – *Berks*: one at School Road Pond 10/14 (Jo Spilde); *Bucks*: one adult at Markey Park 10/31-11/1 (ph. August Mirabella), 44 passed the Penn-Warner Tract 10/25 (ph. Andrew Harrington), and 8-12 were at Nockamixon SP 11/1 (Paul Cooper); *Carbon*: 7 at Beltzville SP 10/26 (Jason Horn); *Delaware*: up to 8 along the Delaware River 10/25 (m.ob.); *Erie*: 32 passed Sunset Point 10/30 (Jerry McWilliams); *Fayette*: one at Greenlick Run Lake 10/25-29 (Kerry Bell, m.ob.); *Franklin*: one at Antrim Common Ponds 10/31 (Gavin Anderson, Carl Garner, Chris Payne, Rebecca Perucci); *Lancaster*: 2 at Middle Creek W.M.A. 11/12 (Bruce Carl); *Luzerne*: 7 at Penn Lake 10/26 (Rick Koval, eBird); *McKean*: 40 at Kinzua Bridge SP 10/30 (Matthew Schenck, eBird); *Perry*: 6 at SGL 170 on 10/28 (Steve Schmit); *Philadelphia*: up to 30 along the Delaware River 10/25 (m.ob.); *Schuylkill*: four sightings at Hawk Mountain North Lookout in Oct, with a high count of 23 on 10/5 (Hawk Mountain data), and one at Sweet Arrow Lake 11/5 (Denise Donmoyer); *Wayne*: several large flocks totaling 650 birds at Equinunk 10/24 (Dave Altmiller, eBird).

**Trumpeter Swan** – *Cambria*: one at Prince Gallitzin SP through the season (m.ob., eBird); *Crawford*: one at Miller Ponds 8/1 (Ron Leberman) and one at Erie N.W.R. 10/10 (Tomas Nonnenmacher, Ken Pinnow); *Cumberland*: pair continued from the summer at Big Spring 9/16 and 9/22 (Vern Gauthier); *Lancaster*: one juvenile at Middle Creek W.M.A. 11/27-29 (Rick Robinson, m.ob.), same bird as in *Lebanon*; *Lebanon*: one juvenile at Middle Creek W.M.A. 11/28 (Jonathan Heller), same bird as in *Lancaster*; *Monroe*: 2 continued in the Pocono Summit area (Todd Underwood, Bruce Johnson); *York*: one at Codorus SP 11/22 (David Arrow).

**Eurasian Wigeon\*** – *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 10/11 (Debbie Beer, Linda Timlin, no doc).

**Harlequin Duck\*** – *Erie*: 2 at Beach 8, Presque Isle SP 11/18 (Ross Gallardy, no doc).

**Eared Grebe** – *Butler*: one at the South Shore of Lake Arthur 10/27 (Aidan Place, Michael David); *Erie*: one passed Sunset Point 10/26 (Jerry McWilliams) and one at Shades Beach in Harborcreek Twp. 11/16 (Jason Horn); *Lycoming*: one at

Rose Valley Lake 9/15 (Bobby Brown, Deb Brown, Brett Matlock).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove** – *Berks*: 15 at Shartlesville 9/27 (Matt Wlasniewski) and 18 near Hamburg 11/25 (Matt Wlasniewski); *Cumberland*: 2 along PA-997 west of PA-223 9/4 (Vern Gauthier) and one in Lower Frankford Twp. 8/1 (Tony Arnold, Ian Gardner); *Franklin*: top counts of the established colony here were 39 at Greencastle Res. 8/4 (Bill Oyler) and 42 at nearby Zarger Road 8/18 (Matt Kello).

**Rufous Hummingbird** – *Allegheny*: one adult male briefly in a Hampton Twp. yard 11/24 (Liz Spence); *Berks*: one male in Exeter Twp. was banded 11/11 (Sandy Lockerman), and one in Boyertown 10/17-11/27 (Ron Wagner) was not captured and banded; *Clearfield*: one male at DuBois 9/26-11/30 (Don Nixon) was banded; *Franklin*: one adult female at a feeder near Scotland 10/9 remained through the season (Kathy Lauver); *Lancaster*: one immature female at Quarryville beginning 11/4 was banded (Sandy Lockerman), and one adult male in Pequea beginning mid-Oct was not banded (Sandy Lockerman); *Lycoming*: one at a feeder near Salladasburg 9/25 (Bobby Brown, Deb Brown, Bob Brown); *Northampton*: one at a feeder in Bethlehem 10/30 (Jason Horn, Matt Sabatine); *Schuylkill*: one at a private residence 8/15-19 (Rich Rieger) was banded; *Somerset*: one previously banded female at Berlin 9/30 (ph. Kevin Chumpitaz Trujillo), but it eluded recapture, and one not previously banded female at a residence a few miles away 9/30 (Jeff Payne) was banded 10/5 and was later recaptured in Delaware (state); *York*: one immature male at Seven Valleys 10/10-12/4 was banded (Sandy and Gary Lockerman) and another immature male at York New Salem 10/5-11/30 was banded (Sandy and Gary Lockerman).

**Calliope Hummingbird\*** – *York*: one at Fairview Township 10/23-12/19 was banded (Sandy and Gary Lockerman, doc submitted).

**Yellow Rail\*** – *Chester*: one juv. found pre-dawn using thermal imaging at ChesLen Preserve 10/7 (ph. Ross Gallardy, doc submitted).

**American Avocet** – *Adams*: 2 at Long Pine Run Reservoir 8/20 (Annemarie Sciarra, Bob Koontz, Bill Oyler); *Bucks*: one at Core Creek Park 8/12 (Dennis Passman *fide* Dwight Molotsky); *Centre*: 3 at Black Moshannon SP 9/28 (Constance Miksits, Greg Moyer); *Clarion*: one at Kahle Lake 8/12-15 (Barbara Keister, m.ob.); *Crawford*: 2 at Pymatuning SP 8/17 (ph. David Keith); *Erie*: season total of 36 at Gull Point 8/2-16 (Jerry McWilliams, Mary Birdsong); *Franklin*: one at Kriner Road 9/3 (Carl Garner, Bob Koontz, Bill Oyler, Chris Payne, Rebecca Perucci); *Lycoming*: one at Williamsport Dam 8/11 (Bobby Brown, et al.); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 8/28 (Paul Heveran); *Tioga*: one at

the Ives Run Rec. Area 9/6-7 (Ken Cooper, Lisa Doud, Dale and Karen Plumley, Gary Tyson).

**Piping Plover\*** – *Erie*: 5 at Gull Point 8/30, presumably continuing from summer (Nathaniel Sharp, eBird, *doc submitted*).

**Wilson's Plover\*** – *Erie*: one at Gull Point 8/15 (Mary Birdsong, *no doc*).

**Upland Sandpiper** – *Lancaster*: one at the Lancaster Airport continued to 8/1 (Jeff Hopkins); *Montgomery*: one at Dixon Meadow Preserve 8/30 (Paul Driver).

**Whimbrel** – *Bucks*: one along the Delaware River in Bensalem Twp. 8/4 (Devich Farbotnik); *Erie*: season total of 9 at Gull Point 8/1-9/16 (m.ob.).

**Hudsonian Godwit** – *Chester*: 4 at the Glenville Farm Pond 10/2-15 (Ross Gallardy, m.ob.); *York*: one in the Hanover area 10/6-21 (Dean Newhouse, et al.).

**Marbled Godwit** – *Erie*: one at Gull Point for about five days beginning 8/3 (Mary Birdsong).

**Ruddy Turnstone** – *Delaware*: one at Hog Island Road 8/1-2 (Debbie Beer, Adrian Binns) and 8/13 (Rob Fergus); *Erie*: up to 12 at Gull Point 8/3-9/19 (Jerry McWilliams, eBird); *Lancaster*: one at the Conejohela Flats 8/20-23 (Steve Schmit, m.ob.), and 3 there 8/29 (Ross Gallardy, Jason Horn, Zach Millen).

**Red Knot** – *Erie*: season total of 6 at Gull Point 8/8-9/13 (m.ob.).

**Purple Sandpiper** – *Erie*: one on the breakwaters at Sunset Point 11/1 (Robert Scribner), one flew past Sunset Point 11/14 (Jerry McWilliams), and 2 at Sunset Point 11/27 (Jerry McWilliams).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper** – *Berks*: one at Mertz Road 8/26 (Jane Wolfe, Peter Wolfe) and another there 9/1 (Matt Wlasniewski, Rudy Keller); *Erie*: one at Gull Point 8/23 (Jennifer Ferrick), one the Union City Dam 8/25 (Robert Scribner, Jennifer Ferrick), one at Gull Point and Sunset Point 9/3-6 (Ken Nicholson, Jerry McWilliams), and one at Gull Point 9/17 (Robert Scribner); *Indiana*: one at Yellow Creek SP 9/15-16 (Lee Carnahan, Sue Dickson, Patience Fisher, Gloria Lamer, Ken Truitt); *Lancaster*: one at New Holland 9/10 and 4 there 9/11 (Zach Millen); *Montgomery*: one at Dixon Meadow Preserve 10/10-11 (Kristen Johnson); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 10/9 (Damon Orsetti, George Armistead).

**Western Sandpiper** – *Berks*: one at Mertz Road 9/10 (Matt Wlasniewski); *Delaware*: one at Hog Island Road 8/3 (Al Guarente, Rob Fergus), 8/18 (Adrian Binns), and 8/24 (Rob Fergus); *Franklin*: one at Antrim Common Ponds 8/22 (Carl Garner); *Philadelphia*: 2 at the Army Corps of Engineers compound 8/22 (George Armistead, Holger Pflücke, Liam Hart, Patrick McGill).

**Long-billed Dowitcher** – *Allegheny*: one juvenile at Imperial 9/6-13 (MV, m.ob.); *Bucks*: one at the Penn-Warner Tract 8/6 (ph. Andrew Harrington); *Erie*: one at Gull Point 9/10-17 (Connor Vara, Jennifer Ferrick, Robert Scribner); *Indiana*: one at Yellow Creek SP 9/26-10/23 (Michael David, m.ob.), and 13 on the spit near the observatory at Yellow Creek 10/13 (Lee Carnahan, Patience Fisher, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee); *Lancaster*: one near Narvon 8/11 (Frank Haas), and one at the Conejohela Flats 10/12 (Jason Horn); *Lawrence*: one juvenile at Shaner Road 9/13-26 (Michael David); *Susquehanna*: one at Hollister's Pond 9/17-20 (Tom Norville, Evan Mann, et al.).

**Willet** – *Centre*: one at Bald Eagle SP 8/4 (Matt Kello, et al.); *Erie*: one at Gull Point 8/8-17 (Mary Birdsong) and one at Sunset Point 9/2 (Jerry McWilliams); *Westmoreland*: one at Mammoth Park 8/30 (ph. Matthew Juskowich, m.ob.).

**Wilson's Phalarope** – *Erie*: one at Gull Point 8/23-24 (Shannon Thompson, Robert Scribner); *Lancaster*: one at the Sporting Valley Turf Farm 8/28-29 (Meredith Lombard); *Lebanon*: one at Middle Creek W.M.A. 8/18 (Ted Nichols, Steve Ferreri, Zach Millen) and one there 9/7 (Steve Ferreri);

*Mercer*: one at the Shenango Wildlife Area propagation ponds 8/25-27 (Bill Winkler, m.ob.).

**Red-necked Phalarope** – *Bucks*: one at Bradford Dam 9/19 (ph. August Mirabella); *Erie*: one at Gull Point 9/17 (Robert Scribner) and one at Sunset Point 9/21 (Jerry McWilliams); *Indiana*: 3 at Yellow Creek SP 9/25 (Pam Illig); *Lancaster*: one at the Conejohela Flats 9/3 (Jonathan DeBalko, Jason Horn); *Mercer*: one at the Shenango Wildlife Area propagation ponds 8/21 (Michael David); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 9/12 (Len Hillegass); *Washington*: three at Cross Creek County Park 9/5 (ph. Matthew Juskowich).

**Red Phalarope\*** – *Bucks*: 2 at the Penn-Warner Tract 9/13 (Bernie Carra Druckenmiller ph., *fide* Andrew Harrington, *doc submitted*) were not known to the birding community until photos were posted online sometime after the sighting; *Clearfield*: one at DuBois Res. 11/2-6 (John Forcey, m.ob., *doc submitted*); *Erie*: one at Sunset Point 11/15 (Jerry McWilliams, Robert Scribner, Jennifer Ferrick, *doc submitted*), and one at Vista 1 at Presque Isle 11/17 (Jason Horn, *doc submitted*); *Lycoming*: one at Williamsport Dam 10/29 (Bobby Brown, Deb Brown, *doc submitted*).

**South Polar Skua\*** – *Delaware*: one passed Hog Island Road on the Delaware River 8/4 during the passage of Hurricane Isaiiah (Jason Horn, ph. Ross Gallardy, *doc submitted*).

**Parasitic Jaeger\*** – *Lancaster*: one at the Conejohela Flats 8/29 (Jason Horn, Zach Millen, *doc submitted*).

**Long-tailed Jaeger\*** – *Erie*: remains of an immature were found and retrieved from Gull Point 9/18 (Robert Scribner), its remains were delivered to the Tom Ridge Environmental Center (*doc submitted*).

**Black-legged Kittiwake\*** – *Erie*: one immature at Sunset Point 10/27 (Jerry McWilliams, *doc submitted*) and one in Presque Isle Bay 11/16 (Matthew Sabatine) and 11/18 (Zach Millen) (*doc submitted*).

**Sabine's Gull\*** – *Erie*: one photographed off Beach 11 at Presque Isle 9/18 (Nathan Hall, *doc submitted*); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 10/10 (Paul Heveran, *doc submitted*).

**Little Gull** – *Erie*: one adult off Sunset Point 11/1 (Robert Scribner, et al.) and one or 2 adults in Presque Isle Bay and at the south pier 11/17 (Dave Wilton) and 11/18 (Connor Vara).

**Franklin's Gull\*** – *Centre*: one at Bald Eagle SP 10/30-11/2 (Julia Plummer, et al., *doc submitted*); *Lancaster*: one photographed at the Conejohela Flats 8/3 (Steve Schmit, *doc submitted*).

**Least Tern\*** – *Bucks*: one at the Penn-Warner Tract 8/4 during the passage of Hurricane Isaias (Devich Farbotnik, ph. Andrew Harrington, *no doc*); *Delaware*: one at Governor Printz Park 8/6 (Robert Karchnyak, *no doc*); *Philadelphia*: one at Pennypack on the Delaware 8/4 (George Armistead, Holly Merker, Liam Hart, Victoria Sindlinger, *doc submitted*).

**Gull-billed Tern\*** – *Delaware*: 6 at Hog Island Road 8/8 (Rob Fergus, Debbie Beer) and 3 downriver at Essington also 8/8 (Adrian Binns) (*doc submitted*).

**Black Tern** – *Bucks*: one at Nockamixon SP 8/4 (Bill Etter); *Butler*: one at Moraine SP 8/16 (Martin Carlin), 3 there 8/21 (Kimberly Berry, Mary Alice Koenke, Glenn Koppel, Martin Carlin), and one at the Lake Arthur North Shore 9/6 (Martin Carlin); *Cambria*: one at Prince Gallitzin SP 8/7 (Tony DeSantis, eBird); *Delaware*: seven reports (m.ob.); *Indiana*: 3 at Yellow Creek SP 9/8 (Lee Carnahan, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee); *Lancaster*: regular at the Conejohela Flats 8/2-9/8 (m.ob.) with a top count of 22 on 9/3 (Jonathan DeBalko, Jason Horn, eBird); *Lebanon*: one at Middle Creek W.M.A. 8/4 (Steve Ferreri) and 2 there 9/1-2 (Steve Ferreri, Jonathan Heller, et al.); *Lehigh*: one at Alburts Road 9/1 (Brandon Swayser); *Philadelphia*: one at the Navy Yard 8/12 (Robert Karchnyak); *Schuylkill*: one at Landingville Dam and Marsh 8/2 (Thomas Buehl Jr.); *Somerset*: one at Quemahoning Reservoir 9/29 (Linda Greble); *Wayne*: 2 at White Oak Pond 9/2 (Chris Fischer, eBird).

**Common Tern** – *Bucks*: one along the Delaware River at Bensalem Twp. 8/4 (Devich Farbotnik); *Butler*: one at the Lake Arthur North Shore 9/7 (Martin Carlin); *Centre*: one at Bald Eagle SP 8/4 (Matt Kello, Kurt Engstrom); *Cambria*: 25 at Prince Gallitzin SP 10/29 (Aaron Yappert, eBird); *Chester*: one at Marsh Creek SP 10/1-2 (Evan Coates); *Delaware*: five reports (m.ob.); *Fayette*: one at Greenlick Run Lake 8/29 (Kerry Bell); *Erie*: up to 29 at Gull Point and around Presque Isle 8/6-9/20 (m.ob., eBird) and one at Sunset Point 11/2 (Jerry McWilliams, eBird); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 8/7 (Paul Heveran); *Philadelphia*: one at the Navy Yard 8/4 (Brian Quindlen, Mariel Taggart); *Somerset*: one at Quemahoning Reservoir 8/19 (Linda Greble); *Tioga*: one at Hamilton Lake 9/18 (Ken Cooper, Lisa Doud); *York*: 3 at Long Arm Reservoir 8/26 (David Arrow).

**Royal Tern\*** – *Bucks*: one at the Penn-Warner Tract 8/4 (Jim Hartley, no doc); *Delaware*: one at Hog Island Road 8/11 (Al Guarente, Rob Fergus, doc submitted) and another there 10/25 (Debbie Beer, Adrian Binns, Al Guarente; Zach Millen, Ross Gallardy, Melissa Gallardy, no doc); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz N.W.R. 10/21 (Rebecca Syring, doc submitted) and one at the Army Corps of Engineers compound 10/25 (Holger Pflücke, et al., no doc).

**Brown Booby\*** – *Bucks*: one along the Delaware River at Bensalem Twp. 8/2 (ph. Devich Farbotnik, doc submitted); *Philadelphia*: one along the Delaware River 8/21 (Liam Hart) and 8/22 (Liam Hart, Patrick McGill) (doc submitted).

**Northern Gannet\*** – *Lancaster*: one with an injured shoulder was found in the parking lot of a food processing plant in Lancaster in thick fog on the morning of 10/22 (fide Zach Millen, doc submitted), taken to a rehabber but later succumbed.

**Great Cormorant** – *Philadelphia*: several reports beginning with one at Pennypack on the Delaware 10/4 (George Armistead, Liam Hart).

**American White Pelican** – *Crawford*: one at Ford Island 10/14 (Ron Leberman).

**Brown Pelican\*** – *Allegheny*: one flying downstream on the Allegheny River at Tarentum 9/11 (Al Bowers, no doc); *Cambria*: one at Prince Gallitzin SP 8/1 (ph. Tony DeSantis, eBird, doc submitted); *Erie*: one photographed from a fishing boat off Gull Point 8/24 (fide Jennifer Ferrick, no doc).

**Least Bittern** – *Erie*: one at Gull Point 8/23-9/16 (Jennifer Ferrick, eBird).

**Snowy Egret** – *Bucks*: 2 at Rohm and Haas, Bristol 8/9 (Devich Farbotnik) and one at the Morrisville Levee 8/21 (Kerry Loux); *Chester*: 3 at Octoraro Res. 8/1 (Larry Lewis); *Delaware*: one at Hog Island Road 8/29-30 (Al Guarente); *Huntingdon*: one on the Juniata River at Huntingdon 8/16-26 (Max Muller, Jacob Owings); *Lancaster*: up to 7 at Octoraro Res. in Aug (m.ob.).

**Little Blue Heron** – *Bucks*: recorded at five locations mostly in late summer (m.ob.); *Chester*: at least 2 at Glenville Farm Pond and Marsh Creek SP in the second half of Aug (m.ob.) and one along the Schuylkill River 9/2-3 (Ross Gallardy, et al.); *Delaware*: seven reports (m.ob.); *Lancaster*: up to 4 at Octoraro Res. in Aug (m.ob.); *Montgomery*: present at three locations 8/1-13 (m.ob.); *Northampton*: one on the Delaware River in Upper Mt. Bethel Twp. 8/3 (Sherri LaBar); *Philadelphia*: one at Cobbs Creek Park 9/10-12 (Tony Crossdale, et al.); *York*: one at Lake Redman and nearby 8/5 (Carolyn Mathur, Bob Reiter) and one at Codorus SP 10/18-22 (m.ob.).

**Cattle Egret** – *Bucks*: one at the Penn-Warner Tract during the second half of Oct (Jim Hartley); *Cumberland*: 11 along the Susquehanna River in Wormleysburg 10/24, same birds as in *Dauphin* (Ian Gardner); *Dauphin*: 11 along the Susquehanna River in Harrisburg 10/24, same birds as in *Cumberland* (Ian Gardner, Ramsay Koury, Steve Schmit); *Delaware*: one at

Hog Island Road 10/30 (Rob Fergus); *Lancaster*: one at Susquehannock SP 11/21 (Tom Amico); *Montgomery*: 7 at Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust 8/12 (Kevin Roth); *Philadelphia*: one at the Navy Yard 10/21 (Liam Hart); *Warren*: one among cattle in Columbus 10/25 (Emily Smith); *York*: one near Craley 11/27 (fide Chuck Berthoud).

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** – *Chester*: one on the Schuylkill River Trail 9/2-7 (Scott Stollery); *Cumberland*: one immature at Letort Spring Natural Trail in Carlisle 8/23 and 8/27 (Ian Gardner, Kelsey Miller); *Lancaster*: one juvenile at Noel Dorwart Park for about a month beginning mid-Sep (Dan Keener, m.ob.).

**White Ibis\*** – *Adams*: one at Long Arm Reservoir 8/22-25 (Derek Hudgins, Dean Newhouse, doc submitted), same bird as in *York*; *Cumberland*: one juv. found by canoe along Conodoguinet Creek near Newville 8/6-8 (Bill Franz, doc submitted); *York*: one juv. at Long Arm Reservoir 8/22-25 (Dean Newhouse, Chuck Berthoud, Derek Hudgins, Nancy Heiser, doc submitted), same bird as in *Adams*.

**Glossy Ibis** – *Berks*: one at the Reading Regional Airport 8/9 (Jo Spilde); *Franklin*: 3 continued from the summer at Bender's Farm to 8/1 (Bill Oyler, Gavin Anderson, Miriam Weaver); *Lancaster*: one at the Lake Clarke portion of the Susquehanna River 8/8 (Meredith Lombard), and presumably a continuing bird at the Conejohela Flats 8/8-9/10 (Steve Schmit, m.ob.); *Montgomery*: one at Dixon Meadow Preserve 8/14 (Steve Grunwald).

**Swallow-tailed Kite\*** – *Bucks*: one continued from the summer in Wrightstown Twp. to 8/8 (m.ob., doc submitted); *Cumberland*: one northeast of Shippensburg 8/14-21 (Vern Gauthier, m.ob., doc submitted).

**Snowy Owl** – *Cameron*: one near Driftwood 11/13 (Anna Donato); *Erie*: one at Gull Point 11/21 (Roger Donn, Jennifer Ferrick) and one photographed by the headlights of a car in Union City (Brett Smith); *McKean*: one near Eldred 11/16-17 (Barbara Gee, eBird); *Northampton*: one at Bethlehem 11/9 (ph. Dana Lindsey) was found dead the next day.

**Long-eared Owl** – *Erie*: one at Presque Isle SP 11/1 (Roger Donn); *McKean*: one heard at the Willow Bay Recreation Area 10/26-27 (Martin Carlin, eBird); *Schuylkill*: one heard near Hidden Valley 11/7 (Nate McKelvie); *Warren*: one at Beanfields 11/12 (Susan Schenck, Matthew Schenck).

**Monk Parakeet** – *Philadelphia*: 2 at Pennypack on the Delaware 9/14 (Holger Pflücke).

**Empidonax sp.** – *Bucks*: one photographed in Tinicum Twp. 11/26 could not be identified to species, but was either a "Western" Flycatcher or a very late Yellow-bellied (ph. Andrew Harrington).

**Vermilion Flycatcher\*** – *Philadelphia*: one male at John Heinz N.W.R. 10/9 (ph. Daniel Kalamarides, doc submitted) would represent the second record for Pennsylvania if accepted.

**Myiarchus sp.** – *Juniata*: one photographed near Academy 11/1 (Alyssa Dean) was not identified to species.

**Western Kingbird\*** – *Crawford*: one at Woodcock Lake 9/17 (Joshua Heiser, no doc); *Delaware*: one at the Philadelphia Airport 8/22 (Jason Horn, doc submitted) and one or the same there again 9/19 (Rob Fergus, doc submitted); *Lebanon*: one at Fort Indiantown Gap 9/20 (Ted Nichols, no doc).

**Gray Kingbird\*** – *Bucks*: one photographed at the Penn-Warner Tract 10/2 (ph. Mark Gallagher, doc submitted).

**Tyrannus sp.** – *Berks*: a yellow-bellied kingbird was photographed on Berk Road 9/13 (Bart Smith, Phil Smith) but it could not be identified to species.

**Northern Shrike** – *Clarion*: one near Wolfs Corners 11/25 (W. Dwayne DelGrande); *Clearfield*: one south of Anderson 10/17 (Jerod Skebo); *Elk*: one at Briggs Hollow Road 11/24 (Andrew Sidelinger); *Erie*: one along Dead Pond Trail 10/26 (Aaron Yappert), one at SGL 314 on 11/28 (Ron Burkert), and one in Venango Twp. 11/29 (Joe Susi); *Forest*: one at Buzzard Swamp 11/23 (Oscar Nigam).



- Violet-Green Swallow**\* – *Delaware*: one at Hog Island Road during the passage of Tropical Storm Zeta 10/29 (Jason Horn, Matthew Sabatine, *doc submitted*).
- Cave Swallow**\* – *Centre*: one at the PSU Arboretum 10/26 (Joe Gyekis, *doc submitted*).
- Sedge Wren** – *Bucks*: one at Silver Lake Park 9/27 (ph. Dawn Deener); *Chester*: one at Kirkwood Preserve 10/22-23 (Ross Gallardy); *Erie*: continued from the summer at Erie Bluffs SP to at least 8/16 (m.ob.); *Lebanon*: up to 3 at Middle Creek W.M.A. 8/1-17 (Pat and Richard Williams, et al.); *Mercer*: one at Hidden Fields, Shenango Res. 10/10 (Michael Williams); *Montgomery*: one at Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust 9/20 (Paul Driver).
- Mountain Bluebird**\* – *Clearfield*: 2 birds, a male and a female (with the female photographed) at Karthus Elk Refuge 11/21 (John Forcey, *doc submitted*).
- Townsend's Solitaire**\* – *Franklin*: one at Caledonia SP 11/12 stayed through the period (Bob Koontz, *doc submitted*).
- Bicknell's Thrush**\* – *Montgomery*: one recorded on nocturnal migration over Elkin's Park 10/3 (Paul Driver, *doc submitted*).
- Northern Wheatear**\* – *Erie*: one seen briefly and photographed at Gull Point 9/18 (Nathan Hall, *doc submitted*).
- Pine Grosbeak**\* – *Carbon*: one heard-only at Little Gap Hawk Watch 10/31 (Jason Horn, Adam Miller, Jon Mularczyk, *no doc*), and one flyover female/immature at Little Gap Hawk Watch 11/4 (Jason Horn, *no doc*).
- Evening Grosbeak** – Recorded in 62 counties.
- Hoary Redpoll**\* – *McKean*: one at Willow Bay Recreation Area 11/3 (ph. Matthew Schenck, Susan Schenck, Tessa Rinehart, eBird, *doc submitted*).
- Red Crossbill** – Recorded in 34 counties.
- White-winged Crossbill** – Recorded in 13 counties.
- Clay-colored Sparrow** – *Chester*: one at Kirkwood Preserve 10/27 (Richard Horwitz); *Indiana*: one in a Shelocta yard 11/30 (Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee); *Luzerne*: one at Plymouth Flats 10/2 (Rick Kova, eBird); *Montgomery*: one at the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust 9/19-24 (Paul Driver) and one at Dixon Meadow Preserve 10/8-15 (Jason Fehon); *Philadelphia*: one at Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park 9/29 (Annie Reeves) and 10/17 (Robert Karchnyak), and also recorded periodically at Pennypack on the Delaware 9/15-11/8 (m.ob.); *Pike*: one at the Old Heller Farm 10/11 (Mike Schall).
- Brewer's Sparrow**\* – *Westmoreland*: one captured and banded at Powdermill Nature Reserve 9/4 (Kevin Chumpitaz, Annie Lindsay, *doc submitted*) and seen by many through 9/10 would provide a first for Pennsylvania if accepted.
- Lark Sparrow**\* – *Bucks*: one at Maple Knoll Farms 9/24 (ph. Richard Smith, *doc submitted*); *Clinton*: one seen briefly at a community baseball field in Mill Hall 8/22 (Matthew Schenck, *doc submitted*); *Luzerne*: one at the Francis E. Walter Reservoir 8/31 (ph. Paul Nale, eBird, *doc submitted*); *Philadelphia*: one at Benjamin Rush SP 11/3 (Dennis Mora, *no doc*); *Washington*: one along McElree Rd. near Washington Reservoir #4 on 8/12 (Sayre Greenfield *fide* Roy Ickes, *no doc*).
- White-winged Dark-eyed Junco**\* – *Erie*: 2 banded at Fry's Landing 10/24 (Laura-Marie Koitsch, Connor Vara, *no doc*).
- Le Conte's Sparrow**\* – *Bucks*: one photographed at Bradford Dam 10/10 (Dennis Hallman, Kevin Hallman, *doc submitted*).
- Nelson's Sparrow** – *Bucks*: one or 2 recorded periodically at Pine Run Dam and Bradford Dam 9/24-10/14 (m.ob.); *Dauphin*: one on the Susquehanna River in the upper portion of the county 10/25 (Steve Schmit); *Huntingdon*: one at Old Crow Wetlands 10/6 (Jacob Owings) and one there again 10/14 (Sean McLaughlin); *Lancaster*: one at the Bainbridge Islands 10/18 (Eric Witmer), one at Noel Dorwart Park 10/26-28 (Seth McComsey), and one at the Chestnut Grove Natural Area 11/2 (Randall Nett); *Lehigh*: one at DeSales University 11/9 (Paul Heveran, eBird); *Luzerne*: one at Susquehanna Riverlands 10/3 (ph. Kayley Dillon, eBird); *Montgomery*: one at Dixon Meadow Preserve 10/10-11 (Scott Northey, Kris Benarcik) and 10/28 (Al Guarente); *Northampton*: one at Minsi Lake 10/15 (Matt Sabatine); *Washington*: one at Greencove Wetlands 10/4-5 (Shannon Thompson).
- Yellow-headed Blackbird**\* – *Bucks*: one at Peace Valley Park 8/17 (August Mirabella, *doc submitted*); *Cumberland*: one male along Ridge Road north of Shippensburg 10/4 (Marian Sensensing, *no doc*).
- Golden-winged Warbler** – *Allegheny*: one at Frick Park 9/12-13 (Nick Liadis); *Berks*: one at the Hawk Mountain North Lookout 9/12 (Ken Walsh); *Bucks*: one each at Doylestown Twp. 8/26 (Nickie Goldstein), Core Creek Park 9/18 (Chris Mortensen), and Tamanend Community Park 9/25-26 (Mike Grubb, Richard Smith); *Chester*: five reports from late Aug to early Sep (m.ob.); *Cumberland*: one each at PGF 9/1 (Bob Koontz, Rebecca Perucci), SGL 230 on 9/4 (Ian Gardner), and SGL 169 on 9/7 (Timothy Johnson); *Delaware*: one at Newlin Grist Mill Park 8/25 and 8/29 (Jessica Shahan); *Franklin*: one at the Heisey Road Old Orchard 8/22 (Bill Oyler) and one at a residence on Heisey Road 9/3 (Bob Keener); *Indiana*: one at Blue Spruce County Park 9/7 (Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, Flo McGuire, Jim McGuire, Ray Winstead); *Jefferson*: one captured and banded at the Top Hat Cut Research Site 9/14 (Scott Stoleson); *Juniata*: one at SGL 88 on 8/21 (Mark Nale, Darla Shank); *Lebanon*: one at SGL 145 on 8/30 (Jonathan Heller, Mary Coomer) and one along Michter's Road 9/1 (Jim Fiorentino); *Montgomery*: one at Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust 9/26 (Mike Grubb); *Philadelphia*: one at Pennypack Park 8/29 (Patrick McGill) and 2 at Tacony Creek Park 9/20 (Holger Pflücke); *Sullivan*: one at Ricketts Glen SP 9/11 (Sean Minnick); *Tioga*: one at Asaph 8/23 (John Corcoran); *Wayne*: one at SGL 159 on 9/24 (Chris Fischer, eBird); *Westmoreland*: one captured at Powdermill Nature Reserve 8/13; *York*: one at Rocky Ridge County Park 8/26 (Frank Blum) and 9/7 (Dennis Weaver).
- Brewster's Warbler** – *Cumberland*: one at SGL 230 on 9/4 that looked mostly like Blue-winged but with gold wing bars (ph. Ian Gardner); *Franklin*: present 8/31-9/1 at the Heisey Road Old Orchard (Bill Oyler, Bon Koontz, Chris Payne); *Philadelphia*: one at Pennypack Park 8/30 (Holger Pflücke).
- Lawrence's Warbler** – *Delaware*: one at Ridley Creek SP 8/27 (Jeff Gordon).
- Swainson's Warbler**\* – *Indiana*: one continued from the summer along the West Penn Trail to 8/7 (Lauren diBiccari, Alex Lamoreaux, *doc previously submitted*).
- Black-throated Gray Warbler**\* – *Fulton*: one in McConnellsburg 11/4 (ph. Tracy Mosebey, *doc submitted*); *Lebanon*: one returned to a home on Clear Springs Road for the second fall in a row, present 9/15-26 (Nate Felty, Justin Felty, et al.) and was there again 11/5-9 (Justin Felty, Ross Gallardy) (*doc submitted*); *McKean*: one at Marilla Reservoir 11/2 (Tessa Rhinehart, eBird, *doc submitted*); *Philadelphia*: one at Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park 10/20 (John Smallwood, *doc submitted*).
- Summer Tanager**\* – *Adams*: one at Gettysburg National Military Park from mid-Sep to 9/19 (Callan Murphy, Tony Arnold, Bill Oyler, Andy Wilson, *doc submitted*); *Clarion*: one in Curlsville 9/27 (Eric Schill, *no doc*); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 9/12 (Jason Horn, *doc submitted*); *Northampton*: one at the Little Gap Hawk Watch 9/5 (Adam Miller, Michael Schall, *no doc*).
- Western Tanager**\* – *Crawford*: one at McMichael Road, Conneaut Marsh 9/11 (Isaac Field, Steve Rotkovecz, *no doc*).
- Painted Bunting**\* – *Lancaster*: an adult male returned to a Mohnton home for the fourth winter of the past five, this year

on 11/29 (*vide* Zach Millen, *doc submitted*) and remained into the winter.

**Dickcissel** – *Centre*: one heard on nocturnal migration at Bellefonte 10/22 (Julia Plummer); *Chester*: one at ChesLen Preserve 10/7 (Ross Gallardy, Michael Hartshorne), one at Kirkwood Preserve 10/16 (Ross Gallardy) one at Bucktoe Creek Preserve 10/28 (Hank Davis) and one at the Embreeville Mill Property 10/28 (Judy Ford); *Delaware*: one detected by nocturnal call at Wallingford 8/27 (Rob Fergus), one at a Rose Valley feeder 10/9 (Karen Beeman), and one in morning flight at Wallingford 10/18 (Rob Fergus); *Lancaster*: one identified by flight call at Lancaster 9/12 (Derek Stoner) and one at the Chestnut Grove Natural Area 10/19-21 (Randall Nett); *McKean*: one at the Poor Farm 9/30 (Matthew Schenck, Susan Schenck); *Montgomery*: one heard at Pennsburg 8/31 (Paul Heveran), one heard at Franconia Twp. 10/5 and 10/14 (Scott Godshall, vr.), and at least 4 during three discontinuous spans at the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust 9/7-10/25 (Paul Driver, Linda Widdop, Lori Gladulich); *Northampton*: one at Hentzelman Park 10/11 (Terry Master); *Philadelphia*: more frequent than in recent years including records from three locations in Nov (m.ob.); *Tioga*: one at Cowanesque Lake 9/12 (Drew Weber), and one at Leonard Harrison SP 9/12 (Ella Weiskopff, John Corcoran); *Westmoreland*: one identified by call at Powdermill Nature Reserve 10/1 (Aaron Yappert).

## Birds of Note, Spring 2020 Addendum

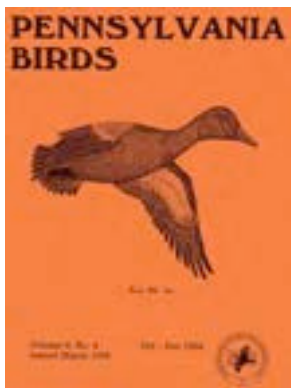
**Painted Bunting\*** – *Montgomery*: one bird photographed at a residence near Green Lane Park 5/22 was initially identified as a Scarlet Tanager, but it was later discovered that it was actually a female-type Painted Bunting (Lisa Cameron, *doc submitted*);

## Birds of Note, Summer 2020 Addendum

**Snowy Egret** – *Chester*: one at Octoraro Res. 7/29 through the season was seen on both the *Lancaster* and *Chester* sides (Larry Lewis).

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## 25 Years Ago in *Pennsylvania Birds*



### Volume 8, No. 4.

Gene Wilhelm discussed the status of Upland Sandpiper in western Pennsylvania.

Ted Floyd speculated on what the next new breeding species would be in Pennsylvania. Of the ten species he listed, he was right on three of them – Double-crested Cormorant, Mississippi Kite, and Clay-colored Sparrow.

Rare birds reported included Trumpeter Swan, Cinnamon Teal, Western Kingbird, Green-tailed Towhee, Lark Sparrow, and LeConte's Sparrow

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

## Photographic Highlights



The sixth state record, and fifth since 2012, this cooperative **Calliope Hummingbird** (not to mention the very cooperative host, Jady Conroy) was at New Cumberland, York 23 October (here 25 November) into December. (*Brett Matlock*)



One of two in York during the season, this **Rufous Hummingbird** was in Seven Valleys 8 (here 11) October through 4 December. (*Bob Reiter*)



**Black Scoter** at Quaker Lake 28 October, a rarity for *Susquehanna*. (*Nancy VanCott*)

*Color printing*

*Sponsored by the Bird Screen Company*

*(More photos inside back cover)*



Rare in *Fayette*, this **Brant** was at Jacobs Creek Park 25-29 (here 27) October; the third eBird record for the county, all from this location. (*Kerry Bell*)



Providing the third eBird report for the county, this **American Avocet** was at Kahle Lake, *Clarion* 12-13 (here 13) August. (*Carole Winslow*)



**Black-bellied Plover** at Prince Gallitzin SP, *Cambria* 26 (here 27) - 30 September; third eBird record for the county, all at this location. (*Pam Illig*)



A *Philadelphia* rarity, this **American Golden-Plover** at Pennypack on the Delaware 15 September was caught in dramatic silhouette against a sun made hazy by dust blown west from California wild fires. (*George Armistead*)



This **Hudsonian Godwit**, one of two for the season in the state (the other in *Chester*) rotated among three locations in southwestern York 6-21 (here 6) October, providing about the fourth county record. (*Dean Newhouse*)



Seldom reported in *Fayette*, this **Dunlin** was at Jacob's Creek Park 26-29 (here 27) October. (*Kerry Bell*)



**Least Sandpiper** at Two Mile Run County Park, *Venango* 22 August. (*Jeffrey Hall*)



**Pectoral Sandpiper** at Yellow Creek SP, *Indiana* 26 September. (*Michael David*)



**Long-billed Dowitcher** at Imperial Grasslands, *Allegheny* 6-13 (here 7) September, the fourth county record, all at this location. (*Mike Fialkovich*)



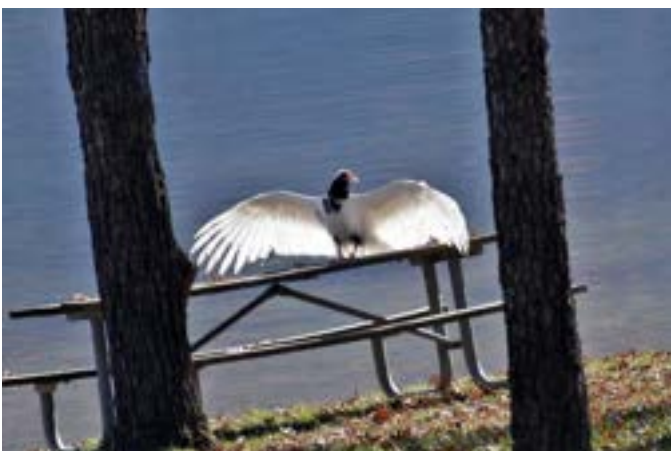
Possibly resulting from passage of Hurricane Isaias, this **Willet** was present only 4 August at Bald Eagle SP, *Centre*. (*Bob Snyder*)



This quite cooperative **Snowy Egret** on the Juniata River near Huntingdon, *Huntingdon* 16-26 (here 16) August represents the third county record; previous were 2018 and 2019. (*Deborah Grove*)



**Green Heron** dining on a frog not quite out of tadpole state (note tail) at Two Mile Run County Park, *Venango* 9 September. (*Jeffrey Hall*)



This mostly white **Turkey Vulture** was at Raystown Lake, *Huntingdon* 10 November, and seen again the 11th; presumably a migrant as it had not been reported previously. (*Alicia Palmer*)



**Osprey** is a nesting species at Lake Arthur, *Butler*; this banded bird, which could have been an early migrant or a summer resident, was photographed 17 August. (*Debra Rittelmann*)



**Swallow-tailed Kite** in Wrightstown Twp., *Bucks* from July until 8 (here 5) August, the fifth documented county record. (*Anne Bekker*)



**Golden Eagle** at Skyline Drive Vista, *Somerset* 7 November, during peak migration for these late-season hawkwatch favorites. (*Chad Kauffman*)



**Sharp-shinned Hawk** at Allegheny Front Hawkwatch, *Bedford* 23 October. (*David Poder*)



**Red-shouldered Hawk** catching emerging cicadas, then flying to a perch to eat before repeating the process; at Glenmoore, *Chester* 12 August. (*Barry Blust*)



**Belted Kingfisher** in flight at Lake Redman, *York* 18 October. (*Andy Wyatt*)



**Red-headed Woodpecker** at Franklin D. Roosevelt Park, *Philadelphia* 12 September. (*Al Guarente*)



**Peregrine Falcon** dining on Rock Pigeon under the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge at Lardner's Point, *Philadelphia* 20 September. (George Armistead)



One of two **Monk Parakeets** at Pennypack on the Delaware, *Philadelphia* 9/14, presumably from the population in New York and New Jersey. (Holger Pflücke)



**Philadelphia Vireo** in SGL 35, *Susquehanna* 1 October; a much sought-after migrant more readily found in fall than spring. (Barb Stone)



**Cave Swallow** at the Penn State Arboretum, *Centre* 26 October; the only one for the season in the state and second record for the county. (Joe Gyekis)



**Winter Wrens** are uncommon but regular fall visitors to Blue Spruce County Park, *Indiana*; this wren was found 16 October. (Roger Higbee)



Not often found even in heavily birded *Bucks*, this **Sedge Wren** was at Silver Lake Park 27 September; one of about a half dozen reported statewide for the season. (Dawn Denner)



Not one, but two **Mountain Bluebirds** were at Karthaus, *Clearfield* 20 November; there are less than about a dozen state records. (*John Forcey*)



This **Townsend's Solitaire** at Caledonia SP, *Franklin* was found and photographed 12 November, and stayed into January at the same park office that hosted a Varied Thrush in 2004-5. (*Brett Matlock*)



Male **Eastern Bluebird** at Seton Hill University, *Westmoreland* 29 November. (*Angela Morelli Knipple*)



**Common Raven** entertaining hawk watchers at the Allegheny Front Hawkwatch, *Bedford* 10 November. (*Tom Kuehl*)



An annual fall visitor to the photographer's yard, this **Gray-cheeked Thrush** posed nicely at Seneca, *Venango* 1 October. (*Meg Kolodick*)



**Hermit Thrush** at Opossum Lake, *Cumberland* 4 November. (*Dave Kerr*)





A first for *Erie*, this **Northern Wheatear** was at at Presque Isle SP only on 9/18. (*Nathan Hall*)



A birdbath apparently not big enough for both **Cedar Waxwing** and **Pine Siskin**; this dispute, outcome not known, occurred at Seneca, *Venango* 8 October. (*Meg Kolodick*)



**White-winged Crossbill** was numerically a minor part of the finch invasion, scattered widely and sparsely across eastern Pennsylvania; this crossbill was at a McAlisterville, *Juniata* feeder 4-5 (here 4) November. (*Jason Petersheim*)



Rare at the location, this **Snow Bunting** was at Peace Valley Park, *Bucks* 9-13 (here 10) November. (*August Mirabella*)



**Fox Sparrow** "chummed" in with seeds at the Allegheny Front hawkwatch, *Bedford* 10 November. (*Tom Kuehl*)



**Nelson's Sparrow** at Noel Dorwart Park 26-28 (here 28) October; one of three in *Lancaster* during the fall. (*Brian Byrnes*)



This **Rusty Blackbird** was one of a flock of 25, a good count nowadays, at Montour Preserve, *Montour* 17 October. (*Bill Tyler*)



One of four found in the state during the season, this **Black-throated Gray Warbler** at McConnellsburg, *Fulton* was seen only on 4 November; the first county record. (*Tracy Mosebey*)



**Northern Waterthrush** at Cherry Valley NWR, *Monroe* 1 October. (*Nancy Tully*)



Not often found at ground level, this **Tennessee Warbler** appeared to be feeding on small insects, possibly aphids, on a Devil's Beggartick at Stone Mt. Hawkwatch, *Huntingdon* 27 September. (*Nick Bolgiano*)



**Cape May Warbler** at Mill Grove Audubon Sanctuary, *Montgomery* 24 September. (*Bill Moses*)



Female **Northern Cardinal** in *Mercer* 31 October. (*Fran Bires*)

# Local Notes – August through November 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: Luzerne, McKean. The following counties had no report submitted: Bradford, Cambria, Lehigh, Luzerne, Mifflin, McKean, Perry, Pike, Snyder, Union, Wayne.*

### Adams County

Locations: Gettysburg College (GC), Gettysburg National Military Park (GNMP), Lake Meade (LM), Long Arm Reservoir (LAR), Long Pine Run Reservoir (LPRR), Michaux State Forest (MICH), Mountain Rd (MTN), State Game Lands #249 (SGL).

Warmer temperatures continued in southcentral Pennsylvania, with the four month average nearly 4°F above normal. Rainfall for the period was 2.0" below normal. The species count of 185 far surpassed the prior fall migration high of 167 in 2018. The strong count was paced by good variety among waterfowl, shorebirds, and warblers, with the added boost from some irruptive species that graced the county.

The 11/9-13 period produced multiple reports of **Tundra Swan** including a high of 271 birds over the Orrtanna area 11/12 (MS). **Gadwall** was more widely reported than normal, with five sites holding birds. High

counts of 8 came from LM 11/22 (LdB, AL) and LPRR 10/30 (BK). Nice counts of **American Black Duck** included 20 at Freedom Twp 11/1 (MS) and 35 at LM 11/22 (LdB, AL). **American Wigeon** and **Redhead** were confined to one report each: 2 wigeons were at LPRR 11/12 (MH, BK, AW), and a pair of **Redhead** was at LPRR 11/22 (RK). A pair of **Northern Pintail** were at LPRR 11/12 (MH, BK, AW) and a single was at GC 11/30 (AW). A duo of **Greater Scaup** was at LM 11/22 (LdB, AL) and 2 **scaup sp.** (likely Lessers) were at LPRR 11/12 (MH, BK, AW). LPRR held two **White-winged Scoters** 10/30 (BK) and the Rte. 94 quarry produced a **Long-tailed Duck** 11/12 (SK). Sorting thru more than 100 **Common Mergansers** at LM 11/22 yielded a **Red-breasted Merganser** among them (LdB, AL).

The only **Horned Grebes** were 2 at LPRR 11/13 (BK, RGTS). A single **Ring-necked Pheasant** was found at GNMP 9/6 (CMo) for the only report. High count of the eight sites reporting **Wild Turkey** were 13 birds along Red Hill Rd 8/12 (JH). A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** at GNMP 10/26 (CG) was getting late. **Black-billed Cuckoo** often proves elusive in Adams but one was found on repeated trips to SGL 9/6-13 (DJG). It is apparent birders are more aware of the fall migration of **Common Nighthawk** as they were reported from 10 sites 8/24-10/2 (m. ob.). Nice

counts of 20 birds at Shippensburg Rd. 8/24 (MB) and 23 at GNMP 9/2 (CM) paced the reporting. An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was calling at Shippensburg Rd. 9/13 (MB). The only **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** reported after 9/30 was a bird at MTN 10/11-13 (RDS)

Two **American Avocets** were at LPRR 8/20 (AS, BK, BO). By no means can this site be considered "reliable" for avocets, but it has produced the vast majority of the limited *Adams* records through the years. An **American Golden-Plover** was a good find along Schriver Rd. 9/6-9 (DGG, et al) and one at LAR was on the *Adams* side 10/7 (DH). A **Semipalmated Plover** was found at LAR 9/19 (DN). A trio of **Pectoral Sandpipers** was at LAR 10/7 (DH) and a single was at GC 10/15 (AW). A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was at GC 8/16 (DMi, CM), and a pair of **Wilson's Snipe** was at GNMP 11/20 (CM). Sixteen **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at LPRR 11/12 (AW) and 6 were at LM 11/22 (LdB, AL), along with a dozen **Herring Gulls**.

A **Red-throated Loon** was a great find at LM 11/22 (LdB, AL). The only **Common Loon** report was a single bird at LPRR 10/19 (CG). A major rarity for the county, a **White Ibis** spent some time in the county's portion of LAR 8/22-25 (DH, DN). All expected raptors were reported at typical frequencies but no **Broad-winged Hawk** kettles of any size were reported.

**Red-headed Woodpecker** was reported at 12 sites with 11 the high count at GNMP 9/7 (AW). Nice counts of 5 **Pileated Woodpeckers** came from the Orrtanna area 11/9-20 (MS). A **Merlin** was at GC 11/6 (CM) and **Peregrine Falcon** was at B&F Rd. 8/12 (DS) and at GC 11/12 (AW).

Vireo highlights included 14 sites reporting **Blue-headed Vireo**, and a **Philadelphia Vireo** at GNMP 9/17-18 (TA, BK, CM, AW). A lone **Horned Lark** at GNMP 10/15 (AW) represented the only report. Just five sites reporting **Tree Swallow** was low, but included a tardy juvenile at GC 11/2 (AW). The higher elevations of the county produced **Black-capped Chickadees**; pairs were noted at LPRR 11/1 (BK) and Orrtanna 11/29 (MS). The **Red-breasted Nuthatch** irruption was well publicized, with birds found in *Adams* at 15 sites (m.ob.). This compiler doesn't recall double-digit counts at specific sites in prior irruptive years, but this year, a visit to MICH 10/19 (GC) produced 15, and the flock size was described as "many" at MTN 11/27-28 (RDS). A **Veery** at MTN 9/23 (RDS) was somewhat late. **American Pipits** were at GC 9/24 (AW), and GNMP hosted them 10/17-11/28 (m. ob.) including a nice count of 68 on 11/20 (CM). Up to 21 pipits also visited Ridge Rd. in Cumberland Twp 11/22 (CM). A late nesting of **Cedar Waxwing** was witnessed at SGL 8/30 (DJG), where nestlings with eyes still closed were being fed.

The **Evening Grosbeak** irruption produced two reports: 8 at a B&F Rd. residence 11/1 (DS) and 2 at LPRR 11/12 (AW). **Purple Finch** was reported from 12 locations, with a high count of 9 at Ridge Rd., Cumberland Twp. 11/18 (CM). **Pine Siskin** first appeared 10/1 and was eventually reported from 10 different sites. Eight of the 10 sites saw double-digit counts, and the high count was 70 at GNMP 10/19 (AW). **Grasshopper Sparrow** was reported only at GNMP 8/20-9/4 (MK, CM) with a high count of 5 birds. Two **American Tree Sparrows** were along Old Mill Rd 11/26 (SW). Three reports of **Fox Sparrow** spanned 10/27-11/27 (RTGS, BK, RDS, AW). A **Savannah Sparrow** was seen at GC 8/16 (DMi) and GNMP produced up to 4 from 8/11-10/24 (m.ob.). **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at MTN 10/3 (RDS) and GNMP (fittingly, wouldn't you say?) 10/15-19 (CM, AW). **Swamp Sparrow** was found at three sites 10/15-11/27 (CM, DT, AW). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** at GNMP 8/5 (JO) was the only report. SGL was the only site outside of GNMP to produce **Eastern Meadowlark**. Three were at SGL 9/19 (DJG) while GNMP produced reports of up to 7 from 9/2-11/9 (m.ob.). Orchard Oriole was a notable miss.

*Adam's* birders experienced a nice warbler migration with 26 species reported. Reports of **Worm-eating Warbler** were made at three sites 8/1-16 (PKB, CC, QE, HM). A pair of **Tennessee Warblers** was at Shippensburg Rd 9/7 (MB) and a single was at SGL 9/6 and 10/4 (both DJG). **Nashville Warbler** singles were at GNMP 9/19 (CM, DSm) and GC 10/8 (AW). GNMP produced a **Mourning Warbler** 9/17 (AW) and a **Kentucky Warbler** 9/12 (MS), the only reports of each. **Cape May Warbler** was found at GNMP 9/17-10/4 (ED, AW) and a picnic table lunch at a Liberty Twp. BBQ joint produced a rewarding 4 Cape Mays 9/19 (DJG). A **Bay-breasted Warbler** was at GNMP 9/17-21 (TA, CM, BO)

and Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve produced one 9/6 (DGG). Some of the better counts among other species included 6 **Chestnut-sided Warblers** at SGL 9/9 (MD, DJG), 4 **Blackpoll Warblers** at GC 10/22 (AW), 6 **Palm Warblers** at GNMP 10/4 (ED), and 12 **Pine Warblers** at MTN 10/5 (RDS). A **Canada Warbler** was at SGL 9/9 (MD) and a **Wilson's Warbler** was at a Waynesboro Pike property 8/30 (CJ).

Remarkably, after a rare **Summer Tanager** was reported in the spring, another was found in the fall season too, and by the same observer (CM)—an adult male at GNMP from mid-Sept (CM) to 9/19 (TA, CM, BO, AW). A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at Hanover 10/17 (DJG) was getting late. The only **Blue Grosbeak** was a single along Mason-Dixon Rd 8/11 (AW).

Observers: **Phil Keener, 198 Jacobs Street, East Berlin, PA 17316, (717) 259-9984, pittche74@yahoo.com**, Gavin Anderson, Tony Arnold, David Bernstein, Mike Bertram, Evan Buck, Peggy Keating-Butler (PKB), Ian Clarke, Colleen Corballis, Michael David, Lauren diBaccari (LdB), Ezekiel Dobson, Quinn Emmering, Connor Gable, Ian Gardner, Don & Jennifer Gilbert (DJG), Deborah & Greg Grove (DGG), Jenny Hook, Derek Hudgins, Matt Hunter, Caroline Jones, Stefan Karkuff, Robert Keener, Matt Kello (MaK), Michael Kendrick, Bob Koontz, Alex Lamoreaux, Laura Lapole, Michael Locher, Heather McKinzey, Dean Mahlstedt, Dominic Mirachi (DMi), Carla Morris (CMo), Callan Murphy, Dean Newhouse, Brian O'Connor (BOc), Jacob Owings, Bill Oyler, Chris Payne, Rebecca Perruci, Michael Pittman, Bonita Portzline, Michael S, Annemarie Sciarra, Ralph & Deb Siefken (RDS), Smiley Family, Daniel Smith (DSm), Ron & Tracy George-Snyder (RTGS), Danny Stoner, David Taylor, Jason White, Andy Wilson, James Winkleman, Scott Wood.

#### **Allegheny County**

Locations: Frick Park (FP), Imperial (IMP).

August was hot and dry which probably helped the main pond at Imperial attract several notable shorebirds due to the expanding mud around its perimeter. The dry weather continued through most of September but with cooler temperatures by mid-month. Warblers and other migrants were in abundance in mid-September with favorable winds and calm weather. There were stretches of unseasonably warm weather in October and early November.

Uncommon here, a white morph **Snow Goose** was at North Park 10/8 (KK, JP, LS, DN) where it remained to 10/13. Perhaps the same bird was at Allegheny Cemetery in Lawrenceville 10/15-27 (AB, CB, m.ob.). Once again a white morph was at North Park 11/4-8 (ME). This was probably a single bird moving between the two locations during its stay. **Tundra Swans** were reported from 10/29-11/22 in small numbers. High counts included 45 over Bridgeville 11/13 (RT) and 60 at Tarentum (RP). Four flocks totaling approximately 270 birds flew over Boyce-Mayview Park 11/28 (DW). A **Northern Shoveler** was at Dashields Dam 10/7 (MV). Three were at the main pond at IMP 10/29-30 (AP), and 5 were at the truck stop pond at IMP 10/31-20 (JF, m.ob.), presumably the same group. **Gadwall** was reported from five locations in November; the high count was 5 at Bell Harbor Marina in Blawnox 11/22 (AH). An **American Wigeon** was seen at Wingfield Pines 11/25-26 (JV, SV, AP); the lone report of this uncommon migrant in the county. A **Northern Pintail** was at Wingfield Pines 10/31 (ST). A group of eight **Surf Scoters** were just off The Point in Pittsburgh 10/30-11/5 (LFH, m.ob.), and one or 2 remained 11/7-23 (MV, LK, ROR). A single bird was at the Leedsdale Boat Launch on the Ohio River 11/26-30 along with two female/immature **Black Scoters** (MV, m.ob.). A **Long-tailed Duck** was on the Ohio River just downriver from The Point 10/31-11/4 (BP, m.ob.). An adult male **White-winged Scoter** was at East Deer Recreational Area 11/28 (MF, DB, AP, m.ob.). It was found 11/27 (AH, PM) but on the *Westmoreland* side of the Allegheny River. I don't recall the last time we had all three scoters in the county at the same time! A **Red-breasted Merganser** was at Brunots Island 10/29 (AP), and one was at The Point in Pittsburgh 10/31 (FI, m.ob.). Four **Ruddy Ducks** were at Duck Hollow 10/25 (JS, SS) and one was on the Highland Park Reservoir 11/26 (JL).

Migrant **Common Nighthawks** were reported in Aug and early Sep. High counts included 62 in Pine Twp. 8/23 (PL, SL) and 85 in Bethel Park 9/1 (MM). High counts of **Chimney Swifts** included 2260 in Oakland 9/27 (KSJ) and 3000 in East Liberty 10/22 (MKu). A male **Rufous Hummingbird** briefly visited a yard in Hampton Twp. 11/24 (LS). A dead **Virginia Rail** was found on a sidewalk in East Liberty 8/26 (OL). Sadly and surprisingly another was found dead in Shadyside 10/26 (OL). A **Sora** was at North Park 9/25-26 (MB, et al.) and one was at Wingfield Pines 10/11 (ST).

A juvenile **American Golden-Plover** was at IMP 9/7 (MV, m.ob.) the eleventh county record and the first since 2016. All county records with the exception of one have been at IMP. Two were at IMP 9/27 (MV, TRh) and one nearby at Janoski's Farm in Clinton 9/28 (MV). A **Semipalmated Plover** was at IMP 8/23-9/17 (AP, MV, m.ob.). Three were there 9/9 (MV). There was quite a concentration of **Killdeer** at an athletic field in Clinton in September. An average of 194 were there 9/7 (AP) and 221 were counted there 9/11 (MV). Rather late, up to 38 gathered in a field at South Park 11/15-23 (MM, JP, JF). A **Stilt Sandpiper** was photographed at IMP 9/27 (DE, ebird); the first report since 2008. Two **Sanderlings** were quite a surprise near Dashiels Dam on the Ohio River 11/1 (MV). Unfortunately, a Peregrine Falcon flew in and flushed the birds a few minutes after their arrival. This provided the fifth county record. **Dunlin** were at IMP 10/3-11/7 (m.ob.) with a high count of five 11/3 (MV). A juvenile **Baird's Sandpiper** was at IMP 8/22-29 (MF, m.ob.), the first in five years. **Least Sandpipers** were reported in Aug and Sep with a high count of 5 at IMP 8/29 (AH). Late **Pectoral Sandpipers** were at IMP 10/12 (MV) and Boyce-Mayview Park 10/29 (AP). **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were at IMP 8/11-29 with a high of 3 on 8/22 (m.ob.). A juvenile **Long-billed Dowitcher** was at IMP 9/6-13 (MV, m.ob.), providing the fourth county record. All four records have been from this same pond. A **Wilson's Snipe** was at IMP 10/30 (ON). Late **Spotted Sandpipers** lingered into Oct with single birds at Hamar Twp. 10/20 (MD) and Dashiels Dam 10/21 (MV). A few **Solitary Sandpipers** were reported in various locations from Aug to Oct. Up to three **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at IMP 9/7-8 (ST, RB, JVa, MV).

**Caspian Terns** are a regular spring migrant at Dashiels Dam on the Ohio River but there were a few there this fall too, including one 8/23 and 3 on 9/3 (MV). A **Forster's Tern** was there 8/16 (MV). **Double-crested Cormorants** are present nearly all year in small numbers on the rivers in the county. A flock of 83 flew over Schenley Park 10/30 (FI), an unusually high count. A **Brown Pelican** was reported on eBird flying down the Allegheny River in Tarentum 9/11, however it was never relocated or confirmed, but a bird such as this should be unmistakable. Furthermore, a Brown Pelican was photographed along the Ohio River in Wood County, West Virginia near Parkersburg 9/14. Could that have been the same wayward bird that traveled downriver to the West Virginia/Ohio border?

Single **Great Egrets** were at Duck Hollow on the Monongahela River 8/2 (LK) and Etna on the Allegheny River 8/26 (DY). One was at Boyce-Mayview Park 8/1-17 (FK, m.ob.). Late birds include one at Dashiels 10/17 (MV), one at South Fayette Twp. 11/2 (fide RT) and one at IMP 11/6-7 (MV). A juvenile **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was at North Park for several days prior to being reported 8/17 (SG). It was seen to at least 8/29 (m.ob.). A juvenile was also found at the Gulf Road Wetland in Harmar Twp. 8/23 (MD). A **Black Vulture** was photographed in Ohio Twp. 10/7 (EPH). One was observed in Franklin Park 11/22, followed by four 11/25, five 11/27 (OM) and one 11/28 (AP).

A **Barred Owl** was reported at FP in Aug and Sep (m.ob.), a rare find at that location. A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was calling in West Deer Twp. 10/8 (LC). A **Short-eared Owl** was at IMP 11/28 (AP). Single immature **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were found at Harrison Hills Park 9/23 (DB) and Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve 9/24 (AH). A very early **Merlin** was at FP 8/1 (AP). One was at Hartwood Acres 9/20 (MB). There were quite a few reports including one photographed at Homewood Cemetery 10/4-17 (eBird), one along Rte. 8 near Etna 11/1 (JVa, SVa), one in Schenley Park 11/3-23 (FI), one at Calvary Cemetery in Greenfield 11/8 (FI) and one at the Leetsdale Boat Launch 11/26 (LFH). There were two eBird reports from North Park 9/26 and 10/27, and one from FP 11/22.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** was reported from Hartwood Acres 9/6 (MKu) and North Park 9/8 (DN). **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were reported from six locations through most of Sep. **Philadelphia Vireos** are more common in fall than spring and there were numerous reports in mid-Sep. A **Red-eyed Vireo** was observed feeding a begging juvenile at FP 8/29 (MF) revealing a late nesting. Flocks of **Fish Crow**s were reported again this season with 56 counted in Shadyside 8/21 (AP), 14 at Carnegie Mellon University 9/8 (AP), 30 at Chatham University 11/8 and 20 there 11/20 (MKu). A **Common Raven** was observed in Franklin Park 10/17 (OM); either a first or one of the few reports from that area. A **Horned Lark** was heard singing at Schenley Park 10/30 (FI), likely the first for that location. Three **Cliff Swallows** were noted flying around with Barn Swallows at IMP 8/1 (MF). Cliff Swallows are one of the less common swallows in the county. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were widely reported this fall. The first report came from 8/26 in Brentwood (DF) and reports continued through Nov with eBird entries from over 30 locations for the season. A **Marsh Wren** returned to Wingfield Pines again this year, first reported 9/24 (JM). Two were reported 10/1 (JM), and one or 2 were then seen regularly through Nov (m.ob.). One was found in a dry meadow at FP 9/29 (NH) and 2 were seen later that day (ST, TRh, MK) and again 9/30 (MK). Large numbers of **American Robins** were noted 11/13-14 flying to a roost site in Cecil Twp. Approximately 6-800 were tallied 11/13 and approximately 1000 were counted 11/14 (RT). Two **American Pipits** were at Janoski's Farm in Findlay Twp. 9/28 (MV) and one was there 11/8 (MV); one flew over Homewood Cemetery 11/7 (MF) a likely first for that location.

I don't often mention **House Finch** in this report unless it's one with an odd plumage, but this season it was a high count that was noteworthy, in fact he highest I have ever had reported for this season: a remarkable 185 were counted at a small park in Lawrenceville 9/15 (NL). Another high count was 60 at Boyce-Mayview Park 10/28 (ST). An orange variant was at Beechwood Farms 11/21 (MF).

There was a widespread movement of northern finches this fall throughout the region. **Evening Grosbeaks** were reported in small numbers starting the end of Oct and continued to late Nov. Small numbers were reported as flyovers or visiting feeders. High counts include 13 in Ohara Twp. 10/30 (BSh) and 21 in Pine Twp. 11/1 (PL, SL). The last report I'm aware of in the county was in 2012. A **Common Redpoll** visited a feeder in Marshall Twp. 11/27 (JHz), the first report since 2015. One was detected by calls flying over Sewickely Heights Park 11/29 (MK). A **Red Crossbill** was seen and heard flying over in Indiana Twp. 11/24 (DYe), the first report since 2013. Reports of **Pine Siskin** started in mid-Sep and continued through November at many locations. High counts included 50 in Oakland 10/8 (AP) and 53 in Library 10/8 (AN). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** at Wingfield Pines 11/26 was a bit late (AP). An **Eastern Meadowlark** was at IMP 9/30 (MV). Meadowlarks have been seen during the winter at that location so this could have been a late migrant or one that will winter in the area. Three **Red-winged Blackbirds** visited a feeder in Harmar Twp. 11/29 (JV); late for here. Large flocks of **Common Grackles** were counted flying over Hilltop Park in Cecil Twp. several evenings in Aug and Sep. Counts include 1373 on 8/23, 1503 on 8/31, 1448 on 9/3 and 2000 on 9/10 (RT).

A total of 33 species of warblers were reported this fall including some late migrants in Nov. A late **Louisiana Waterthrush** was well described at FP 9/16 (LF). A **Northern Waterthrush** was photographed and well described at Boyce-Mayview Park 8/23 (JF, JP), and one at FP 9/16-30 (JF, JP, m.ob.) was in the same location as the long staying bird in the spring. Fall reports of waterthrushes are rare in general, and it is extremely rare for both species to be reported. A **Golden-winged Warbler** was a nice find at FP 9/12 (NL) and it continued to the next day. A late **Tennessee Warbler** was photographed in Ross Twp. 10/24 (EPH) and another late bird was at Beechwood Farms 11/4 (LFH). **Orange-crowned Warblers** were reported more frequently than usual this fall. I'm sure it was due to more birders in the field during migration. Several reports came from FP, one from Pine Twp., Boyce-Mayview Park and Beechwood Farms. A late bird was photographed in Schenley Park 11/8 (HJ, LCH). A late **Nashville Warbler** was in Oakland 10/29 (FI). A few **Connecticut Warblers** were gleaned out of thickets this fall. One was at Wingfield Pines 9/9 (LN), one was at Tom's Run Nature Preserve 9/10

(KSJ, KS, BG, RS), one at FP 9/15-16 (LFH, DYe, m.ob.), one at Harrison Hills Park 9/24-26 (DB, m.ob.) and one in Library 10/25 (JP). A **Mourning Warbler** was at FP 9/16 (NL, MK, MB). Rather unusual for this time of year, a **Kentucky Warbler** was heard singing at Beechwood Farms 9/9-10 (BSh). A late **Common Yellowthroat** was at South Park 10/25 (JF). A late **Northern Parula** was at Deer Lakes Park 10/25 (DYe) and a late **Bay-breasted Warbler** was there 11/14 (DYe). An eastern "**Yellow Palm Warbler**" was at Harrison Hills Park 10/18 (AH, PM). Of course the western race is the expected group here, but a few of the eastern race are found occasionally.

The **Blue Grosbeaks** reported last season at IMP continued to at least 8/24 (m.ob.). A female **Indigo Bunting** was feeding two fledglings the first week of Sep in FP (MK, et al.).

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### **Armstrong County**

Locations: Armstrong Trail at Dam 8 (AT8), (CR), Crooked Creek Lake (CCL), Keystone Lake (KL), Kittanning L&D7 (KT7), Mahoning Creek Lake (MCL), Rosston (RT), SGL 137, Stone House Road (SHR), Templeton (TT), Worthington (WT).

A nice count of 35 **Snow Geese** were spotted probably headed to KL 10/28 (JSt). Four **Tundra Swans** were at CCL 10/30 (vr. LC, CR), 22 flew low over CCL 10/31, 6 were observed and photographed at CCL at the boat launch area (MVT), and 54 flew over SL 11/23 (GM). **Blue-winged Teal** were numerous at KL with a high count of 35 on 8/30, then one or 2 were observed 9/12-21 (AB, RB, SG, MH, RH, GK, MAK). Five **Northern Shovelers** were reported from KL 8/30, and one was seen 9/13-10/31 (m.ob.). Five **American Black Ducks** returned to CCL 11/19 (CR) and 20 were reported 11/1 (TR). A lone **Green-winged Teal** was noted at KL 8/30 (MD) and 9/14 (AB). A **Surf Scoter** was discovered at KT7 on 11/12 (ph. TR, AB). First **Buffleheads** this season were 7 at CC 10/30 (MVT), 3 at KL 10/31 (MH, RH), and a high count of 17 at RT 11/12 (TR). Two **Hooded Mergansers** were at KT7 on 9/1 (MD), 4 were at TE 11/5 (PWa), 6 were on the AT 11/7 (TR), 2 were at CCL 11/20 (TR), and 8 were at MCL 11/25 (AK, JK). Although it isn't unusual to find good numbers of **Common Mergansers** in the county, the count of 322 at CCL 11/21 (JB) was exceptional. The flock drew in Bald Eagles, which enjoyed scattering the ducks when they hang together. Several observers have witnessed their dives in an attempt to grab one for a meal. First **Ring-necked Duck** to arrive was at CC 10/25 (JB, ph.). A lone **Ruddy Duck** was reported from KL 10/10 (MH, RH), and 3 were observed on the AT 10/30 (MH, RH, FM). The only **Horned Grebes** to be seen were a single at Rte. 839 near Numine, and 2 at KT7 (AB, TR).

Twelve **American Coots** at KL 10/31 represented the only report of this species. Noteworthy shorebirds this season were 2 **Black-bellied**

**Plovers** at KL 9/14 (AB, RB, SG) which continued to 10/3 (DF, BG, MD, MH, RH, GK, MAK, PW, RW, MV), 2 **American Golden-Plovers** at KL 9/13 (MH, RH) to 9/21 (DF, BG, MD, GK, MAK, PW, RW, MV), and 2 **Dunlin** at KL 10/27 (AB). The only **Bonaparte's Gull** was a single at CCL 11/18 (ph. JB).

**Common Loons** at KL were one 8/3 (JS), one 9/7 (MD), one 9/16 (PW, RW), 7 on 10/28 (JS), and one 11/25 (JC). **Ospreys** included one at CCL 8/13 and 8/24 (MVT), 9/1 at KT7 (MD), 9/1-27 at KL (AB, RB, MD, SG), and 3 at CR 11/4 (SD). Two **Northern Harriers** were observed at SHR Farm 10/7 and again 11/21 (AB), and 2 were observed at WT 10/31. One of the harriers at WT was a male, which was seen with a **Peregrine Falcon** as a close "companion" (ph. MVT). Art McMorris, a biologist researching the falcons, thought it was perhaps a hatchling from the Graff Bridge in KT this year. The only report of **Merlin** was a single at SHR Farm 9/9 (AB).

**Golden-crowned Kinglets** arrived first at CC 10/18 (TR). Two **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were seen first at SGL 247 (TR), then 6 were spotted on the AT at TT 10/16 (TR). Others included 2 at CC 10/24 (MH, RHa, RHi SM), and one 10/30 at CC (MVT). Two **American Pipits** were observed at KL 9/6 (PW, RW), then 2-4 were seen through 10/11 (AB, HC, MD, MV), but the best count was 11 on 10/10 (MH, RH). The county did fairly well with **Evening Grosbeaks** during this invasion year: one was observed in a yard near KT 10/18 (ph. SG, ph.), 7 were at a feeder near KL 10/27 (JSt), 12 visited a yard near LB 10/31 (ph. MVT), and 5 were reported from SHR Farm 11/7 (AB). First **American Tree Sparrow** was observed at CCL 11/21 (DB). The only **Blue-winged Warbler** found was at SGL 137 near Distant 8/13 (TR), and a lone **Cerulean Warbler** was noted at CCL 8/17 (TR).

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### **Beaver County**

Locations: Ambridge Reservoir (AR), Big Beaver Wetlands (BBW), Economy Borough (ECON), Hanover Twp. (HAN), Independence Marsh (IND), Little Blue Lake site (LBL), Mouth of the Beaver River at Rochester (RCH), Raccoon Creek State Park (RCSP), Rocky Bend Nature Preserve (RBNP).

It was a rather poor season for waterfowl, even by fall season standards. (Late winter and spring are generally the high times for waterfowl in these parts.) Ten **Tundra Swans** were at RCSP 11/28 (RH), providing the only report this season. Five **Blue-winged Teal** were at the Siebel Farm in Independence Twp. 9/3-5 (MV), and an excellent count of 51 blue-wings was made at AR 9/27 (MV). The few reports of **American Black Duck** included one at the Siebel Farm 10/29 (MV) and one at RCH 9/28 (JM). Three somewhat early **Green-winged Teal** were at RCSP 9/6 (JM). The only report of **Ring-necked Duck** was of 11 at a pond in New Galilee 11/25 (TJ). An excellent count of 60 **Common Mergansers** was made at RBNP 9/27 (DZ)—more on the exciting developments at this new *Beaver* hotspot in a bit. Common Mergansers were also seen in typical numbers at New Brighton, as usual, through much of the season.

The only report of **Black-billed Cuckoo** was one at IND 8/10 (DZ). **Common Nighthawks** included 6 over the RCSP spillway 8/21 (RT) and singles at three other locations in the first two weeks of Sep (m.ob.). The 2 adult **Sandhill Cranes** that bred in the county this past summer were last noted 8/14 (MV), but there was no sign of the colt they had in tow during July. It was assumed that it succumbed to predation.

With LBL long gone as a shorebird hotspot and IND in serious decline, the "best" spot for shorebirds in the county lately has been the RCSP spillway. As one might imagine, the list of shorebirds there is

moderately interesting given the odd location, but it's quite far from an exciting, must-see shorebirding destination. A **Semipalmated Plover** was at the spillway 9/13-18 (MV, DZ). Four early **Least Sandpipers** were at the Siebel farm in Independence Twp. 8/2 (MV), and 7 were at BBW 8/8 (MV). Two **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were also at Siebel 9/2 (MV). Two **Wilson's Snipe** were at RBNP 10/8 (DZ). Tarrying **Spotted Sandpipers** were at both RCSP and AR 10/11 (both MV), and a very late **Solitary Sandpiper** was still at AR 11/1 (MV). Six **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at BBW 10/11-18 (MV), and a **Greater Yellowlegs** put in an appearance at the RCSP spillway 10/2 (MV). One Greater Yellowlegs was still at AR on the late date of 11/7 as well (MV).

Single **Common Loons** were at AR 10/31 (MV) and 11/28 (MD). The only report of **Great Egret** was of 2 at BBW 8/8 (MV, TJ). An **Osprey** was still hanging around RCSP 10/17 (JM).

LBL may be all but dead as a shorebird hotspot, but the ongoing remediation at the site has created extensive grasslands, and the old lakebed is perhaps soon to become one of the best grassland sites in sw. Pennsylvania. Some shorebird habitat may persist on the far northern end of the former lakebed near the dam, but there is no public access within a mile of anything resembling a mudflat, too far for even the best of spotting scopes to see (TJ). So the grasslands on the south end of the lakebed are the story there now, and they produced some excellent sightings this fall. Up to 5 **Northern Harriers** were seen there 11/27 (TJ, KJ), and later the same evening, 2 **Short-eared Owls** made an appearance, the first for the county since 2006 when one or two were found wintering on grasslands near SGL 285. The owls were seen there again 11/28. **American Kestrels** were on site in early Aug as well (TJ), a species now expected in good numbers there in summer. A **Merlin** was seen repeatedly in Ambridge 10/16-11/26 (MV), but no reports were made of any in Rochester or Beaver, where they have wintered more often than not over the past decade or so. One or 2 **Peregrine Falcons** were seen on several occasions on the Ambridge-Aliquippa Bridge through most of the season (MV), and one was on the P&LE rail bridge in RCH 11/7-21 (MV).

The only report of **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was one photographed at IND 9/23 (AZ), and a late **Eastern Phoebe** was at LBL 11/28 (MV).

RBNP is a property along a wooded stretch of Raccoon Creek in Potter Twp., recently acquired by the Independence Conservancy. Development for low-impact access to the site is still underway, but already the spot is showing its potential, with several interesting records from the preserve made this fall. This stretch of Raccoon Creek has always been of high interest and potential to birders, but for many years off-road access to most of the area was an issue, especially at the old "tank farm", so named because it was once a secret fuel depot (consisting of six large underground gasoline tanks) built by the U.S. Department of Defense in 1942. It remained in private hands after the end of WWII until 2009, inaccessible to the public until recently.

**Yellow-throated Vireo** persisted at RBNP until 9/25 (DZ), and a **Blue-headed Vireo** was still at RCSP 10/23 (RT). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was nicely photographed at IND 9/27 (AZ). One or two **Common Ravens** were seen around RBNP for much of the season (DZ), one of six locations they appeared this fall. It's almost not worth mentioning ravens anymore in this report. Three **Horned Larks** were at the grasslands at LBL 11/27-28, seen by hopeful (and successful) short-eared owl searchers (TJ, KJ, et al.). A **Purple Martin** was at BBW 8/8 (TJ). A few colonies of this species persist in the county but are not often checked on, however BBW is not among the known summer sites for them. The first of many reports of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** in this even-numbered year was made in Hanover Twp. 9/23 (JM). (Red-breasted Nuthatches tend to noticeably irrupt every other year, and for quite a while, dating back to the first decade of the 2000s at least, the "up" years have been those in which fall migration began in an even-numbered year.) A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was in ECON 10/5 (KD), the only report. It was among a nice count of 10 **Swainson's Thrushes** that were also in ECON 10/5 (KD), all associated with a large flock of robins. A late **Gray Catbird** was at IND 11/27 (DZ).

*Beaver* missed out on the invasion of Evening Grosbeaks, at least prior to the end of November. But **Pine Siskins** showed up in some big numbers, including 85 at RBNP 10/20 (DZ) and a whopping 130 in ECON

11/22 (KD). **Purple Finches** were present in small numbers in a few locations beginning in late Sep (m.ob.), mostly at feeders. A **Chipping Sparrow** was still at Hanover Twp. 11/27-29 (JM), and **Lincoln's Sparrow** was seen at RBNP many times 9/24-10/20 (DZ). Up to 2 **Orchard Orioles** were at RBSP until 8/26 (DZ). Reports of **Rusty Blackbird** were made from four locations: 3 at AR 11/1 (MV), one in Beaver 11/13 (MV), 10 near Enon Valley 11/25 (TJ), and one at LBL 11/28 (MV, MD, DZ).

A **Northern Waterthrush** at IND 9/24 (DZ) was a nice late-Sep find. **Tennessee Warbler** was frequently reported, with the last a late bird at IND 10/21 (JM). An **Orange-crowned Warbler**, noted in *Beaver* less than annually, was at RBNP 9/25 (DZ). Another straggler was a **Nashville Warbler** at IND 10/17 (AZ). Best of all warblers was a **Connecticut Warbler** photographed at the RBNP tank farm on the somewhat early date of 9/4 (TR). This is another species found far less than annually in the county, though the undoubtedly pass through annually in the fall, though mostly undetected. **Bay-breasted Warbler**, like Tennessee, was reported quite well, but there were only two reports of the other budworm specialist, **Cape May Warbler**, both in mid-Sep. A very late **Yellow Warbler** was very nicely photographed at BBW 10/11 (FJ). **Blackpoll Warbler** was procrastinating at IND 10/16 (DZ), as was a **Black-throated Blue Warbler** at Hanover Twp. 10/10 (JM). **Palm Warbler** was frequent at RBNP in Oct, up to 10/18 (DZ). **Wilson's Warbler** was noted at IND 9/18 (AZ) and 9/20 (DZ).

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### **Bedford County**

Locations: Aahyndman Road (A), Allegheny Front Hawk Watch (AFHW), Belden Road (BR), Foor Farm (FF), Jackson Property (Mountain Meadows) near Everett (MM), Lake Gordon/Lake Koon (LG/LK), Shawnee State Park (SSP), Sweet Root Natural Area (SRNA), Union Memorial Church (UMC), Whitetail Wetlands (WW).

Precipitation totals for 2020 showed a dry trend during the fall for *Bedford*, typical compared to other seasons, but rains from Hurricane Laura in August (1.2 in.) and Hurricane Zeta in October (1.87 in.) provided substantial volume to monthly totals. *Bedford* was spared any extreme fall weather events in 2020. Most data for this report were taken from eBird.

The only report of **Tundra Swan** was of 16 over MM 11/21 (MLJ). Four **Northern Shovelers** were reported at SSP 10/24 (AG). A high of 3 **American Wigeon** were reported at SSP 11/8 (TA). Three **Northern Pintail** were at SSP 11/15 (RMH). Twelve **Green-winged Teal** were counted at WW 10/25 (AG). Four **Ring-necked Ducks** were seen at LG/LK 10/25 (AG), the only report. **Buffleheads** frequented SSP through the fall, with a high of 30 on 10/30 (TA). **Hooded Mergansers** passed through in Nov, with a high of 6 at SSP 11/27 (AB). A high of 14 **Common Mergansers** were at SSP 11/24 (DG). **Ruddy Ducks** were reported frequently at SSP starting with a high of 21 on 10/30 (TA), then lower numbers were noted throughout Nov (m.ob.).

The absence of Ruffed Grouse sightings in *Bedford* was very disturbing, but flocks of **Wild Turkeys** were common, with a high of 18 at MM 11/16 (MLJ). A high count of 15 **Pied-billed Grebes** were at SSP 11/9, where they had been present throughout the fall (m.ob.). **Horned Grebes** were seen much less frequently, with a high count of 4 on 10/30 (TA), and only 4 other sightings, all at SSP.

Scattered reports of **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** occurred in Aug, most commonly from FF 8/12-24 (EB). There were no fall reports of Black-billed Cuckoo. **Common Nighthawks** were only reported twice: one 8/25 and 2 on 8/26 at UMC (EB). Fortunately, **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were heard frequently; a hiker (GD) on the Mid-state Trail at SRNA heard more than 5 on 9/10 (GD), while farther north on Tussey Mtn. another one was

heard at MM that night (MLJ). **Chimney Swifts** moved through the county in Sep and Oct, with a high of 35 at SSP 9/16 (AS). Migrating **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were reported consistently in Sep, with the last one seen 9/29 at AFHW (DP). The high count was 19 on 8/27, but other counts in Oct ranged from 14 to 18 (DP).

A **Sora** was reported at SSP 10/24 (AG). A high of 15 **American Coots** at SSP 10/30 (TA) also marked the last report. A lingering **Killdeer** was reported at Schellsburg 11/8 (JG), but the high count was 26 at WW 10/25 (AG). Four **Dunlin** were at WW 10/25 (AG), the only report.

A high of 65 **Double-crested Cormorants** were at SSP 10/25 (AM). Single sightings of **Great Egrets** were made at Everett 8/5-9/2 (MLJ); another one was reported 8/21 at BR (MLJ). A high of 15 **Black Vultures** was reported 9/23 at Aahyndman Rd. (ND). **Turkey Vultures** continued to congregate at FF, where a high of 50 was tallied 9/3 (EB). The most consistent location for **Osprey** was SSP, where the last sighting was made 10/18 (MLJ), but the high count for the county was 7 at AFHW 9/9 (DP).

The AFHW logged 721 hours of observation, somewhat below the 10-year average of 774.45 hours, but certainly commendable as cases of Covid-19 sky-rocketed in surrounding communities. Fortunately, the counters were a dedicated team committed to recording the fall migration, marking the 24th year of hourly fall counts at this site. The total count of 9326 **Broad-winged Hawks** was well above the 10-year average of 5681. **Red-tailed Hawks** were near the 10-year average, with a total count of 1112. The **Osprey** total was 54, the lowest in over 20 years. The **Bald Eagle** count of 1151 was the lowest in the past 4 years. The total for **Golden Eagles** was 186, below the 10-year average of 206. The high count was 32 on 10/31 (BW), followed by 26 on 11/10 (JR). All falcon and accipiter species counts were low (BS, et al).

Just one **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was reported at SSP, on 10/24 (AG), but bander David Darney's owl banding efforts at AFHW yielded a total of 97 **Northern Saw-whet Owls**. Banding began 10/8 and ended 11/20, with 9 survey nights during that time. The high count was 29 on 10/24. There were 2 recaptures: the first was banded 2 years ago in Ellenville, New York on 10/16/2018 and was recaptured 11/21, and the second was banded 10/27 in Danville, Pennsylvania 10/27 and recaptured 11/13. No other owl species were captured this year, although last year a Long-eared Owl was netted. David rated this year as a good one, better than the past 10 years.

The earliest sighting of **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was 10/21 at MM (MLJ) and reports continued in several areas during the fall. **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were reported from three sites, with a high of 2 in BR 8/8 and 8/30 (AB). **American Kestrels** were consistently reported from UMC; high was 3 on 8/21 (EB). The only **Merlins** were reported at the AFHW, where the high was just 2 on 9/15 (DP).

**Olive-sided Flycatchers** were seen only at SSP 9/9 and 9/15 (m.ob.). Two **White-eyed Vireos** were reported from WW 9/6 (MLJ, TJK). Several sites reported **Blue-headed Vireos**, topped a high of 4 at SSP 10/18 (JC, MLJ). SSP was the only site where 2 **Warbling Vireos** were reported, 9/9 and 9/15 (m.ob.). A high count of 2 **Horned Larks** were reported SSP 11/7 (JG, CK). Four **Tree Swallows** lingered until 10/25 at SSP (AM). A high of 5 **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were reported 11/27 at SSP (AB), but multiple sightings occurred in the county. A high count of 7 **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** was recorded at WW 10/25 (AG); they were also reported multiple times at SSP. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** irrupted into the county; the first one migrated over the AFHW 9/8 (TJK), but SSP was also a good spot, with a high of 4 on 10/11 (AB). The first **Brown Creeper** was reported at MM 10/17 (MLJ). Scattered reports of **Winter Wrens** began with one at WW 10/25 (AG), and a high of 2 at SSP 11/8 and 11/11 (m.ob.).

A count of 17 **Cray Catbirds** at WW 9/20 (TJK) was the high; the last one seen was 10/25 (AG). A late sighting of a **Brown Thrasher** was made at MM 11/7 (MLJ). One **Swainson's Thrush** appeared at SSP 10/4 (KL). A high count of 10 **Hermit Thrushes** was made at SSP 11/7 (JG, CK), and the high for **American Pipits** was 10 at SSP 11/7 (JG, CK).

The flashy flocks of **Evening Grosbeaks** were the most exciting

birds that visited this fall. Although some reports were not posted on eBird, they were noted in at least 5 locations. The feeders at MM (MLJ) had the most consistent visitors from 11/2-20, where the high was 16 on 11/18. A **Common Redpoll** at SSP 11/7-11 was the only one reported (AB, JG, CK). The first reports of 2 **Pine Siskins** occurred 10/8 at MM, where numbers quickly swelled to a high of 92 on 10/20 (MLJ).

The first **Fox Sparrow** was at WW 10/25 (AG), followed by scattered reports and a high count of 5 at SSP 11/8 (JG, CK). The only report of **Vesper Sparrow** was one at Aahyndman Road 9/14 (ND). Three locations yielded **Lincoln Sparrow**, the earliest 9/3 at MM (MLJ) and the latest at SSP 10/14 (LG). Sixteen **Swamp Sparrows** were recorded at WW 10/25 (AG). **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported at scattered locations, with a high count of 18 at WW 10/25 (AG).

Twenty-two species of warblers were reported, one species less than the previous year (Canada Warbler was missed, and was the difference). One **Louisiana Waterthrush** was reported at a residence north of Bedford 8/8 (AB) and one **Northern Waterthrush** was at SSP 9/16 (TJK). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was seen at LG/LK 10/25 (AG). The only **Mourning Warbler** was one at SSP 9/16 (TJK). **Cape May Warbler** was seen twice at SSP, 9/22 (LS) and 9/26 (LG). A late **Northern Parula** was reported at SSP 11/9 (CK, NK). A high of 3 **Blackpoll Warblers** were tallied at SSP 10/10 (JSD). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were reported at various locations with a high of 26 at SSP 10/24 (AG). A high count of 3 **Scarlet Tanagers** was made at SSP 9/8 (TJK). Three **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** visited MM 9/18 (MLJ).

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### **Berks County**

Locations: Bartrum Trail (BAT), Berne Township, (BT), Blue Mountain Academy (BMA), Blue Marsh Lake (BML), Blue Marsh Lake State Hill Boat Launch (BMLSH), Blue Marsh Lake Sheidy Boat Launch (BMLSBL), EJ Breneman's Quarry (BQ), French Creek State Park (FCSP), Gotwal's Pond (GP), Green Hills Preserve (GHP), Hamburg Commerce Park (HCP), Hamburg Reservoir (HR), Hawk Mountain North Lookout Data (HMNL), Hawk Mountain South Lookout (HMSL), Hay Creek (HC), Kernsville Dam Recreation Area (KDRA), Kutztown University (KU), Lake Ontelaunee (LO), Lake Ontelaunee Bailey's Creek (LOBC), Lake Ontelaunee Blue Falls (LOBF), Lake Ontelaunee Water Street (LOWA), Lake Ontelaunee West Shore Drive (LOWS), Lowland Road Retention Pond (LRRP), Monacacy Hill Recreation Area (MHRC), Mount Penn (MP), Old Topton Road (OTP), Peter's Creek (PC), Pine Swamp Road (PSR), School Road Pond (SRP), Shartlesville Farm Pond (SFP), State Game Lands 52 (SGL52), State Game Lands 106 (SGL106), State Game Lands 110 North Kill Gap (SGL110), Trout Run Reservoir (TRR).

As the Covid-19 restrictions eased in Pennsylvania, birders who had spent the past few months cooped up were eager to get back in the field. Fall migration proved to be more interesting than usual for shorebirds. Birders were in anticipation of a winter finch forecast which gave hope for birds missed in the past few years.

The first report of **Snow Geese** came from HMNL 10/3 (MW). On 11/12 at GP, 4 **Snow Geese** mixed in a flock of 4500 **Canada Geese** (RK). A lone **Brant** showed up at SRP 10/14 (JSp). A single **Cackling Goose** at GP 11/13 was joined by a second **Cackling Goose** 11/25 (RK). Nine **Tundra Swans** stopped over at LO 10/29 (RK). Puddle duck activity consisted of the normal species; however, the more desirable **Blue-winged Teals** included 6 at LO 9/9 (RK) and 9 at SRP 9/26 (MSI). Storm bird activity was low this season as no major rain events passed through **Berks**. **Greater Scaup** were reported at LO on three occasions: 3 on



10/26 (RK), 2 on 10/29 (RK) and 20 on 11/12 (JW, PW). One **Lesser Scaup** rested at LOWS 11/4 (RK). A female **Black Scoter** was seen on a morning excursion to LO 10/31 (BS, PS). One **Long-tailed Duck** at BQ 11/13 (JSp) was the only report. A raft of 45 **Bufflehead** was reported at LO 10/31 (MW)—a familiar stop for those ducks. The rare **Red-breasted Merganser** made three appearances in Nov: 2 at LO 11/12 (JW, PW), 3 at BML 11/18 (JSp), and one at LO 11/18 (RK). Single **Red-throated Loons** were found at BML 11/13 (JW, PW) and 11/18 (JSp). A lone **Common Loon** remained at LO 11/12-29 (JSp, JW, PW, RK). Single **Red-necked Grebes** were noted at LO 10/29 and 11/22 (RK).

The fall dispersal of herons and egrets resulted in single **Great Egrets** at BML 8/6 (JS) and at BMA 8/20 (MW). Reading Regional Airport is not often birded but a **Glossy Ibis** was seen there 8/9 (JSp).

Winds were seldom ideal at Hawk Mountain this season, which resulted in lower than average totals for most species. Two exceptions were **Bald Eagle** and **Turkey Vulture** which might set new season highs by the end of counting in Dec. A full report will be included in the next issue. The highest one day total for **Bald Eagles** was 32 on 9/18 (LG). An adult **Golden Eagle** made a rare appearance off ridge over Hamburg 10/16 (MW). On 9/7, a single **Sandhill Crane** flew over Henningsville (PS).

Shorebird migration has recently been poor due to the lack suitable mud flats and rain puddles in the surrounding countryside. A notable exception this season was an alfalfa field on Mertz Road near Lyons that was harvested just as shorebirds began to arrive. A large rain pool, usually unseen when the usual crop of corn hasn't yet been harvested, appeared, making it easy to view shorebirds from the roadside. The School Road pond in Fleetwood, although smaller, also provided suitable habitat. The water level at the retention pond at Hamburg Commerce Park remained high but is still the main spot to find shorebirds.

Shorebirds found at Mertz Road: one **American Golden-Plover** 8/29 (MW) and 11 on 10/17 (JV); 3 **Semipalmated Plover** 8/15 (EH) and one 9/10 (MW); 60 **Killdeer** was a high number 10/19 (MW); 3 **Lesser Yellowlegs** 8/30 (MW); one **Semipalmated Sandpiper** 8/29 (MW) and 3 on 9/10 (MW); one **Western Sandpiper** 9/10 (MW); 7 **Least Sandpiper** 8/19 (RH); one **White-rumped Sandpiper** 9/2 (RK) and 9/10 (MW); one **Baird's Sandpiper** 8/19 (RH, RW, JW, PW) and 9/26 (MW); 10 **Pectoral Sandpiper** 9/10 (MW), 6 on 9/18 (MW), and 3 on 10/19 (MW); one **Stilt Sandpiper** 8/11 (JW, PW) and 10/11 (RK); one **Wilson's Snipe** 8/19 (JW, PW); and one **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** 8/26-27 (JW, PW, RW) and 9/1 (MW, RK, m.ob.).

The **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** is a sought-for but seldom reported wading bird during fall migration. The first record as noted in *A Century of Bird Life in Berks County Pennsylvania*, 1997 (William D Urich) was 9/6/1958 at LOWS (RC, MS). On 9/8/1966 two individuals were observed from close range at LOWS (DK). Due to drought, the mudflats at LOWS were exposed more than usual and a single bird was observed 8/26-27/1995 (JH, KG). On 8/26 of this year, a Buff-breasted Sandpiper was found at the Mertz Road rain pool (JW, PW). It was seen the following day but not after, until one, assumed to be the same bird, reappeared at Mertz Road 9/1. Upon close inspection, the obvious plumage differences showed the bird on 9/1 to be different (RK). These two latest reports represented the fifth and sixth documented sightings in *Berks*.

Shorebirds found at the School Road Pond: one **Lesser Yellowlegs** 8/31 (MW); one **Semipalmated Sandpiper** 8/29 (MW); one **Pectoral Sandpiper** 8/31 (MW); 2 **Dunlin** 10/26 (JW, PW); one **Short-billed Dowitcher** 8/22 (RK); and one **Wilson's Snipe** 9/25-10/9 (RK).

A nice flock of 36 **Bonaparte's Gulls** were observed at LO 11/12 (JW, PW), and one was seen at GP 11/12 (RK). An early **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was found at BML 11/20 (JS). Single **Caspian Terns** fed at LO 8/6 (BS, MW) and 8/16 (DP), and another was at BML 8/7 (JS). The colony of **Eurasian Collared-Doves** has increased over their breeding season; 15 were found in Shartlesville 9/27 (MW). On 11/25, 18 **Eurasian Collared-Doves** were a surprise seven miles east of Shartlesville along Berne Road near Hamburg (MW). One wonders if their range is finally expanding. The doves were not found after three days.

A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** apparently halted its southern migration near a residence in Boyertown 9/25 (RK). It responded to calls but wasn't seen. A number of **American Robins** seemed to have arrived at the

same time. A **Common Nighthawk** was first reported in Dryville 8/29 (SF) and 17 were active near Henningsville 8/31 (PS). Two **Common Nighthawks** were first heard then seen hunting over the Schuylkill River and a pasture near Berne 9/12 (MW).

**Rufous Hummingbirds** are becoming annual visitors to *Berks*. A male was banded 11/11 (SL) in Exeter Township. In 2019, a female Rufous Hummingbird, nicknamed "Lizzie", visited same location 10/3 to 12/25 of that year. Also this season, a Boyertown resident hosted a Rufous Hummingbird 10/17-11/27 (RW) that eluded capture and banding. A different hatch-year female Rufous Hummingbird was banded at another residence in Boyertown 12/20 (SL). The two nesting pairs of **Red-headed Woodpeckers** had offspring this year as immatures were seen at both locations—Allendale Road 8/20 (MW) and Bastian Road 8/27 (RK). The wintering **Merlin** pair arrived at BML on schedule with one first seen 10/16 and the second 10/19 (JS).

Single **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were seen at HMNL 8/27 (LM) and 9/5 (MW). A migrating **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was a nice find at Angora Fruit Farm 9/6 (LI, MSI). A **Least Flycatcher** was at HMNL 8/22 (MW). A mysterious yellow-bellied kingbird was photographed on Berk Road 9/13 (BS, PS) but its identity could not be confirmed. The bird could have been a Western Kingbird, but Tropical or Couch's Kingbird could not be ruled out. The bird flew off after the birders exited their car. A single **Philadelphia Vireo** was seen at HMNL 9/5 (MW) and another was on Mt. Penn 9/13-20 (RH). **Common Ravens** are frequent at BML, and 4 were there 8/4 (JS). They are also often seen at KDRA (MW). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were more prevalent this season and were seen throughout *Berks* in the proper habitat. Habitat has improved at KDRA since the wetlands have been expanded. A **Marsh Wren** was present at KDRA 9/20-23 (KG, MW). **American Pipits** found Mertz Road habitat their liking and were there in good numbers. High counts included 50 on 10/19 (MW) and 200 on 10/23 (JW, PW).

The number of migrant warblers was not significant but some unusual warblers were seen. On 9/12, a **Golden-crowned Warbler** was a surprise at HMNL (KW). **Orange-crowned Warbler** was in Morgantown 10/13 (HH) and at LRRP 11/1 (KG). A brightly plumaged **Nashville Warbler** popped out of some goldenrod at KDRA 9/26 (MW). There were two sightings of **Connecticut Warblers**: at MHRC 9/15 (LI) and at TRR 9/28 (DM). There were three sightings of **Mourning Warblers**: at Leesport 8/24 (DK), at GHP 9/10 (AZ), and at Union Meadows 9/25 (JT). A total of 33 **Cape May Warblers** went past HMNL 9/5 (HM). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was a surprise window-kill at an office building in Reading 10/19 (TU).

Three **Fox Sparrows** were active at SGL106 on 11/8 (MW). Four **Lincoln's Sparrows** found the scrub vegetation to their liking at KDRA 9/21 (KG), and one was still present 10/3 (MW).

The winter finch irruption was limited in numbers and locations here, but it was still great to see after years of absence. The greatest number of **Purple Finch** was 40 that fed at a feeder in Bernville 10/30 (JS). By 11/12 their numbers had dwindled to 12. Five **Red Crossbills** flew by HMNL 10/25 (MW), and another flew over KDRA 11/14 (KG). Thirteen **White-winged Crossbills** in two groups flew over HMNL 11/14 (MW). Three **Common Redpolls** were at HMNL 11/22 (MW) and 6 were at Kutztown the same day (TU). A single **Pine Siskin** flew past HMNL 10/18 (MW, RK). Greater numbers were reported the following month.

The most desired winter finch, **Evening Grosbeak**, did not appear in *Berks* in good numbers. They flew by HMNL in unpredictable numbers and at unpredictable times. Five stopped at a Fleetwood feeder 11/1-2 (TS). Seven stayed one day at a feeder in Oley 11/5 (JD). Two flew over SGL110 11/8 (KG). Counties surrounding *Berks* seemed to have better luck with these winter jewels.

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Merker, Luke Miller, Dennis Miranda, Sandra Moroney, Derek Price, Troy Sabocheck, Peter Saenger, Joan Silagy, Mike Slater (MSI), Bart Smith, Phil Smith, Matt Spence, Jo Spilde (JSp), Stollery & Flood, Jaime Thomas, Todd Underwood, Bill Uhrich, Jeff Vinosky, Ron Wagner, Ken Walsh, Linford Weber, Jane Wolfe, Peter Wolfe, Art Zdancewic.

### **Blair County**

Locations: Albemarle trail (AT), Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS--6 to 10 Trail (APR), Bald Eagle Sportsmen Cooperative Nursery (BESCN) Canoe Creek S.P. (CC), Frosty Hollow (FH), Lower Trail-Mount Etna (LTE), Lower Trail Ganister (LTG), Plummers Hollow (PH), Reese Pond (RP) State Game Lands #278 North (SGLN), Yellow Spring Pond (YSP).

The fall period brought moderate temperatures and below average precipitation. The species count for the period was 182, which was 41 more than the previous fall. Information was obtained primarily from eBird data. The Canoe Creek lake was drawn for a period of time due to repairs, which contributed to notable shorebird activity.

Several highlights included *Blair* first records of 3 **Black Scoters** CC 10/26 (JC), and 4 **American Golden-Plovers** CC 10/29 (DG, GG). The northern finch irruption also hit *Blair* as **Evening Grosbeaks** were scattered around. Six were at a residence on 20th Ave, Altoona 10/27 (CK), one male was off Bell-Tip Rd Tyrone 11/1 (JC), and 2 were at PH (MB). Fifteen **Red Crossbills** moved through the pine trees at SGL 198 north of US-22 on 10/31 (JC), and 24 **Common Redpolls** visited PH 11/12 (MB). **Pine Siskins** were reported heavily across *Blair* with the irruption of finches.

Uncommon **Dunlin** were observed at CC, with a high-count of 72 on 10/26 (ph. JC), along with **Pectoral Sandpipers** (m.ob.). A late-season **Sora** was at CC 11/10 (ph. TD).

Twenty-four species of waterfowl were reported, including 16 **Blue-winged Teals** at CC 10/25 (JC), 8 **Green-winged Teal** nested at the Army National Guard Readiness Center Pond along with a single **Tundra Swan** 11/18 (PI), and 20 more **Green-winged Teal** at CC 10/31 (LC, MN). During a fallout on 10/29 at CC the following were seen: 150 **Ruddy Ducks**, 30 **American Wigeons**, 35 **Gadwalls**, 50 **American Black Ducks**, 30 **Buffleheads**, 25 **Pied-billed Grebes**, 50 **Killdeer**, 15 **Bonaparte's Gulls**, and 12 **Greater Yellowlegs** (DG, GG).

A group of 7 **Common Nighthawks** were spotted near Altoona 8/24 (TD), and a high count of 200 **Chimney Swifts** was viewed at PH 8/28 (MB). The last **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was documented at a residence off Bell-Tip Rd. 9/30 (JC).

An uncommon **Herring Gull** reported 10/26 at CC (JC). Seven **Golden Eagles** observed at the Tussey Mt. powerline cut above Lower Trail 11/16 (NB), and 3 more were noted along with a single **Rough-legged Hawk** at PH 11/2 (MB). **Ospreys** appeared throughout the area with seven reports, and **Bald Eagles** and **Red-tailed Hawks** continued to be commonly noted. Four separate reports of **Red-shouldered Hawks** included a high count of 2 at PH 8/4 (MB). An uncommon **Peregrine Falcon** was at PH 9/18 (MB). **Merlin** was at Altoona 8/11 (ph. LP) and at CC (LC, MN).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was spotted at CC 9/7 (JC). Two **Red-headed Woodpeckers** showed up again at SGLN 9/16 (MN). The lone report of the uncommon **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was made in FH 9/16 (LB). Two **White-eyed Vireos** were at FH 10/4 (LB). A single **Philadelphia Vireo** was along the LT Cove Dale section 9/4 (JC), one was at CC 9/7 (MN), and one was at FH 9/20 (LB). Three **Purple Martins** flitted around PH 8/2 (MB), and a lone bird was at CC 9/5 (JC). There were three separate reports of **Gray-cheeked Thrush**: at PH 9/16 and 10/17 (MB, MaB), and one reported at a residence off Bell-Tip Rd. 10/2 (JC).

Warblers showed well with 28 species reported. A **Connecticut Warbler** was on SGL 278-South 9/15, and an **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at SGLN 10/16 (MN). A single **Mourning Warbler** was reported at FH 9/20 (LB).

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### **Bucks County**

Locations: Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve (BHWP), Bradford Dam (BRD), Maple Knoll Farms in Buckingham Twp. (MKF), Nockamixon State Park (NSP), Peace Valley Park (PVP), Penn-Warner Tract (PWT), Silver Lake Park (SLP).

The month of August was a little warmer than usual (+1.8°F) and about average (+0.51") precipitation-wise. September featured average temperatures (+0.1°F) and overall wet (+1.69") conditions. October was somewhat warmer (+1.4°F) but not wetter (+0.08") than usual, while November was a good bit warmer (+3.3°F) and a bit damp (+0.83"). August weather was influenced in some way by a record Atlantic hurricane season. One of these, *Isaias*, passed through the region and dropped several storm rarities in the county. Not that unusual anymore, the waterfowl migration was overall unimpressive. However, warblers and others stayed late, and multiple rarities showed up during the course of the season. This was a fall for winter finches and the other irruptive passerines, in what amounted to near-record or well above average numbers for several species. The overall species count during the period was 239, four above the 10-year average of 235. No fewer than 10 species observed were rare enough to be on the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (PORC) review list, including a photographed second state record **Gray Kingbird**. Shorebirds, terns, and sparrows made up the bulk of the other rarities. In addition to these, multiple other species were observed for which 20 or fewer *Bucks* records exist. One early date was set and five late dates, with several more approaching record lateness. Thanks are extended to August Mirabella for compiling some general notes and observations. Ken Kitson's 1998 *Birds of Bucks County* and the subsequent county spreadsheet were referenced for historical information.

Of the **Snow Goose** reports this fall, a count of 36 at Core Creek Park 11/27 (DD) was the only double-digit number reported. This has often the case in recent years as Snows move south later in the year. A carefully identified immature **Ross's Goose** made an appearance at Pine Run Dam 10/20 (AM ph.). **Brant** are detected in small numbers most years, so an adult at Markey Park 10/31-11/1 was not exceptional (AM ph.). Several flocks totaling 44 birds passed PWT 10/25, a good count (AH ph.). On 11/1, 8 to 12 were also seen at NSP (PC). Eight **Cackling Geese** were reported from 6 locations, a rather low number (m.ob. ph.). **Mute Swans** were status quo, with reports from 6 locations (m.ob.) and a high of 11 at PWT 11/22 (KL). **Tundra Swans** were again reported from one location, when 7 arrived at BRD 10/29 (VP) and 2 of those stayed until 11/4 (m.ob., KL ph.). The only dabbler reported in good numbers this fall was **Green-winged Teal**, with an excellent estimated high of 210 at PWT 11/16 (AH). Hopefully the increase of reports from this site will lead to a better understanding of the numbers of common migrants that pass through here. Both Canvasback and Redhead went unreported, something that doesn't happen often in *Bucks*. Scaup and scoters were found on area lakes 11/12, though. **Greater Scaup** were represented by one at PVP (AM, KI) and 7 or 8 at NSP (DFa). Higher counts of **Lesser Scaup** on this day were 12 at PVP (AM, KI) and 70+ at NSP (DFa). A good count of 8 **Surf Scoters** spent the day at Churchville Park 11/12 (KL ph.). Single **Black Scoters** were at PWT 10/25 (AH) and Core Creek Park 11/7-8 (KL ph.). Four male **Long-tailed Ducks** made for a striking visual among the floating vegetation at L. Towhee C.P. 10/28 (RS ph.). The rainy day of 11/12 also brought the season high of 124 **Buffleheads** to PVP (AM, KI). Two **Common Goldeneyes** arrived at PVP 11/24 (AM). A low count of 2 **Red-breasted Mergansers** at Churchville Park 11/12 furnished the only fall report (RS).

A **Ruffed Grouse** provided a huge surprise to the observer when it flushed at NSP 10/18 (EB). They are now very rare and sporadically reported in the northern end of the county, with just one or two credible

reports in the past decade. Lisa Williams from the Pennsylvania Game Commission commented that young birds will disperse some in fall, and that gray morphs (this was reported as such) are exceptionally rare in the state. Numbers and reports of **Horned Grebes** were up a bit from last year, with three locations hosting the species. Counts were often one to 3 (m.ob. ph.), with a high of 6 at PVP and PWT 10/29 (AM, DFa). Compared to last autumn, **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** had a very strong year, with 28 locations reporting at least 45 individuals (m.ob. ph.). The high count of 7 at Tyler SP 8/3, on a long travelling count, suggested that summer residents were still reported in numbers along with migrants later on (MGr). The more uncommon **Black-billed Cuckoo** fared slightly above average, with 8 individuals reported from 7 sites (m.ob.). A calling **Eastern Whip-poor-will** in Plumstead Twp. 8/27 must have been a great surprise to the observer, but she obtained a good audio recording to cement its identification (JC). This was only the fifth accepted **Bucks** eBird record, with the only previous autumn records from PVP in the 1970s, demonstrating how truly rare encounters are with the species in recent years. The more common of our goatsuckers, the **Common Nighthawk**, had a fairly large number of reports of low numbers (m.ob.). There were five reports of over 15 birds, topped by a healthy high of 68 cruising south over a Reigelsville yard along the Delaware R. 8/21 (EB). One lingering **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** in Buckingham Twp. 10/31 was late (LeRoy Tabb), but not as late as the 11/15 late date. Few rails were reported, as can be the case in fall. A **Virginia Rail** was flushed by a deer at Pine Run Dam 11/18 (DFa) and a **Sora** was at PVP 10/8 and 10/14 (BF ph., KG ph.). The latter was just the eighth record for the park. The continuing **Common Gallinule** at PWT was not consistently reported in late summer and was not definitively seen after 8/9 (DFa).

A fairly strong total of 20 shorebird species were found this fall, with several highlights. An **American Avocet**, the county's 14th record, stayed with the resident ducks for a bit at Core Creek Park 8/12 (Dennis Passman *fide* Dwight Molotsky). An **American Golden-Plover** was photographed well at PWT 10/4 (AH ph.). Amazingly, the only **Semipalmated Plover** report was of a single at SLP 9/3 (DD ph.). One **Whimbrel** flew past at Bensalem Twp. along the Delaware R. 8/4, providing the 10th reliable county record (DFa). **Dunlin** were reported from three locations, with a high of 7 at PWT 10/26 (DFa). The high count for **Least Sandpipers** was a fairly tame 42 at BRD 8/31 (AM). A single **White-rumped Sandpiper** put in a close flyby appearance at PWT 10/25 (AH ph.). An exceptionally late **Short-billed Dowitcher** was confirmed by call at PWT 10/26 (DFa), providing a new fall late date. **Long-billed Dowitcher** is accidental in the county, but one was carefully studied and photographed at PWT 8/6 for the seventh known **Bucks** occurrence (AH ph.). Similar to last year, single **American Woodcocks** were found at 6 locations (m.ob.). A rare **Red-necked Phalarope** spent some time at BRD on 9/19 (AM ph.). Photos posted to a Facebook page revealed after the fact that two **Red Phalaropes** had visited PWT 9/13 (Bernie Carra Druckenmiller ph., *fide* AH, *doc submitted*). This was about the 12th county record of this mostly pelagic shorebird.

Six gull and six tern species were reported, an unusual balance that was in large part due to a passing tropical storm. Sizable flocks of **Bonaparte's Gulls** dropped in across the county with the rain event on 11/12, including 60 at NSP and 132 at PVP (both DFa), and 32 at the more unusual location of Churchville Park (KL ph.). **Laughing Gulls** were seen by the hundreds on the lower Delaware R. as usual, with a maximum report of 600 at PWT 10/25 (AH). The high count of 390 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** at NSP 10/6 was normal for the season, but numbers were a bit lower than usual otherwise (AM). The county's seventh **Least Tern** was observed at PWT 8/4 after a tropical storm passage (DFa, AH ph., *no doc.*). **Caspian Terns** had a quiet reporting season, with at least 18 birds at 4 locations (m.ob.). An adult **Black Tern** at NSP 8/4 was also a product of Storm Isaias (BE). This day produced a **Common Tern** along the Delaware R. at Bensalem Twp. (DFa). **Forster's Tern** was represented by 2 at PWT 8/9 (DFa). A very rare **Royal Tern** at PWT 8/4 (JH, *no doc.*) was probably the seventh county record, although historical records are hard to tally exactly.

**Red-throated Loons** were seen at PVP, with one 10/28 (KR ph.) and 2 on 11/13 (AM), as well as one at NSP 11/13 (DFa). The high of 14 **Common Loons** at NSP was also 11/13 (RS). On 8/2, one **Brown**

**Booby** flew up the Delaware R. at Bensalem Twp. for the third known county record, seen from New Jersey but over Pennsylvania waters (DFa ph., *no doc.*). Great Cormorant went unreported. **American Bitterns** pass through quietly in the fall, but several were detected this time. Singles were at Bedminster Twp. 9/10 (Chris Starling), 2 at BRD 10/9 (VP), one at L. Towhee C.P. 10/11 (CP), and one at PWT 10/27 (DFa). Two **Snowy Egrets** were at Rohm and Haas in Bristol 8/9 (DFa), and one was at the Morrisville Levee on the Del. R. 8/21 (KL ph.). Six immature **Little Blue Herons** were at 5 locations, mostly in late summer (m.ob.). **Cattle Egrets** are rare in **Bucks**, but later in the fall can be good for them. One was seen sometime in the second half of Oct. at PWT (JH). At least 13 **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were seen at 7 sites (m.ob.), with the usual SLP leading the way with 5 (DD ph., MGa ph.). These numbers are more likely normal summer dispersal than a real indication of breeding status.

In a year of multiple notable sightings, the raptor family contained a gem as well. The county's fifth documented **Swallow-tailed Kite** found in late July in Wrightstown Twp. continued until 8/8 and was seen and photographed by well over 100 birders during its stay (m.ob. ph., *no doc.*). A very good total of 5 **Golden Eagles** were observed this fall, perhaps closer to the actual number that must sail silently past every fall in small numbers. Dedicated observation during Nov turned up 2 immatures (DFa) and a subadult (KR) at NSP, an immature in Bedminster Twp. (DFa), and likely an adult at BRD (AM). Any **Northern Goshawk** reported in the county should be carefully documented. Observers at Delaware Canal S.P. Giving Pond were treated to a low flyover from a calling bird 11/14, with the added bonus of it being a very rare adult (JBH, Anne Fry)! A **Broad-winged Hawk** over Doylestown 11/8 provided a new record late date and was a well-described adult (KI). Many observers enjoyed a large kettle of 400+ fly over PVP on 9/20 as well (KJ, m.ob. ph.). Not reported in eBird here since 2011, a **Short-eared Owl** was at PWT 10/30-31 (JH) and two more were at MKF on 11/4 (RS). Additionally, one was at a Warwick Twp. park from 10/24 sporadically through 11/29 (John Tramontano). A single **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was reported at BHWP 11/20, part of a good year in their regular population cycle (Monica Nichols). **Red-headed Woodpecker** reports came from 8 locations, at least 9 or 10 birds total, which is more or less normal for a fall season (m.ob.). No fewer than 6 **American Kestrels** were together at MKF 9/25, not rare but notable in that the group was observed catching invasive Spotted Lanternflies in the air (RS). A **Merlin** seen at the Swallow-tailed Kite location 8/1 provided a new fall arrival date (DFa).

The uncommon **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen once in good habitat at MKF 8/10 (RS). An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** photographed in Lower Makefield Twp. 10/17 was right around their fall late date (KL ph.). Seven confirmed **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were reported from 6 sites, a good showing for this unobtrusive migrant (m.ob. ph.). One of these, in Warwick Twp. 9/26, matched the known county late date (Erik Nelson). Surprisingly, their **Least Flycatcher** cousins were reported from just 6 locations (m.ob. ph.). The mega-rarity that never was came in the form of an **Empidonax sp.** that flew across a road in Tinicum Twp. on the extraordinary late date of 11/26 (AH ph., *no doc.*). Despite its being extensively photographed and discussed at length on various platforms, recordings were not obtained, and it couldn't be determined if this was a Pacific-slope/Cordilleran Flycatcher or a very late Yellow-bellied. The bird was seen by only a few people, given its location on a tiny yet surprisingly busy road with private property on both sides. Without question, however, the award for "Biggest Inaccessible Rarity" went to a **Gray Kingbird** that was photographed at PWT 10/2 (MGa ph., *doc. submitted*). If accepted by the PORC, this would be the second state record and obviously the first **Bucks** record. It was not found the next day, 10/3, although a record-late juvenile **Eastern Kingbird** was present by some coincidence (AM, MGa ph.). Late vireos included a **Blue-headed Vireo** in a Doylestown yard 11/17 (KJ) and a **Red-eyed Vireo** at Tyler S.P. 10/17 (Rachel Adler ph.). At least 14 **Philadelphia Vireos** were reported in their peak season from 8 sites, similar to last year (m.ob. ph.).

You knew it was going to happen sooner than later: a new **Bucks** high count of **Common Ravens**. That distinction goes to MKF, which hosted 8 soaring together 11/24 (AM). This was a moderate irruption year for **Black-capped Chickadees**, with birds generously sprinkled

throughout the county at 14 locations, starting 10/26 from at least 2 locations (m.ob. ph.). **Horned Larks** were reported from three locations, with a fairly low maximum of 41 at MKF 11/25 (KL). A late **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** or two were at PWT 11/16 (AH). Look for more on this in the upcoming winter report. A **Barn Swallow** at PVP 11/13 was late for that species as well (DFa). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** rained down on the county in ones and twos as they do every few years, starting with 2 at PVP 8/16 (m.ob. ph., Rebecca Wilson ph.). Crippling photos were entered of a **Sedge Wren** at SLP 9/27, one of between 15 and 20 records in the county (DD ph.). **Marsh Wrens** were at 4 locations (m.ob. ph.), with a high of 3 at BRD 10/4 (Chris Mortensen ph.). Perhaps a late **Veery** was an eerie sight for the observer at SLP 10/31 (DFi). **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was documented on the ground with 6 birds from 4 sites (m.ob. ph.). **American Pipit** numbers were up by a lot compared to most recent years, though reasons are unclear. The MKF hub used to have highs of over 100 each year, but these had dropped to no more than 40 or 50 in the past 8 or so years. This year, 15 sites reported pipits, including 6 sites with counts of 40+ (m.ob. ph.). The high count was 115 at a farm neighboring MKF on 10/10 (RS).

Without a doubt, one of 2020's birding highlights was the winter finch invasion, which was partially predicted but far exceeded expectations. The standout species in terms of excitement was the **Evening Grosbeak**, whose numbers in the county (and perhaps the state) were probably the highest of this century. Grosbeak reports came from at least 17 locations, mostly during Nov. in the general vicinity of both NSP and PVP. The maximum individual count was 25 at SGL157 on 11/1 (DFa), but totaling the high counts from each site yielded a conservative number of 100 (m.ob. ph.). Given repeated occurrences at multiple NSP sites, the actual number reported must have been over 100 birds. **Purple Finches** were widely reported, starting at PVP 9/12 (PH). Numbers ranged anywhere from single digits to multiple counts of 15-25, with a high of 34 at MKF 10/27 (RS). As is often the case with Purples, reported numbers dropped to low single digits per site by early Nov. (m.ob. ph.). **Red Crossbills** entered the state in good numbers but mostly stayed along and north of the major ridges, in keeping with their rare status in *Bucks*. Single flyovers were noted at NSP 11/8 and 11/15, with another over Tinicum Twp. 11/28 (DFa). White-winged Crossbills and Common Redpolls were not observed during the fall season, both having mild to moderate fall flights elsewhere in the state. **Pine Siskins**, however, came through the county in huge numbers, some of the highest here in a long time. During the height of the movement in Oct. and Nov., counts of 50+ were made at eight different locations, with seemingly countless other reports of 15-40 birds at feeders (m.ob. ph.). Two locations had estimates of 100+ (CF, Tom Price), with a high of 120 at a feeder in Lower Makefield Twp. on 10/13 (CF). Although numbers dropped later, counts of 20-30+ were still occasional through the end of the reporting period. While at a site in E. Rockhill Twp. on 9/18, an observer saw and heard a small finch with a distinctive call fly over. After suspecting it was a **Lesser Goldfinch**, he checked a recording of the species' call and found it to be "spot on." However, given the extremely brief view with no photo and no good view of the bird's coloration, there is really no way this possible mega would be accepted by the PORC as a second state record (DF, *no doc.*).

Veering away from winter finches, one or 2 **Lapland Longspurs** mixed with larks at MKF 11/22-24 (RS, VP, AM) for a scarce fall cameo appearance. The usual **Snow Buntings** at NSP were either not looked for or not found, but one was quite tame at the PVP dam area from 11/9-13 (Kl ph., AM ph.). Few people check the Van Sant Airport for **Grasshopper Sparrows** in late summer, often leading to a fall absence, but a visiting birder found one there 8/8 (Shea Tiller). Late Aug and Sep are the magic window for finding **Lark Sparrow** at MKF, and one was photographed there 9/24 for the eighth county record (RS ph., *no doc.*).

A **White-throated Sparrow** was detected from the MOTUS tower stationed near NSP on 10/31. This individual was tagged in New Brunswick on 10/15 and had moved to Maine by 10/18. On 10/30, it passed a tower in southwestern Connecticut. This means that the bird undertook a 118-mile journey to reach NSP 24 hours later, giving us a fascinating look at the travels of a bird we typically see under our backyard feeders.

Only four reports of one or 2 **American Tree Sparrows** were received, highlighting the species' increasing rarity here.

**Vesper Sparrows** were well-reported, at least 10 birds from 6 sites (m.ob. ph.) with a high of 3 at PWT 10/29 (DFa). **Nelson's Sparrow** reports followed the annual pattern, with ones and twos at BRD and Pine Run Dam from 9/24 to 10/14 (m.ob. ph.). Our fifth known **LeConte's Sparrow** was photographed well at BRD 10/10 (KH, DH ph., *no doc.*). Photos show that the bird was still in a ratty juvenile plumage and showed a fleshy gape, an odd look indeed for a bird that doesn't breed anywhere in the state. Single **Yellow-breasted Chats** were at PVP 9/21 (KJ) and in Yardley 10/3 (Robert Mercer ph.). A young male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was picked out among cowbirds at PVP 8/17 by a meticulous observer for a first park and ninth county record (AM, *doc. submitted*). Small **Eastern Meadowlark** flocks are fairly common in the fall, but 16 at Forest Rd. Park in Hilltown Twp. on 8/18 were unusual for the date (AM). Late **Baltimore Orioles** were at a feeder near the Del. R. just north of Bristol 11/21-30 (Elaine Graemlich ph.), and one at Churchville Park 11/28 (VP). **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported from 12 locations in numbers generally up to 15, with low maxima of 25 at SLP 10/31 (DFi) and 23 at L. Towhee C.P. 11/5 (BE).

Thirty-one warbler species were reported this fall, not exceptional but with several late lingerers. Three **Golden-winged Warblers** were found, at Doylestown Twp. 8/26 (NG), Core Creek Park 9/18 (CM), and Tamanend Community Park 9/25-26 (MGr, RS). A **Black-and-white Warbler** in Richland Twp. 11/14 set a new fall late date (DH). After 11/2 was set as the fall late date for **Tennessee Warbler** last year, singles at Delaware Canal S.P. Giving Pond 11/6 (BG, JBH) and in Richland Twp. 11/10 (CP) set new departure dates. Fifteen seen on a long walk at Tyler SP 10/5 constituted a high count as well (MGr). A further update on this will be in the upcoming winter report. An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at BRD 10/9 (BK), and a warbler in Doylestown Twp. 11/29 could possibly have been this species as well (KJ). **Connecticut Warbler** reports were a bit higher than usual. One was at PVP 9/12 (PH, AM), one at Wilma Quinlan Nature Preserve 9/19 (KJ), 2 at PWT 9/20 (DFa), another at PVP 10/2 (AH), and one was a window strike victim in Warrington Twp. on 10/17 (Tena Kellogg ph.). Normally **Mourning Warbler** is more expected, but only 4 were reported from 3 locations this fall (Idilko Jones, Steven Lamonde, RS, DD ph.). Two **Hooded Warblers** were detected, one at PVP 8/26 (KI) and one at SLP 9/19 (DFi, Kevin Sauppe). As an indicator of the good numbers of boreal warblers this fall, 10 **Cape May Warblers** foraged in cedars at NSP 9/19 (DH, KH ph.). A **Magnolia Warbler** along the Neshaminy Cr. 10/18 was three days shy of the known late date (NG). Another very high count was of 19 **Blackpoll Warblers** seen by kayak along the PVP lakeshore 10/3 (KI). A late male **Black-throated Blue Warbler** foraged right near residence halls on the Delaware Valley University campus 11/4 (Jasmine Dietz ph.). A **Black-throated Green Warbler** in Richland Twp. 11/6 was also late (CP). Finally, a **Wilson's Warbler** at NSP 10/17 was a few days shy of the 10/21 late date (Edward Johnson ph.).

**Blue Grosbeaks** were detected at 5 locations and almost exclusively in Aug, with several singing males suggesting local breeders (m.ob. ph.). The high count was of 4 at MKF 8/23, very likely a family (KL).

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#### **Butler County**

Locations: Bear Run Boat Launch (BRBL), Lake Arthur (LA), Lake Oneida (LO), Lakeview Beach (LB), North Shore (NS), Squaw Valley Woodlands

(SVW), South Shore (SS), State Game Lands 95 (SGL 95), Thorn Reservoir, (TR), Waterfowl Observation Area (WOA). BRBL, LB, NS, SS, and WOA are all part of Lake Arthur in Moraine State Park.

Dry weather persisted into Aug as *Butler* moved into moderate drought status. Even though extended dry conditions produced a better shorebird flight than usual, it undoubtedly adversely affected insect populations. This in turn had to negatively affect avian insectivores even though there is no data to prove it. Notable sightings included **Ross's Goose**, **White-winged Scoter**, **Black Scoter** and **Eared Grebe**. Very interesting was a **Mallard x Northern Pintail** photographed at Thorn Reservoir 10/20 (KB). An immature **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** visited a feeder in Nov. **Chipping Sparrow** and several warbler species were seen into late Nov in several locations. **Eastern Towhee** was seen through Nov and would stay through Dec in several locations.

Uncommon in western Pennsylvania, a wayward **Snow Goose** was photographed grazing with **Canada Geese** at Wylie Road 10/3 (LC) and a **Ross's Goose** was discovered at LO 11/23 (KB ph.). The bird was seen moving between LO and nearby TR until 11/27 (m.ob.). This bird is the third or fourth known record for *Butler*. A **Mute Swan** continued from the summer season at Zelenople 8/21 (MV). **Tundra Swan** arrived early with 4 seen at Bear Run Boat Launch 10/29 (ST) and several flocks seen at Lake Arthur 10/30 (m.ob.). They were seen regularly at LA through November (m.ob.). Duck migration seemed to start early with large flocks of **Mallard**, 3 **Blue-winged Teal**, and **Green winged Teal** at the SGL 95 marsh 9/27 (KB). Five **Northern Shovelers** arrived at Squaw Valley Woodlands 9/14 (DW). During the third week Oct, small numbers of **Gadwall**, **American Wigeon** and **Northern Pintail** appeared at LA (m.ob.) Pleasant surprises included a **White-winged Scoter** at SS 10/28 (RN) and 4 at Mt. Zion Church 11/10 (LC ph.). A female **Black Scoter** (the least frequently reported scoter here) appeared at South Shore 10/27 (AP). Two days later, a gorgeous male **Black Scoter** was photographed there 10/29 (ST). Overall, it was an average season for ducks with 20 species reported. High counts included 120 **Wood Duck** at the WOA (formerly known as the Wildlife Observation Area) 10/10 (LFH), 92 **Mallard** at WOA 10/30 (GK, MAK) and 30 **Ring-necked Duck** at LB the same day (MAK, GK). Rounding out the high counts, tallies included 35 **Bufflehead** at LA 11/25 (MV), 71 **Common Merganser** at LO 11/21 (KB) and a whopping 379 **Ruddy Duck** at LB 10/30 (MC).

Among Gallinaceous birds, **Ring-necked Pheasants** were numerous, no doubt because of the stocking at SGL 95, but there were only two reports of **Ruffed Grouse**: a lone bird near Portersville 8/11 (MC) and a grouse acting strangely, reportedly chasing birders' cars at Porter's Cove 11/13 (KSJ et al.). Some wondered if the bird was under the influence of nearby fermented wild grapes. **Wild Turkeys** remain locally abundant.

**Pied-billed Grebe** was reported starting 9/16 through the season, and **Horned Grebe** arrived at LA. 10/28 (m.ob.). For the second year in a row, **Eared Grebe** was found at Lake Arthur. One was found during the spring 2019, and this year's surprise appeared at SS 10/27 (AP, MD).

Only one **Black-billed Cuckoo** was reported the entire season, but at least 15 reports were made for **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**, all in Aug in widely scattered locations. After 7 probable resident **Common Nighthawks** were seen in downtown Butler 8/5 (GK MAK), the late Aug movement was decidedly average with low numbers reported. High count was 8 birds at North Shore 8/30 (MC).

**Virginia Rail**, **Sora** and **Common Gallinule** were all seen in low numbers only at SGL 95 where they are known to breed. **Virginia Rail** was confirmed again with a juvenile seen 8/1 (KB). A few **American Coots** were noted in as early as 10/3, and numbers increased to a high count of 187 at SS 11/23 (KB). Up to 3 **Sandhill Cranes** were seen regularly through the season at their usual haunts near LA, West Liberty, and SGL 95 (m.ob.).

Shorebird migration was exceptional by *Butler* standards, not so much in number of species seen as length of stay in certain locations. Drought during the summer months lowered lakes and reservoirs and exposed extensive mudflats. Warm fall temperatures and available food may have encouraged some birds to enjoy extended stays. Twelve species were reported: **Semipalmated Plover**, **Killdeer**, **Dunlin**, **Least**

**Sandpiper**, **Pectoral Sandpiper**, **Semipalmated Sandpiper**, **American Woodcock**, **Wilson's Snipe**, **Spotted Sandpiper**, **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, and **Lesser Yellowlegs**. Extensive exposed mudflats at Lake Oneida attracted up to 4 **Dunlin** continuously 10/23-11/10. Normally reported only a few times in the fall season, **Least Sandpiper** was present at Glade Run Lake, SGL 95 and TR continuously through Aug and one was reported daily at LO 10/15-29 (KB, MAK, GK). Rarely reported in the fall, **Pectoral Sandpiper** was seen 12 times at five locations (m.ob.). **Solitary Sandpiper** were reported 8/1-10/24 (m.ob.). Extraordinary for *Butler*, the high count for **Solitary Sandpiper** was 14 at TR 8/25 (KB).

**Bonaparte's Gull** usually arrives in late August, and this year 5 showed up at NS 8/30 (MAK, GK). Their numbers gradually increased through the season and the season high was 41 at SS 11/18 (MAK, GK). **Ring-billed Gull** numbers increased from the summer low below a hundred to 400 at NS 11/18 (MAK, GK) and an estimated 600 at SS 11/26 (RT). **Herring Gull** is regular but in much lower numbers than Ring-billed Gull; an unusual high count was 36 at BRBL 11/29 (ST). Four tern species dropped in at LA. Annual **Caspian Tern** appeared at 528 Boat Launch 8/6 (MAK, GK) and **Black Tern** was reported 3 times: one at Moraine State Park east 8/16 (MC) and 3 there 8/21 (KB, MAK, GK, MC). Another was at NS 9/6 (MC). A **Common Tern** was seen at NS during a heavy rain storm 9/7 (MC) and our most frequently seen tern, **Forster's Tern** was spotted five times at LA 8/21-9/17 (m.ob.).

Only one **Red-throated Loon** was reported, at NS 11/25 (MV), and **Common Loon** was seen in low numbers 10/27 through the end of the season, with the exception of a nice count of 28 at SS 10/29 (ST). **Double-crested Cormorants** summer at LA in low numbers, and larger flocks stop during migration. Numbers were mostly below 100, much lower than during spring migration. More frequently seen in the spring season, an **American Bittern** was spotted at the WOA 11/10 (TR ph.). **Great Egret** stopped at 3 locations 8/12-10/24 (m.ob.). Usually gone by late Sep, **Green Heron** was seen twice at NS 10/4 and 10/18 (MC). A nesting species at several locations around LA, a late **Osprey**, possibly migrating from points north, was photographed at LO 10/31 (MAK, GK). **Short-eared Owl** returned to their wintering ground at Johnson Road 11/6, and 2 were there 11/8-21 (MC). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** seem to be on the increase with reports from eight different locations (m.ob.). **Merlin** sightings also increased with birds seen in MSP and SGL 95 (m.ob.). A lone **Peregrine Falcon** was seen at SGL 95 on 10/18 (MH, RH).

**Common Raven** is seen regularly through the season, many within a few miles of the West Sunbury landfill. The 7 ravens reported from SGL 95 Gate 7 were in two groups so there may have been overlap. This is the second time in several years that possible family groups were reported but because both reports came later in the season, breeding may have occurred elsewhere. After no reports of **Bank Swallow** in the summer season, there were eight fall reports, all from MSP including 20 there 8/21 (KB, MC, GK, MAK). **Cliff Swallow** successfully nested at their established colonies at the Rte. 422 and 528 bridges over LA, although it was not noted if the drought affected the number of offspring. **Red-breasted Nuthatch** visited feeders continuously from 8/27 through the season but most reports were of one or 2 birds except the 7 at MSP 10/8 (MAK, GK). **Marsh Wren** was present in suitable habitat at SGL 95 marsh 8/21 (KB ph.). NS attracted nice flocks of **Cedar Waxwing** estimated at 150 birds 8/26-9/17 (MAK, GK). **American Pipit** moved through 10/21-11/2 (m.ob.).

Birders were teased in anticipation of a good northern finch invasion. Four **Red Crossbills** were at Sunken Garden Trail 11/28 (FI). **Common Redpolls** included one at Squaw Valley Woodlands 11/4 (DW), one at SGL 95 on 11/26 (MD), and 4 seen at two locations at LA 11/29 (ST). The **Pine Siskin** irruption was of historic proportions and included a green morph at Seven Hills Road (KB ph.). Siskins were reported almost daily from 9/19 through the season with flocks of 20 or more birds seen at least 20 times. Amazing counts included 104 at Tinker Road 10/11 (MAK, GK), 118 at Seven Hills Road 10/13 (KB), and 50 at Zelenople the same day (DK). An estimated 200 were feeding in a sunflower plot at SGL 95, along with 300 **American Goldfinch** 10/18 (MAK, GK), and 74 were at Portersville 11/18 (MC). **Evening Grosbeak** appeared at SS 10/27 (AP),

in Lancaster Twp. under a feeder 10/28 (RN), near Zelenople 1/29 (DK), in Clay Twp. 11/3 (BB), and a pair visited a feeder at Seven Hills Road 11/4 (KB ph.).

**Chipping Sparrow** remained at LA into Nov with one at NS 11/13 (MC) and one at SS 11/24 (MAK, GK). **Fox Sparrow** moved through 9/22-11/23 (m.ob.) and **Lincoln's Sparrow** occurred in higher numbers than usual 9/30 to 10/25 (m.ob.). **Rusty Blackbird** sightings were all from SGL 95 in Oct except 2 at LA 11/23 (RN). High count for Rusties was a nice tally of 70 at SGL 95 gate 7 on 10/18 (MAK, GK).

Including local breeders and migrant warblers, 27 species were reported. As usual, the most frequently seen warblers included **Common Yellowthroat**, **Hooded Warbler**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler** and **Black-throated Green Warbler**. Uncommon warblers included two reports of **Worm-eating Warbler**: one at SVW 8/15 (DW) and one at NS 9/11 (MAK, GK) as well as one report of **Prothonotary Warbler** at Tinker Road 9/12 (MC). Usually reported once or twice in the fall season, **Pine Warbler**, **Canada Warbler** and **Wilson's Warbler** sightings increased, possibly due to increased birding activity. An immature **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** visited a feeder at Seven Hills Road 11/5-13 (KB ph.).

Lake Arthur, the crown jewel of Moraine State Park, continues to attract a multitude of migrating birds and a wide variety of ducks including all three scoters, as well as Eared Grebe and American Bittern. Rare gulls have visited recently including Black-headed Gull, California Gull and both Great and Lesser Black-backed Gull. Four tern species were reported this fall season. Sandhill Cranes nest nearby and are regularly seen. Birders are encouraged to visit the park since a nice variety of birds can be seen in any season.

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### **Cameron County**

Locations: Brooks Run (BR), Driftwood (DR), Emporium (EM), Hicks Run (HR), Lower Ridge Road (LRR), May Hollow (MH), Quehanna Wild Area (QWA), Ridge Road (RR), Sinnemahoning State Park (SSP), Sterling Run (SR), Sterling Run Mines (SRM) West Creek Trail (WCT), Wykoff Run (WR).

One hundred thirty-four species were found this season. Six **Wood Ducks** were at DR 9/10 (MS). An **American Black Duck**, a **White-winged Scoter**, 9 **Hooded Mergansers**, 13 **Common Mergansers**, six **Red-breasted Mergansers**, and a **Ruddy Duck** were all at SSP 11/22-23 (AB). Seven **Ruffed Grouse** were seen at DR 10/3 (FM). Two **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were at SSP 9/5 (DB). Twenty **Chimney Swifts** were seen at EM 8/29 (SS). Two **Ring-billed Gulls** and a **Common Loon** were at SSP 11/22-23 (AB). A **Double-crested Cormorant** was at SSP 8/31 (DKP). Five night flying **Great Blue Herons** were seen at SSP 8/19 (DB). A **Golden Eagle** was at SR 10/18 (MJ). Fourteen **Broad-winged Hawks** flew over BO 9/18 (MJ). The first county photo-documented **Snowy Owl** was at BO 11/13 (AD). Three **American Kestrels** were found at BO 9/18 (MJ).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** and a **Yellow-throated Vireo** were at WR 9/6 (AB). Sixteen **Blue-headed Vireos** were at WCT 9/19 (MJ). Eighteen **Red-eyed Vireos** were at WCT 8/31 (MJ). Four **Horned Larks** were seen at SRM 11/10 (MJ). Ten **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were at HR 10/10 (ABU). Four **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were at HR 9/14 (MJ). Three **Brown Creepers** were found at SSP 11/1 (PK). A **Northern Mockingbird** was at HR 9/24 (DB). A **Grey-cheeked Thrush** was found at HR 10/11 (ABU). Two **Swainson's Thrushes** were at QWA 9/30 (CW). Five **Hermit Thrushes** were at MH 10/24 (MJ). A total of 117 **Cedar Waxwing** were tallied at SR 8/23 (BH). Fourteen **American Pipits** were

at SRM 11/19 (MJ).

A great count of 47 **Evening Grosbeaks** were at SR 11/27 (MJ). Eleven **Purple Finches** were at SR 10/24 (MJ). Two **Common Redpolls** were at HR 11/29 (ABU). Twenty **Pine Siskins** were found at SR 10/24 (MJ). Two **Snow Buntings** were at SSM 11/4 (MJ). Seven **Field Sparrows** were at SR 11/13 (MJ). Five **American Tree Sparrows** were at HR 11/30 (ABU). Two **Fox Sparrows** were at WC 11/15 (MPB). Two **Lincoln's Sparrows** and 6 **Swamp Sparrows** were at WCT 9/17 (MJ). Five **Eastern Meadowlarks** were at SRM 11/15 (MJ). Fourteen **Rusty Blackbirds** were at SR 11/14 (MJ).

Eight **Tennessee Warblers** were found at WCT 9/17 (MJ). One **Orange-crowned Warbler** was seen at WR 10/10 (AB). A **Connecticut Warbler** was at RR 10/5 (MJ). Four **Hooded Warblers** were at WCT 8/31 (MJ). A **Pine Warbler** was at SSP 9/2 (DKP). Three **Cape May Warblers**, 4 **Bay-breasted Warblers**, and 11 **Black-throated Green Warblers** were at WCT 9/17 (MJ). Seven **Indigo Buntings** were at DR 9/5 (AB).

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### **Carbon County**

Locations: Bake Oven Knob (BOK), Bear Cr. L. (BCL), Beltzville S.P. (BSP), Blue Mt. Ski Resort (BMSR), Hell Hollow Rd. (HHR), Lehigh Carbon Community College Grassland/Artificial Wetland (LCCC), Lehigh Gap Nature Center (LGNC), Little Gap hawk watch (LGHW), Mauch Chunk L. (MCL), Penn Forest Res. (PFR), Wild Cr. Res. (WCR).

Note: finches, raptors, and other flybys recorded from LGHW and BOK and included in this report for completeness, due to the *Carbon* jurisdiction on the north side of each lookout, have been entered in *Northampton* and *Lehigh*, respectively, in eBird, due to the lookouts' actual locations.

The superflight of winter finches in the northeast bestowed up to seven of the eight species upon *Carbon*, attracting a greater than average number of observers to the Kittatinny Ridge for the second half of the season. **Evening Grosbeak** was reported from late Oct through Nov as both an overhead migrant and a feeder visitor (m.ob.), with a high of 26 in the air over BSP 11/6 (PN) and 9 on the ground (or in the tray) in Beaver Meadows 10/27 (SGe). A probable heard-only flyover **Pine Grosbeak** was noted at LGHW 10/31 (JHor, ZM, AMil, JM, et al.), which may have been in *Northampton* airspace since the lookout is just south of the county line. This was followed by a female or immature **Pine Grosbeak** described flying north through the gap at LGHW 11/4 (JHor). **Purple Finch** occurred in decent numbers throughout the period, peaking in October, with 41 estimated from LGHW 10/24 (JM). A handful of **Common Redpolls** were detected along the ridge in November, and 20 fed on birches at BSP 11/22 (TS). **Red Crossbill** staged an impressive irruption in late October and November, appearing almost daily for weeks, with 27 counted from LGHW 10/31 (JHor, ZM, AMil, JM et al.), but there was only one report away from Blue Mt.: one or more audible at WCR 11/15 (BW, JW). **White-winged Crossbill** was heard from LGHW twice, on 11/10 (MSc) and 11/24 (AMil), likely over *Northampton* but equally likely "Straight Outta *Carbon*." Finally, **Pine Siskin** proved abundant at times, mostly in October and November, with a conservative estimate of 350 at BSP 10/13 (JHop).

With reluctance, this writer now moves to the taxonomy's remainder. BSP produced multiple uncommon waterfowl, some but not all of which were "storm birds." Highlights included 7 **Brant** 10/26 (JHor), a **Cackling Goose** 11/25 (SB, JHor, MSa), a **Surf Scoter** 10/30-11/1 (BW, JM), 3 **White-winged Scoters** 10/13 (RR, BR), 4 **White-winged Scoters** 10/26 (JHor), 4 more **White-winged Scoters** and 4 **Black Scoters** 11/1 (JM), 5 more **Black Scoters** 11/8 (BW, JW, WW, DL, DT), and 2 **Long-tailed Ducks** 10/30 (BW). Also notable were 19 **Lesser Scaup** 11/12 (BW, RR). Away from BSP, uncommon waterbirds were uncommon indeed, but 6

**Long-tailed Ducks** paused at BCL 11/12 (DF). **Pied-billed Grebe** may have bred at MCL since one or more of 3 individuals photographed via kayak 9/7 (MGa) appeared to be juvs.

Four **Sandhill Cranes** were an excellent find on the north side of BSP 11/20 (MC et al.). Perhaps the period's most unusual report was a **Black-bellied Plover** heard from LGHW 11/14 as it passed to the north at 4:46am (RG, JHor, ZM, JM, MSa). Surely few Lehigh Valley area eBird checklists comprise both Black-bellied Plover and Saw-whet Owl! A **Wilson's Snipe** flushed from the BSP spillway 10/9 (RR). A modest flock of 16 **Bonaparte's Gulls** passed through BSP 11/12 (RR, BW); less seasonal was a **Herring Gull** at PFR 8/3 (RR, BR). **Red-throated Loon**, an annual but always appreciated species, appeared at BSP 11/13 (RB). **Common Loon** featured more prominently, but a non-breeder at PFR 8/3 (RR, BR) deserves mention.

The fall's high counts among eBird entries from the hawk watches were as follows: 22 **Golden Eagles**, LGHW 11/2 (JC et al.); 2 **Northern Goshawks**, BOK 10/27 (JHop); 25 **Bald Eagles**, LGHW both 8/30 and 9/14 (AMil); 1480 **Broad-winged Hawks**, LGHW 9/14 (AMil); 5 **Peregrine Falcons**, LGHW 10/10 (AMil). Other raptors included an adult female **Northern Goshawk** at BSP 10/26 (RR), 18 **Bald Eagles** at PFR 11/26 (RR), a **Peregrine Falcon** over BMSR 8/30 (RR et al.), and another **Peregrine** on the PFR dam 9/27 (BW, JW, WW). Intriguing but unconfirmed was an apparent adult **Mississippi Kite** observed independently by travelers on Rte. 248 near the turnpike bridge in Parryville in both August (WW) and September (JW). Between these convincing, albeit fleeting, sightings, other observers canvassed the area but were unable to locate a kite. An "owl prow!" at BSP 11/4 afforded participants a visual of a single **Northern Saw-whet** (RB et al.).

Two **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were spotted on a snag near BCL 8/31 (DF). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** and a **Philadelphia Vireo** joined a small group of migrants at the main series of stream crossings along HHR 9/13 (BW, JW, WW). **Yellow-throated Vireo** was reported from LGNC 9/15 (JHop) and Mahoning Valley 9/17 (MY). **Black-capped Chickadee** may not often enjoy emphasis here, but a pure flock of 19 striking out across the water from the plantings behind the BSP swimming beach, as on 10/11 (BW, WW), will do the trick! Seven **Red-breasted Nuthatches** at The Woods Campground (private) north of BSP 10/24 (SGr, BG) represented a nice total. **Winter Wren**, infrequent as a breeder south of the Pocono Plateau, was noted singing at WCR 8/17 (MGr, AMin). A **Marsh Wren** was at BSP 10/4 (DH), as were at least 22 **Eastern Bluebirds** 11/22 (BW). A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** foraged in the canopy off HHR 9/27 (BW, JW, WW); the fall's lone other *Carbon* encounter with this common but overlooked transient occurred almost a month later, on 10/24 at The Woods Campground, where 2 late **Swainson's Thrushes** were also reported (SGr, BG). Another semi-late Swainson's was at BSP 10/18 (BW, JW, WW). **American Pipit** passed regularly over LGHW, but was recorded also from BSP 11/25 (13; SB, JHor, MSa) and along Strohl's Valley Rd. 10/15-22 (max 40; RR, BR).

Among a smattering of ridge-line **Snow Buntings** in November, one on the rocks (as they say) off the Appalachian Trail 11/3 (BE) and 2 over BMSR 11/18 (RR) were unequivocally in *Carbon*. A **Chipping Sparrow** near Parryville 11/22 (BW) was relatively late. At least 17 **Fox Sparrows** were tallied in the thickets northeast of the Pine Run bridge at BSP in mid-November (DL, DT et al.). Respectable counts of 6 **White-crowned Sparrows** at BSP 10/20 (RR), 7 **Lincoln's Sparrows** at BMSR 10/3 (JM), another 7 **Lincoln's** at BSP 10/4 (TS), and one **Vesper Sparrow** on the BSP dam 10/24 (JB, JG)—since **Vesper** is respectable in *Carbon*, period—rounded out the fall's LBJs. An **Eastern Meadowlark** vacated a grassy pond edge at BMSR 10/24 (RR). Solo **Rusty Blackbirds** stopped by BMSR 10/17 (RL, JM) and BSP 11/6 (RR). Dawdling warblers included **Tennessee Warbler** at BSP 10/22 (RR, BR), **Nashville Warbler** at BSP 11/1 (BW, WW), and **Blackpoll Warbler** at BSP 10/18 (BW, JW, WW), while a **Wilson's Warbler** at LCCC 8/27 (JB) was a little early. Last but not least, **Blue Grosbeak** continued at LGNC from the summer, with a pair noted 8/6 (CS). This writer should probably retract his sober 2019 pronouncement that the grosbeaks had disappeared, but this writer is too busy scheming how to end a future report with either a peep or an empid, in order to conclude with the line, "Last AND Least...." For now, consider yourself *Carbon*-ated!

ADDENDUM: Inadvertently excluded from the summer report was the confirmed breeding of **Virginia Rail** at an undisclosed wetland in southern *Carbon*. A pair originally discovered in May 2020 (during a Pennsylvania Game Commission marsh bird survey) raised 4 young (RR).

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### Centre County

Locations: PSU Arboretum (ARBOR), Bald Eagle S.P. (BESP), Black Moshannon S.P. (BMSP), Colyer L. (COL), Haugh Family Preserve (HFP), Jo Hayes Vista (JHV), Scotia Barrens and Pond (SCO)

BESP proved to be a rarity magnet this season with several species of note observed. The 2020-2021 Winter Finch Forecast <<https://finchnetwork.org/winter-finch-forecast-2020>> indicated that many boreal finch species would irrupt this year. That was proven to be the case. On a sad note, Chuck Widmann, a long-time birder and hawk watcher, passed away in August. The following species were reported in five or more locations and will not be discussed further in this report: **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, **Marsh Wren**, **Gray-cheeked Thrush**, **Bobolink**, and **Northern Waterthrush**. Information for this report were obtained primarily from eBird and the State College Bird Club listserv with background and status now from *Birds of Central Pennsylvania* by Nick Bolgiano and Greg Grove, 2010 (*B&G, 2010*).

Four **Snow Geese** were observed on N. Nixon Rd. 11/1 (KMD, MK). Another bird was spotted 11/24 at BESP (KMD). One or 2 casually occurring **Red-necked Grebes** were present at BESP 10/27 (EH, et al.). A late **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was observed 11/4 and 11/12 in State College (KE).

A trio of **American Avocets** were seen 9/28 at BMSP (CM, GM). Two reports made on Facebook included photos of this accidental species. The birds were in non-breeding plumage. According to eBird, this represents the seventh occurrence of this species with most reported in the fall, including those at BESP in 2007 and 2014, and COL in 2009 and 2011. The species was also observed in April 2020 at the Nittany Farms ponds, and in July 2014 at COL.

A casually occurring **American Golden-Plover** was spotted as it paused its migration to do some foraging at BESP 9/27-28 (BC *fide* BS, et al.). BESP was also the site of multiple reports of **Sanderling**, with up to 4 being observed 8/4-8 (JP, et al.). Single Sanderlings were also observed there 8/22 (KE) and 9/2-3 (EZ, BoS). BESP was also where a **Dunlin** was present 10/26-27 (BS, JP, AM). Another was spotted 10/29 at the Nittany Farms pond (CE). Hurricane Isaias deposited a wayward **Willet** at BESP 8/4. Based on coloration, observers identified it as a western variety (MK, et al.). Although considered to be accidental, the species has been reported many times in the county, according to eBird.

The county's first fall migration sighting of a **Franklin's Gull** occurred 10/30-11/2 at BESP (JP, et al.). Three previous reports of this accidental species were at BESP in July 1983, May 2014, and May 2016, while a fourth observation, also in May 2014, was at the Curtin wetland and was probably the same bird as was seen at BESP that year. A second accidental gull species was also present at BESP: an imm. **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was photographed 11/1 (JH). The only prior report of this species was from December 2015, also at BESP.

Two rare migrating tern species were noted at BESP. A **Caspian Tern** was seen in the area around the marina and the beach 8/2 (JP), and a **Common Tern** was present 8/4 (MK, KE). A **Red-throated Loon** made a brief appearance at BESP 11/22 (RF). **Great Egrets** are rare but are seen most years. Five were spotted 8/11 at BESP (CE), and one was observed 8/28 in Spring Cr. canyon (JL). The nocturnal flight call of a **Black-crowned Night-heron** was noted 9/12 at Penn's View in the Bald Eagle SF (JG). A **Barn Owl** was spotted 8/17 at a known location near Spring Mills (JG).

Two rare vireo species were noted. One or 2 **White-eyed Vireos** were present 9/13-10/7 at the Haugh Family Preserve (JaC, et al.), and a single bird was observed in Boalsburg 9/22 (NK). A few **Yellow-throated Vireos** were also reported. One lingered at SCO from 8/1-9/21 (AM, et al.), 2 were at BMSP 8/15 (KM), and a single was also at BMSP 9/19 (GLN, LC). Another single was found in State College 8/19 (JD).

The county's second report of a **Cave Swallow** was documented at ARBOR 10/26 (JG). According to eBird records the only other county sighting was at BESP in Dec 2015. Normally found in Mexico, southern Texas, the U.S. Gulf Coast, and the Caribbean, an eBird range map shows sightings all the way up the Atlantic seaboard into the Canadian Maritime Provinces.

Area birders received a sweet fall treat in the form of a multi-species boreal finch irruption, as predicted in the Winter Finch Forecast. Blue observation markers for **Evening Grosbeaks**, **Purple Finches**, **Red Crossbills**, and **Pine Siskins** festooned eBird maps like sprinkles on a chocolate-covered donut, with too many sightings to enumerate. Although most of these species are not particularly rare, most are not reported every year, so the number of species and the quantity of observations combined to make this a notable event. A fifth species, **Common Redpoll**, was also noted in limited numbers. A single bird was spotted 11/22 in SGL 333 north of Spring Cr. (NiB). There were two sightings on 11/24: one in SGL 100 German Settlement Grasslands (CE, KE), and one at JHV (CE, JV).

Two lucky birders found **Snow Buntings**. One was observed 11/3 in SGL 100 (MN), and 6 were spotted 11/4 at BESP (AC).

There was a trio of single **Louisiana Waterthrush** sightings: 8/1 off Bell Hollow Rd. (MN, GLN), 8/3 at the Bell Hollow fields (JC), and 8/8 at Laurel Haven (MB). **Northern Waterthrushes** were observed in at least five locations. **Orange-crowned Warblers** are casual visitors. There were four reports of single birds: 9/13 at Penn-Roosevelt SP (JP), 9/14 at SCO (JV), 10/3 at ARBOR (EM), and 10/6 at the Curtin wetland (JV). At least one **Connecticut Warbler** was present 9/6-13 in SCO (AM, et al.). An imm. was observed 9/10 at BESP (AL). An imm. bird was seen foraging 9/12 at HFP (JaC). An imm. was also reported there 10/2, but it is not known if it was the same bird (JP). Two **Mourning Warblers** were spotted at SCO 8/31-9/7, a first year female and an adult male (JP, et al.). One was spotted 9/15 in Potter Twp. (JG, DR), and on the same date, another was observed foraging in some shrubbery in Port Matilda (PW). A **Kentucky Warbler** was noted 8/29 in Boalsburg (VZ, AW). A deceased Kentucky Warbler was found 9/2 on the Penn State central campus. Its demise was probably due to a window strike, based on the location where it was found (JG).

A **Dickcissel** was recorded during a nocturnal flight count in Bellefonte 10/22 (JP).

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## Chester County

Chester County Locations: Bucktoe Creek Preserve (BCP), Chambers Lake (CL), ChesLen Preserve (CLP), Exton Park (EP), Great Marsh (GM), Marsh Creek State Park (MCSP) Octorara Reservoir (OCTRES), Rushton Farm Banding Station (RFBS), Struble Lake (SL).

The continuing Coronavirus pandemic had a significant impact on the number and quality and bird sightings, as many birders took to the open air for a safe, stress-free outdoor activity. National and international travel to exotic locations was cancelled, many local walks were cancelled, many folks were not going to work, but instead working from home. All these factors contributed to more bird sightings and reports. Exciting for birders was the 22nd Annual Winter Finch Forecast, published 9/20 by Tyler Hoar (taking over for Ron Pittaway, after many years) in which an irruption was predicted for a handful of species. For the most part those predictions have been met or exceeded, in both numbers and geographical extent.

Highlights for the period include a county first **Yellow Rail**, the emergence of a relatively unknown farm pond as a shorebird hotspot, and the arrival of those predicted winter finches.

Two species of scoter were observed on the larger bodies of water in the county. **White-winged Scoter** was present on MCSP from 10/29-11/14, with a max of 4 on 11/12 when a photographer was able to catch the white secondaries during wing-flap (JD). A single bird spent part of the day at SL 11/12. Also at MCSP was a single **Black Scoter** 11/7.

It's always a kick to see a **Black-billed Cuckoo**: one was at Willisbrook Preserve 9/12 by a group of nine observers, and singles were noted at BCP 9/5 and 9/27 (LL). Also at BCP, high counts of 42 and 40 **Common Nighthawks** were counted 8/28 and 9/1, respectively, while smaller numbers were seen around the county (m.ob.).

"Yikes!" began the report by (RG) when he first observed a juvenile **Yellow Rail** at CLP 10/7. Assisted by thermal optic capability, the bird was initially observed in the early morning, and then re-found later in the day with a small group of fellow birders who were able to share a view of this incredibly elusive, Pennsylvania Code-5 bird. It should be noted that many hours and days were invested in the search for such a find. Subsequent attempts to relocate the bird over the next few days were unsuccessful. A new record for *Chester*, in total six reports of this species have been reviewed and accepted by PORC since 2002, with another handful of reports going back 50 years and more. One specimen was added to the collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, when a bird died after an unfortunate window strike in *Montgomery* 10/19/2007.

Other Rallidae observations include a **Sora** sighted by flashlight 10/18 (RG); several other sightings were noted at Shamona Creek Park 10/8 (HM) and CLP (HM, JH, CH). **Virginia Rail** can be reliably heard, if not always seen, at CLP, where up to 8 individuals were heard 11/15 (JMc). American **Coot** observations were mostly from CL (m.ob.), with a few recorded from other locales.

Shorebirding in *Chester* is often dependent on unpredictable, but controlled drawdowns at lakes, reservoirs, local ponds, etc. sometimes provide habitat. CL has experienced some exceptional years due to dam repairs, yielding Willet in 2010 and Buff-breasted Sandpiper in 2015. This year, Glenville Farm Pond, a relatively unknown farm pond near Cochranville, was *the* place to be. Species seen included up to 10 **Stilt Sandpiper**, a max count of 183 **Least Sandpiper** (HM), as many as 10 **Pectoral Sandpiper**, max of 14 **Semipalmated Sandpipers**, **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Wilson's Snipe**, **Greater Yellowlegs** and a max of 81 **Lesser Yellowlegs**. Most remarkable were 4 **Hudsonian Godwits** that were present 10/2-15 (RG). Away from Glenville, 7 **Semipalmated Plovers** were a flyover at Longwood Gardens 9/14 (AG).

**Bonaparte's Gull** made an impressive appearance 11/12-13, with 67 at MCSP (m.ob.) and several more at SL, CL, and West Vincent Sewage Pond. An unusual **Laughing Gull** away from the Delaware River was noted at SL 11/15 and 11/18 (LL). Two **Lesser Black-backed Gulls**



were picked out of flock of 1000 **Rng-billed Gulls** on the grounds of Honey Brook Township Building (LW), while single birds were ticked at SL. A fly-over was noted at BCP 10/18 during a regular Sunday walk sponsored by Delaware Nature Society. A very uncommon, **Common Tern** was photographed at MCSP 10/1 (EC) was still present the next day. The more likely of the medium-sized *Sterna*, **Forster's Tern** was seen only once, when two appeared at MCSP 9/26 (BB, et al.).

Sightings of **Red-throated Loon** were limited to a max of 4 at MCSP 10/26-29, and 2 were identified in flight over Elverson (RG). The more frequently observed **Common Loon** was also noted, but again only at MCSP (m.ob.), with several flyovers noted (ZB). **American Bittern** made only one appearance, at EP 11/16 (ph. JD). Seen a bit more frequently in neighboring *Lancaster*, 3 **Snowy Egrets** wandered into *Chester* portion of OCTRES 8/1 (LL). Like Snowy Egrets, **Little Blue Herons** disperse from their coastal breeding grounds, up the rivers and inland to local bodies of water. At least two individuals spent the latter half of Aug in *Chester*, with one at Glenville Farm Pond and another at MCSP, seen north of bridge on Little Conestoga Road (m.ob.). Another or the same individual was along the Schuylkill River 9/2-3 (RG, et al.). This same area, Schuylkill River Trail, was the site of the lone **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** of the season 9/2 (SS). An immature bird, it stayed until 9/7 and was seen by a handful of birders. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was also seen on once only, when a nice in-flight photo was taken 8/4 (JM).

For the second year in a row, an immature **Golden Eagle** seen in flight 11/19 at BCP was the only observation. An amazing find of **Short-eared Owl**, (or did it find the birder?) took place on the balcony of a condominium near Malvern, where it spent the good part of the day 11/21 (JW) resting on a lounge chair! Regarding **Northern Saw-whet Owl** banding results at RFBS, 84 new owls are now wearing a tag after this season. This year's results followed 22 last year, and 152 the year before.

The dates of 9/12 and 9/13 were the time to find **Olive-sided Flycatcher**! Observations this year at BCP, CLP, and The Mill at Anselma (SS), all occurred on this date. One nice photo (JD) showed a large dragonfly about to become lunch. Overall, the species was seen from 8/21-10/2. **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** sightings were scattered around the county during their typical timeframe, but a bird south of Coatesville 11/7 (ph. JMcN) was exceptionally late. Identified primarily by voice, the only **Alder Flycatcher** reported was at Upper Uwchlan Twp. (SS). With the exception of **Philadelphia Vireo**, for which there were quite a few sightings 9/5-10/17, vireo identification is fairly straightforward, but this fall a vireo was observed at Warwick County Park that provided for an interesting debate. Was it the expected Blue-headed, or could it be a Cassin's? The two species are very similar, and together with the Plumbeous comprise a threesome was once considered three species, then lumped into a single species, the Solitary Vireo, then, based on DNA analysis published in 1997, it was split back into three separate species. It was determined to report the bird as Cassin's/Blue-headed.

An irruption species, **Black-capped Chickadee** reporting began with several early Sep observations at OCTRES and BCP; the majority of sightings however were in Nov, with numerous widespread reports at feeders and elsewhere. Birders were happily reviewing the differences between the normally occurring Carolina and the Black-capped. Even so, many birds were reported as Carolina/Black-capped Chickadee, especially in October. **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, another irruptive species, arrived in mid-Aug, with most sightings from Sep throughout the period. A beauty of a bird, who doesn't like to hear their "yank-yank" calls?

Kirkwood Preserve joined the short list of fall locations where **Sedge Wren** has been recorded in *Chester*. Found 10/22 (RG), the bird stayed until the next day, providing couple dozens of birders good viewing and photographic opportunities. An intriguing voice recording was made from CLP 8/12 (JS). **Marsh Wrens** are observed annually in small numbers in suitable habitat.

**Gray-cheeked Thrushes** banded at RFBS included 3 on 10/6 and one 10/15. Two other observations were made (AB, JG), and three separate, nocturnal call detections were made using NFC technology (ZB). **American Pipit** reports started with the beginning of Oct. Observations of single or a few birds were made around the county (m.ob.), but larger flocks of approximately 100 were counted, one-by-one, at CLP and Homestead Road area, including SL.

As mentioned earlier, this year was predicted to be a flight year for several species; for more detail refer to the Winter Finch Forecast. The timing of when these northern visitors have been reported in *Chester* went generally thus: Red-breasted Nuthatch in mid-August, **Purple Finch** at the start of September, **Pine Siskins** arrive in big numbers in October, first **Evening Grosbeak** late October, Black-capped Chickadee in early November, and finally small numbers of both crossbill species and **Common Redpolls** in mid-to-late November. **Red Crossbill** reports were of one-two calling flyover birds at Coatesville Res. (LL), Goat Hill Serpentine Barrens (RG) and a personal residence near Downingtown (ZB). The only **White-winged Crossbill** reported was at the same residence near Downingtown (ZB). Single **Common Redpolls** were reported from Elverson 11/24 coming to feeder with **Pine Siskins** and **American Goldfinch** (JK, DK), 11/25 in same area (RG, CH, MH), and a single fly-by was noted at personal residence also 11/25 (PW, JW). All other finch species have been widely reported, from many locations/ feeders (m.ob.)

Homestead Rd. was the place to look for **Lapland Longspur** this season, beginning with initial report of 2 birds 11/22 (SS, NF). Sightings continued throughout the period. Finding this species requires searching through the tens and sometimes hundreds of **Horned Larks** that frequent the open fields. American Pipits are sometimes here as well. Homestead Rd. is also a good location for **Snow Bunting**, where one bird was reported 11/24 (LL).

**Grasshopper Sparrows** were reported in early Aug at several locations where they probably nest in the southwestern section of the county. Later, a single bird was found and at Kirkwood Preserve 10/19-22 (ph. RG). The season's only **Clay-colored Sparrow** was also reported from Kirkwood 10/27 (RH). And finally, also at Kirkwood Preserve, **Vesper Sparrow** was reported multiple times 10/18-10/27 (AG, JD, RG, CH). Reports for one-two vespers came from a few other locations, but only one, BCP, offered two together in the same tree (IS).

The highest number of **Rusty Blackbird** was 65 reported from GM 10/25 (MC). Other sightings were made at the often visited spots around the county (m.ob.).

Warbler migration can be the highlight for many a birder, with fall birds presenting a fun challenge. **Golden-winged Warbler** presents no such challenge, with its unique golden wing patch and facial pattern; there were 5 reports including one with a "decent" photo capture at RFBS (MD)—the observer's description, not mine! The periods only **Prothonotary Warbler** was discovered unexpectedly at MCSP 9/10 (HM). Somewhat non-descript, but still eagerly sought, the **Orange-crowned Warbler** was reported on three occasions: at EP 10/18 (BB), at RFBS 10/5-6 (RG, JD), and at Waterloo Mills Preserve 10/7 (KF). In the battle of *Oporornis* warblers, **Connecticut Warbler** sightings outnumbered **Mourning Warbler** eight or nine to one, the lone Mourning reported at Honey Brook WTP 9/6 (SS). Single Connecticut Warblers were banded at BCP on 9/18, 9/23 and 9/24. The range of sighting in the county ran from 9/15 through 10/9.

A **Dickcissel** was photographed at BCP on 10/28 (HD), the same day that 125 Pine Siskins were tallied there. Elsewhere on the 10/28, a Dickcissel was reliably described at Embreeville Mill Property (JF). Single birds were also detected by their buzzy flight call at ChesLen Preserve 10/7 (RG) and at Kirkwood Preserve 10/16 (RG).

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### **Chester County – ADDENDUM – June-July 2020**

Locations: Bucktoe Creek Preserve (BCP), Marsh Creek State Park (MCSP), Octorara Reservoir (OCTRES).

The Coronavirus Pandemic persisted through summer, with statewide lockdowns ordered by the Governor through 6/8. Most birders continued to scour through their local patches, finding relief to the situation through ornithology. There were no significant storms during this period, and other than the pandemic, this was a typical summer. Avian highlights included a Sandhill Crane at Struble Lake, and a Summer Tanager at Goat Hill in the extreme southern part of the county.

*Chester* hosts a nice array of migrating waterfowl during spring, but by mid-May most migrants have cleared out and only **Mallard** and **Wood Duck** remain to nest. This made the discovery of a male **Ring-necked Duck** at the Honey Brook WTP 6/26 an unexpected find. Likewise, a male **Greater Scaup** at MCSP 6/11 caused a stir, as birders flocked to see this unusual Jun visitor. Both of these diving ducks are expected to be in Canada on the nesting grounds at this time. **Common Mergansers** are unexpected in Jun. Although no nesting in *Chester* is known at this point, they do nest in neighboring counties. There were 2 female types found 6/10 at Sanatoga County Preserve (NF, SS), and 6/12-13 at MCSP (LL). Lastly a drake Common Merganser was a surprise at OCTRES 7/14-15 (LL).

An adult **Pied-billed Grebe** found at West Vincent WTP 6/26 (NF, SS) was unexpected as this grebe is not known to nest in *Chester*, and a follow-on sighting 7/29 (KC) was doubly intriguing. This small grebe does nest in nearby Wilmington, Delaware, and has nested previously in southeastern Pennsylvania.

**Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were reliably found at Goat Hill Preserve in the Serpentine Barrens region (m.ob.). This remains the only spot where one can find this vocal nightjar “on demand” during summer. Sadly, efforts to locate whips at Chrome Barrens, a location they previously occupied during the nesting period, have failed.

A lone **Sandhill Crane** at Struble Lake 6/2 (SS) was quite unexpected. This species is rare in the southeastern part of the Commonwealth in Jun, and only irregularly found in summer.

The night of 6/4 saw a last massive push of shorebirds in migration northward from the Delaware Bay. *Chester* offers a geographical advantage for witnessing this visible migration. Multi-species flocks graced the evening sky around the dinner hour, and birders ready for them at BCP witnessed 1025 **Ruddy Turnstones**, 113 **Red Knots**, and 1000 **Semipalmated Sandpipers**, among many other unidentifiable shorebird migrants (LL, m.ob.). A lucky birder in Downingtown looking skyward at the right moment watched 354 Ruddy Turnstones and 88 Red Knots among many hundreds of unidentified shorebirds moving overhead (ZB). There’s only a short window of time in summer when arctic nesting shorebirds are absent, and the first returning migrants heading southward begin appearing in Jul. Water levels in a Glenville farm pond began to drop through Jul. and allowed for excellent foraging opportunities for shorebirds heading south. Up to 50 **Least Sandpipers** were reported there 7/15 (LL). Four **Semipalmated Sandpipers**, which are not as common on the piedmont, were notable 7/31 (RG, MG).

An immature **Laughing Gull** was a nice find on the lake at MCSP 6/3 (LL), while the following week, 6/11, an adult was found in the same place (LL). The occurrence of this coastal plain species is unusual without an associated storm, especially in Jun. **Caspian Terns** will often use local lakes for prime hunting during their migration, and this large tern was found at MCSP 6/11 (LL) which was an unusual early date. Two Caspians were noted at Chambers Lake 7/17 (RR), and another was found at OCTRES 7/25 (LL). A lone **Forster’s Tern** at OCTRES was nice to add

to the day’s birding list 7/17 (LL).

A birder reported flushing an **American Bittern** along the lakes edge at Struble Lake, 6/20 (JA). This cryptic bittern has only rarely been found during the nesting season, so this observation was intriguing. No follow-up sightings occurred. A **Snowy Egret** was found foraging in shallow edges of OCTRES 7/29 and lingered through the end of the reporting period (LL). **Little Blue Herons** also favor this location and are typically found at the end of summer as they disperse from rookeries in other regions. An immature was seen there 7/30 (LL).

*Chester* proves to be the most reliable county in the Commonwealth to find **Mississippi Kites** in flight during May and Jun, but evidence of breeding has not been noticed. Two Jun reports came from Downingtown, appearing to be different individuals, 6/1 and 6/7 (ZB). An immature **Northern Harrier** was spotted hunting over tall grasses at OCTRES 7/21 (LL). This species is rarely found in Jun or Jul. **Red-headed Woodpeckers** are now known to nest in two locations, both in Honey Brook. Reports are frequent, and because of the site-fidelity, reliably found (m.ob.).

Continuous reports of up to 12 **Bank Swallows** flying over MCSP in summer brings suspicion of breeding nearby (m.ob.). A **Cliff Swallow** was seen moving around the Brandywine Creek in Chadds Ford Delaware, but often flying across into *Chester* boundaries 6/11-12 (m.ob.). This species has not been known to nest in the county for the last few decades, and it was not apparent if this swallow was just passing through, or nested nearby.

A **White-throated Sparrow** spent summer in a yard in Downingtown, seen on multiple occasions from 6/3 through the end of the reporting period (HM). Since this species is not known to typically linger into Jun-Jul., it was suspected that the sparrow was not healthy enough to migrate north in spring.

A **Kentucky Warbler** was found singing at Warwick CP 7/8, presumably still on territory. This is a low-density nesting bird, and this location is one which this warbler has been found in recent years. A singing **Cerulean Warbler**, a species no longer known to nest in the county, was heard 6/12-13 (SS, NF). This was intriguing, but unfortunately further encounters were not to be had. Northbound migrant **Blackpoll Warblers** occasionally linger longer than other migrants, so several discovered into the first few days of Jun (m.ob.) was not terribly unusual. An adult male Blackpoll photographed in a yard in East Fallowfield 6/17, however, was completely unexpected that late into Jun (MN).

An immature male **Summer Tanager** was a good find at Goat Hill Preserve 6/13 (JW, PW). The tanager was subsequently found 6/21 (RG) and 6/24 (SB). Summer Tanager is an irregular nesting species in both sw. and se. Pennsylvania, though nesting has never been confirmed in *Chester*.

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### **Clarion County**

Locations: Beaver Creek Nature Area (BC), Clarion (CL), Cullsville (CV), Kahle Lake (KL), Lucinda (LU), Mt Zion (SGL 330/Piney Tract) (MZ), New Bethlehem (NB), Redbank Valley Trail (RVT), Rimersburg (RI).

Some early cold weather patterns in late October brought **Tundra Swans** down just a little early to KL. Several flocks numbering up to 68 were found starting 10/31 and continuing through 11/3 (DS, ES, TS). At this same location **Common Goldeneyes** were also found about a week ahead of normal dates, with 3 present 10/24 (ES).

**Ruffed Grouse** continue to be reported less frequently, and only one sighting was received, a single bird in forest land near LU 11/28 (ES). For the fourth year, a **Common Nighthawk** watch was held at Mill Creek along the Clarion River on a nightly basis from 8/16-9/9 (MH, FM, LT). The total count of birds was 394, the lowest number since the count started. The two highest counts were 41 on 8/30 and 120 on 9/1. Rails are rarely recorded in *Clarion*, so a **Sora** at the ponds area of SGL 72 on 9/1 was an excellent sighting. This was the same location where Virginia Rail was found breeding this past summer (MW).

Shorebirds are a group not reported as often here, so it is worthwhile to note several that did occur this year. The first of these was **American Avocet**, a rare migrant for *Clarion*. It was first seen at KL 8/12 (BK), and then found 8/13 at the far northeast edge of the lake (DD, CW). It was last seen 8/15 (JS). Others seen at KL 8/13 were 3 **Least Sandpiper**, one **Semipalmated Sandpiper**, one **Spotted Sandpiper**, and 3 **Solitary Sandpiper** (CW). An additional Spotted Sandpiper was seen in NB 8/26 and 8/28 (J&AK), and an additional Solitary Sandpiper in RI 8/6 (MM). **Greater Yellowlegs** were found also at KL and later into migration than is typical. One was noted there 10/24 and up to 5 birds continued late into the season, last reported 11/14 (MD, PF, ES, DW). A single bird was also found not far away at BC 11/13 (ES). Two **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at KL 10/9 (DS).

The only notable gull species was a **Bonaparte's Gull** at KL 11/14 and 11/23 (ES). **Great Egrets** are sporadically seen in migration, but it was rather unusual to see one as a flyover near CV 8/15 (CW). One was also reported in more typical habitat along the Allegheny River at Foxburg 8/23 (SK).

**Osprey** was more frequent than usual this season, starting with one seen near NB 9/2 (J&AK), one near Fisher 9/11 (DK), and one near CV 9/15 (CW). Single birds were also reported at both KL and BC 10/31 (ES). After what seemed like an increase in the local population over the past winter, **Northern Harrier** numbers appear to have dropped considerably and for the season only one report was received, that of a single bird found at MZ 11/20 (NV). Monitoring of the numbers through winter and

Throughout this fall season, one contributor undertook an extended survey of owl populations for *Clarion* (MH). This survey consisted of 10-12 stops and roughly 3 hours of survey work for each township in the county, with some small variations for size. Twenty-two townships are evenly divided between those located north of I-80 and south of it, as the road almost evenly divides the county. Habitat south of I-80 is predominantly grassland, scrubland, and farms with scattered smaller forest lots, although there are remaining larger forested areas along waterways. North of I-80 has agricultural areas as well and woodlots, but also many more areas of extensive forest. The surveys were run at night from 10/11-11/27, with stops done at areas of potential habitat and playback used for northern saw-whet, eastern screech and barred owl. Eastern screech-owls that were able to be seen were noted as to color phase as well. A total of 33 hours were completed north of I-80 and 30.5 hours south of I-80. Only one **Great Horned Owl** was located near Knox. A total of 146 Eastern Screech-Owls were located, with 99 in the south, and 47 in the north where habitat is less suitable. **Barred Owls** were more equally distributed, with 7 in the north and 9 in the south. No **Northern Saw-whets** were found. Success rate for locating owls reflected totals, with only 48 out of 123 stops producing owls in the north while in the south 76 out of 118 were successful. Gray morph to red ratio was 11:1 in the north and 19:7 in the south. This data will be valuable for future survey work, potentially for the next BBA, and provides insight into habitat utilized by different owl species in the county. It also shows how owl populations are often hard to predict without more dedicated work such as done by this observer, with an example being screech owl numbers which were higher than anticipated.

into next spring will hopefully reveal this not to be a long term trend, but it could be an area of concern for this species with limited habitat. **Bald Eagles** are happily not in this same situation, and the number and variety of locations for sightings are such that it would be too lengthy to report in detail (m.ob.).

At a location near CV where **Eastern Screech-Owls** are regular breeders, 2 young owls were noted still in the vicinity of the nestbox and interacting at dusk as they sparred over an object of prey, while both adults were still roosting in the same vicinity 8/14 (DD, CW). **Short-eared Owls** were first seen back on their usual wintering grounds on Rankin Rd near CV 10/26, with just one bird present, and then again seen 11/24 (DD, CW).

**Merlins** are not always reported but there were two sightings not far from each other, one near Knox 8/16 (DR), another near Emlenton 10/30 (BB), both along I-80. There were also two records of **Peregrine Falcon** seen in migration, one near CV 10/4 and one in CL 10/13 (TS).

**Philadelphia Vireo** is a fairly regular migrant but still not common, and so increased numbers this year was noteworthy. One was found on three occasions near CV 9/7, 9/23 and 9/25 (CW). A single bird was also found at MZ 9/19 (RC, LC) and one at CL 10/1 and 10/3 (TS). **Warbling Vireo** is also sparsely reported and this year there were three reports near CV 9/15, 9/23 and 9/25 (CW). There is a large amount of great habitat for **Northern Shrike** available. They are not common but still regular every winter; this year the first appeared in an agricultural area near Wolfs Corners 11/25 (WD). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** continued throughout the area from fall with one or 2 birds at feeders near CV, at MZ, and SGL 63 (RC, LC, ES, TS, CW), and up to 4 birds in several areas in CL through the season (ES, TS). **Winter Wrens** continued rather late at a breeding area along the river in CL, where up to 3 birds were seen from 10/1-11/12 (TS).

As in the past several years, nocturnal flight calls of migrating thrushes were documented before dawn near CV, this season on seven occasions from 9/5-10/8 (CW). About 90 total calls were heard on the first day, and on the last day 10/8, 50-60 calls were still being detected but with a change in species. The peak counts were 9/15 with about 600 total calls in 35 minutes and 9/23 with approximately 1300-1400 total calls over about 20 minutes. **Veery** is the earliest thrush to pass through, and only two calls were heard on the first date 9/5. **Gray-cheeked Thrush** were detected as early as 9/10 with a single call, but the most calls were heard 9/23 where 30-40 were noted. They were still being heard through the last morning 10/8 with 4 calls. **Swainson's Thrush** routinely make up the bulk of migrants and are the easiest to ID. They were detected on every day of counting, with the highest number 9/15 when there were 425 calls and 9/23 with over 1000. **Wood Thrush** are the second most common thrush typically heard, detected on all counts but 10/8, by which time their migration is mostly completed. Their peak numbers occurred 9/10-15 with over 100 calls. **Hermit Thrushes** do not usually pass through until October, as they are the latest thrush migrant. This was reflected in their calls only being noted on the last count day 10/8, where they made up the majority with about 30 calls.

Word was spread during the season that it would be another northern finch irruption year, and the first species on the list was **Evening Grosbeaks**. Indeed, they showed up at feeders near Strattanville in numbers up to 20 from 11/4-11/12 (LT). Thirteen birds were also found at LU 11/5, 2 were at KL 11/7-8, and 2 were also at MZ 11/8 (ES). **Common Redpolls** also showed up at MZ with several small flocks noted 11/15 (MW), and 30 were seen 11/18 (RG). **Pine Siskins** were found in multiple locations throughout the county starting 9/22 though at least 11/22. Locations included feeders in CL, CV, and the LU area as well as groups found at KL and MZ (PC, ES, LT, MW). The highest count noted were up to 60 birds found at feeders in RI 10/10 (MM).

**Snow Buntings** were reported early in the season when 10 were located at KL 11/7, and then one was still found in the area 11/8 and 11/14 (ES). The one sparrow species worthy of mention is **Lincoln's Sparrow** which had an increased number of reports this year. One was first seen in CL 9/18 (TS), and then at KL 10/9 (DS). At another location near CV they were found on 7 days between 9/25-10/14 which is more frequent than normally seen (CW).

The first two warblers of note are both boreal species that have been

showing some increase in numbers. Up to 2 **Cape May Warblers** were found in CL on 3 days from 9/14-10/8 and also on 3 occasions at SGL 63 between 8/30-9/27 (TS). Near CV up to 6 birds were found on 10 days between 9/7-10/8, feeding consistently in Norway spruce plantings (CW). **Bay-Breasted Warblers** were also found at this location with up to 3 birds found on 5 days between 9/11-9/25 (CW). They were reported in CL on multiple days with one or 2 birds seen from 9/24-10/8 (JH, TS). Two were also found near Marble 9/21 (DSn), and one at SGL 63 on the same date (TS). A late **Yellow-throated Warbler** continued singing at a breeding area on the RVT near RI 8/8 (CW). **Prairie Warblers** show fall migration predominantly in the eastern corridor on eBird maps and are not frequently reported in fall migration even though they are a regular breeding bird in *Clarion*. For this reason it was unusual to find not one but 2 birds feeding together in the scrubby field habitat they prefer late in migration near CV 9/25 (CW).

The last species of note is one of the most surprising, as no recent reports of this bird are known to the writer. This was a **Summer Tanager** found in a wooded area in the town of CL, observed feeding at treetop and heard calling as well 9/27 (ES).

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#### **Clearfield County**

Locations: Curwensville Lake (CL), DuBois Reservoir (DBR), Karthus Elk Refuge (KER), Platt Road Swamp (PRS), Sandy Ridge Road (SRR).

Personal communications from birders were supplemented by information from the PABIRDS listserv and eBird for this report. **Black Vulture** and **Merlin** observations continue to increase in *Clearfield* with 7 or more sightings during this reporting period, while irruptive **Evening Grosbeaks** and **Pine Siskins** were observed at numerous different locations; these will not be discussed further in this report.

A male **Rufous Hummingbird** first seen on Green Glen Drive in Dubois 9/26 was banded and seen off and on through 11/30 (DN, et al.). An adult **American Golden-Plover** was photographed at CL 9/13 and 9/14 (JF, JS), and a second one with typical juvenile plumage was photographed at CL 9/21 and 9/23 (JF). A **Red Phalarope** was observed and photographed at DBR 11/2-6 (m.ob.). **Great Egrets** were observed along Sandy Lick Creek in DuBois 9/4 (GO) and at Shaggers Inn Shallow Water Impoundment 10/8 (JF). A single **Golden Eagle** was observed at the Wallace Sphagnum Bog 11/5 (JF). Single **Rough-Legged Hawks** were observed at KER 11/21 (BS) and along SRR 11/24 (NV). One **Short-eared Owl** was observed at KER 11/21 (AKI, JV) and three were observed along SRR 11/24 (DR) and 11/27 (JF). A **Red-headed Woodpecker** was located in Treasure Lake 11/7 (DiR) and 11/10 (JV) with an additional three seen 11/8 (DR) and 11/9 (JF). A single **Peregrine Falcon** was observed in Houtzdale 9/9 (JF) and at KER 10/1 (JF).

A **Northern Shrike** was photographed south of Anderson 10/17 (JS). A **Marsh Wren** was observed along Moose Grade Road 9/24 (JF, JS) and another was photographed at PRS 11/21 (AK). A **Mountain Bluebird** was photographed 11/20 at KER (JF). Single **Gray-Cheeked Thrushes** were photographed along Redden Hill Road 9/18 (JF) and at SGL 331 on 9/20 (JF) with an additional 2 observed in Clear Run 10/3 (DR). **Common Redpolls** were observed at the Pottersdale strippings 11/8 and 11/21 (JF) and photographed near CL 11/19 (JF) and south of Anderson 11/19 (JV). **Red Crossbills** were observed at DBR 11/6 (TS), Mahaffey 11/8 (KS, NV), KER 11/21 (RG, JH), and south of Anderson 11/29 (JS). A **Lapland Longspur** was photographed at KER 11/21 (RG, JH, AK, JV). **Rusty Blackbirds** were observed along Anderson Creek Road 10/22 (JF) and at PRS 10/13 (JF, JS) and 10/18 (PW, RW).

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#### **Clinton County**

Locations: Jake's Run (JR), Lock Haven (LH), Mill Hall (MH), Swissdale (SW).

A **Red-throated Loon** was seen at Kettle Creek State Park 11/22 (AB). **Merlins** continued to be reported in the MH area where they had nested during the previous period (ELM).

A **Marsh Wren** was observed at the MH wetlands (MS). A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was seen at Peddie Park near LH 8/31 (MS). Not just a one day wonder but literally a one hour wonder, *Clinton's* first **Lark Sparrow** was found at a community baseball field in MH just prior to the commencement of a game 8/22 (MS). It left when the game started and was not relocated.

*Clinton* was not left out of the statewide winter finch irruption. **Purple Finches** were widely reported throughout the region as early as October into November (m.ob.). On 11/29, both a single **Red Crossbill** and a single **White-winged Crossbill** were found at a hunting camp at JR north of Beech Creek (MS). A **Common Redpoll** was observed at a feeder in SW 11/2 (WL), and another was reported at the hunting camp in JR on 11/28 and 11/29 (MS). **Pine Siskins** were also widely reported from October through November (m.ob.). **Evening Grosbeaks** were reported sporadically and in small or single numbers 10/26-11/30 at Avis, JR, LH, SW, West Keating Township, and Woolrich (m.ob.).

Observers: **Wayne Laubscher**, 749 E. Croak Hollow Road, Lock Haven, PA 17745, (570) 748-7511, [wlnlaubscher@comcast.net](mailto:wlnlaubscher@comcast.net). Adam Bartles, Matthew Schenck.

#### **Columbia County**

Locations: Bloomsburg University (BU), Crow Hill Sanctuary (CHS), Jamison City (JC), Madison Township (MT), Weiser State Forest (WSF)

Fall was a dry season across the region with normal to above average temperatures. Migrants were abundant and we saw the first push of winter finches. A group of 4 **Sandhill Cranes** flew over CHS 11/21 (DG). This species formerly nested in the county but none have been reported in recent years. **Golden Eagles** were seen in good numbers this year with three reported 11/4 (EH), 2 on 11/9 (EH) and a single bird 11/14 (EH). One **Golden Eagle** was also reported from WSF 11/14 (AK). The upper campus at BU has shown good potential for raptor migration because it offers a wide, unobstructed view of the sky. The season's only report of **Rough-legged Hawk** was a single bird migrating south over WSF 11/14 (AK).

**Philadelphia Vireo** were reported in large numbers in the state this fall but *Columbia's* only report was a single bird at BU 9/24 (EH). **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** are infrequently reported in the county, most likely due to difficulty in identifying this species. The season's only report was a single bird at BU 9/24 (EH).

The highlight of the season was the winter finch irruption that got started in Oct when a single **Evening Grosbeak** visited a feeder in JC 10/17 (JL). Thereafter they were reported across the county with a high count of 26 at JC 10/26 (JL). **Common Redpoll** moved into the area in Nov when they were observed primarily as flyovers moving south. A total

of 4 were reported from CHS 11/25 (DG) and 6 were in MT 11/29 (AK). The other notable finch was a single **White-winged Crossbill** that visited a feeder in JC 11/26 (JL).

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### **Crawford County**

Locations: Conneaut Marsh at Geneva (CMG), Hartstown Marsh (HM), Hartstown Marsh-Towpath (HMT), Miller Ponds (MP), Pymatuning State Park (PSP), Pymatuning State Park Causeway (PC), Pymatuning State Park Fish Hatchery (FH), Pymatuning State Park Spillway (PS), Pymatuning State Park Hartstown Project (HP), Woodcock Lake (WL), Woodcock Lake - Abandoned Road Trail (WART), Woodcock Lake Causeway (WLC).

Observations of **Snow Goose** included 25 in the Spartansburg area 10/27 (MB), 23 at PC 11/5 (RL), approximately 35 at HP 11/12 (JH), and one at MP 11/22-27 (IF, MH). **Mute Swan** is scarce in *Crawford*, so 2 in the PSP area 10/25 (BM) were notable. **Trumpeter Swan** is also infrequent here; sightings this season included one at MP 8/1 (RL) and one at Erie NWR at Deer Run Trail 10/10 (TN, KP) and 10/11 (RHAm). A high count of 60 **Tundra Swans** was made at MP 10/31 (EH). Notable observations of **Blue-winged Teal** included a single early bird observed at MP 8/15 (PF) and 3 late birds at HM 10/31 (PF). An early **Common Goldeneye** was observed at Teakettle Road 10/25 (CG). A continuing **Ruddy Duck** from the summer season was still at PS 8/9 (TN, KP).

Two **Northern Bobwhites**, quite rare in *Crawford*, were heard at Teakettle Road 10/24 (MW). Observations of **Ruffed Grouse**, a notable and declining bird in *Crawford*, included multiple sightings at SGL 122: one 11/3 (AL), 2 on 11/13 (AL), and one 11/19 (AL). Elsewhere one was at CMG 10/1 (RL) and another was north of Townville 11/12 (AL). **Black-billed Cuckoos** included single birds south of Springboro 8/6 (CN), at WART 8/30 (TN), and at CMG 9/3 (RL). The only observations of **Common Nighthawk** this season were one at WART 8/16 (TN, KP), one in the Meadville area 9/2 (CG), and one at Woodcock Creek Park (TN). The high count of **Chimney Swifts** was 120 on the Allegheny Campus 9/2 (JHe).

**Virginia Rail, Sora, and Common Gallinule** are all notable breeding birds in *Crawford*, but oddly there were no observations of Virginia Rail or Sora this fall, but Common Gallinule was observed in their expected numbers and locations (m.ob.), including a single juvenile at CMG 9/16 (CN) and 2 juveniles at McMichael Road 8/26 (IF). Late observations of Common Gallinule included one at Custards 10/3 (CG) and one at McMichael Road 10/17 (JN). The high count of the expected **Sandhill Crane** was 59 at MP 11/20 (MAK, GK).

**American Avocet** is a rarely observed bird in *Crawford*, so the observation of 2 birds at PSP 8/17 (DK) was especially notable. There were several observations of **Black-bellied Plover**, all singles. One was at Teakettle Road 8/20 (MHa), and the rest were at WL: 9/30 (RL), 10/4 (RM, KP), 10/22-23 (JHe, AL, BW), 10/28 (RL), and 11/5-7 (JHe, KP). Observations of **American Golden-Plover** included a single bird at WL 10/4 (KP) and another at WLC 10/29 (MW) and 10/30 (JHe, TN). Up to 3 **Stilt Sandpipers** were at WL 9/2-9/20 (m.ob.). **Sanderling** is also infrequently found here, so the single bird found at WLC 9/11-14 (m.ob.) was welcome. A good count of up to 44 **Dunlin** was made at HMT 10/26 (TN, MW). There were several late observations of **Least Sandpiper** at WL (m.ob.), of which one seen from WLC 11/24 was latest (MW). **White-rumped Sandpiper**, expected but sometimes scarce here, was reported frequently at WL from 9/26-10/26 (m.ob.), and a late bird was at WLC 11/24 (MW). **Pectoral Sandpiper** lingered late at the HMT (MW), with the latest report mentioning 2 on 11/19 (MW). The observation of 4 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** at WLC 10/26 (MW) was also notably late. The only observation of **Short-billed Dowitcher** was one at MP 10/15 (RL). The only report of **American Woodcock** this season was a single bird seen near Fairfield Township 9/8 (SG). Notable observations of

**Wilson's Snipe** included a remarkable count of up to 42 birds at HMT 10/26 (TN, MW) and a late observation of 20 birds at PS 11/14 (LC, RC). Late **Solitary Sandpipers** included one at HMT 10/13 (MW) and one at WL 10/23 (AL). A single late **Lesser Yellowlegs** was observed at the PSP Four Island Boat Ramp 11/15 (MH). There were several late **Greater Yellowlegs**, including one MP 11/14 (ME, CG, LS), one at WLC 11/14 (CG), and 2 at PSP Four Island Boat Ramp 11/15 (MH).

Rare for western Pennsylvania was a **Laughing Gull** at PS 9/5 (RL) followed by another at the same location 10/22-28 (m.ob.). A high count of 21 **Caspian Terns** were made at PS 8/18 (KP). Two **Common Terns** were at PS 10/14 (RL). The only observations of **Forster's Tern** this fall were one at WL 9/17 (JHe) and one there again 10/28 (RL).

A **Red-throated Loon** flying over a private residence in the Townville area 10/24 (AL) was unexpected. The only other report was of one at PS 11/3 (CG). A high count of 67 **Common Loon** was made at Tuttle Beach 11/21 (MH), and top count of **Double-crested Cormorant** was 287 in the Pymatuning area 10/14 (RL). A single **American White Pelican** at Ford Island 10/14 (RL) was a nice rarity. The only observations of **American Bittern**, an infrequently reported bird in *Crawford*, were a single bird seen at Erie NWR Tsuga Trail 8/23 (BM) and one at Custards 9/5 (RL). Two late **Great Egrets** were observed at FH 11/14 (RC, LC). Late observations of **Green Heron** included one at Custards 10/28 (RL) and one at SGL 200 on 11/9 (AL), the latter an exceptionally late date for this species.

Last **Osprey** was at WL 10/28 (RL). A single **Northern Goshawk**, very rare in *Crawford*, was reported at the Goose Management Area 9/15 (RL). Early observations of **Rough-legged Hawk** occurred at MP 10/31 (EH) and 11/3 (CG), and one was at Tamarack Lake 11/5 (RL).

**Barn Owl** is a very rare and notable bird for *Crawford*. Two fledglings were observed on private property west of Conneautville 8/24 (CN). **Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, and Barred Owl** were seen infrequently throughout *Crawford* in their expected numbers and locations (m.ob.). **Short-eared Owl** is a rare bird in *Crawford*, so the reports of one at CMG 9/1 (RL), one at the Goose Management Area 9/15 (RL), and a single bird at MP 11/30 (EH) were all notable. A single **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was unfortunately found dead by the side of the road off of Rte. 98 north of Little's Corners 11/28 (KZ).

**Olive-sided Flycatchers** included one in the Pymatuning area 8/19 (RL), one at Lincoln Avenue Park in Meadville 9/11 (BW), one south of Meadville 9/15 (OM), and one at WART 9/30 (TN, KP). **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** observations during the fall season have increased the last several years, and there were again a higher than average number of observations in *Crawford* (m.ob.). A single late **Alder Flycatcher** was heard at a private location in the Townville area 9/12 (AL). Also late was an **Eastern Kingbird** at Woodcock Creek Park 9/16 (TN) and 9/17 (JHe).

The only report of **Northern Shrike** was one at CMG 10/14 (RL), somewhat early for the species. **White-eyed Vireo** is uncommon here; this fall sightings included one at WART 9/15 (TN, KP) and a single near Fairfield Twp. 9/23 (SG). It was a good season for **Philadelphia Vireo** this fall in their expected locations (m.ob.).

**Common Ravens** were observed throughout *Crawford* more than usual, primarily on the eastern half of the county (m.ob.). The only reports of **Horned Lark** this season were 6 off of Porter Road in the Harmonsburg area 11/29 (TN, KP) and 4 at MP 11/29 (AL). An excellent count of approximately 250 **Bank Swallows** was made at MP 8/6 (MF). Consistent with much of the state, **Red-breasted Nuthatches** invaded *Crawford* this fall, and was found with significantly higher than average frequency by county birders. **Winter Wren** also showed better than average

Observations of **Gray-cheeked Thrush**, a scarce bird in *Crawford* during the fall migration season, included a single bird seen at Allegheny College 9/14 (JHe), one at Greendale Cemetery 9/15 (RL), and one at a private location in the Townville area 9/17, 9/19, and 9/21-9/23 (AL). **Swainson's Thrush** showed well this season throughout *Crawford* (m.ob.). A single late individual was noted at a private residence in the Townville area 10/19 (AL). A late **Gray Catbird** was observed in the Centerville area 11/25 (AL). Observations of **Northern Mockingbird**, an expected but scarce bird here, included a one at a private residence in Cambridge Springs 8/18 (SR), a one at Greendale Cemetery 9/10 (MW),

up to 2 birds at the same location 10/6 (NC, ML, JM), and one at WL 10/28 (RL). Top count of **American Pipit** was 11 at WL 10/10 (BM).

Consistent with the rest of the state, *Crawford* experience an invasion of **Evening Grosbeaks**, **Purple Finches**, **Common Redpolls**, and **Pine Siskins** this fall. **Evening Grosbeak** irrupted throughout *Crawford* in the late fall season beginning in late October, with observations occurring throughout the county (m.ob.). A high count of 14 was made in the Conneautville area 11/1 (CN). A high count of 10 **Purple Finches** were observed in the Centerville area 10/28 (AL). Observations of **Common Redpoll** included one heard at SGL 122 on 11/13 and another heard off of Cemetery Road near Oil Creek in the Centerville area 11/25 (AL). Starting in late September, there was a significantly higher than average number of **Pine Siskins** throughout the county (m.ob.). The high count was 170 at a private residence in the Townville area 11/30 (AL).

The only reports of **Snow Bunting** were one at Candahotta Lake Park 10/31 (DA) and one at PC 11/20 (RL). An early **American Tree Sparrow** was observed at McMichael Road 10/16 (KN). A **Chipping Sparrow** at Fairfield Township 11/11 (SG) was somewhat late. **Grasshopper Sparrows** included 2 in the Cochran area 10/23 (RL). **Fox Sparrows** were observed in higher than average numbers throughout *Crawford* (m.ob.), while **Lincoln's Sparrows** were observed in their expected numbers and locations (m.ob.). A single late Lincoln's was seen at HMT 11/6 (MW). **Rusty Blackbirds** were observed in higher than average numbers throughout the county (m.ob.), including a high count of 150 at HMT 10/26 (MW).

There were multiple late observations of **Tennessee Warbler**, including 2 at a private residence in the Townville area 10/23 and a one at the same location 10/29 (AL), one at CMG 10/23 (EH), and one at WL 10/28 (TN). Late **Nashville Warblers** included one at a private residence in the Townville area 10/15, 10/17 (2 birds), 10/22, and 10/23 (AL). **Connecticut Warbler** is a very infrequently observed bird in *Crawford*, so the observation of a single bird at WART 9/26 (JHe, LWG) was notable. Fall observations of **Mourning Warbler** are relatively scarce in *Crawford*, singles at Greendale Cemetery 8/31 (JHe) and at a private location in the Townville area 9/17 (AL) were also notable. A late **Common Yellowthroat** was at HMT 11/6 (MW), and a late **Magnolia Warbler** at a private residence near Townville 10/14 (AL). **Bay-breasted Warblers** were abundant this fall season (m.ob.). A high count of 15 was made at Greendale Cemetery 9/14 (JHe). Late **Yellow Warblers** included one at Woodcock Creek Park 9/23 (KP), one at CMG 9/26 (EH), and one observed at WL 10/5 (JHe, TN, KP). Late **Blackpoll Warblers** were represented by one at Woodcock Creek Park 10/15 (KP), one near French Creek in the Meadville area 10/17 (TN, KP), and one at the Ernst Bike Trail 10/19 (LF). **Pine Warblers** are scarce in *Crawford*, but were well-reported this fall (m.ob.). **Canada Warblers** included one at a private location in the Townville area 8/24 (AL) and one at Greendale Cemetery 9/1 (JHe). Similar to last year's fall season, there was a higher than average number of **Wilson's Warblers** seen throughout the county (m.ob.).

A single **Western Tanager** reported at McMichael Road 9/11 (IF, SR) was an exceptional rarity.

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Nordquest, Mariam Ohanjanyan, Ken Pinnow, Jessica Prutzman, Renee Reilly, Domenic Rocco, Steve Rotkovec, Sarah Sargent, Steve Schmit, Robert Scribner, Shawn Sowers, Liz Spence, Gavin Svenson, Karin Tanquist, Robert VanNewkirk, Tammi Ventura, Linda Wagner, Landon Wells-Green, Bill Wilkinson, Michael Williams, Pam Williams, Aaron Yappert, Kendall Zook.

### **Cumberland County**

Locations: Burd Run Nature Trail (BRNT), Big Spring Sportsman Club (BSSC), Colonel Denning State Park (CDSP), Creekview Road Marsh (CRM), King's Gap State Park (KGSP), Letort Spring Natural Trail (LSNT), Camp Michaux (MICH), Mud Level Road (MLR), Michaux State Forest (MSF), Opossum Lake (OL), Pine Grove Furnace (PGF), West Fairview (WF).

A total of 208 species were reported for *Cumberland* during this period. Unless otherwise stated, occurrences and the number of prior occurrences of the species listed in this report are according to eBird records and "Annotated List of Cumberland County Birds" (*Pennsylvania Birds* 30:138-147, V. Gauthier, 2016). 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 to have occurred in *Dauphin* since the county line is the west shoreline of the river.

There was one new species for *Cumberland* reported this fall. A male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was found in a flock of Red-winged Blackbirds by a pair of observers 10/4 (MS). It was seen only that day at a farm along Ridge Road near Britton Road North of Shippensburg. This species has been reported in several surrounding counties in the past, but *Cumberland* has never had a record until this report. Unfortunately, the report did not come out until days after the sighting.

A single **Snow Goose** was found at Children's Lake 10/3, providing the only report for the season (DB, StB, TJ). At least one of the summering **Tundra Swans** was seen at BSSC 8/2 and 9/19 (VG) and along the Conodoguinet Creek outside of Newville on 8/6 (BF). Migrants of this species moved through at a more expected time in November, with a high count of 85 seen flying over OL 11/12 (DW). The nesting **Trumpeter Swans** also hung around the area after the loss of the cygnet that hatched this summer. The pair was sighted 9/16 and 9/22 at the pond on Big Spring (VG).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove** was reported in its traditional area along PA-997 west of PA-233, with 2 birds 9/4 (VG). One was also noted in a new area near Ponderosa Road in Lower Frankford Township 8/1 (TA, IG). An impressive count of 131 **Common Nighthawks** was made at PGF 8/28 during a nighthawk watch (VG, TJ, DK, BO). Two unusually late reports were made of calling **Eastern Whip-poor-will** at separate locations in the MSF area, one at the Charcoal Hearth Campground on 9/5 (JW), and another at Milesburn Road 9/6 (VG). At least one **Sora** was present at CRM, perhaps a breeding bird that had not yet left its territory, with reports 9/8 and 9/26 (VG, AndyM, BK).

The shorebird season this fall (really the whole year) was mediocre. Drought conditions carried over from the summer into the beginning of Aug, resulting in shorebird habitat at only a few locations. Rain in Aug and Sep was enough to fill in much of the exposed mud at these locations but was not enough to provide any flooded fields. Most shorebird sightings this season were at Big Spring, Stoughstown Road Pond, and Children's Lake, and the main pond at Huntsdale; however these locations failed to produce any notable species. For the first time in at least a decade, Semipalmated Sandpiper was missed for the entire year in *Cumberland*. The lackluster shorebird diversity was somewhat made up for by large flocks of **American Golden-Plovers** that hung around for many to enjoy. A flock of 47 birds was first found 10/12 at MLR west of Duncan Rd (CP). From then until 11/1 a varying size flock was frequently reported, with a high count of 107 on 10/17 (DC). Perhaps the same flock was also seen during this time period a couple miles west along Gephart Rd., where a high count there of 84 was made 10/29 (CP). A few sightings

of **Dunlin** in rainy weather 10/26 provided the only other notable shorebird records for the fall. A flock of up to 14 was first found along Gephart Rd with the plovers (CP, ScB, VG, BK) and a single bird briefly dropped in at OL (DK).

Rarely reported here in the fall, **Caspian Tern** made a few appearances at OL during rainstorms: 2 on 8/4 as the remnants of Tropical Storm Isaias moved through (DK, VG), and another 2 on 9/1 (DK). The remnants of Hurricane Zeta 10/31 did not bring much in the way of notable waterfowl to *Cumberland* but did produce a single **Bonaparte's Gull** at the pond on Zion Road near Mt. Holly Springs (TJ, DB), and 2 at OL (DK), for the only reports of the season.

A canoe ride on the Conodoguinet Creek near Newville resulted in an excellent find of a juvenile **White Ibis** 8/6 (BF), for the first *Cumberland* record since the fall of 2017. This bird proved difficult to find, no doubt due to lack of roadside views of the creek in this area, but was spotted again in the creek along Potato Road 8/8 (BF, VG, BK, BO). Splitting time in both *Dauphin* and *Cumberland* counties was a nice flock of 11 **Cattle Egrets** along the Susquehanna River in Wormleysburg 10/24 (IG). While not rare in the extreme eastern section of the county, an immature **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was found at an unexpected location at LSNT in Carlisle 8/23 and 8/27 (IG, KM).

The star of the season was a **Swallow-tailed Kite**, the second for *Cumberland*. The kite was a chance find by an alert observer who was driving along PA-533 near Oakville Road 8/14 (VG). The kite was seen by many, staying a full week and last reported 8/21. Another notable raptor was a **Golden Eagle** found at a private residence just east of SGL 169 on 11/23 (JM). Though this species is a regular fall migrant along the Kittatinny Ridge just a few miles to the north, reports away from the ridge are rare. There was one report of a **Barn Owl** in Newburg 9/15 (AndyM). A couple of banding efforts at KGSP yielded 7 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** 10/27 and 9 on 11/14 (CP). The only other report for this species was a single owl found on 11/21 at SGL 230 during a dedicated search for them (TJ).

Overall, Neotropical migrants such as flycatchers, vireos and warblers had a fairly typical year with no large fallouts noted, but steady sightings were reported. **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was reported at just two locations this year, with one or 2 birds at PGF 8/28-9/5 (m.ob.) and one at Simpson Park near Grantham 9/8 (KA, JR). Single **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were reported from several locations by a number of birders, with sightings ranging from 8/30-9/19. **Philadelphia Vireo** had a strong presence this fall. High counts of 4 each were made 9/19-20 at SGL 230 (TA, IG, RK) and 9/13 at Big Spring (AndyM, VG). There were a few reports for **Gray-cheeked Thrush** this fall, with single birds at SGL 169 on 9/6 (AndyM), detected by nocturnal flight call in Newburg 9/14 (AndyM), and at Shippensburg University 10/2 (CP).

Joining the finches in this year's invasion were **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, which were heavily reported the entire season. **Black-capped Chickadees** also made a major push into the area, to the point that it was not unusual to find them in equal or larger numbers than **Carolina Chickadees**. Carolina Chickadees normally dominate *Cumberland* year-round, though Black-capped Chickadee can be found in winter, typically still in smaller numbers. A single **Marsh Wren** was found at Big Spring 9/7, the only report of the season (VG, BK).

The winter finch invasion brought every expected species to *Cumberland* this fall. **Pine Siskins** and **Purple Finches** were widely reported much of the period. **Evening Grosbeaks** were found at several locations, most commonly at PGF (VG, RK) and with a high count of 35 on 11/1 at a private residence near KGSP (AG). Despite all the sightings most flocks seemed to stay in one location no more than a day or two. There was just one sighting of **Common Redpoll**, with a single bird briefly visiting a feeder along Greason Road near Plainfield 11/15 (KJ). This species had not been seen in *Cumberland* since January 2015. **Red Crossbills** were frequently found from 11/14-25 at PGF and MICH (m. ob.). A high count of 20 was made at PGF on 11/21 and with these birds was found a single **White-winged Crossbill** (SG). This was the lone report for this species this season and the first in *Cumberland* since the invasion winter of 2012-13.

**Lincoln's Sparrow** was well reported this fall, SGL169 at Mt. Road being most reliable for them. Counts here maxed out with a nice total of

14 on 10/8 (IG). Rarely reported in the fall, a **Nelson's Sparrow** was another good find at this location, present 10/4-10/6 (CP, m. ob.).

Warblers were well represented this fall with 32 species reported. Notable warblers included an unprecedented number of **Northern Waterthrush**. A common migrant in the spring, most fall seasons see one or two records if any, but they were reported at four different locations this fall. Among these was a single bird 9/17-27 in Carlisle at LSNT (DB, StB, DW) and up to 2 at WF 9/25-26 (VG, AnnM). Also an unusual sighting in fall, a single **Louisiana Waterthrush** was found at CDSP 8/23, a location where they breed (PL). Single **Golden-winged Warblers** were found 9/1 at PGF (BK, RP), 9/4 at SGL 230 (IG), and 9/7 at SGL 169 (TJ). Also present at SGL 230 on 9/4 was an apparent **Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler** hybrid that was photographed, which had mostly Blue-winged Warbler plumage yet with golden wing bars (IG). One or 2 **Prothonotary Warblers** still hanging around on their breeding grounds at SGL 169 provided rare fall records 8/26 and 9/1 (BF, VG, AndyM). A check on the nest boxes there 10/16 revealed 5 nests showing signs of successful breeding (VG, TB). Single **Orange-crowned Warblers** were reported on 9/1 at SGL 169 Cabin Road (VG, AndyM), 9/6 at SGL 169 Mt. Road (AndyM), and 10/4 at BRNT in Shippensburg (BK). Single **Connecticut Warblers** were reported 9/19 at Huntsdale (VG), 9/21 at LSNT (KJ), and a combined three sightings in SGL 169 on 9/20 (VG, AndyM), and on 10/4 (CP, TJ). **Mourning Warblers** were reported at SGL 230 on 8/30 (RK), on East Creek Road near the county landfill 9/1 (AndyM), and at SGL 169 with one 9/15 and 3 on 9/20 (AndyM).

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#### *Dauphin County*

Locations: Clark's Ferry Bridge (CFB), Harrisburg-City Island (HCI), MYO Park-Millersburg (MYO), State Game Lands 211 (SGL211), Susquehanna River Front Street (SRFS), Susquehanna River West Fairview (SRWF), Wildwood Lake (WL).

Two dozen **Tundra Swans** were seen and photographed from SRWF 10/29 (BM). Autumn brought all the usual waterfowl to the Susquehanna River in the Harrisburg area. A small group of **Canvasbacks** was spotted at WL 10/17 (SJ, AV). At HCI 10/31 were a **Black Scoter** and a **Long-tailed Duck** (RK).

There were fewer **Common Nighthawks** than usual reported this season. One report from Hummelstown 8/29 counted 6 (AM) and 20 were seen in northern Harrisburg 9/7 (EC). A late migrating **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was reported in Lykens 10/25 (DS). Two fly-over **Sandhill Cranes** were seen and photographed in the Hummelstown area 10/25 (HW).

An **Iceland Gull** was seen at SRFS and HCI 11/25 and 11/27 (RK, SS). Being seen more and more, **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were sighted from HCI 10/14, 10/31, 11/25 and 11/29. (m.ob.). A **Great Black-backed Gull** was reported along the river in Harrisburg 8/28 (EC). A late migrating **Great Egret** was spotted in upper *Dauphin* on 11/19 (DB). Not reported on eBird since 2012, there were 11 **Cattle Egrets** seen and photographed along the shoreline in Harrisburg 10/24 (IG, RK, SS).

The Ned Smith Center's owl banding site in upper *Dauphin* caught and banded 106 migrating **Northern Saw-whet Owls** 10/13-11/14 (S&GL). One foreign recovery (banded elsewhere) came from Ontario, Canada. An adult **Peregrine Falcon** was seen at CFB 11/2 (S&GL) and 11/5 (TW). This is one of *Dauphin's* successful sites for nesting falcons. Eighteen **American Pipits** were observed at MYO 10/19 (S&SB).

Of course, the big news for this reporting period was the irruptive

winter species. Just like many other counties in the state, there were **Evening Grosbeaks** (m.ob.), **Purple Finches** (m.ob.), and **Pine Siskins** (m.ob.) reported throughout *Dauphin* as early as mid-Oct. A **Snow Bunting** was reported at WL on 11/6 (JM).

A **Nelson's Sparrow** was observed along the Susquehanna in upper *Dauphin* 10/25 (SS). Again this year, the place to see **Rusty Blackbirds** was at WL during Oct and Nov. A high of 24 were seen 10/30 (R&PP).

There were no unexpected finds with migrating warblers. Thirty of the usual 35 species were observed passing through *Dauphin* including a **Connecticut Warbler** 9/25 (ZR) and a **Mourning Warbler** 9/15 (IG) in SGL211.

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### **Delaware County**

Locations: Barrett's Meadow (BM), Bethel Springs Elementary School (BSES), Commodore Barry bridge/riverfront (CB), Crum Creek Reservoir (CCR), Crum Woods (CW), Delaware River (DR), Delaware River-Hog Island Rd (DRHIR), First State National Historic Park (FSNHP), Garnet Valley High School (GVHS), Governor Printz Park (GPP), Harvey Run Trail (HRT), Haverford College (HC), Haverford Reserve (HR), Hildacy Farm Preserve (HILD), John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge (JHNWR), Houston Park (HP), Marcus Hook (MH), Newlin Grist Mill Park (NGM), Philadelphia Airport (PHL), Bridle Trail (BT) at Ridley Creek State Park (RCSP), Rose Tree Park (RTP), Springton Reservoir (SR), Taylor Memorial Arboretum (TMA), Tyler Arboretum (TY), The Willows (WILL).

At the start of the period, Tropical Storm Isaias brought winds, rain and tornadoes to the region 8/3-4. *Delaware* experienced 3.5-7.5" of rain, depending on exact location. More flooding occurred a few days later. The remnants of Hurricane Laura passed by 8/28-29. The period of 10/2-3 saw northerly winds and a strong migration push resulting in numerous phoebes, flickers and other migrants 10/3. Tropical Storm Zeta brought rain 10/29-30; heavy rain and wind was again an issue a month later 11/30. A total of 237 species were recorded this period.

Unusual were 4 **Brant** at SR 10/25 (AB, DB). Later that morning the same number were seen from DRHIR (AB, DB) and 8 were noted flying over the DR near Essington (ZM, MG, RG), part of a larger group seen in New Jersey. A single **Cackling Goose** report came from JHNWR 11/8 (JB). **Tundra Swan** was a flyover at HC 10/31 (KJ), along the DRHIR 11/15 (AB, DB) with 2 at MH 11/19 (RF), but the highest numbers were at CB with 16 on 11/25 (AG), 8 on 11/27 (RF) and 10 on 11/28 (DH). In addition, 15 were reported from Drexel Hill 11/18 (JH). **Blue-winged Teal** were reliable at JHNWR 9/9-26 (m.ob.). A single bird was at SR 9/3 (RF) and DRHIR 9/26 (AB, DB). A flock of 30 **Northern Shoveler** flew over Wallingford 10/25 (RF); there were eight other reports during the period from SR, JHNWR, and DRHIR (m.ob.). **Gadwall** numbers swelled at MH during Nov (m.ob.) with a high estimate of 300 on 11/12 (RF). Ten were at SR (RF) that same date, while others were reported from JHNWR during Nov (m.ob.). **American Wigeon** was reported 10/29-30 at DRHIR (MS, JHo, RF) and at SR 11/14 (AB, DB), but the species was consistently found at MH 10/26-11/27 (m.ob.) with a high count of 30 (RF) on that last date. **Green-winged Teal** high count was 40 at JHNWR 10/8 (JMc) with **Northern Pintail** high of 40 at the same location 11/18 (RF). Four **Redhead** found at SR 11/22 (AB, DB) were seen by many but only stayed the day. There were considerably more **Ring-necked Ducks** this year than last, present in Oct and Nov, peaking at 50 at SR 11/13 (RF). **Greater Scaup** were at DRHIR 10/29 (RF, MS, JHo), and **Lesser Scaup** were reported from MH 10/26 (RF), CCR 11/12 (AB, DB, m.ob.) and SR (four dates, m.ob.) with a flock of 67 on 11/12 (RG). That date also produced a scoter fallout with 5 **Surf Scoters** (RF) and one **White-**

**winged Scoter** (RF) found among other ducks at SR. The other scoter fallout, associated with Tropical Storm Zeta, occurred 10/29 with 17 **Surf** and 13 **Black Scoter** reported from DRHIR (JHo, MS), presumably the same group of 13 as seen at GPP (RF) since those birds were described as swimming upriver earlier in the morning. **Black Scoter** were also reported from MH 10/12 (AG, 27; RF, 5), 10/26 (AB, DB, 10; JMc, DH, 7) and 10/27 (RF, DO). A female **Common Goldeneye** spent 11/19-27 at CCR (m.ob.) where a **Common Merganser** had also hung out 11/2-3 (AB, DB, JZ). The only other **Common Merganser** reports were from DRHIR 10/2 (RF) and MH 10/26 (RF). **Red-breasted Merganser** is more difficult to find in *Delaware*, but one was at DRHIR 10/29 (MS, JHo, RF) and another was at GPP 11/20 (RF). **Ruddy Duck** reports were way up with 13 observation dates at SR (m.ob.) including a high count of 21 on 10/29 (RF, AB) and additional reports from JHNWR, GPP and DRHIR (m.ob.). **Pied-billed Grebe** reports were too numerous to count, due in part to the coverage of CCR, a traditional Pied-billed hangout, where a rare **Red-necked Grebe** showed up 11/23 (AB, DB) drawing many birders as it stayed through 11/30. **Horned Grebe** put in appearances at MH 10/12 (RF) as well as SR 10/12 (AB, RG), 11/13 (DB) and 11/19 (DB, AB).

Two **Wild Turkeys** were reported from the Concordville area 8/17 (GGr). There were more than a dozen **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** reports during this period, nearly twice as many as usual, and two reports of **Black-billed Cuckoos** from RCSP 9/11 (JMc) and 9/14 (SBN). **Common Nighthawks** were widely-reported during their annual passage. The daily watch at HC 8/15-9/13 (SJ, KJ) tallied a low 1007, with only one day, 8/29, of any sizeable number, 265. This was the lowest total in the history of this 20-year count and less than 1/3 of high-count years. Although no visitors were allowed due to Covid-19, coverage-hours were higher than usual. Of note, was also the lack of rain and no nights with any kind of flying ant hatch. Here's hoping this was just a blip and not indicative of a larger scale, downward trend, but 2019 also produced a low total (1907). The last **Chimney Swift** in the county was over Wallingford 10/25 (RF), the same date as last years' last. A late **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** frequented a Wallingford yard 11/6-21 (RF). A probable **Calliope Hummingbird** was briefly seen at TMA 9/17 (RF) but never able to be relocated.

**Common Gallinule** was an unusual find in a narrow lagoon DRHIR 11/13 (JMc, DH) where an **American Coot** was simultaneously present. A single coot was also at CCR 11/29 (Kevin Fox, m.ob.). Two calling **Sandhill Cranes** flew over HC the morning of 10/31 (SJ) adding a new species to the campus list.

Sandbars viewed from DRHIR produce nearly all *Delaware* shorebird reports. **Black-bellied Plover** were seen on 15 dates 8/18-11/12 (m.ob.), representing a three-fold increase in the number of reports, with a max count of nine 10/9 (RF, DO). Even more amazing were seven days of **American Golden-Plover** reports 9/18-10/29 (m.ob.); three of those dates reported two birds. **Semipalmated Plover** were frequently noted 8/4-10/4 (m.ob.); **Ruddy Turnstone** was detected 8/1-2 (DB, AB) and 8/13 (RF); **Sanderling** showed up on five days in Aug (m.ob.) and again 10/14-30 (both RF). Oct also brought six reports of **Dunlin** (RF, DO). Up to three **Baird's Sandpipers** were present 8/18 (AB, RF) and 2 on 8/25 (RF). **Least Sandpiper** passage was 8/1-9/25 with a high count of only 16 on 9/7 at JHNWR (RGo) where they were frequently found. Back at the DRHIR, 3 **White-rumped Sandpipers** were on the flats 10/30 (RF). **Pectoral Sandpiper** sightings were much-improved over last year, recorded on a dozen dates 8/4-10/8 (m.ob.) and as many as 7 individuals. A high estimate of 765 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** was garnered during the passage of Isaias 8/4 (JHo, m.ob.) when a single **Short-billed Dowitcher** was also observed (RG, MD, EZ, BQ). **Western Sandpiper** was documented 8/3 (AG, RF), 8/18 (AB) and 8/24 (RF). A flyover **American Woodcock** was the last bird of the day 10/10 (RF) during the Big Sit at RTP, and one was heard 11/22 at HR (SB). **Wilson's Snipe** were reported four times from JHNWR with 8 on 9/26 (GG, KR, DB), and was also at DRHIR 10/17 (RF).

Ten lucky birders were present 8/4 DRHIR during Hurricane Isaias when a **South Polar Skua** appeared just before the strongest part of the storm (JHo, m.ob.), disappearing about a minute later headed toward Little Tinicum Island, but not before a few photos were snapped (RG).



Observers felt certain of its identity as a skua and, based on plumage, determined it to be the South Polar species. If accepted, this would be the first record of this species in Pennsylvania, a great storm bird!

**Bonaparte's Gulls** were numerous this season. A count of 65 were reported from DRHIR 10/29 (RF) during the passage of Tropical Storm Zeta, and 58 were counted on the mudflats 11/12 (RF). On the former date, 6 were also observed from CB (AG), while on the latter date 2 were seen from MH (JMc). A non-river report of this species was of a single bird at SR 11/12 (DB, AB, m.ob.). An **Iceland Gull** flew from New Jersey to land in Essington 10/25 (ZM, RG, MG). DRHIR is best for unusual gulls and terns. This season included: **Lesser Black-backed Gull** on five occasions, mainly in Sep (m.ob.); 6 **Gull-billed Terns** 8/8 (RF, DB) and 3 downriver at Essington the same day (AB); **Black Tern** on six occasions; **Common Tern** on five occasions; and a rare **Royal Tern** 8/11 (AG, RF) and 10/25 (DB, AB, AG; ZM, RG, MG) when it was observed simultaneously from both sides of the river. **Caspian Tern** and **Forster's Tern** were too numerous to list this year and were seen from multiple river locations. Thirteen **Black Terns** at CB 9/26 (JMc, DH) and **Least Tern** 8/5 at GPP (RK) were also notable.

A **Red-throated Loon** was seen from DRHIR flying upriver 10/29 (MS, JHo) and **Common Loons** were reported there and as flyovers from a half-dozen additional locations in Oct and Nov. There were only two **Snowy Egret** sightings both at DRHIR 8/29-30 (AG, m.ob.). At the same location was one **Cattle Egret** 10/30 (RF) and a single **Black-crowned Night Heron** 8/23 (JH). The latter were easily seen at CB 9/18-26 (m.ob.) as there was a roost in a group of trees near the bridge, with 8 reported 9/18 (JMc). Seven reports of **Little Blue Heron** came from multiple locations and observers.

The RTP hawkwatch, staffed daily from 9/1-11/20, tallied about 390 hours of coverage. Unfortunately, though better than 2019's nadir, hawk migration through *Delaware* was poor again this year with a total raptor count of 2921, resulting in the second-lowest of 20 years of data. Three **Golden Eagle** reports, two 10/31 (AG, JM) and one 11/16 (RF) represented a small, bright blip. **Golden Eagles** were also reported from FSNHP 11/3 (HM) and 11/28 (HM) and from Upper Darby (BKU) and GVHS (SJ), both 11/4. A juv. **Northern Goshawk** soared past RTP 11/21 (RF) hastened on its way by a local **Red-tailed Hawk**.

The pair of **Barred Owls** at RCSP were reported only 8/22 (AM, AB, DB) while those at BM were detected 9/23 (SB), 10/13 (SB) and 10/22 (RF). Another individual was at BSES the eve of 8/26 (RF). There was a brief flurry of **Short-eared Owl** activity DRHIR 11/14-16 (AG, DB, AB, DO, RF) when one or more birds were heard barking at dawn or dusk. **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard calling at RCSP 11/28 (AB, DB). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were spotted several times: at BM 9/24 (RF), a Broomall feeder 10/13 (NK), an Ogden feeder 10/29 (SD), and in Garnet Valley 11/15-20 (*fide* BQ).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** was consistent at RCSP 8/30-9/5 (JMc, m.ob.) and again 9/17 (JMc), and one was at WILL 9/7 (KJ, SJ). **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was reported from Chester Park 9/15 (DH) and TMA 9/15 (JMc), and **Least Flycatcher** was reported from DRHIR 8/21 (JMc), TMA 8/25 (RF), BSES 8/26 (BQ, RF), a Swarthmore yard 8/30 (DE) and RCSP 9/29 (L&TJ, AB). A **Western Kingbird** foraging along the fence-line behind PHL DRHIR 8/22 (JHo, m.ob.) was another surprising find but stayed only two days; however, it, or another, was found at the same location 9/19 (RF).

**Yellow-throated Vireo** were reported from HILD 9/11 (EE) and Skunk Hollow 9/12 (BMcD) and **Philadelphia Vireo** showed up in many places: BSES 8/26 (BQ) and 9/15 (BQ), RCSP 9/11 (JMc), DT 9/10 (RF) and 9/23 (DH, JMc), TMA 9/18-19 (DO, m.ob.), DRHIR 9/21 (RF) and HILD 10/10 (AB). A late **Red-eyed Vireo** was at FSNHP 11/1 (SN, KB, ML).

Two **Horned Larks** were at DRHIR 10/30 (RF) and 2 were at Glen Mills 11/25 (RF). A **Violet-green Swallow** was yet another rarity, new to *Delaware*, associated with the passage of Tropical Storm Zeta 10/29 (JHo, MS). It was found among a large group of Tree Swallows during a river watch DRHIR and was described as a boldly-marked bird. Single **Cliff Swallows** were found 8/6 at the Creek Rd. bridge (JMc) and at HP 9/4 (DO). Although a large influx of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** began in Aug, with the first reported 8/24 from TY (SBN, BBr) and Wallingford (RF),

many seemed to pass right on through. Nine **Gray-cheeked Thrush** reports from Sep through mid-Oct were more than usual, as were seven **American Pipit** reports in Oct and Nov.

In this invasion year, **Evening Grosbeak** reports began 10/25 at HC (SJ, KJ) and Wallingford (RF). Scattered individuals and small groups were subsequently reported from nine locations, sometimes on multiple dates. Particularly reliable were a group of up to 10 at a Glen Mills feeder 10/26-28 (HM) and a few individuals at CCR 11/5, 11/21, and 11/25 (DB, AB). **Purple Finches** began arriving at the end of Sep, were most common during Oct, and persisted through Nov in smaller numbers. **Common Redpolls** were scattered and elusive with one group at GVHS 11/5 (SJ) the same day one was at CB (RF), four 11/8 in Wallingford (RF), and one 11/15 in Swarthmore (JMc). The only two **Red Crossbills** were reported 11/3 from RTP (RF). **Pine Siskins**, first reported from Wallingford 9/27 (RF), were widespread and often in large groups. **American Goldfinch** numbers also blossomed with the concomitant passage of the other smaller finches.

The first **Dark-eyed Junco** was noted at RCSP 9/30 (RM). Overall, sparrows fared well this season. Eighteen **White-crowned Sparrow** reports were significantly more than usual, while **Fox Sparrow** and **Lincoln's Sparrow** sightings were too numerous to count. **Savannah Sparrow** was pretty much regular DRHIR (m.ob.) particularly during Oct, and the species was reported from several other locations as well. A high count of 80 **Bobolinks** were reported from JHNWR 9/12 (BM, KrG) with an estimate of 60 on 9/18 (RF). There were also reports from Wallingford 8/16, 8/23, and 9/28, and RTP 9/19 (all RF), BSES 9/19 (BQ), HRT 9/24 (RF) and a flyover group 10/10 in Wallingford (DO). **Eastern Meadowlark** was noted from DRHIR 8/1, 8/6 and 10/14 (all RF). **Rusty Blackbird** was seen in Wallingford 10/25 (RF), at BM 10/28 (AG) and 11/19 (JM), at DRHIR 11/28 (AG), and at JHNWR 11/6 (JMc, DH) and 11/13 (JD).

Thirty-three warbler species and one hybrid were reported in *Delaware* during this period. **Worm-eating Warbler** was reported only from the BT at RCSP 9/14 (SB). **Golden-winged Warbler** was at NGM 8/25 and 8/29 (JSh). A **Lawrence's Warbler** was seen at RCSP 8/27 (JG). **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at JHNWR 10/8 (RF, DH, JMc), RCSP 10/10 (AG), 10/11 (SB, AB) and 10/18 (DB, AB), and TY 11/4 (JMc, DH). **Connecticut Warbler** was found at BM 10/2-3 (JMc, m.ob.) and CFM 10/2 (JMc, DH). **Mourning Warbler** appeared at HR 9/4 (WS); **Kentucky Warbler** at HRT 9/4 (RF) and CW 9/5 (DE); **Hooded Warbler** at RCSP 8/30 and 9/20 (JMc) and 9/29 (L&TJ). **Tennessee Warbler**, **Cape May Warbler**, **Bay-breasted Warbler** and **Blackburnian Warbler** were widely-reported this year. **Wilson's Warbler** was at CW 9/5 (DE), and BM 9/28 (RG), 10/1 (SB), and 10/2 (AB). **Yellow-throated Warbler** that nested at RCSP continued near the mansion through 8/3 (m.ob.). Unusual late warblers included: **Tennessee Warbler** at Caleb Pusey House 11/3 (JMc), **Northern Parula** at JHNWR 11/7 (JMc, DH), **Blackpoll Warbler** at CB 11/13 (JMc) and **Black-throated Blue Warbler** at Leiper Park 11/29 (DE).

A **Blue Grosbeak** was at DRHIR 8/9 (JZ) and HILD 10/2 (BB). A **Dickcissel** NFC was recorded over Wallingford 8/27 and again as a morning flyover 10/18 (RF), and one was photographed at a Rose Valley feeder 10/9 (KaB).

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## Elk County

Locations: Moshannon State Forest - Beaver Run Impoundment (BEA), East Branch Clarion River Lake vicinity (EBL).

For the first time in *Elk*, according to eBird records, **Northern Pintails** and a **Dunlin** were observed. Second-ever observations were a **Marsh Wren** and **Snow Buntings**. First-ever fall observations included a **Blue-winged Teal**, **Gadwalls**, a **Red-throated Loon**, and a **Northern Shrike**. As noted throughout Pennsylvania, this winter's finch irruption brought **Evening Grosbeaks**, **Common Redpolls**, **Red Crossbills**, and **Pine Siskins**.

Rarely seen in *Elk*, 24 **Tundra Swans** were in Rasselas Marsh 11/21 (BB). First-ever fall observations were made in EBL of a **Blue-winged Teal** 10/6 and 10 **Gadwalls** 10/16, and a first record in *Elk* of **Northern Pintails** at EBL, with 6 on 10/6 (BB). At BEA, reports included 3 **Green-winged Teals** 10/13 (C&SA), 10 **Bufflehead** 10/31 (SLB) and 2 on 11/28 (LB), and 2 **Pied-billed Grebes** 10/13 (C&SA).

A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was in EBL 9/19, as were a high count of 12 **Common Nighthawks** 8/29 and 2 **Chimney Swifts** 8/29 (BB). A Chimney Swift was also at BEA 9/5 (AB).

A **Semipalmated Plover** was spotted twice in EBL in Aug (BB). For the first time in *Elk*, one **Dunlin** was observed in EBL; it was audio-recorded 10/27 (MS). A Dunlin was heard less than three hours later across the lake, then they were observed at two EBL locations the next day (BB). Two **Least Sandpipers** were in EBL 8/21, where there were three reports of an **American Woodcock** and of a **Solitary Sandpiper** (BB).

As a first-time record in *Elk*, a **Red-throated Loon** was observed and photographed at Laurel Run Res. 11/23 (CB). A **Common Loon** was in EBL 9/21 and 10/24 (BB), and in Highland Twp. 10/24 (GF). A high count of 35 **Double-Crested Cormorants** were in EBL 10/14 (BB). A **Green Heron** was at West Cr. Wetland Learning Center 8/29 (MS, SS), and nocturnal flight calls of the species were noted in EBL 9/14 and 9/18 (BB).

A **Northern Goshawk** was seen "stalking feeders" in EBL 10/16 (BB). A **Great Horned Owl** was noted in St. Mary's 9/21 (MN) and in EBL 10/5 with 2 on 11/7 (BB). Three **Barred Owls** were in EBL 9/13-14, one was near Wilcox 9/19 (BB), and two were at West Branch Hicks Run 9/19 (JM). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was briefly seen on Quehanna Hwy 11/16 (CL) and was heard at EBL 11/8 and 11/20 (BB). There were five observations of **Merlins** mid-Aug through early Oct (BB, KB, TB, KM, MS), and a good view of a **Peregrine Falcon** in Kersey 11/1 (CB).

An **Olive-side Flycatcher** was photographed in EBL 9/18 (BB), and an **Alder Flycatcher** was heard in West Cr. Wetland Learning Center giving clear "pip" calls 8/29 (MS, SS). One **Great Crested Flycatcher** was in EBL 8/24 (BB). A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was at SGL 311 Porcupine Hollow 9/20 (JM), and another was at SGL 311 Woodring Farm 9/28 (TL, SM). A single **Philadelphia Vireo** was observed in EBL four times (BB), and 2 **Warbling Vireos** were in Rasselas Marsh 9/11 (BB).

For the first time in the fall migration season, a **Northern Shrike** was seen in *Elk* on Briggs Hollow Rd. 11/24 (AS). A high count of 17 **Common Ravens** was on Rasselas Rd. 10/28 (BB). **Horned Larks** were observed four times in EBL (BB). A **Bank Swallow** was at EBL 8/16, and a high count of 40 **Cliff Swallows** was at Rasselas Marsh 8/20 (BB). **Winter Wrens** were observed five times in EBL (vr. BB, AK) and twice near Wilcox (MS). A **Marsh Wren** was seen and heard at Rasselas Marsh 10/6 (BB). A high of 110 **Cedar Waxwings** were counted in EBL 10/8 (BB). **American Pipits** were observed at Buzzard Swamp 10/14 (MS, SS), and four times in EBL (vr. BB).

**Evening Grosbeaks** were seen over a dozen times throughout *Elk* (BB, CB, LB, CL, JS) with a high count of 11 in EBL 11/18 (BB). Several **Common Redpoll** sightings included one in St. Mary's 11/15 (SE) and a high count of 13 in EBL 11/13 (BB). **Red Crossbills** had a high count of 20 in EBL 10/24 (BB). **Pine Siskins** were seen regularly with high counts of 34 in EBL 10/8 (BB) and 30 in Kersey 11/4 (CB).

Three **Snow Buntings** were photographed near EBL's Turmoil Trail 11/2 (AS), one was at EBL 11/14 (BB), and 2 were near Kersey 11/21

(CB). A high count of 12 **Fox Sparrows** were on Markert Rd. 10/28 (BB) and one at Dr. Colson E. Blakeslee Memorial RA 11/3 (MN) with a dozen other observations. **White-crowned Sparrows** included 6 at SGL 311 Woodring Farm and 5 at BEA 10/13 (C&SA), as well as several sightings at EBL (MS, BB). A **Vesper Sparrow** was seen in three areas (C&SA, JM, MS), as was a **Savannah Sparrow** (C&SA, BB). Three **Lincoln Sparrows** were on Markert Rd 9/25 (BB), and 18 **Eastern Towhees** were in Benezette Township 8/21 (VZ). An **Eastern Meadowlark** was photographed at Buzzard Swamp 10/14 (MS, SS). The only fall report of a **Brown-headed Cowbird** was in EBL 10/28 (BB). One **Rusty Blackbird** was in EBL on four occasions (BB, MS).

A **Northern Waterthrush** was in EBL 8/15 and 9/15, as was one **Blue-winged Warbler** 9/11 (BB). Three **Black-and-white Warblers** were last seen at Moshannon SF Marion Brooks Natural Area 8/21 (AW, VZ). A high count for **Tennessee Warblers** was 4 in EBL 9/23 (BB). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at BEA 10/6 (DB) and at EBL 10/11 (BB). A **Connecticut Warbler** was seen in EBL 9/18 (MS) and on Markert Rd 9/25 with a full description to eBird of an "unmistakable adult" (BB). In EBL there were 6 **Blackpoll Warblers** 9/25 and 6 **Palm Warblers** 10/20 (BB). Three **Canada Warblers** were in BEA 8/20 (KM).

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## Erie County

The larger shorebirds that nest in the central part of North America continue to dominate the shorebird reports, with increasing numbers and regularity within the last decade. Saltwater species like **Brown Pelican** and **Wilson's Plover** have also become more regular in recent years. A couple of new county records, **Northern Wheatear** and the white-winged subspecies of **Dark-eyed Junco**, were well documented with photographs. There was a potential third county record of a **Long-tailed Jaeger**, however the origin of the bird remains questionable, since only parts of a dead one was found along the shoreline of Gull Point at Presque Isle S.P. following a severe storm. Northern finches were widely reported throughout the county. **Pine Siskins** were locally abundant at some feeding stations. However, **Evening Grosbeaks** took the stage and were widely reported in small groups for the first time in many years. The only crossbill report was one calling **Red Crossbill** whose voice was recorded as it passed overhead.

During the morning of 11/17 at the mouth of Walnut Creek in Fairview Twp., there was an unprecedented flight of **Common Loons**. In just 20 minutes, between 08:30 and 08:50, an estimated 3500 loons passed overhead (JM). They were moving across the lake from Canada and heading inland in several directions, but mostly towards the southwest. This was a single day high for the county. A total of only 50 more **Common Loons**, outside of that 20-minute time period, were seen within the two-and-half-hour period during the waterbird count. The previous single day high was set 12/4/2008 when 1577 birds were recorded during the waterbird count at Sunset Point. However, those loons passed over in two and a half hours, not in just 20 minutes.

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

A white **Snow Goose** was spotted flying over Gull Point 9/17 (AH). Two white **Snow Geese** flew over Sunset Point during the waterbird count (WC) 10/4 (JF) while a high-flying flock of 60 birds were counted

flying over Dead Pond Trail 10/27 (CV). The only **Brant** reported for the season were the 32 flying past Sunset Point at the WC 10/30 (JM). A single **Cackling Goose** was reported flying over Millcreek Twp. 9/17 (RS). Two **Harlequin Ducks** zipped past Beach 8 for an unexpected encounter 11/18 (RG). There were several **Red-necked Grebes** reported this season, with nine of those sightings from Sunset Point at the WC 10/22-11/13 (JM) and up to three were present off Beach 9 from 11/19 to the end of the period (CV). An **Eared Grebe** was a surprise at Sunset Point during the WC, when one flew past 10/26 (JM). Another **Eared Grebe** was spotted off Shades Beach in Harborcreek Twp. 11/16 (JH).

A season total of 36 **American Avocets** was recorded at Gull Point from 8/2-16 (JM, MB). A **Wilson's Plover**, one of the rarest shorebirds in the state, was identified at Gull Point 8/15 (MB). Always a thrill to see, were a season total of at least 9 **Whimbrel** from 8/1-9/16 (m.ob.). The lone **Marbled Godwit** reported this fall was one found at Gull Point 8/3 (MB) which stayed for about five days. Up to 6 **Red Knots** were reported from Gull Point 8/8-9/13 (m.ob.). Up to 3 **Stilt Sandpipers** were present at Gull Point 8/4-13 (MB, JM). There was also one spotted at the Union City Dam 8/19 (MD, JF). Sunset Point was the place to be to see **Purple Sandpipers** during the WC this fall when one landed on the breakwaters 11/1 (RS), another flew past 11/14 (JM), then two more appeared 11/27 (JM). A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** made landfall at Gull Point 8/23 (JF), and one was at the Union City Dam 8/25 (RS, JF). Another **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was at Gull Point, and probably the same bird on Sunset Point at the WC, from 9/3-6 (KN, JM) followed by another 9/17 (RS). A **Long-billed Dowitcher** was carefully studied and photographed at Gull Point 9/10-17 (CV, JF, RS). All three phalaropes were observed this fall. A **Wilson's Phalarope** was at Gull Point 8/23-24 (ST, RS), and a **Red-necked Phalarope** was at Gull Point 9/17 (RS). Another **Red-necked Phalarope** was at the WC off Sunset Point 9/21 (JM). A **Red Phalarope** landed and fed around the breakwater for a couple of hours during the WC off Sunset Point 11/15 where it was easily photographed (RS, JM, JF). Another circled around the head of Presque Isle Bay off Vista 1 on 11/17 (JH). The now annual **Willet** was at Gull Point, where most are found, from 8/8-17 (MB), and another was recorded on the WC at Sunset Point 9/2 (JM).

Following a severe storm, the remains of an immature **Long-tailed Jaeger** were retrieved (RS) along the Gull Point Trail to the observation platform 9/18 (RS). This could have been a new county record, but unfortunately, the origin of the jaeger remains a mystery. It is likely it died over Lake Erie, but there is no way to determine if it died within the lake boundaries of Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, or Canada. The remains have been archived in the Tom Ridge Environmental Center Natural History Museum. Two immature **Black-legged Kittiwakes** were spotted around the park this season. The first was one that flew west past the WC off Sunset Point 10/27 (JM), and the other was in Presque Isle Bay 11/16 (MS) and then again on 11/18 near the channel (ZM). Extremely rare in the state was a juvenile **Sabine's Gull** well photographed off Beach 11 on 9/18 (NH). **Little Gulls** have been missed the past couple of years, so it was good to have a few reports this season. There was an adult observed and photographed off Sunset Point during the WC 11/1 (RS et al.) and then one or two adults in Presque Isle Bay and at the south pier 11/17 (DW) and 11/18 (CV). An adult **Brown Pelican** was photographed from a fishing boat off Gull Point 8/24 (*fide* JF). This may have been the same pelican that had been seen in the Cleveland area for several weeks earlier in the summer.

An immature **Snowy Owl** was at Gull Point for just a single day 11/21 (RD, JF) and another was photographed in the headlights of a car after dark as it sat in the middle of the road in Union City (BS). The only **Long-eared Owl** was one in the pines at Presque Isle 11/11 (RD). There were three **Short-eared Owls** reported with one at Gull Point 10/18 (JF), and quite unexpected, was one in a backyard tree in the city of Erie 10/25 (MB). The third bird was at Gull Point 11/25 (AM). A total of 7 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were at PISP 10/25-11/3 (RD). Four of those were mist-netted and banded at the banding station during the last few days of Oct (*fide* CV).

**Northern Shrikes** were reported from three locations, one along Dead Pond Trail 10/26 (AY), one at SGL 314 on 11/28 (RB), and one in Venango Twp. 11/29 (JS). A **Cliff Swallow** was seen at the WC 10/18,

setting a county late date by 17 days (JM). The **Sedge Wrens** that were believed to have nested at Erie Bluffs S.P. were still present there to at least 8/16 (m.ob.). The bird of the year had to be the **Northern Wheatear** that was spotted at Gull Point 9/18 (NH), providing the first county record. It was seen only briefly but an outstanding photo was made of the bird before it flew off and was never seen again.

For the first time in many decades there were too many **Evening Grosbeak** reports to single out each individual sighting, but most were seen at feeding stations in singles or small groups from 10/20 to the end of the period throughout the county. **Common Redpolls** were also widely reported in small numbers throughout the county. However, most redpolls were at Presque Isle, where as many as 65 birds were estimated in the birches at Fry's landing until at least 11/20. The only crossbill this season was a flyover **Red Crossbill** along Pine Tree Trail 11/21 whose voice was recorded (MSh).

Two **Dark-eyed Juncos**, of the white-winged subspecies, were banded by the Erie Bird Observatory at Fry's landing 10/24 (LMK, CV). This represents the first county record of this form from the central U.S. At least two **Orange-crowned Warblers** were reported. The first was record early in the county in Fairview Twp. 8/28 (DS), and another was banded by the Erie Bird Observatory at Fry's landing 10/3. There was a **Connecticut Warbler** well photographed at Fry's landing 9/16 (EH) and another observed there 10/5 (CV). A **Bay-breasted Warbler** photographed along Pine Tree Trail 10/23 was record late in the county by about 18 days (JM, RS).

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#### **Fayette County**

Locations: Duck Pond Road (DPR), Greenlick Run Lake (GRL).

This season featured two fallouts over several days at GRL, one due to the remnants of Hurricane Zeta. Late September brought an impressive and surprising fallout of Pied-billed Grebes at the lake.

A **Brant** was a nice find at GRL 10/25-29 (KB, m.ob.). **Tundra Swan** max counts at GRL includes 60 on 10/29 (m.ob.) and 300 on 11/22 (KB, AB). There was a surprising fallout at GRL 9/29 because it seemed earlier than expected. Amazing counts of at least 100 **Blue-winged Teal** and 161 **Northern Shovelers** were there that day (MJ, KB) along with 4 **American Wigeon**, 2 **Gadwall**, 9 **Green-winged Teal** and 3 **Ruddy Ducks** (MS, GS, RS, EC). The second fallout occurred during the passage of the remnants of Hurricane Zeta 10/29 that included a few **American Wigeon**, **Ring-necked Ducks**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Bufflehead**, **Hooded Merganser** and **Ruddy Duck** (m.ob.). Heavy rain made accurate counting nearly impossible. Better conditions 10/30 revealed 400 **Ruddy Ducks** at the lake (EJR). Two **Northern Pintail** were at the lake 10/28 (LG). A **Surf Scoter** and a **White-winged Scoter** were nice finds at GRL 10/25 (MJ). Two **White-winged Scoters** were there 10/27 (EJR). There was an eBird report of 2 **Long-tailed Ducks** at Deer Lake 11/12 (LVV). An amazing fallout of **Pied-billed Grebes** occurred at GRL 9/29 when a total of 132 were counted (MS, GS, RS, EC); 89 lingered 9/30 (MS, GS).

Shorebirds are hard to come by in *Fayette*. Local birders searched the small lakes and ponds and were able to discover a few species. A **Semipalmated Plover** was at a small pond on DPR 8/19-22 (KB, MJ). **Dunlin** reports included 4 at GRL 10/26 (SM, RH) with one remaining 10/27 (KB) and one at Dunlap Creek Park 10/29 (KB). Two **Least Sandpipers** were at DPR 8/14-19 (KB), 2 were at Virgin Run Lake 8/15 (EJR, KB), 5 were at Filbert Lake 8/22 (MJ), 3 were there 9/20, and one was at GRL 10/28 (LG). A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was at DPR 8/15 (KB, EJR) and one was at Filbert Lake 8/22 (MJ). A good count of 15

**Solitary Sandpipers** were at Filbert Lake 8/22 (MJ). A **Lesser Yellowlegs** was at GRL 9/30 (MS, GS) and a **Greater Yellowlegs** was there 10/25 (MJ). A **Bonaparte's Gull** was at DPR 11/12 (KB). A **Caspian Tern** was at GRL 9/30 (MS, GS) and five were there 10/27 (MS, GS). A **Common Tern** was at GRL 8/29 (KB).

Six **Common Loons** were at GRL 10/29 (MD, MF, MS, EJR, TM, RC). A single bird was there 11/22 (AB). Single **Great Egrets** were at DPR 8/15 (KB, EJR) and GRL 9/14 (KB, EJR). Rare in the county, an immature **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was photographed at Jacob's Creek Wetlands 9/15 (KB, EJR). Three **Black Vultures** were at Junonville 9/15 (DBI) and four were found just south of Uniontown 10/9 (EJR). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were present in the Farmington Area all season. A **Merlin** was at GRL 10/25 (MD, m.ob.) and 11/22 (KB). Rarely reported in the county, a **Peregrine Falcon** was at GRL 9/30 (MS, GS) and another was in Uniontown 9/10 (GG).

**Red-breasted Nuthatches** were reported from mid-Sept on from 10 locations (eBird). A **Marsh Wren** was a nice find at Jacob's Creek Wetlands 10/6 (EJR, KB) and as far as I'm aware is a first county record. Checking the county lists on the PSO website, Marsh Wren is not listed for *Fayette*. Surprisingly there was only a single **Evening Grosbeak** report during this irruption year. Two visited a feeder in Connellsville 10/25 (BM). Eight **Purple Finches** were at Jacob's Creek Wetlands 10/29 (MJ) and one was at GRL 10/27 (MS, GS). **Pine Siskins** were also surprisingly sparse with reports in six locations. The highest count was 30 at a feeder in Connellsville 10/19 (BM). Birds visited this feeder 10/11-11/12. A **Rusty Blackbird** was photographed at GRL 10/31 (KB). A **Mourning Warbler** was at Friendship Hill 9/15 (KS).

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### Forest County

Locations: Allegheny National Forest - Beaver Meadows Recreation Area (BEA), Allegheny National Forest - Buzzard Swamp Recreation Area (BS), Tank Hill Road Wetlands (TH).

As **Evening Grosbeaks** have done for over a decade, they again were reported to eBird as setting up camp for the winter in Marienville, where they have wintered since 2008, arriving this year 10/25 (DY), and since 2012 in Tionesta, arriving 10/31 (FM). They have been observed in several other locations in *Forest* (FM, ON) along with a few sightings of **Pine Siskins** (m.ob.).

**Snow Geese** were seen for the first time since two reports in Nov 2015, with 80 at Tionesta Lake Outflow 11/7 (FM). A first fall record was set with 2 **Lesser Scaup** in BEA 11/6 (FM). A high count of 97 **Common Mergansers** was made near Cooksburg 10/5 (T&JK). Two **Hooded Mergansers** were there 11/23 (SK), and one was at BS 10/14 (SS). A **Pied-billed Grebe** was near Cooksburg 10/1 (SK). Two **Killdeer** were seen at BS 10/14 (MS, SS) and one 11/23 (ON). Also seen there was an **American Woodcock** 10/14 (MS, SS), and a **Spotted Sandpiper** was photographed there 10/4 (T&JK). Two **Double-crested Cormorants** were at Tionesta L. 10/1 (SK). Two **Green Herons** were near there 8/19 (MC), and one was in Kellettville 8/25 (EN, KN). An **Osprey** was near Tionesta L. 8/20 (MC), and one was at the Tank Hill Rd. Wetlands 10/2 (KS). One was reported eight times in the Mayburg area 8/9-9/11 (JS). An **American Kestrel** was also seen near Mayburg 8/14 (JS), as well as 2 at BS 8/9 (AN, ph.) and 10/1 (TR). A **Merlin** was seen and submitted as a third fall observation at an Allegheny National Forest banding site near Marienville 10/12 (SS).

A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was photographed near BEA 8/28 (SS). Seen near there was a **Philadelphia Vireo** 9/17-18 (FM, SS). For a second fall report, a **Northern Shrike** was photographed at BS 11/23 (ON). A second record for *Forest*, an **American Pipit** was seen in BS

10/14 (MS, SS). A high count of 212 **Cedar Waxwings** was made in BS 10/25 (FM). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at BS 10/1 (TR) and another seen at TH 10/2 (KS). One **Rusty Blackbird** was photographed at BS 10/1 (TR). A **Tennessee Warbler** was near West Hickory 9/19, seen several hours apart (JS, KS). One **Orange-crowned Warbler** was seen near Cooksburg 10/2 (EL), and near BEA 10/12 (FM, ph.) and 10/21 (SS). A **Connecticut Warbler**, not previously reported through eBird in *Forest*, was reported frequently: four times near BEA, twice 9/11 (JB, SS) and twice 9/17 (FM, SS), and once at TH 10/2 (KS). A **Pine Warbler** was near Cooksburg 9/12 (SK), and a **Wilson's Warbler** was near BEA 9/12 (SS).

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### Franklin County

Locations: Antrim Commons Ponds (ACP), Bender's Farm (BEFA), Buchanan State Forest-Eastern Slope Trails (BSF-EST), Caledonia State Park (CSP), Fort Loudon Fort Historical Site (FLFHS), Greencastle Reservoir (GRRE), Heisey Road Old Orchard (HROO), Keefer Road Farm Pond (KEEF), Kriner Road Retention Ponds (KRIN), Letterkenny Reservoir (LERE), Long Lane Pond (LLP), Mountain Brook Road Pond (MBRP), Mountain Lake Fannettsburg (MLF), Upper Horse Valley-SGL 235 (UHV-SGL235).

Vagrant birds are exciting and generate a high level of interest from both local and non-local birders. This season, a **Townsend's Solitaire** was found at Caledonia State Park 11/12 (BKtz). The bird was seen by seven other local birders the same afternoon (BKtz, MH, GA, BO, CP, RP, VB, VG, m.ob). Over the next number of days, birders from all over Pennsylvania and some from out of state made their way to *Franklin* to view the continuing bird, which stayed through the end of the reporting period and continued into December. The attention drawn to this special bird is reason to review past recent vagrants that drew similar interest here since this century began. The same CSP hosted a **Varied Thrush**, discovered by park office staff at the park feeders, from December 2004 into March 2005. Other vagrants that drew the attention of birders from far and wide were **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** discovered by Denny Bingaman on Honodel Road near Waynesboro August 2005, **Lark Sparrow** found by Joan Bowen on Shatzer Road near Chambersburg January into February 2006, **Lesser Goldfinch** at Dale Gearhart's feeders near Shady Grove April 2012, **Black-chinned Hummingbird** at Dale Gearhart's feeders near Shady Grove November 2013, and **Ruff** found by Carl Garner at Greencastle Reservoir September 2015. What species will be our next special vagrant?

There were few significant sightings of waterfowl. It was a slow season overall with the greatest numbers being reported between 10/29-11/6. More notable was a blue morph **Snow Goose** 10/26 at MLF (BKtz), and both a blue and white morph at BEFA 11/15 (BO). The waterfowl highlight of the season was a **Brant** 10/31 at ACP (GA, CG, CP, RP, m.ob.). The only other e-Bird records for the species in *Franklin* were Jan 2007 at GRRE and Oct 2012 at KRIN and MBRP. A **Cackling Goose** was at MBRP 11/12 (BO). There were no large numbers of migrating **Tundra Swan** reported, with the high count just 7 at LLP 11/20 (BO). An early fall migrant, of note was a very high count of **Blue-winged Teal** 9/27 at MBRP (CG). An early female **Common Goldeneye** was a surprise at BEFA 10/21 (BO). Another very high count was 51 **Ruddy Ducks** at ACP 10/29 (CG).

A **Ruffed Grouse** was found on a hike at BSF-EST 10/7 (BO). Recorded high counts of the **Eurasian Collared-Dove** population in

southern Franklin were 39 at GRRE 8/4 (BO) and 42 at nearby Zarger Road grain silos 8/18 (MK). This is well below some previous high counts during this period in some other years. **Black-billed Cuckoo** reports were from Roxbury Road 8/5 (SK), Portico Road 8/22 (DC), HROO 8/31 (BO), and CSP 9/1 (DP). Unfortunately, there were no high numbers of migrating **Common Nighthawks** reported, with the top count just 12 north of Chambersburg 9/10 (BO). **Chimney Swifts** seem to congregate in numbers over Chambersburg in late Aug into Sep. Staging for migration farther south, approximately 550 swifts dropped into a South Main Street chimney late dusk 9/21-22 (BO). A similar scenario with swifts numbering in the hundreds has been witnessed in past years at a South Second Street location. The last reported swift in *Franklin* was 10/15 in Chambersburg's North End (RG, TSG, BO).

Coincidentally, the last reported **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** in *Franklin* was again from Chambersburg's North End 10/5 (RG, TSG, BO). An annually hoped for western hummingbird, doing a "J-route" migration to the east before migrating south, turned up in a yard of a resident near Scotland. An adult female **Rufous Hummingbird** was first seen by the homeowner 10/9 and continued to be seen by many local birders during its stay through the end of the reporting period and into Dec (KL, DG, BO, GA, BKnr, m.ob.). The host of this bird (KL) had this species at feeders at her previous home in *Franklin* near the Blue Mountain Pennsylvania Turnpike interchange in both Oct-Nov 2012 and Nov-Dec 2013. The other historical eBird report of the species was near Fort Loudon Nov 2008 into Feb 2009. That winter became very cold. The homeowner found the bird on her windowsill in a state of torpor, picked it up, took it inside for part of the night, and released it in ok shape.

The only report of **American Coot** was one at MLF 11/2 (BKtz). Reports of this species both in spring and fall migration seem to be less frequent and fewer in number than earlier this decade. Infrequent in *Franklin*, an **American Avocet** was at KRIN 9/3 (CG, BKtz, BO, CP, RP, m.ob.). Another infrequent bird, a **Stilt Sandpiper**, was at ACP from 9/17-20 (DE, BKtz, BO, GA, CG, m.ob.). A typically late migrant, single **Dunlin** were found at KEEF 10/23 (DC, BO) and at ACP 11/3 (GA) along with a very large flock of 53 at ACP 10/26 (CG). A **Baird's Sandpiper** was reported from KRIN 8/18 (CG). **Least Sandpipers** lingered late into fall this year with the latest report from KEEF 11/3 (GA). Annual but infrequent, a **White-rumped Sandpiper** was found at MLF 9/2 (BKtz). A **Western Sandpiper** was reported at ACP 8/22 (CG). **Short-billed Dowitcher** continued to be found more often than normally. There were sightings in the spring into summer, and sightings during the fall season included a bird at LLP 9/2 (BO), and 2 at MLF 10/12 (BO).

**Bonaparte's Gull** reports were sparse, with the only known reports being 7 at MLF 10/29 (BKtz) and a single bird at MLF 11/30 (BKtz, BO). There were several sightings of **Caspian Tern** in spring migration, and that continued during fall migration with reports of 4 at BEFA 9/1 (BO), one at BEFA 9/2 (BO), and another at BEFA 10/12 (BO). Three **Glossy Ibis** were at BEFA 8/1 (BO, GA, MWvr), presumably 3 of the 4 found there 7/30 and reported in the summer season report for *Franklin*.

**Golden Eagle**, an annual late fall migrant on the ridges here, was reported from Tower Road Overlook in Buchanan State Forest 11/4-5 (GA, DE) and from CSP 11/20 (TK, CM) and 11/24 (LP). Another rare migrant, **Northern Goshawk**, was observed flying the ridge above LERE 11/1 (BKtz). As is normal during recent years, there were occasional reports of **Merlin** and **Peregrine Falcon** from a number of locations by a number of birders.

The number of birders in *Franklin* has increased over the past few years. Greater use of eBird by long-time county birders as well as the addition of new birders has resulted in more reports of species desirable to report. An example is **Olive-sided Flycatcher** which was reported from a Wilson Avenue yard 8/16 (RG, TSG), at HROO 8/31 (CP) and 9/14 (BO), at Michaux State Forest-Stillhouse Hollow 9/5 (CASFT, DE), at Roxbury 9/6 (EB), and at FLFHS 9/11 (CP, BO). **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was reported at HROO 9/24 (BO) and at Creekside Nature Trail-Menno Haven 10/3 (BKtz). An **Alder Flycatcher**, which should be distinguished from **Willow Flycatcher** only by song or call, was found calling at FLFHS 9/11 (BO). **Philadelphia Vireo** was reported from HROO 9/5 (CASFT, BO), 9/15 (CP), and 9/24 (BO) with other reports from a Greene Knolls yard 9/12 (VB) and at ACP 9/17 (DE).

Notable, and a theme later in this report regarding finches, was the apparent invasion from the north of **Black-capped Chickadees** with widespread and frequent reports beginning in Nov. Since *Franklin* is in the zone where nearly all chickadees are Carolina Chickadees or hybrids, an infrequent invasion year is special.

A late **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** was reported from ACP 11/2 (DC). A late and impressive number of **Tree Swallows** congregated and fed for several days in the vicinity of GRRE, an annual gathering place, with an estimated high count of 1300 or more 10/14 (CG). A large number of 62 **Cliff Swallows** were on the wires at KEEF 8/12 (CG). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was pretty much absent in *Franklin* last fall and winter. This year's fall season was very much different as there were widespread frequent sightings including high numbers beginning late Aug

The arrival of migrant Red-breasted Nuthatches and Black-capped Chickadees in unusual numbers this reporting season paralleled with a significant irruption of northern finches in the Mid-Atlantic. Pennsylvania hawk watch site reports of non-raptors as well as eBird reports from throughout Pennsylvania indicated an irruption year was becoming reality for several species of northern finches. **Evening Grosbeak** was a regular winter visitor here in the 1970's and 1980's, but their winter range had withdrawn far to the north in the decades since. Prior to November 2020, known reports in *Franklin* this century could be counted on the fingers of one hand. The first report this season was of a bird at a Penn National yard feeder 10/31 (DH) followed by sightings 11/5 of five birds at a Lower Horse Valley feeder (GR), 13 birds 11/6 at a Black Gap Road feeder (JB), three 11/9 at Penn National again (DH), and two at CSP 11/10 (BO). CSP feeders became the hot spot for finding them regularly from 11/10 through the end of the reporting period with double digit numbers reported at times, including a flyover flock of 52 on 11/15. **Purple Finches** migrated into *Franklin* beginning the second week of September in good numbers with widespread reports. For the third and fourth time this century there were *Franklin* eBird reports of **Common Redpoll**. The prior two were 2007 at Penn National (DH) and 2015 at CSP (BO). A juvenile was at a feeder on West Creek Road 11/19 (BKtz), and a female appeared irregularly at a Greene Knolls yard 11/23-27 feeding among many siskins (VB, BKtz, JT, DE, BKnr, BO, m.ob). **Red Crossbill** flyovers were reported 11/13, 11/21, 11/25, and 11/26 from birders drawn to CSP to chase the Townsend's Solitaire (JH, m.ob). Also, a flock of about 30 were observed calling in a tight flock flyover at South Mountain Restoration Center 11/17 (BO). There was only one prior e-bird report of this species in *Franklin*, that being at Lincoln Cemetery in Chambersburg in December 2012 (BO). **Pine Siskins** arrived here beginning with a flock of between 40 and 50 birds seen feeding at arborvitae in the south and north ends of Chambersburg borough 10/8 (DC, BO). Sightings from all over the county followed. As in other years, a yard in Greene Knolls held biggest numbers with a high count of an estimated 150 birds coming to feeders (VB).

through the end of this period. A **Marsh Wren** was found singing and calling at BEFA 9/16 (BO). In addition to the Townsend's Solitaire highlighted at the outset of this report, other notable thrushes were a **Gray-cheeked Thrush** at HROO 10/8 (BO), and a late **Swainson's Thrush** in a Greene Knolls yard 11/15 (VB).

A **Lapland Longspur** was found in a field on Church Road 11/11 (BO) with additional sightings of between one and three birds 11/17-21 (BKtz, GA, DG, JT, DE, m.ob). A **Snow Bunting** was also in the same field with the longspur on 11/11 (BO, BKtz). **Lincoln's Sparrow**, generally present from mid-Sep to mid-Oct, was reported from various locations 9/20-10/19. An unusual late find was a **Yellow-breasted Chat** at HROO 9/1-2 (BO, RP). A late **Ovenbird** was at CNT-MH 10/8 (BO). It was a good fall regarding sightings of winged warblers. **Golden-winged Warbler** was reported 8/22 from HROO (BO) and 9/3 with photo from a Heisey Road resident's yard (BKnr). **Blue-winged Warbler** was at HROO 8/31 (BO), 9/3 (JS), and 9/10 (BO). Also, **Brewster's Warbler** hybrids were found 8/31-9/1 at HROO (BO, BKtz, CP). Two late **Tennessee Warblers** were found at Antietam Meadows Park 11/1 (GA). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at BEFA 9/20-21 (BO). A

**Connecticut Warbler** was viewed in a brushy area near the Conococheague Creek near Ragged Edge Road 9/24 (BO). Several sightings of **Mourning Warbler** occurred at HROO. Two different birds, a first-year bird and a female, were observed 8/31-9/2 (BO, Bktz, CP) followed by sighting of a male 9/15 (BO). A late **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was in a Greene Knolls yard 10/15 (VB). As reported in the summer report, **Blue Grosbeak** reports have increased in *Franklin*. The Jun and Jul summer sightings continued into Aug and Sep with reports from multiple locations (BO, GA, Bktz, DC), and a very late report was made from Portico Road 9/25 (DC).

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### Fulton County

A wonderful rarity in lightly birded *Fulton* was a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** found and photographed in McConnellsburg 11/4 (TM), not surprisingly a first county record, and one of four in the state for the fall of 2020. Unfortunately, this western visitor was not seen again.

A good count of 100 **Tundra Swans** passed over Buchanan SF 11/28 (MH). Continuing the bleak state-wide trend, there were only 2 **Ruffed Grouse** reports: 4 at Harrisonville 9/17 (AS) and one in Buchanan SF 11/29 (MH). Hawk-watching at the formerly full-time watch on Tuscarora Summit (along Rte. 30) produced a **Merlin**, 6 **Bald Eagles**, and 17 **Broad-winged Hawks** 9/11 (EB).

A **Red-headed Woodpecker** at Wells Tannery 9/17 provided the only report of a species that is probably a regular nester in the county (TM). Rarely reported in *Fulton*, 5 **American Pipits** were found at Warfordsburg 9/26 (KS). Thirty-three **Evening Grosbeaks** near WAR 10/25 provided the only fall report of this irrupting species (JS).

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### Greene County

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

A flock of **Snow Geese** flew over at SY 11/28 (AC). **Wood Duck** were last seen at EV 10/18 (MH). **Pied-billed Grebe** was found at Lake Wilma 10/27 (MH, JC). **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was sighted in JT 8/23 (RL). **Common Nighthawk** was observed at SY 8/27 (AC, JC). **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was last reported in MT 10/16 (KB).

**American Woodcock** was sighted at SY 10/11 (AC, JC). **Spotted Sandpiper** was found at RSP 10/8 (MJ). **Solitary Sandpiper** was found at SGL 223 on 9/1 (MJ). **Double-crested Cormorant** was seen Wayne Twp. 9/12 (TC). **Osprey** was last reported at Lake Wilma 8/29 (SB). **Bald Eagle** was reported in many areas of the county during this period. **Northern Harrier** was seen in SY 11/20 (JH). **Barn Owl** was confirmed nesting in MT this year (*vide* KK). **Eastern Screech-Owl** was heard in EV 10/18 (MH). **Great Horned Owl** was heard calling in Center Twp. 10/1 (SB). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was seen at LCR 10/10 (MLP). **American Kestrel** was sighted in MT 10/17 (JC, MH).

**Eastern Wood-Pewee** was last reported at CL 10/15 (LA). **Acadian Flycatcher** was observed in JT 9/10 (RL, BD). **Least Flycatcher** was observed in JT 9/25 (RL, BD). **White-eyed Vireo** was last reported at Bell Farm 9/9 (CDB). **Red-eyed Vireo** was last reported

in Perry Twp. 8/14 (SC). **Purple Martin** and **Tree Swallow** were observed at Bell Farm 8/15 (m.ob.). **Barn Swallow** was last seen at CL 8/22 (LA, RA).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch** was sighted in JT 9/25 (RL). **Brown Creeper** was found at EV 10/24 (MH). **Wood Thrush** was in seen Whitley Twp. 8/3 (SB). **Gray Catbird** was last reported at LCR 9/27 (MLP). **Brown Thrasher** was last reported in EV 10/28 (MH). **Cedar Waxwing** was seen at EV 10/10 (MH). **Purple Finch** was sighted at EV 10/9 (MH). **Evening Grosbeak** made a quick stop at LCR 11/5 (MLP). **Pine Siskin** was observed at LCR 10/7 (MLP).

**Field Sparrow** and **Fox Sparrow** were reported in Washington Twp. 11/26 (AP). **White-crowned Sparrow** was seen at SY 11/30 (JC). **Dark-eyed Junco** was first reported at EV 10/25 (MH). **Baltimore Oriole** was last reported at Bell Farm 8/15 (m.ob.).

**American Redstart** was last observed 8/7 in MT (KK). **Cerulean Warbler** was spotted at Bell Farm 9/9 (CDB). **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was observed at Lake Wilma 10/3 (MH). **Black-throated Green Warbler** was found in JT 9/25 (RL). **Scarlet Tanager** was last reported in Whitley Twp. 8/3 (SB). **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was last reported at EV 10/4 (MH).

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### Huntingdon County

Locations: Baker-Henry Peace Chapel at Juniata College (BH), Brumbaugh's Access at Raystown Lake (BA), Cornpropst Mills (CM), Ennisville (ENN), Huntingdon town (HU), Juniata River (JR), Lake Perez (LP), Marklesburg waterfowl area-SGL 420 (MAR), McAlevys Fort (MF), Old Crow wetland (OC), Pennsylvania Furnace Rd (PF), Petersburg (PET), Raystown Lake (RL), Rothrock State Forest (RSF), Seven Points Rec Area at Raystown Lake (SP), Shaver's Creek Environmental Center (SCEC), Stone Mt. (SM), Stone Mt. hawk watch (SMHW), Stone Valley (SV), Tussey Mt. (TM), Whipple Dam SP (WD).

The eBird species count for the fall season in *Huntingdon* was 203, compared to a five-year average of 206. The season was warm, averaging three degrees above average, and each of the four months individually was above average. The season was notably drier than normal, although the total rainfall for the four months was essentially average thanks to a heavy two-day rain event in late Oct.

Waterfowl reports were routine. The high counts of **Tundra Swan** in passage over SMHW were 120 on 11/17 (NB) and 123 on 12/2 (NB, SM). Six **Northern Shovelers** at LP 8/29 were early (SM). **American Black Ducks** continue the recent trend of lower numbers; the high was only 8. Stormy weather brought all 3 scoters to LP in late Oct: 3 **Surf Scoters** 10/26-31, 2 **Black Scoters** 10/31, and one **White-winged Scoter** 10/28 (m.ob.).

Nine reports of **Ruffed Grouse** were all of single birds, excepting one report of 2, and all but one in SV and RSF, in the northeast (m.ob.). Among many reports at LP, 10 **Pied Billed Grebes** was a good total 11/6 (KT). The cuckoo ratio was skewed heavily, with dozens of **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** reported but only 2 **Black-billed Cuckoos**. **Common Nighthawks** were few; five reports 8/25-9/5, from five scattered locations, totaled only 13 birds, with a max of 4 (DK, TK, GG, DG, RF, JL, DW, JG).

A **Sora** was seen frequently at OC 10/3-17 (m.ob.); otherwise the only report was of one at SCEC 10/10 (SM). A **Virginia Rail** was photographed on Front Mt. Rd. near Allensville 9/12 (LR).

An **American Golden-Plover** was at PF 10/12-13 (JHa, JK, SM). All previous county records, about half a dozen, have been at that same location. A **Semipalmated Plover** was at PF 9/25 (SM). Again this

season, reports of **Wilson's Snipe** were few. One was at WD 10/9 (PM) and one was at OC 10/20-24 (KT, LP). Four **Dunlin** were at ENN 10/26 (SM). Late **Greater Yellowlegs** were at BA 11/5 (KT) and CM 11/1 and 11/15 (GG). Four **Forster's Terns** were at SP 8/29 (DK, TK).

As usual, high counts of **Common Loon** and **Double-crested Cormorant** came from SMHW where 276 loons were tallied 11/2 and 145 cormorants 10/25 (NB, et al.). The third county record of **Snowy Egret** came 8/16-26 with a cooperative bird on the JR at HU (MM, JO, m.ob.). An **American Bittern** was at OC 10/20-11/6 (KT, m.ob.). A boat trip on the southern part of RL yielded 23 **Great Blue Herons** 9/12 (TK, JK). **Green Herons** were in good number, found at many locations, with a high of 7 at OC 8/16 (JO).

Stone Mt. hawk watch completed its 26th season. Yet again, **Bald Eagles** set a new record with 231 for the season. The **Golden Eagle** tally was 138, down from 161 last year, but about average for the last decade. Favorable winds in Oct and early Nov helped **Sharp-shinned Hawks** and **Red-tailed Hawks** rebound from very poor counts in 2019; in fact, the total of 1122 Sharpies was fourth highest ever. The count of 1584 **Broad-winged Hawks** was right at the long-term average. On the negative side, the total of 40 **Osprey** was the lowest ever. **Rough-legged Hawks** passed on 11/2 and 11/3. (See David Barber's fall hawk watch report in this issue for more details).

Away from SMHW, the two larger falcons continue the trend of increased presence at several county locations, including in or near town in HU. **Merlins** were reported 9/7-11/6 at TM, MAR, PF, and BH. **Peregrine Falcons** were seen at TM, MAR, and HU 8/21-11/27, and continued into Dec at HU.

A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** heard in SV 10/21 provided the only report (JK). Single **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were at Mill Creek (town) 8/26 (GG) and in SV at Red Rose Rd. 8/30 (SM). Not often reported in fall, 2 **White-eyed Vireos** were at BH 8/15 (JO) and 2 at MAR 9/25 (PM). Counts of one or 2 **Philadelphia Vireos** were made in SV on five dates 9/12-19 (SM, DW, TB, JK) and one was at SMHW 9/26 (GG). A very late **Red-eyed Vireo** was well-described at WD 11/7 (PM, AG, JH). Most of the many **Horned Lark** reports came from PF, topped by 240 on 11/30 (SM). Single **Marsh Wrens**, nearly annual in fall, were reported five times, including possibly some repeats, at OC 10/8-11/9 (SM, KT, RL).

**Carolina Wrens** in central Pennsylvania are valley birds primarily, but are often found at higher elevations in RSF from mid-summer into fall. As is well-known, their numbers in Pennsylvania fluctuate considerably, with large decreases after hard winters with persistent deep snow cover. After population crashes, numbers recover over a few years. With relatively mild winters recently, and especially the 2019-2020 season, wren numbers observed on repeated survey routes done by Nick Bolgiano in RSF have increased dramatically, especially from 2019 to 2020. In the table, the greater portion of the trip counts reported has been in the fall seasons.

**Carolina Wrens in Rothrock SF (number trips in paren.) – data from Nick Bolgiano**

Location	Before 2019	2019	2020
Standing Stone Trail	16(38)	6(10)	23(9)
Mid-State Trail (Rt 26 to PA Furnace Rd)	2(29)	3(6)	13(7)
Thickhead Wild Area	0(22)	1(15)	9(13)
Jackson Trail	0(44)	1(5)	10(7)
Owl Gap-Sand Knob	6(23)	5(9)	17(8)

**Gray-cheeked Thrush** was reported only twice, in RSF 9/12 (SM) and 10/5 (NB); and **Veery** only once, at SGL 322 on 9/5 (PM). By contrast, **Swainson's Thrush** was reported in eBird about a dozen times. **Cedar Waxwings** were numerous and widespread, with dozens of reports, from ridges and elsewhere; the high count was 300 at ENN 10/19 (SM). **American Pipit** reports came only from PF. Three early pipits were there 9/4 (SM); higher numbers arrived beginning 10/12, with counts as high as 80 through the end of the period (JHa, JK, SM, m.ob.).

The first **Evening Grosbeaks** were reported 10/25, with numerous reports to follow, although at a fairly restricted number of favored locations, mostly in SV (where birder activity is high). High counts reached around 40 (m.ob.). **Purple Finch** reports were numerous beginning in Sep, again mainly in the much-more-heavily birded northern half of the county (m.ob.). There were five **Common Redpoll** reports, all from ridge locations on SM and TM, where black birch may serve as an important food resource. The first was a single on 11/3 on SM (JK, GG). Later reports were all 11/17 or after, with a high of 30 on TM 11/23 (NB). There were at least eight reports of **Red Crossbill**. Three reports from SCEC and the LP area included a first single 10/27 and a high of 21 on 10/31 (JK, LF, JPo), one on TM 11/6 (JG), and four reports from SMHW 10/30-11/28, with a high of 19 on 10/30 (LF). Modest-sized flocks of several dozen **Pine Siskins** were reported, again mostly in northern *Huntingdon*.

The only **Snow Bunting** was a confiding individual that hung out with (or at least near) hawk watchers on SM 11/2-4. The first **American Tree Sparrow** report was 11/7, followed by a half dozen more through the month, with a max of 5, in keeping with the low counts of recent years. **Fox Sparrow** reports spanned 10/13 though the end of the season, with counts peaking at 10-12 birds in late Oct-early Nov. All of four **Vesper Sparrow** and three **Savannah Sparrow** reports came from PF, with highs of 5 and 3 respectively. A **Nelson's Sparrow** was photographed at OC 10/6 (JO) and another, perhaps the same, was there 10/14 (SM). **Lincoln's Sparrow** was reported to eBird at least 15 times. Most of numerous **Swamp Sparrow** reports came from OC, where the max was 15 on 10/28 (LF).

Only one **Eastern Meadowlark** was reported, at MF 8/6 (RF). **Rusty Blackbird** numbers were low and all from OC where nine reports spanned 10/10-11/14, with a max of just 5 birds on the latter date (JO, m.ob.).

Thirty-two warbler species were reported, compared to an average of 26 over the previous five years. The top find was a **Prothonotary Warbler** photographed at SCEC 9/6 (SM). An early **Northern Waterthrush** was at SCEC 8/19 (DW, SM, TB) and 2 were flipping over leaves along the JR near Ardenheim 9/19 (GG, DG). **Tennessee Warblers** were numerous, topped by 7 at SMHW both 9/16 and 9/27 (NB). A **Connecticut Warbler** was photographed at SCEC 10/3 (MM). A **Mourning Warbler** was found in a yard in Ennisville 9/13 (DW). A good count of 12 **Hooded warblers** was made on the Owl Gap Trail area in RSF 9/4 (NB). One or more **Yellow Warblers** were at OC well past the normal late date, seen as late as 10/22 (m.ob.). Quite remarkable was a count of 10 **Yellow-throated Warblers** along the JR at HU 9/1, several documented by photo (JO) to convince the skeptical eBird reviewer; certainly the highest one-time count ever in the county for this uncommon nester.

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### Indiana County

Locations: Blue Spruce County Park (BS), Indiana University of PA (IUP), Shelocta (SH), Yellow Creek S.P. (YC).

Not often seen in the county, 6 **Snow Geese** flying over YC were unusual 10/29 (AY). A single **Cackling Goose** accompanied a flock of 43 Canada Geese over SGL 276 near Blacklick 10/25 (MH, RH). Water levels continued low at YC through the fall. Two **Surf Scoters** were present at YC 10/27 (LC, SD, PF, BF, MH, RH). One to 3 **Common Nighthawks** migrated over *Indiana* between 8/21 (MH, RH) and 9/23 (MC) with only seven reports.

Low water levels at YC caused extensive mudflats providing good habitat for a great shorebird migration stopover this fall. This was the best

shorebirding in the county since 2005 when the water level was drawn down for repair of the dam. All shorebird reports were at YC unless otherwise noted. One to 3 **Black-bellied Plovers** were listed between 9/6 (JP) and 9/30 (TD). Single **American Golden Plovers** were found between 9/7 (RyH) and 10/14 (RC). **Semipalmated Plovers** moved through between 8/4 (MH, RH, DM) and 11/10 (LC, PF, MH, RH, LW) with top count of 8 on 9/16 (MH, RH); eight was also the best count along the West Penn Trail 8/19 (DL). First 5 **Dunlin** arrived at YC 10/20 (TR); by 10/27 (LC, SD *et al*) numbers had increased to 61; last sighting was 11/10 (LC, PF *et al*) when 21 were counted. Fifteen was the high **Least Sandpiper** tally 8/16 (MH, RH). A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, the second for the county, was photographed 9/15 (LC, SD, PF, GL, KT); it was last seen very early the following morning (PW, RiW) but not thereafter. **Pectoral Sandpipers** moved through between 9/6 (JP) and 10/27 (LC, SD *et al*) when the last individual was listed; top count of 20 occurred 9/26 (MD). First **Semipalmated Sandpiper** arrived 8/4 (MH, RH, DM) with 9 the peak number 8/29 (MH, RH); last sighting was 9/30 (TD). Two very cooperative **Short-billed Dowitchers** called as they foraged on the mud in Little Yellow Cove 8/15 (JC, SH, BS). A **Long-billed Dowitcher**, photographed 9/26 (MD), continued through 10/23 (MH, RH, ON). Quite remarkable were the 13 tallied on the spit near the observatory 10/13 (LC, PF, MH, RH). The lily pads provided protection for at least 11 **Wilson's Snipe** 9/16 (MH, RH); once the lilies were frosted, the snipe disappeared; the last sighting was a singleton 10/25 (MH, RH). Three **Red-necked Phalaropes** visited YC 9/25 (PI); all previous sightings involved single birds. Last **Spotted Sandpiper** lingered 9/29 (LC, MH, RH, KT). Seven **Solitary Sandpipers** was the high count 8/18 (LC, PF, MH, RH) and the last reported occurred 10/21 (JaP, JP). **Greater Yellowlegs** put in a good appearance this fall with top tally of 13 on 10/30 (RB); last 2 were sighted 11/16 (MH, RH, ON). One to 3 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were present between 8/8 (ReH, SM) and 10/28 (BG, KSJ).

Single **Caspian Terns** visited YC 10/11 (MH, RH) and 10/29 (MH, RH, AY). Three **Black Terns** stopped at YC 9/8 (LC, MH, RH). Top **Common Loon** tally was 17 at YC 10/29 (MH, RH). An **American Bittern** was reported at YC 8/25 (BF). Seven was a good count of **Great Egrets** at YC 10/27 (LC, SD *et al*), the highest fall tally on record. Since the first reports in 2012, **Black Vulture** reports continue to increase in number with singletons reported this fall on three dates, 10/8 (AM) near Cramer, 10/10 (JK, TK) near Dilltown, and 11/5 (HR) in IN near White's Woods. Seldom seen in the county, a **Red-headed Woodpecker** was listed near Lewisville 10/21 (MC). **Merlins** were widely reported with most sightings at YC between 8/29 (MH, RH) and 11/18 (TR). A **Peregrine Falcon** stopped at YC 9/25 (GL).

The fall's only **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was found at IUP 10/3 (JT). **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were noted at four locations between 8/31 (MH, RH) and 9/17 (TA); BS is still the county's hotspot for this species. **Philadelphia Vireos** moved through the county with sightings at five locations between 9/12 (JT) and 10/3 (MH, RH). One to 2 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were found at ten locations in *Indiana*. Single **Winter Wrens** were present at BS between 9/27 - 10/17 (MH, RH), in IN 10/13 (JP), and at YC 10/23 (MH, RH, ON). BS yielded the season's only reports of **Veery** on 8/31 (MH, RH) and 9/12 (JP), both singletons. **American Pipits** were found only at YC between 9/24 (MH, RH, KT) and 11/3 (LC, ED, MH, RH) with high count of 18 on 10/23 (MH, RH, ON).

First 6 **Evening Grosbeaks** made a very brief appearance in the top of a dead pine near SH 11/1 (MH, RH); next sighting of 15 occurred 11/15 (JH, MS) at YC; 2 were noted three days later, also at YC (TR). The only **Common Redpoll** reported was a calling flyover at YC 11/15 (JH). First 3 **Pine Siskins** arrived near SH 10/3 (MH, RH); high counts included 75 near SH 10/12 (MH, RH), 45 in IN 10/10 (JaP, JP), and 24 at Nolo also 10/10 (GL).

Two late **Chipping Sparrows** appeared 11/2 (MH, RH, ON) at YC and 11/13 (MH, RH) near SH. A **Clay-colored Sparrow**, a new yard bird, appeared near SH 11/30 (MH, RH). **Fox Sparrows** arrived at YC 10/25 (MH, RH) where one remained through 11/3 (LC, ED, MH, RH). They were also reported in IN 11/12 (JP); and near SH 11/13 (MH, RH) where one lingered through the end of the period. First **White-crowned Sparrow** was noted at Conemaugh Dam 10/16 (TA). One **Lincoln's Sparrow** at Blacklick Valley Natural Area 9/12 (JT) was the lone report.

A late **Orchard Oriole** was spotted at YC 8/4 (MH, RH) and last **Baltimore Oriole** was observed near Lewisville 9/19 (MC). YC yielded the only **Rusty Blackbirds** with reports of 10 on 10/21 (JaP, JP) and 80 on 11/10 (MD).

Thirty warbler species were reported this fall. A **Golden-winged Warbler** was a nice find at BS 9/7 (MH, RH, FM, JM, RW). The **Swainson's Warbler** found in June along the West Penn Trail, lingered into August with last report 8/7 (LdiB, AL). An **Orange-crowned Warbler**, last reported in the county 9/23/2018 (MD), was photographed at YC 9/26 (JaP, JP). Two **Connecticut Warblers** were noted this fall: one at BS 9/27 (MH, RH) and the other at IUP 10/1 (JT).

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#### **Jefferson County**

Locations: Kyle Lake (KL), Emerickville (EMV), Ringgold (RG), Mahoning Shadow Trail (MST), Galusha Road (GR), Brookville (BV), Brockway (BW), Punxsutawney (PXY), Top Hat Cut Research Site (THCRS), Sigel (SG), Five Bridges Trail (FBT).

The 2020 northern finch invasion highlighted the autumn season in west-central Pennsylvania; however, a nice variety of other migrants and residents were observed in the county as well. A good sized flock of 39 flyover **Tundra Swans** was observed along Allegheny Boulevard in Brookville 10/28 (NV). Four **Redheads** were reported at Cloe Lake 10/28 (JAK). Five **Greater Scaup** were napping on KL 10/28 (TS). A solitary **Long-tailed Duck** was photographed on Kyle Lake 11/27 (DK). A **Black Vulture** was discovered near Brockway 10/24 (DK). Two **Ruffed Grouse** were flushed at the Top Hat Cut Research Site in Heath Township 10/16 (SS). A tardy **Greater Yellowlegs** was spotted at a pond near Ringgold 11/18 (JAK). One **Wilson's Snipe** was tallied along Martini Road near Brockway 11/10 (DK). A late **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was visiting fall flowerbeds in RG 10/5 (JAK).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was photographed near Sigel 9/15 (NV). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was present at THCRS 9/14 (SS). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** and a **Winter Wren** were observed along the Mahoning Shadow Trail 11/27 (MH). A **Swainson's Thrush** was found along Five Bridges Trail 10/21 (MH). Another **Catharus thrush**, **Gray-cheeked Thrush**, was noted along FBT 9/23 (JAK). A persisting **Hermit Thrush** was reported along MST 11/26 (RH). A **Northern Mockingbird** was seen perched atop an apple tree along US Route 322 near Emerickville 11/13 (DR). An adult male **Golden-winged Warbler** was captured and banded at THCRS 9/14 (SS). A lingering **Field Sparrow** was located along the MST 11/26-11/27 (MH/RH). Six **Evening Grosbeaks** were patronizing a feeder along Galusha Road near BW 11/1 (DK). Eight more **Evening Grosbeaks** were seen at a feeder in RG 11/24 (JAK). A half-dozen **Pine Siskins** showed up at a RG feeder 10/4 (JAK). A few days later, a large flock of 70 **Pine Siskins** arrived at feeders on E. Mahoning St. in Punxsutawney 10/10 (NV).

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## Juniata County

Locations: Casner's Crossing - Juniata River (CC), Clearwater Res. in Licking Creek Valley (CR), Licking Creek Valley (LCV), McAlisterville (MA), Mifflintown (MIF), Mifflintown River Access (MRA), Port Royal (PR), Thompsonstown (TT).

A count of 115 **Snow Geese** at MA 10/28 was quite good for *Juniata* (JP). Duck reports were limited. Good counts included 30 **American Black Ducks** at CR 11/22 (JP) and 47 **Common Mergansers** at MRA 10/19 (CK).

The lone **Ruffed Grouse** report was found at PR 9/29 (JP). Rarely reported in fall, a **Horned Grebe** was at CR 10/29 (JP). **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was reported at more than ten locations but the only **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at MRA 8/14 (CK, NK). Three reports of **Common Nighthawk** were all from CC, but the high was only 3 birds, on 9/5 (CK, NK).

Among few shorebirds reports was a nicely photographed **Pectoral Sandpiper**, one of 2 at TT 9/17 (MN, DS). Counts of 3 **Spotted Sandpipers** came from MA area 8/14 (CK, NK) and CR 8/23 (JP). A good count of 17 **Greater Yellowlegs** was made at MA 10/26 (JP). The high count of **Double-crested Cormorants** was 27 at CC 10/11 (m.ob.).

A **Golden Eagle** was at CR 10/25 (CK). The high count of **Broad-winged Hawks** was 40 over MA 9/12 (JP). A good report of 7 **American Kestrels** came from Fayette Twp. 8/7 (JG). **Merlins** were seen at least eight times at CC through the period (CK, m.ob.), and one was at MA 10/3 (JP). Single **Peregrine Falcons** were seen around the MIF area 8/8, 8/14, and 9/14 (JP, CK, NK), and one was at PR 9/12 (CK).

A Myiarchus flycatcher photographed near Academia 11/1 was not identified to species (AD). Single **Philadelphia Vireos** were at CC 9/15 (CK, NK) and TT 9/17 (MN, DS). An impressive count of 500 **Tree Swallows** was made at TT 8/29 (CK). Eighty **Barn Swallows** were at MA 8/6 (JP). Multiple good counts of **American Pipit** near MA were topped by 50 on 10/26 (JP) and 56 on 11/5 (VP).

*Juniata* shared in the early stages of the winter finch invasion. The first **Evening Grosbeak** appeared at MIF 10/24 (CK). Otherwise, however, all reports came from a feeding station in LCV, where a high of 29 grosbeaks arrived 10/29 and grosbeaks were then seen there in smaller numbers through the end of the season (DB). The first **Purple Finch** was at CC 8/30, a female. Numerous reports followed, mainly from MA, MIF, CC, and LCV (m.ob.). The only report of **Red Crossbill** was of 3 at MA 11/16 (JP). That same location had a **White-winged Crossbill**, nicely photographed, 11/4-5 (JP, MW). The first **Pine Siskin** was noted 8/25 at LCV (DB); from Oct on reports were plentiful with high counts into the 40s (m.ob.). One **Common Redpoll** was reported on Mountain Rd. 11/23 (BL).

*Juniata* birders recorded an excellent 27 warbler species for the season. Highlights included a **Golden-winged Warbler** at SGL 88 on 8/21 (MN, DS), a **Mourning Warbler** at MA 9/20 (JP), and a **Canada Warbler** at MA 9/5 (JP).

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## Lackawanna County

Locations: Chapman Lake (CL), Lackawanna SP (LSP), Hollister Reservoir (HR).

Pleasant weather conditions for much of the period granted birders ample opportunities to get outdoors and enjoy fall migrants. As forecasted, Pennsylvania hosted a thrilling southward movement of boreal finches; the northeast was not excluded! Although this irruption did not compare to historic movements, it was still a remarkable sight and readily welcomed by all.

Waterfowl highlights consisted of discoveries of **Blue-winged Teal**; four observations were had at three separate locations with the period high of 5 at Bird Rd. 10/6 (RJ). Three **Sandhill Cranes** were seen near suspected breeding grounds along Watts Rd. 10/12-28 (RA). Hollister Reservoir, which was drained in Sep due to an outdated dam, produced the counties shorebird highlights. A **Least Sandpiper** was there along with a county high 8 **Lesser Yellowlegs** 10/1 (RJ). Two **Greater Yellowlegs** were at Greenfield Rd. 10/28 (RA) followed by one at HR 11/9 (RJ). Costly repairs are likely to leave HR permanently empty and locals upset by the absent lake, but it will be exciting to see what shorebird and wetland species turn up at this mudflat in the coming years. A county high 19 **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at Fords Lake 11/16 (TD). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** wailed from appropriate breeding habitat along Henry Drinker Rd. in Madison Twp. 11/14 (RJ), the third county encounter of this species this year. **Peregrine Falcons** are rarely seen in *Lackawanna*, especially outside of Scranton, but a birder was lucky to find one at a private community in Covington Twp. 10/3 (DC).

For the second consecutive fall migration, a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was found and photographed at CL 9/6-10 (MM). Two **Marsh Wrens** visited LSP 9/26 (AK) with one continuing through 9/30 (TS). The hayfields of southeastern *Lackawanna* once again hosted large stopover flocks of **American Pipits**; the period high was 31 from Line Rd. in Jefferson Twp. (RJ). The shortage of cone crops up north brought down anticipated finches including **Evening Grosbeak**; a county high was set with 9 at SGL 312 11/19 (MS, JH). Missed was Red Crossbill likely due to minimal efforts taken to locate them. This is particularly of interest since each of *Lackawanna's* neighboring counties saw reports; *Wayne* took the impressive lead with 60 observed 11/1-11/17 (CF, RJ). The chart below highlights this movement in showing the minimum total of irruptive species encountered by birders in *Lackawanna* during the period.

Fall 2020 Lackawanna Irruptive Species Totals		
Species	# of Sightings	Minimum # Observed
Red-breasted Nuthatch	19	19
Evening Grosbeak	4	17
Purple Finch	40	54
Common Redpoll	8	23
Pine Siskin	18	57

A **Vesper Sparrow** at Pinchot SF 8/8 (AY, BY) was notable. An impressive 24 warbler species were observed for the period which is one of the best, if not the best, tallies *Lackawanna* has ever seen. Of note was a **Hooded Warbler** along Creamery Rd. 9/24 (DS), 2 **Northern Parula** at LSP 9/26 (AK) and one at CL 9/6 (MM), and 2 **Prairie Warblers** at Aylesworth Cr. 8/31 (BM). **Rusty Blackbirds** often go undetected in fall; one visited the swamp along Bird Rd. 10/6 (RJ) followed by 2 at Corby Swamp 10/11 (TD).

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## Lancaster County

Locations: Alcoa Marsh (AM), Beechdale Rd Farm Pond (BRFP), Brenner Quarry (BQ), Chestnut Grove Natural Area (CGNA), Chickie's Rock County Park (CRCP), Conewago Recreation Trail & Wetlands (CRTW), Greenfield Ponds (GP), Lancaster Airport (LA), Lancaster County Central Park (LCCP), Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (MCWMA), Millport Conservancy (MC), Muddy Run Reservoir (MRR), Noel Dorwart Park (NDP), Octoraro Reservoir (OR), Overlook Park (OP), Prescott Rd (PR), Riverfront Park (RFP), Rock Springs Nature Preserve (RSNP), Safe Harbor Dam (SHD), Speedwell Forge County Park (SFCP), Speedwell Forge Lake (SFL), Shenk's Ferry Wildflower Preserve (SFWP), Spalding Conservancy, Sporting Valley Turf Farm (SVTF),

Susquehanna River Bainbridge Islands (SRBI), Susquehanna River Conejohela Flats (SRCF), Susquehanna River Lake Clarke (SRLC), Susquehanna River Long Level (SRL), Susquehanna River Peach Bottom (SRPB), Susquehanna River "The Rocks" (SRTR), Susquehanna SP (SSP), SGL 52, SGL 156, SGL 220, Susquehanna W.T.P Washington Boro (SWTPWB), Wood's Edge Park (WEP).

Aug continued the summer heat wave with a mean high of 87°F (83°F normal mean) and slightly above mean precip, and in fact the mean temp of 77.9° for the entire summer Jun-Aug was an all-time record. The warmth continued through the rest of the fall, creating balmy Oct-Nov temps and allowing many species to linger a little later in numbers. Fall precip was well down, however, at a total of 7", vs. 10" normal mean. There was no snow. Weather information is derived from Harrisburg data from the National Climatic Data Center. A total of 254 species were recorded during the period, well above the 3-year average of 240 (242, 240, 238 previous).

Two **Brant** were put down at MCWMA in inclement weather 11/12 (BC). **Cackling Geese** were found at several locations after 11/1. A juvenile **Trumpeter Swan** hung around MCWMA 11/27-29 (RR, m.ob.). At SRCF high counts were made of 200 **Blue-winged Teal** 9/18 and 250 **Green-winged Teal** 10/7 (JHr). At least 6 **Canvasback** staged on SRLC 11/15 along with a hen **Redhead** (ZM), and there were a few other observations of Redheads in Nov. Large numbers of other *Aythya* staged on SRLC: 150 **Ring-necked Duck** 11/15 (ZM), and 600 **Lesser Scaup** along with another 300 scaup sp. 11/13 (ME). Reports were up for **Surf**, **White-winged** and **Black Scoters** which were almost regular in various groups between 10/15-11/13 (m.ob.), nearly all on MCWMA and SRLC. A total of 4 **Long-tailed Ducks** were observed 11/13-22 at MCWMA and SRLC.

One of the best birds of the season was a well-described **Ruffed Grouse** at MCWMA 10/31 (anon.). West Nile Virus hit our remnant population hard in the early 2000s, and sightings since have been very few and far between. Lone **Red-necked Grebes** were at SFL 10/26 (BC) and MCWMA 11/22-28 (AW, m.ob.). A juvenile female **Rufous Hummingbird** showed up at a feeder in Quarryville 11/4 and was banded. An adult male of the species visited a Pequea home beginning mid-Oct, but a banding attempt was not successful. Both birds remained post-period (*fide* SL). **American Coot** were counted at 800 on SRLC 11/13 (ME), and a large flyover flock of 63 **Sandhill Cranes** was seen over Strasburg 10/31 (JB).

Shorebird counts at SRCF were severely depressed this season, due likely in part to low rainfall after Aug and possibly lower overall river levels. This left new areas of habitat available upstream, as observed by the author in Nov, which would typically be underwater. However, in New Holland there was a freshly harvested potato field where **Killdeer** congregated, which were counted at over 160 on 9/9 (ZM). Between 9/10-10/12 an adult **Black-bellied Plover** and up to 6 juveniles joined them. Two adult **American Golden-Plovers** dropped in 9/4, and numbers of this species were in the single digits for about a month. Then a flock of 25 juveniles were found 10/2. Numbers quickly shot up to a high of 95 by 10/9 (EM) and the last count was 15 on 10/31. In all, at least 10 species of shorebirds were confirmed in this one field. See the article in this journal by Frank Haas titled "Plover Palooza – American Golden-Plover Event in Lancaster County" for a more thorough account of this spectacle. One of the continuing **Upland Sandpipers** was at LA 8/1 (JHp), the final report. One **Ruddy Turnstone** was found at SRCF 8/20-23 (SSc, m.ob.), and 3 flew by 8/29 (RG, JHr, ZM). The only **Stilt Sandpipers** were lone birds at SRCF 8/29 (JHr, ZM) and MCWMA 9/1 (BC). **Sanderlings** were only observed between 8/29-9/9 and the biggest group was 4, a very low number. **Dunlin** was not numerous, with about 30 in the county and only 13 of those at SRCF. Up to 3 **Baird's Sandpipers** were together at SRCF 8/20-30 (m.ob.). MCWMA pulled in the "best" count of 38 **Least Sandpipers** on 8/29 (SF), a number that is easily surpassed most years at SRCF. The only **White-rumped Sandpiper** was seen at SVTF 9/4 (BC). Back in the New Holland field on the evening of 9/10 a juvenile **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was discovered, and the following night there were 4 together (ZM). Counts of **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were average for prior years, often in the high single digits or teens at SRCF.

**Short-billed Dowitchers** were frequent there 8/11-9/5. An adult **Long-billed Dowitcher** hung out for an afternoon in a stream near Narvon 8/11 (FH), and one was seen and heard at SRCF 10/12 (JHr). At SVTF a juv. **Wilson's Phalarope** hung out with the local Killdeer 8/28-29 (ML), an odd place for such a species. A flyby **Red-necked Phalarope** was reported at 9/3 (JD, JHr). These two rare shorebirds are annual or nearly so in the county, but per usual we missed Red Phalarope.

One of the highlights of the season was a young, dark jaeger at SRCF 8/29, identified as a **Parasitic Jaeger** by shape and several plumage points. Unfortunately, only very poor photos were obtained (JHr, ZM, *doc submitted*). Three or 4 **Laughing Gulls** frequented SRLC to 10/12, which is typical. The rarer of the two look-alikes, an adult **Franklin's Gull** was photographed at SRCF 8/3 (SSc). **Caspian**, **Black**, **Common** and **Forster's Terns** were regular along the Susquehanna per usual, but late season an unusual tern event happened on SRPB. On 10/12, 13 Caspians were seen together, a solid count for this date (BS). The Forster's Terns were the real spectacle, however, counted at 84 on

The morning of 10/22 was densely foggy with very low visibility. At daybreak workers in the parking lot of a food processing plant near Lancaster city found a juvenile **Northern Gannet** sitting on the wet pavement! To protect it from truck traffic they shooed it under some pines at the edge of the property, from where it eventually wandered into a nearby field. Thankfully, one of them was curious about the identification, so they texted a photo to a friend, who texted a friend, who posted to a bird group on Facebook. Pretty soon it was identified and rehabber information exchanged, but not before the local birders found out. However, it was due to be picked up within 30 minutes so time was seriously short! Shockingly, the rehabber from Raven Ridge was rear-ended on her way to pick up the bird, which provided additional time. Fortune favored the birders rushing for this once-in-a-lifetime chance to view a gannet sitting in a field, surrounded by clover, dew, and dried manure. Eventually, she arrived and the bird was easily captured. It was transferred to Tri-State Bird Rescue, but sadly had an unrecoverable shoulder injury and had to be put down. What a wild saga, which unfortunately could not have a happy ending for the very bird we were all so grateful to see.

10/16 and 145 on 10/27 (BS)! There were still 22 present 11/8 (CG). Also at this location were as many as 5 **Red-throated Loons** 10/19 and 21 **Common Loons** 10/25 (BS).

**American Bitterns** were in marsh habitat near MCWMA 9/18 (BC) and at CGNA 10/15-24 (m.ob.), and normally a few are found each fall. The post-breeding dispersal heron flight brought small white waders starting with numerous reports of up to 7 **Snowy Egrets** and 4 **Little Blue Herons** at OR in early Aug (m.ob.). **Cattle Egret** was nearly missed until a juvenile showed up at a farm outside SSP 11/21 (TA, m.ob.). A juvenile **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was dedicated to a stream at NDP for nearly a month after mid-Sep, single-handedly destroying its crayfish population (DK, m.ob.). A **Glossy Ibis** was sighted flying down SRLC 8/8 (ML), and presumably a continuing bird hung out at SRCF 8/8-9/10 (SSc, m.ob.). There were 3 **Golden Eagle** reports around the county 11/4-21, all of young birds (SB, MG, M&MZ). On 8/24 a **Barn Owl** hunted the back fields at MCWMA (SF), and 11/6 a **Short-eared Owl** was accidentally flushed from pheasant-stocked fields (RG). Hopefully it moved on before falling prey to the wrong end of a trigger-happy hunter's shotgun.

Five **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were found late Aug-early Sep, and **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** sightings were somewhat numerous, mostly in Sep. The last of the breeding **Alder Flycatchers** at MCWMA was reported 8/6 (m.ob.). **Philadelphia Vireos** were well represented, also mostly in Sep.

Nearly all members of the suite of irruptive boreal birds put on red letter flights this season. Nov brought a movement of **Black-capped Chickadees**, as it did across much of the region, with at least 9 individuals scattered in the county. This was the first true irruption since 2016 of the northerly cousin to our local Carolina Chickadees. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were impressive as well, with a rough estimate from eBird data of at least 100 individuals reported. Surely this was only a small fraction of what truly passed through. Similarly, there was a

massive irruption of **Evening Grosbeaks**, with an eBird total of 50 individuals over 12 locations between 10/27-11/11 (m.ob.). It stands as one of the best, if not the best passage of these birds since the 1970s. **Purple Finches** were seemingly everywhere one looked, on par with the fall of 2018 as the best flight this decade according to eBird data. **Common Redpolls** are quite rare in this region of Pennsylvania, but there were three observations: a pair with goldfinches north of Manheim 11/19 (BC), one with siskins at a feeder near Wakefield 11/23 (CG), and 3 flyovers at MCWMA 11/25 (BC). More would be found post-period. Both crossbills were recorded, all in the northern end of the county. Five **Red Crossbills** in 3 groups were ticked 11/4-28 (BC), and a female **White-winged Crossbill** flew over SGL 220 on 11/21 (BC). **Pine Siskins** put on their best show this decade, with many hundreds observed beginning in Oct.

A **Lapland Longspur** was observed in flight over New Holland farmland 10/30 (ZM), signaling the start of a good winter for these. Two **Snow Buntings** were seen amongst larks and pipits in farmland near Ephrata 11/18 (BC). A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was recorded at CGNA 10/21 (LB), on the later side for this species. At least 5 reports of **Vesper Sparrow** were made during the period. A **Nelson's Sparrow** was finally found at weedy islands south of Bainbridge on the Susquehanna R. 10/18 (EW), the first there since heavy rains in the fall of 2018 wiped out much of its vegetation, which is slowly regaining a foothold. One was also found at NDP 10/26-28 (SM, m.ob.) in weedy habitat with a stand of cattails. A third individual was discovered at CGNA 11/2 (RN) to round out a decent fall for this species.

Thirty-two warbler species were tallied this season. Five **Orange-crowned Warblers** were reported 9/21-10/20, and at least 8 **Connecticut Warblers** were found, a very skulky species which is likely underreported (m.ob.). **Mourning Warblers** are difficult to find after Sep, but one was described at an Ephrata park 10/2 (FB), and another photographed at CGNA 10/20 (BM). Most **Blackburnian Warblers** have pushed on by early Oct, but a straggler was a bit late 10/22 at CGNA (ML). A **Black-throated Green Warbler** was a nice find 11/6 near Quarryville (DB), and a late **Wilson's Warbler** was photographed at CGNA 11/22 (KL, m.ob.).

A probable Summer Tanager was seen briefly just east of MCWMA 9/12 (EW), which unfortunately does not contribute to this season's species count. An adult male **Painted Bunting** returned to a Mohnton home 11/29 (fide anon), earlier than its arrival dates in previous years between 12/17-20. The bird began its fourth winter here out of the previous five, at the ripe old age of at least 7 at the time of this writing in 2021. See the *Lancaster* winter 2019-2020 report for more details. And last, but not least, a **Dickcissel** gave its recognizable flight call over a Lancaster farm 9/12 (DS), and another was photographed at CGNA 10/19-21 (RN, m.ob.).

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#### Lawrence County

Locations: Black Swamp (BS), Plain Grove Twp. (PGT), Shaner Road Marsh (SR), Volant Strips (VSM), Vosler Road pond (VR), Wampum-New Galilee Road Marsh (WNGM).

A group of 10 **Cackling Geese** were found at SR 11/26 (ph. DA) and were seen there and nearby to 11/28. Some reports of this flock mentioned as many as 12 birds. Up to 6 **Tundra Swans** were at SR 11/14-26 (SM, RH); they were noted in two other locations as well. Top count of **Blue-winged Teal** was 15 at SR 9/14 (GK, MAK). An early **Northern Shoveler** was at SR 8/29 (GK, MAK), where the species was noted now and again until 11/21. A count of 28 **Gadwalls** was made at McConahy Road 11/28 (GK, MAK), a nice tally for the fall season. Somewhat unusual in fall, **American Wigeon** was noted twice, at the Copper Road Marsh 10/16 (MV), and at SR 11/4 (KS). Two **American Black Ducks** were at SR 11/4-28 (KS, et al.). A female **Redhead** that summered at the pond on McConahy Road was still there throughout the fall season (MV, et al.). Quite impressive for the fall season were the 170 **Ring-necked Ducks** at SR 11/21 (MV). Up to 98 remained there through 11/28. Very rare for fall, and generally uncommon overall in *Lawrence*, 4 **Red-breasted Mergansers** were at VSM 11/27 (MC).

A **Sora** was at WNGM 8/22 (MV), and up to 17 **Common Gallinules** (many of which were the young of the year) were there 8/8-25 (MV). Impressive double-digit counts of **Sandhill Cranes** arrived in the PGT area early this year, beginning with 62 on 10/3 (MC), and topping out at 67 at BS 11/3 (RN).

*Lawrence* once again produced a good shorebird season, mostly at SR as usual. One **American Golden-Plover** was found with a **Semipalmated Plover** and many **Killdeer** in farm field in the rarely-birded sw. portion of the county, along Mt. Jackson Road 9/6 (MV). Two **American Golden-Plovers** were at VR 9/19 (HC), and one was there 9/26-27 (MC, et al.). **Semipalmated Plover** was also at SR 8/15 (GK, MAK). An impressive count of 264 **Killdeer** was made at VR 8/5 (GK, MAK). Two **Dunlin** were at SR 11/3 (RN), and a **Baird's Sandpiper** was there 8/21 (MD). Early **Pectoral Sandpipers** were at VR 8/5 and at SR 8/8 (both GK, MAK). **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were there and gone from SR by 8/26. Two **Short-billed Dowitchers** were at SR 8/15 (GK, MAK), and the most exciting shorebird of the season was a juvenile **Long-billed Dowitcher** at SR 9/13 (MD), which was seen by several observers until 9/26. Both **Greater** and **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at SR on the opening day of the period, 8/1 (MC). The former species was still at Mason Road as late as 11/4 (MH, RH, LW).

An **American Bittern** at SR 8/15 (GK, MAK) was an unusual find for the county for a species that probably isn't as rare here as the record would indicate. **Great Egret** was at VR periodically from 9/9-10/2 (MC, et al.). An **Osprey** was still hanging out in PGT to at least 10/23 (MC), and **Northern Harrier** was seen at Mason Road 8/14 (MC), well before fall migration. Three **Broad-winged Hawks** were at VSM 10/3 (MC). Up to 5 **Red-headed Woodpeckers** remained from the summer to 10/17 at SGL 151 (m.ob.), and a **Merlin** was noted at the old Three Rivers gravel pond site 9/25 (MV).

As usual in this county, reports of passerines were meager, but included a few notable species this time around. A **Great Crested Flycatcher** was a bit late at SGL 151 on 9/12 (GK, MAK). *Lawrence* is one of only a few remaining Pennsylvania counties where **Common Raven** is still a notable species; this season there were three sightings: 2 in the New Galilee area 8/22 (MV), one nearby there 10/31 (KG), and one at SR 11/4 (MH, RH, LW). It's probably only a matter of time before the species becomes more common even in mostly-glaciated *Lawrence*. First **Red-breasted Nuthatch** appeared at a feeder in New Castle 9/6 (PS) and although they were also noted in two other locations, there were not many reports. A **Swainson's Thrush** was found at BS 10/4 (RN), and reports of **American Pipit** included one at VR 9/21 (MC) and 5 at VSM 11/4 (MH, RH, LW). Nine **Evening Grosbeaks** attended a feeder in the town of Volant 10/26-27 (BMP), representing the first record for the county in many years. **Pine Siskins** showed up in large numbers in Oct, including 30 at BS 10/14 (LW), 42 at a feeder in New Castle 10/20 (PS), and 34 at a different New Castle feeder 10/26 (LW). The only report of **Lincoln's Sparrow** was one at Copper Road 10/18 (AZ). **Rusty Blackbirds** were limited to singles at BS 10/12 (LW), Copper Road 10/18 (AZ), and SR 11/3 (RN). A late **Common Yellowthroat** was well-described at BS 11/20 (CJ), and a **Wilson's Warbler** was at McConnell's Mill S.P. 9/13 (MD).

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### Lebanon County

Locations: Annville Area (AA), Balmer Farm Ponds (BFP), Camp Shand Powerline (CSP), Clear Springs Rd (CLSP), Cold Springs Rd (CSR), Cornwall Area (CA), Fort Indiantown Gap (FIG), Fox and Prescott Rd (FXP), Kreider's Pond (KP), Lebanon Valley Rail Trail (LVRT), Marquette Lake (ML), Memorial Lake State Park (MLSP), Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (MC), Mt Gretna (MG), Quittapahilla Educational Wetlands (QEW), Reistville Flooded Fields (RFF), Second Mountain Hawkwatch (2Mtn), SGL 145, SGL 156, SGL 211, Shuey Lake (SL), Spring Hill Acres (SHA), Swatara State Park (SSP).

A **Cackling Goose** provided a new county early date at MLSP 10/24 (JH). One was also at QEW 10/27 (JH) and at ML 10/30 (JH). An immature **Trumpeter Swan** was heard and seen in flight with a flock of **Tundra Swans** at MC 11/28 (JH), providing the sixth county record. Up to 32 **Blue-winged Teal** were at MC 8/26-9/7 (JH, SF, ZM, BQ). Accidental in Aug was an **American Wigeon** at MC 8/3 (SF). A male **Surf Scoter** provided the tenth county record at ML 10/28 (TB, KB, MC, P&RW, RSt, JF, NF). Four **White-winged Scoters** were at MLSP 10/26 (JF, TB, KB, JH). It was a good year for **Black Scoters**. A female Black Scoter provided the ninth county record at MLSP 10/26-11/6 (JF, TB, KB, JH, SW, MH, TBa, R&PP). This was followed by 10 more Black Scoters, nine females and a male, which provided the tenth county record at MLSP 11/13 (MC, TB, KB, STh). A **Ruddy Duck** provided a new county early date at KP 8/3-13 (TB, JE, JH).

Single **Common Nighthawks** were seen at 2Mtn 9/7 (JD, SW, RS) and CLSP 9/14-15 (JF, BB, BBr, NF, EF). Two flew over CA the evenings of 9/24-25 (P&RW).

Single **Stilt Sandpipers** were at MC 8/28 (JH, SF), at FXP 8/30 (TN, VP) and at RFF 9/24-30 (JH, P&RW, JHo). Three were at Elco Pond 9/29 (FH), and up to 4 were at QEW 10/17-27 (JH, TB, KB, MC, P&RW, JFi). A **Dunlin** was at ML 10/26-27 (JH, SW). A **Greater Yellowlegs** provided a new county late date at QEW 11/27 (JE). Three **Wilson's Phalaropes** were seen at MC 8/18 (TN, SF, ZM), and one was there again 9/7 (SF). A **Bonaparte's Gull** was at KP 11/12 (JH). A **Black Tern** was at Risser's Pond at MC 8/4 (SF), and 2 were there 9/1-2 (SF, JH, BC, P&RW, TB, KB).

**Black-crowned Night-herons** were seen at MC 8/9 (JH), BFP 9/8 (JH), and MLSP 10/24 (JH). A **Rough-legged Hawk**, hopefully the harbinger of a good winter for this species, flew over Margin Rd. 10/31 (JW, TN, JH). **Barred Owls** were found at SGL 156 on 8/15 (JF), and SSP 10/2 (MH). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were at FIG 8/29 (RSt); MLSP 9/2 (RSt) and 9/29 (JM); and CA 9/30 (JFi). One was at Obie Rd 9/5 (JFi), and 2 were there 11/29 (JFi). **Merlins** were found at five locations 8/18-11/9 (m.ob.). **Peregrine Falcons** were observed at MC 8/18 (TN, SF, ZM), SSP 9/12 (JH), QEW 11/7 (JH), and LVRT 11/24 (JFi, FHe).

**Olive-sided Flycatchers** were found at SGL 145 on 8/28-9/4 (PB, RP), at FIG 8/30-9/2 (AM, SW), at SSP 9/5 (JH), and along CSR 9/12 (TB, KB). **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were seen at SGL 145 on 8/30 (JH) and 9/12 (P&RW), at CLSP 9/3 (JF), and at CSP 9/16 (TB). An **Alder Flycatcher** was at MC 8/3-9 (BC, SF, JH, ST).

A **Western Kingbird** provided a fourth *Lebanon* record and third September record at FIG 9/20 (TN). The bird was perched on a utility wire along Fisher Avenue by the airport. Unfortunately it moved on before other county birders could see it, and was not relocated.

**Philadelphia Vireos** made a good showing this fall. They were observed in five county locations, especially at SSP, between 8/29-10/11 (m.ob.). An excellent count was made of 1100 **Tree Swallows** at FXP 9/24 (JH). Up to 35 **Bank Swallows** provided a good count at MC 8/8-20 (AL, LD, RA, JL, JH). Ten **Cliff Swallows** were found at Kauffman Rd 8/9 (NF, JF, BB, BBr, SB). It was a great fall for **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, with the first one reported at SSP 8/21 (DT). Seven Red-breasted Nuthatches provided a good count at SGL 211 on 9/20 (BBr, JF, NF). Up to 3 **Sedge Wrens** were at MC 8/1-17 (P&RW, SF, JHo, JFi, MS, TB, KB, ML, JH, JHr, m.ob.). A **Marsh Wren** was at QEW 10/11 (JH, JE). **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were found at SSP 9/19 (TB) and 10/3 (JH), at SGL 145 on 9/27 (JH) and 10/4 (JH), and at MLSP 10/6 (TBa). Notable counts of **American Pipits** included 57 at Krumstown Rd 11/1 (JH), up to 55 at Fredricksburg Rd. 11/25-29 (P&RW, RS), and up to 50 along Chapel Rd 11/28 (JSt).

Winter finches made a very strong showing this fall. The first **Purple Finch** was seen at SGL 145 on 8/30 (JH), with numbers there building to 35 on 10/4 (MC). They were well-reported throughout the county. **Common Redpolls** began to trickle in later in the fall. Two were at SHA 11/8 (JH), and one was at SGL 145 on 11/22 (JH) and 11/29 (JH). Up to three **Red Crossbills** were at SGL 211 from 10/31-11/7 (JH). Three were at SGL 145 on 11/8 (JH); and two were at SHA 11/28 (JH). The first **Pine Siskin** was reported from SGL 145 on 9/20 (JH), with numbers building to 120 there on 11/1 (JH). They were found in lesser numbers throughout the county. Two of the better Pine Siskin counts were provided by 35 at MLSP 10/26 (JF), and up to 104 at CA 11/23-26 (P&RW). Perhaps the most exciting finches to invade the county were **Evening Grosbeaks**. The first reported were 18 at 2Mtn 10/23 (SR, JG, AW), which provided a new county high count. Other notable counts were 10 at SGL 145 on 10/25 (BW), 15 at Margin Rd 10/31 (GR, JW, SW, TN, JH), 15 at CSP 11/6 (JH), and up to 14 at SHA 11/8-9 (JH). Lesser numbers were found at several other locations.

A **Lapland Longspur** was associating with a flock of **Horned Larks** at Wagner Lane 11/8-28 (JH, TO). **Vesper Sparrows** were found at MC 8/1 (P&RW) and MLSP 10/13 (JF). Successive new county high counts of **Lincoln's Sparrows** were provided by 11 at SGL 145 on 9/20 (JH), 19 at SSP 10/3 (JH), and 25 at SGL 145 on 10/4 (JH). Successive new county late dates were provided by a **Baltimore Oriole** at MLSP 9/24 (RS), and at 2Mtn 9/29 (RS). Small numbers of **Rusty Blackbirds** were seen at four county locations 10/23-11/4 (CT, JH, DK, P&RW). Eight was the highest count this fall, made at Swatara Watershed Park 11/24 (RS).

A **Black-throated Gray Warbler** returned for a second fall to a home along CLSP. It was once again associating with small flocks of other migrant songbirds. It was occasionally noted 9/15-26 (NF, JF, BB, BBr, EF, DF) and 11/5-9 (JF, RG).

A **Golden-winged Warbler** was observed at SGL 145 on 8/30 (JH, MC), and along Michter's Rd 9/1 (JFi). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was seen at SGL 145 on 10/4 (JH) and at CLSP 10/8 (JF). Up to 2 **Mourning Warblers** were at SSP 9/13-10/3 (TB, KB, JH, P&RW, TA). Single Mourning Warblers were at CSR 8/29 (RSt), FIG 9/21 (SW), and SGL 145 on 10/11 (JH). At least 2 **Connecticut Warblers** were found at SSP 9/19-26 (JH, TB, AW, JD), and another was there 10/3 (JH). Other Connecticut Warblers included one at SGL 145 on 9/26 (JHo), and 2 there 10/3 (JH). Unusual in late November was a **Common Yellowthroat** at QEW 11/28 (JH). A **Wilson's Warbler** was at CA 10/4 (P&RW). Up to 5 **Blue Grosbeaks** were reported at MC 8/3-9/2 (SF, ST, JFi, JS, JH, JHr, MSh, TB, KB), and 2 were at SGL 145 on 9/4 (PB, RP).

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### Lycoming County

Locations: Mill Street (MS), Rose Valley Lake (RVL), Williamsport Dam (WD).

Despite a few tropical systems passing through the area during the fall season, fallout events did not really produce many good records. Most of the excitement for the season came from shorebirds and the finch irruption that started to kick into gear early in the season. In total, 204 species were reported during the fall.

The male **Lesser Scaup** that spent the summer at RVL remained at the lake through mid-Oct (m.ob.). A **Surf Scoter** was at WD 10/26-27 (BB, et al.). Two **White-winged Scoters** spent several weeks at RVL in Nov (m.ob.). A **Black Scoter** was at RVL 10/28 (AK, et al.), and 2 were at WD 11/12 (BB, DeB, BoB, DanB). Two **Red-breasted Mergansers** were at WD 11/17 (BB) and three were at RVL 11/30 (BB, EH).

A **Red-necked Grebe** was at RVL 10/28 (AK, et al.). An **Eared Grebe** was at RVL 9/15 (BB, DeB, BM, et al.), providing the third *Lycoming* record of that species. A late **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was still visiting a feeder outside of Hughesville 10/13 (BB, DeB, BoB). A **Rufous Hummingbird** was confirmed at a feeder near Salladasburg 9/25 (BB, DeB, BoB), which was at least the ninth confirmed record of that species for *Lycoming*, and the first since 2016. A **Sora** was at RVL 10/5 (BB, DeB, et al.). Two **American Coots** were at WD 10/4-17, and one was at the same location during the last week of Oct (m.ob.).

Four **American Avocets** were at WD 8/11 (BB, et al.), providing the third *Lycoming* record of that species. An **American Golden-Plover** dropped in at WD 11/12 (DanB, et al.), providing the second *Lycoming* record of that species. Up to 3 **Semipalmated Plovers** were regularly seen at WD during the first half of Aug (BB, et al.). Three **Pectoral Sandpipers** were at RVL 9/21 (BB, DeB, BoB), and were joined by a fourth the following day. The birds were present though 9/28 (EH). A **Red Phalarope** flew by WD during fallout conditions 10/29 (BB, DeB), providing the third *Lycoming* record of that species. A very late **Solitary Sandpiper** was at RVL 11/7-8 (BB, DeB, BoB), which is the second-latest record ever for Pennsylvania on eBird.

A somewhat late **Osprey** was seen near Cedar Run 10/31 (BB). **Golden Eagle** reports were not very abundant, with one at the Rte. 15 Overlook 10/24 (BB, DeB, BoB) and one at Mill Hill Rd. 11/28 (DF). An injured juv. **Northern Goshawk** was found in the Jersey Shore area 11/20 and was taken to rehab. There were no very large **Broad-winged Hawk** days during the fall, with the highest count coming in at 398 in Ralston 9/14 (NF). With reports of a lot of **Rough-legged Hawk** movement up north, a flyby bird at RVL 10/25 (BB) sparked hopes of a nice irruption coming to this area, but those hopes did not pan out, and numbers ended up being on the low end of normal for *Lycoming*. A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard near Cedar Run 11/5 (PL) and another in Gamble Twp. 11/13 (BB, DeB, BoB).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at RVL 8/29-30 (BB, DeB, BoB), and one was at MS 9/2 (BB). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at SGL 252 on 9/13 (BB, AK). **Philadelphia Vireo** reports included South Williamsport Park 9/2 (BB), SGL 252 on 9/13, 9/20, and 10/4 (BB, AK), RVL 9/21 (BB, DeB, BoB), and Bruce Henry Park 9/24 (BM). A pretty late **Purple Martin** was in a mixed flock of swallows at RVL 9/16 (BB, DeB, BoB, MH). Two reasonably late **Tree Swallows** were at WD during fallout conditions 10/29 (BB, DeB). The fall's **Red-breasted Nuthatch** irruption was evident, as numbers started to climb during the second half of Aug, and the species was present in elevated numbers the rest of the fall. The highest count of the fall was 17 at the Williamsport Water Authority 11/27

(BB, DeB, BoB). There were quite a few reports of **Marsh Wren** at various areas of RVL during Sep, including 9/15 (BB, DeB, BM), 9/17 (BB), 9/21 (BB, DeB, BoB), 9/22 (BB, DeB), 9/23 (BB), 9/24 (BB, DeB, BoB), and 9/25 (BB, DeB). A late **Brown Thrasher** was at RVL 11/30 (EH).

A widespread finch irruption occurred during the fall season, leading to many more reports than normal for several locally uncommon or rare species. The first finch species that started appearing in elevated numbers was **Purple Finch**, which started showing up right at the end of Aug. Next, after the first report at SGL 252 on 9/27 (BB, AK), an influx of **Pine Siskins** started to arrive at the beginning of Oct, and the species was fairly abundant for six to eight weeks before numbers really started significantly declining. Crossbills never really showed up in *Lycoming* in significant numbers during the fall, but a **Red Crossbill** was at Little Pine SP 10/27 (BM), and a flock of 6 was seen at the Rte. 15 Overlook 11/1 (AK). **Evening Grosbeaks** were reported in a variety of areas during late Oct and Nov, in what was one of the strongest seasons for them in a couple decades. The last of the finch arrivals during the fall, small flocks of **Common Redpolls** were at RVL 11/7 (BB, DeB, BoB), 11/8 (BB), 11/22 (BB), 11/25 (BB), and 11/28 (BB, DeB, BoB) and at the Williamsport Water Authority 11/27 (BB, DeB, BoB).

**Snow Buntings** were seen off and on at RVL during much of Nov (m.ob.). A **Vesper Sparrow** was found in Jackson Twp. 10/31 (SP). A mostly white **Song Sparrow** was at SGL 252 on 10/4 (AK, BB). An **Eastern Towhee** was still at the Williamsport Water Authority as late as 11/27 (BB, DeB, BoB). A late **Bobolink** was in Antes Fort 10/31 (SP).

A **Connecticut Warbler** was photographed near South Williamsport Park 10/5 (EH). A **Mourning Warbler** was found in the Tiadaughton SF near Cedar Run 8/30 (JG), and one was at SGL 252 on 10/4 (BB, AK). An extremely late **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was at RVL 11/21 (BB, DeB, BoB). There are only two previous Nov eBird records for this species in Pennsylvania, and this record is more than two weeks later than the previous late date. A late **Palm Warbler** was at the Robert Porter Allen Natural Area 11/9 (EH, YB).

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### Mercer County

Locations: Airport Road (AR), Beatty School Road (BS), Buhl Park (BP), Brent Road (BN), Chestnut Run (CR), Golden Run (GR), Greenville (GN), Grove City (GC), Hidden Fields, Shenango Reservoir (HF), Lake Latonka (LL), Lake Road (LA), Lake Wilhelm (LW), Mahaney Rec Area (MR), Mercer (ME), Pennsy Swamp (PS), Propagation Area (PR), Sharon (SH), Tait Road (TA), Tieline Road (TE), Transfer (TF), Triple Link (TL), Trout Island (TI), West River Road (WRR), White Chapel (WC).

Waterfowl were not very plentiful this fall. Highest count of **Snow Goose** was 35 at BS 10/23 (ANP). There was a nice flight of **Tundra Swans** in Nov which peaked at 122 birds at PR 11/21 (BW). Small numbers of **Ruddy Ducks** were seen including 7 at LL 10/13 (MH).

**Ring-necked Pheasants** continue to be found occasionally. One was at LA 10/22 (BW). *Mercer* continues to see nice flights of **Common Nighthawks**. Birds were first noted in early Aug and peaked with 4 birds at TF 9/12 (KS). **Sandhill Cranes** are generally found in small numbers throughout the year, never equaling the totals seen in adjacent *Lawrence* or *Crawford*, but still good. This year 25 were noted at BN 10/18 (PS).

Shorebirds were among the best finds of the season. **Killdeer** maximum was 50 at WC 10/28 (SS, JMC, MH). A single **Baird's Sandpiper** at PR 8/21 (MD) was a very good sighting. A single **White-rumped Sandpiper** was at PR 8/21-24 (KS, BW). Twelve **Pectoral Sandpipers** at WRR 8/27 (MV) was the high count. A nice flight of **Solitary Sandpipers** was evidenced by sightings at various locations 8/27-10/24 with a high count of 19 at WRR 8/27 (MV). The most exciting shorebirds were the two species phalaropes: a **Wilson's Phalarope** was

at PR 8/25-28 (m.ob.), and a **Red-necked Phalarope** was at PR 8/21 (MD).

PR is also the best place to find good numbers of **Great Blue Herons**. This season the high count was 27 on 11/19 (MH). Two **Great Egrets** were at CR 8/6 (KS). They were also noted at GR until 9/5. A somewhat early **Northern Harrier** was at TE 10/25 (JN, KS). Another exciting find this season was a **Northern Goshawk** at GN 11/3 (MW). This was only the second sighting in eBird for *Mercer* and the first since 2014.

Flycatchers seemed hard to find and not just in *Mercer*. A single **Great Crested Flycatcher** at CR 9/16 was one of a small number (KS, SS, BD, SAH). **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were noted 8/31-9/13 at PR and CR (RN, KS, JS, JN). **Philadelphia Vireos** are an often overlooked species, but this fall 2 were noted at LW 9/16 (JH). **Common Ravens** are noted fairly regularly in the county although the most reliable site no longer exists. Ravens were often found at the deer dump in SGL 130; however the game commission has cleaned that area. Ravens were still noted throughout the period including 2 at GC 10/11 (LB). Swallows came through in good numbers, and were mostly seen at PR, where on 10/31 there were 18 **Tree Swallows** and also still 2 **Barn Swallows** present (MW).

As expected this year, **Red-breasted Nuthatches** made their first appearance 8/23 when 2 showed up at PR (KS). Low numbers continued to be seen throughout the period. It was also a good season for wrens. **Winter Wren** showed up at TL 9/24 (MW, JMC). A more unusual find was a single **Sedge Wren** at HF 10/10 (MW). Quite unusual was an **Eastern Bluebird** found nest building at TF 10/14 (KS). Other thrushes were noted in small numbers, including one **Swainson's Thrush** at GR 9/10 (LB) and one **Hermit Thrush** at GC 10/12 (LB). It was expected to be good flight of winter finches, and indeed 5 **Evening Grosbeaks** were found at BS 10/30 (SNP) and occasionally again throughout the rest of the period. **Pine Siskins** came through fast and early with up to 43 at TF 10/15 (KS). After this, small numbers were seen throughout the county but never in such good numbers.

Sparrows were hardly noticed, something that seemed to be the case in *Butler* as well, at least by this author's experience. One **Fox Sparrow** at HF 11/10 (MW) was one of the few reported. **White-throated Sparrows** began appearing 9/30 with one at BP (SS). A nice find of 2 **Lincoln's Sparrows** was made 9/24 (MS, JMC). **Rusty Blackbirds** made a small push near the middle of Nov. The highest total was 18 at AR 11/14 (KS, JN).

It was a good year for warbler migration with most coming through in early Sep. Highlights include: one **Prothonotary Warbler** at CR 9/12 (SB), one **Tennessee Warbler** at PS 8/31 (KP), one **Cape May Warbler** at PR 8/30 (NJ, KS, JS), **Magnolia Warbler** at PR 8/30 (JS), one **Bay-breasted Warbler** at CR 9/11 (MH, SS), one **Blackburnian Warbler** at GR 9/5 (MH, SS), one **Chestnut-sided Warbler** at GC 9/5 (LB), 2 **Blackpoll Warblers** at GC 9/15 (LB), 11 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** at CR 9/25 (KS, BD), and one **Wilson's Warbler** at CR 9/12 (KS, JS).

A common species, but not to be left out, 11 **Northern Cardinals** were at TF 9/2 (KS) which included one partially leucistic female that remained throughout the period.

Observers: **Glenn Koppel, 122 Linsdale Dr., Butler, PA 16001, macatilly@gmail.com**, Sophia Balunkek, Lauren Brock, Michael David, Bill Drosblagh, Patience Fisher, Jeff Hall, Michael Hartshorne, Sue Ann Herald, Mimi Hoffmaster, Jennifer Neider, Oscar Nigam, Richard Nugent, Kevin Parsons, Anthony Piccolin, Gerald Robinson, Steve Sanford, Pam Shaw, Jim Springer, Kim Springer, Mark Vass, Michael Williams, Bill Winkler.

### **Mifflin County**

Locations: Belleville Area (BA), Cooper's Gap Road (CGR), Jack's Mountain Hawkwatch (JMH), Stone Mountain Hawkwatch (SMH).

This fall, birding activity continued at a much lower level than previous years. With a few exceptions, most of the notable birds for this

period were a result of the winter finch irruption.

A late **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was heard calling near Burnham 9/18 (RH). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was observed at JMH 9/24 (JK). A first county record of an **Orange-crowned Warbler** was found on a private farm at BA 10/13 (IB). A **Northern Goshawk** was observed chasing a **Peregrine Falcon** on the same farm later in the month 10/29 (IB). Multiple **Snow Buntings** were found at BA 11/8 and 11/11 with a high count of 7 on 11/8 (JZ).

The first indication of the winter finch irruption was observed at CGR with larger than normal numbers of **Red-breasted Nuthatch**. Multiple birds were observed in this location throughout the fall period with the first observation occurring on 9/7 (RD). **Evening Grosbeaks** were first observed at a feeder near Reedsville on 10/31 and once again at the same feeder 11/2 (GP). The first report was soon followed by additional reports at McVeytown 11/1 (TK), Milroy 11/8 (KD), SMH 11/14 (CY), and BA 11/17 (CY). **Common Redpolls** were first observed at JMH 11/9 (BC) and **Red Crossbill** was noted at SMH 11/14 (CY).

Observers: **Rob Dickerson, 44 Oak Ridge Road, Lewistown, PA 17044, radickerson@gmail.com**, Ivan Byler, Bill Chambers, Kathy Damicanantonio, Robert Hosler, Jon Kauffman, Thiel Kauffman, Gordon Parker, Christopher Yoder, Jay Zook.

### **Monroe County**

Locations: Broadhead Creek Rec Area (BRCR), Cherry Valley NWR (CV), Long Pond IBA (LP), Lynchwood Lake (LL), Mount Pocono Airport (MPA), Mt. Airy Lake (MA), Silver Valley Natural Area (SILV), Skytop (SKY), Swiftwater Lake (SL), Tobyhanna SP (TOBY).

The start of the fall season was almost blown away, so to speak, and swamped by the remnants of Hurricane Isaias 8/4, which dumped 4.5 inches of rain on what was shaping up to be an excellent shorebird season. Good shorebird habitat would have to wait a few more weeks until water levels retreated. Overall, birders were able to enjoy beautiful weather and do a lot of birding for the three continuous months, with some very noteworthy finds. Most notably was an early Lapland Longspur in Sep that was found repeatedly over the course of a few days. As predicted, there was also an excellent movement of northern finches.

The only **Double-crested cormorant** of the period was seen on 8/26 on MA (BJ). Usually a few more are located this time of year. A **Semipalmated Sandpiper**, the first of the season, was found at MPA on 8/1 (MS). A **Merlin** passed through the Cresco area 8/31 (RK) and one was seen earlier in the month at BRCR (JS). **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were twitced at Pine Grove Lake 8/24 (BJ) and at West End Regional Park 8/31 (JM). Great high counts of **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** (52) and **Red-breasted Nuthatches** (8) were tallied 8/17 and 8/23, respectively, at SKY by their on-site naturalist (RK). A leucistic **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was well photographed at a personal feeder 9/27 in the Sciota area (CH). Rounding out the month of Aug was a **Mourning Warbler** found 8/30 (JM). Another **Mourning Warbler** was found 9/29 at SILV (JM). While on the subject of rarely found and seen warblers, 2 **Connecticut Warblers** were found 10/3 at two different locations by two different lucky birders. One was in the Cresco area (TG) and the other in LP (NF).

Sep and Oct both saw finds of very good birds and very high counts of certain species. A **Sanderling** put down on a drained retention pond at MPA 9/13 (BJ). High counts of **Chipping Sparrows** 10/10 and **Pine Siskins** 10/13, of 211 and 316, respectively, were notched at SKY (RK). A much-sought after **Sora** also appeared at SKY 10/13 (RK), and another was tallied at MA 10/22 (TG). A first-county record for **Lapland Longspur** was located at LL 9/25 (JS), a species long hoped for by many birders but never found until now, and very early and unexpected on top of it all. It was ultimately seen, photographed and enjoyed for three consecutive days (m.ob.). Shorebirds finally put in an expected visit at the same location around the same time, in total nine species were seen. Noteworthy were one **Stilt Sandpiper**, 3 **Solitary Sandpipers**, 5 **Pectoral Sandpipers**, and 7 **Wilson's Snipe**. Rarer still, three **American**

**Golden-Plovers** were found by the MPA runway with the Killdeer (BJ), and a high of 4 were there the next day (JM, SK). A visiting out-of-county birder was able to find the only **Vesper Sparrow** of the period at MPA 10/4 (JY), and the only **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen on BRGR 10/4 (JW) as well. Rounding out the month of Sep was a late **Northern Waterthrush** photographed at CV 10/1 (NT).

**Evening Grosbeaks, Red Crossbills, Purple Finches, Common Redpolls**, and the already aforementioned **Pine Siskins** and **Red-breasted Nuthatches** started to make their grand appearance in numbers not seen for many years. Almost all local birders were able to get a glimpse at some or most of these species, some in very high numbers, the lone exception being the elusive and nomadic crossbills. Late Oct **Red Crossbills** included 5 at SKY (RK) and 2 at Cresco (BJ), both 10/28, and 2 were at BV 11/7 (JM). High count for crossbills was 41 on 11/9 (RK). **Common Redpolls** were on the move in the white birches— 47 at SKY 11/23 (RK), 150 at MPA 11/26 (BJ), and 52 at TOBY 11/29 (JM).

A pair of birders who make yearly visits had another great day on the Blue Mountain at Wolf Rocks 11/2 (JE, SL). Sightings, in summary but not inclusive, included a **Rough-legged Hawk**, 12 **Common Loons**, 17 **Golden Eagles**, 24 **Bald Eagles**, 2 **Northern Goshawks**, 171 **Red-tailed Hawks**, and 5 **Merlins**. A late **Osprey** was observed at BRGR 11/25 (JW). A **Carolina Chickadee** was at a feeder in Kresgeville 11/21, not the first time found at this location (LWC). A **Marsh Wren** was an excellent find at Weir Lake 11/16 (PN), and the only **Rusty Blackbird** noted for the period was at CV (SA). Six **Tundra Swans** were seen at Saylor's Lake 11/23 (BJ), and the 2 **Trumpeter Swans** continued in the Pocono Summit area (TU, BJ, m.ob.). Two **Black Scoters** were found on Pocono Summit Lake 11/27 (TU), and were subsequently seen by many. Late warblers include a **Nashville Warbler** at Kresgeville 11/14 (NF), a **Black and White Warbler** at SILV 11/12 (PN), and a **Wilson's Warbler** at SILV 11/24 (JM).

In all fairness to local birders, and for the historical importance that may be associated with the data, a summary of notable Evening Grosbeak sightings in *Monroe* that started in the month of Oct follows:

Date	Count	Location	Observer
10/18	6	SKY	RK
10/26	1	SILV	JM
10/30	6	Kresgeville	SKu
10/31	3	Eburg	NT
10/31	1	SILV	PN
11/4	12	Canadensis	JO
11/8	7	Kresgeville	NF
11/13	1	Blakeslee	KA
11/21	24	Kunkletown	PN
11/27	3	SILV	JM
11/29	9	Weir Lake	PN

Observers: **Bruce Johnson**, [brucejohnson207@yahoo.com](mailto:brucejohnson207@yahoo.com), Kate Abell, Scott Angus, L. Wm Clark, Jeff Ellerbusch, Nate Fronk, Tim Grover, Christine Himler, Stephen Kloiber, Suzanne Kuzminski (SKu), Rick Koval, Simon Lane, Jon Mularczyk, Paul Nale, Jan Olsommer, Mike Schall, June Smith, Nancy Tully, Todd Underwood, Jeff Wilkins, Rick Wiltraut, Joe Yuhas.

### 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), Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust (PERT), Shortridge Memorial Park (SMP), Valley Forge National Historical Park (VFNHP), Wissahickon Waterfowl Preserve (WWP).

Despite lackluster shorebird habitat at GLP and elsewhere (wrecked, in part, by Tropical Storm Isaias in early Aug), strong birder

effort (some of which was COVID-19 pandemic-fueled), a winter finch irruption, and general good avian-luck resulted in 233 bird species being found within *Montgomery*, a remarkably high total. By way of comparison, just 202 species were spotted during fall 2019, 31 fewer than in 2020. These 233 included three PORC review list species: Bicknell's Thrush, Summer Tanager and, pending PORC decision, a potential new bird for *Montgomery* in Sabine's Gull.

A **Ross's Goose** was present at GLP 10/15-17 (PH, m.ob., ph.), representing a new county early date by nine days. A **Greater White-fronted Goose** was at GLP 11/5-15 (LH, m.ob., ph.), and **Cackling Geese** were fairly regular at GLP 10/25 onward, in counts ranging as high as 4 (m.ob., ph.). The other notable goose for the period was a **Snow x Canada Goose** at GLP 10/6-7 (PH, LH, ph.). A **Blue-winged Teal** was spotted at GLP on the fairly late date of 11/11 (m.ob.). **Gadwall** numbers at GLP were consistently robust, even in the earlier part of peak-Gadwall season. Higher counts included 114 on 11/11 (JH), 105 on 11/22 (PH) and 79 on 10/27 (PH), with the latter report 10 ducks greater than our previous Oct high count record. Earlier dabbling arrivals, all at GLP, included an **American Wigeon** 9/23 (PH, ph.), **American Black Duck** 8/14 (PH, ph.) and a **Northern Pintail** 9/5 (PW, JoW, SBa). Two male **Canvasbacks** dropped by GLP 10/29 (PH, ph.). A pair of **Surf Scoters** on the quarry pond at Springfield Twp.'s Sandy Run Park 11/12 (BMu, m.ob., vt.) was unexpected, and Montco's first instance of this duck appearing anywhere other than GLP. Singles of the other scoter species were noted at the more traditional location of GLP: a **White-winged Scoter** 10/27 (KR, m.ob., ph.) and a **Black Scoter** 10/25 (GF, m.ob., ph.). Two male **Long-tailed Ducks** were at GLP 11/12 (PH), replaced by a female the following day (KR, ML, ph.). A female-type **Common Goldeneye** turned up at WWP 11/2, where it remained until well beyond the end of the period (JM, m.ob., ph.). Although they've now bred locally for a few years now, there were few reports of **Hooded Merganser** in early fall, but a pair were observed in Franconia Twp. 8/21 (SG, ph.).

With the Surf Scoters at Sandy Run Park 11/12 was the only **Horned Grebe** of the period (m.ob.). A **Red-necked Grebe** at GLP 10/29 (ML, m.ob., ph.) represented the county's first Oct record since 1983.

A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was noted at ESP 10/25 (PK), a couple weeks later than usual. Despite a handful of western hummingbirds popping up elsewhere in the region, there were no confirmed *Montgomery* reports in fall 2020. We did have a couple of unidentified hummingbirds squabbling over a feeder in Jenkintown on the fairly late date of 10/13 (SH), however.

Multiple **Sora** were present and frequently observed at DMP from 8/27 to the record late date of 11/4 (PD, KR, m.ob., ph.). Single Sora were also sighted at WWP 9/13-18 (JM, m.ob.), PERT 9/1 (PD) and PERT again 9/30 (MG, AnM). A **Sandhill Crane** was reported flying over FWSP 10/24 (SGr, m.ob.), and a pair of cranes soared from *Montgomery* airspace into *Delaware* at HC 10/31 (SJ).

Higher water levels at GLP meant the shorebird bonanza of some autumns was not repeated in 2020, and quantities of the common species were far below what they are in a "good mud" year. Persistence and luck still netted us 18 species, comparable to recent years with more optimal shorebird conditions, like 2015 (21) and 2016 (18). An **American Avocet**, the second of 2020, was at GLP 8/28 (PH, m.ob., ph.). A **Black-bellied Plover** was heard flying past GLP 8/14 (PH). **Semipalmated Plovers** were at WWP 8/1 (JM, m.ob., ph.) and GLP 9/14-8 (KR, m.ob., ph.). An **Upland Sandpiper** was heard at DMP 8/30 (PD), the same location of the county's last reported sighting of the declining species, five years earlier. Single **Stilt Sandpipers** were seen at GLP 8/26 (LH, ph.), 9/6-7 (MC, m.ob., ph.) and GLP 10/12 (PH, ph.). **Dunlin** were present at GLP 10/25-28 (m.ob.), including an impressive 19 on 10/26 (KR, ph.). This quantity Dunlin has not been spotted on the ground in Montco since 2007. Meanwhile, GLP **Least Sandpiper** numbers didn't even crack 10 this season! Slightly larger amounts of Least were observed at WWP (m.ob.). A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, *Montgomery's* first since 2015, was an excellent find on a plowed field across the street from DMP 10/10-11 (KJ, m.ob., ph.), and wound up being one of the county's most-chased birds for the period. Early **Wilson's Snipe** were seen at DMP 9/2 (BD, ED, ph.) and WWP 9/5 (CD, m.ob., ph.). A **Red-necked Phalarope** was at GLP 9/12 (LH, ph.). Several late-staying **Spotted Sandpipers** were

observed. One was at GLP 10/27-30 (BHo, m.ob., ph.). Another, on Unami Creek 11/6 (KR, ph.), tied the record late date. That record was then smashed a few days later by a third Spotted Sandpiper, the latest of the late, at GLP 11/12 (PH, KC). Also late, but not as notably, was a **Solitary Sandpiper** at WWP 10/27 (JM).

An immature **Sabine's Gull** was reported as a flyby at GLP 10/10 (PH, doc. submitted). It did not linger, regrettably. Pending PORC acceptance, this species would represent a new addition to the *Montgomery* county list. **Bonaparte's Gulls** were seen sporadically at GLP 10/29-11/23, including an impressive 87 on a rainy morning 11/12 (PH, m.ob., ph.). An immature **Laughing Gull** was photographed at Limerick Generating Station 8/2 (SD, ph.). An early **Lesser Black-backed Gull** appeared at GLP 9/8 and loitered through Oct (PW, RW, m.ob., ph.). Fifteen **Caspian Terns** were at GLP 8/18 (PH, ph.), the highest count of a steady flow of GLP reports through 9/12 (m.ob.). A pair of **Common Terns** were noted at GLP 8/7 (PH), and **Forster's Terns** on 9/27 (LH, JG, ph.) and 10/2 (KR, ph.).

An **American Bittern** was recorded flying over Franconia Twp. 10/5 (SG, vr.). Another bittern became a mini-celebrity at DMP, attracting copious viewers 10/14-27 (m.ob., ph.). A report of 16 **Great Egrets** at GLP 8/18 (JP, ph.) was one of just six egret reports with quantities exceeding 2 this season, and the only above 5 (m.ob.). Single **Little Blue Herons**, all immature, were seen during short 1-3 day stays at GLP, WWP and DMP 8/1-13 (m.ob., ph.). Representing a first for the park, 7 **Cattle Egrets** were found at PERT 8/12 (KR, m.ob., ph.). A late **Green Heron** turned up at VFNHP 10/17 (AB). A juvenile **Black-crowned Night-Heron**, first found at WWP 7/27, remained there through 8/6 (m.ob.). Roughly a month later, another (or maybe the same) heron was again seen at WWP 9/7-16 (PDe, m.ob., ph.). A flyover Black-crowned Night-Heron was taped over Franconia Twp. 9/21 (SG, vr.) and an adult was seen in flight over LP 10/9 (MK). Disappointingly, there were no observations of Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Norristown Dam or elsewhere, the first autumn since 2015 that this has happened. A flyover **Glossy Ibis** was reported at DMP 8/14 (SGr).

A wing-tagged **Black Vulture** was spotted in a large committee of 79 in Franconia Twp. 8/28 (AM). Though the numbers had been worn off by weather and age, the tag's color and placement indicated that the bird had been tagged in West Virginia. Militia Hill Hawk Watch at FWSP counted raptors for fifteen days longer than usual this season, continuing their efforts into Nov for the first time since 1997. High counts noted from FWSP include 280 **Turkey Vultures** 10/31 (SJ), 24 **Osprey** 9/12 (SJ, SGr), 5 **Northern Harriers** 10/25 (JHe), 63 **Sharp-shinned Hawks** 9/20 (SGr, AF), 19 **Cooper's Hawks** 10/3 (RC, AF), 17 **Bald Eagles** 9/19 (AF, SGr), 34 **Red-shouldered Hawks** 10/27 (PBu), 40 **Red-tailed Hawks** 10/31 (SJ) and 4871 **Broad-winged Hawks** 9/19 (AF, SGr). The 9/19 Broad-wing bonanza was, regrettably, the only day to feature a quadruple digit count at Militia Hill. In fact, it was one of just 5 days with Broad-winged Hawk numbers over 100 (m.ob.). A **Golden Eagle** flew over FWSP 11/2 (MM, RC, m.ob.).

As many as 3 **Short-eared Owls** were viewed by plenty at DMP 10/31-11/14 (SB, m.ob.). A solo Short-eared Owl was also located at PERT 11/21 (MG). **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were noted in ones and twos at PERT and adjacent LP 10/25-11/15 (PD, vr.), and at FWSP 11/20-22 (PD, vr.). The **Red-headed Woodpecker** first seen in Kulpville 6/26 continued there until 9/5 (JR, BeR, ph.). Other Red-headed Woodpeckers appeared in Wayne 9/18 (CDa), Horsham Twp. 9/27 (JD, ph.) and Spring Mount 11/14-29 (BHo, ph.). High falcon counts from the hawk watch at FWSP this period included 25 **American Kestrels** 9/12 (SJ, SGr), 8 **Merlins** 10/11 (JHe, SGr) and 5 **Peregrine Falcons** 10/7 (JS, PBu).

At least 3 different **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were observed at PERT 8/28-9/8 (m.ob., ph.), and another was viewed at Temple University Arboretum 9/1 (AA). **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were reported from PERT 9/18 (AnM) and SMP Park 9/27 (JW, DM, RB, ph.). A fairly late **Acadian Flycatcher** was recorded at ESP 9/15 (BM, vr.), and fellow Empidonax **Alder Flycatcher** was recorded at GLP 9/2 (PH, vr.). **Least Flycatcher** put in a good showing, with a minimum of 15 noted 8/15-10/2 (m.ob.). After a banner spring migration for Least Flycatcher, this mostly stands to reason. Later **Eastern Phoebe**s included individuals

at Bethayres Swamp 11/15 (JC) and WWP 11/25 (CB, MK), and a delinquent **Eastern Kingbird** was noted at Norristown Farm Park 9/19 (CH). A **Great Crested Flycatcher** at PERT 10/3 (PD) was even more notable in its lateness.

A **White-eyed Vireo** at PERT 10/13 (MG) was a couple of weeks late as well. There were at least 14 reports of **Philadelphia Vireos** 9/11-10/3 (m.ob.). **Blue Jay** migration this period was heavy, particularly so on 10/5, when a county-record-setting 1176 flew over Pennsburg in the span of only 101 minutes (PH). Forty-three **Fish Crows** were at HC 9/30 (SJ). **Common Ravens** were everywhere (m.ob.). Another species irrupting this fall, after a few years of relative drought, were **Black-capped Chickadees**, noted at 20-plus sites starting 10/15 (m.ob.).

**Northern Rough-winged Swallows** have stayed late at a couple of Schuylkill River water treatment plant sites for the past few years. They were present at a WTP near King of Prussia's Heuser Park in low double-digits through the end of the period (m.ob.). Ten more were noted at a plant in Oaks 11/19 (SGr). A total of 430 **Tree Swallows** graced GLP 10/10 (PH), not an insane count, but more than is typical for the date. A pair of several-week-late **Barn Swallows** were seen at GLP 10/12-13 (PH, m.ob., ph.). **Cliff Swallows** were occasionally present in low single digits at GLP 8/1-28 (PH), over Pennsburg 8/27 (PH) and at WWP 8/17-22 (CB, m.ob., ph.). A Cliff Swallow at GLP 9/22 (PH) provided a new record late date for the county record books.

Heavy irruptive flow of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** pushed into the area in late Aug. The first was found at ESP 8/21 (KCa, WS, ph.). Many more followed (m.ob.). A particularly late **House Wren** was at High School Park in Elkins Park 11/10 (PD), and a notably early **Winter Wren** was well-described at Schwenksville 9/15 (MC). A **Sedge Wren** was recorded calling at PERT 9/20 (PD, vr.). **Marsh Wrens** were observed at eight locations 9/2-11/7 (m.ob.).

Late **Gray Catbirds** included birds at SMP 11/20 (JW, ph.), Huntingdon Valley 11/23 (CA, ph.) and Natural Lands' Stoneleigh Garden in Villanova 11/28 (MaG), and late **Brown Thrashers** were detected in Schwenksville 11/20 (TG, ph.) and Bethayres Swamp 11/30 (MG). A several-week-late **Veery** was at PERT 10/18 (PD, vr.), and a similarly late **Swainson's Thrush** at HC 10/28 (SJ, KJ, ph.). A **Bicknell's Thrush** was recorded in flight over Elkins Park on the night of 10/3 (PD, vr., doc. submitted via eBird). Flocks of 200 and 175 **Cedar Waxwings** were counted over Pennsburg 10/5 and 10/31, respectively (both PH), and 60 **American Pipits** were at GLP 11/5 (PH).

All of the traditional "winter finches" were on the move this season, with volumes varying by species. **Evening Grosbeak** saw a huge push into the area, with many reports 10/25-11/14 (m.ob.) and none thereafter. While most of the confirmed sightings were of low quantities only, 10 flyover Evening Grosbeaks were noted from PERT 10/25 (PD, vr.) and another 9 visited Franconia Twp. feeders 10/31 (SG, ph.). **Purple Finch** irruption was even more substantial, featuring tons of reports 8/31 through the end of the period, though numbers and frequency of observations dropped off significantly in the latter half of Nov (m.ob.). During the span of 10/6-31, there were 8 reports of 25+ Purple Finches (PH, PD), including 157 at Pennsburg on a particularly massive finch migration day 10/14. During that same count period, 82 **Pine Siskins** and 50 additional unidentified finches were noted (PH). This brings us to siskins, the other high volume irruptive finch this season, with scores of sightings 9/22 through the end of the period (m.ob.). Bigger groups noted included 150 at PERT 10/25 (PD) and 110 at DMP 10/15 (AM). Other winter finches were far less common, but did include flyover, heard-only **White-winged Crossbill** 11/18 and similarly observed **Common Redpoll** 11/19 and 11/23, all from SG's Franconia Twp. yard. (One benefit to an out-of-control viral pandemic is being able to really focus on yard-birding.) **Red Crossbill** was on the move as well, but there were no confirmed reports in *Montgomery*.

Migrant **Grasshopper Sparrows** were found at PERT 9/7 (PD, vt.), PERT again 9/26 (MG) and DMP 10/19 (BD, ED, BR, ph.). One was also recorded as a nocturnal flyover at Franconia Twp. 10/1 (SG, vr.). **Chipping Sparrows** did their usual lingering, and were spotted, in single digits, at least a half dozen locations in late Nov (m.ob.). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was at PERT 9/19-24 (PD). Another, heavily-chased Clay-color was present at DMP 10/8-15 (JF, m.ob., ph.). A **Dark-eyed Junco** was



spied at PERT 9/19 (PD), a couple weeks earlier than typical. Single **Vesper Sparrows** were reported at DMP on several days 10/9-25 (SG, m.ob., ph.). Vespers were seen in ones and twos at PERT 10/18-11/14 (PD, m.ob., ph.) as well. A **Nelson's Sparrow** was found at DMP 10/10-11 (SN, KB, ph.). Another, presumed different Nelson's Sparrow was located at DMP 10/28 (AG, m.ob.). **Lincoln's Sparrows** were well-represented in this fall's reports, and included counts of 7 at PERT 9/26 and 10/3 (PD). A fairly late Lincoln's was photographed at DMP 11/7 (JL, ph.).

The sole **Yellow-breasted Chat** discovered this period was at GLP 9/13 (JT). Among several reports of semi-late **Bobolinks** (m.ob.), the latest seen was at DMP 10/21 (KCa, WS, ph.). Late **Baltimore Orioles** were documented at LP 11/4 (LW, ph.) and FWSP 11/5-8 (BM, m.ob., ph.). Another oriole, almost certainly a Baltimore but not seen well enough to rule out vagrant Bullock's, made a brief appearance in a Salford Twp. yard 11/6 (WBH). What was probably the same hefty **Common Grackle** flock of 2350-2500 birds was seen in Salford Twp. 8/31 (WBH) and a mile away in Franconia Twp. 9/1 (SG). There are few historical reports in eBird of grackle flocks this large in *Montgomery* in Aug or Sep.

In all, 32 warbler species were detected this period: all of the expected ones plus a few specials. *Five* new date late date records were set this period as well. In both the special and late categories was an extraordinarily late **Golden-winged Warbler** noted at PERT 9/26 (MG). The date of this sighting is more than two weeks beyond our previous county record late date. A **Tennessee Warbler** dallied at Lansdale's Stony Creek Park until 11/14 (CB, ph.). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was seen by several birders at DMP 10/9-10 (m.ob.). At least 5 **Connecticut Warblers** were detected around Montco 9/15-10/14 (m.ob., ph.). An equal number of **Mourning Warblers** were also sighted (m.ob.), including, based on differing descriptions, two different individuals at PERT 10/2-4 (MG, m.ob.). This represents another warbler county record late date. A handful of late **Common Yellowthroats** were seen through mid-Nov (m.ob.). Six or more **Hooded Warblers** were reported 8/14-9/17 (m.ob.). Among several late **American Redstarts** observed (m.ob.), the latest was a bird at VFNHP 10/17 (AB). A very late **Cape May Warbler** was at GLP 11/23-27 (DM, m.ob., ph.), representing another county record and also a first confirmed Nov sighting. A **Cerulean Warbler** was well-described at HC 8/23 (SJ), making it *Montgomery's* latest ever. The previous record late was 8/12/1971 (GF), way back before Ceruleans had, sadly, been extirpated as a breeder here. A **Northern Parula** at GLP 10/30 (WBH, ph.) was awfully late as well, but not late enough to oust the previous late date of 11/8/2016 from its position. This parula took second place instead. On top of a handful of late Sep reports, two **Yellow Warblers** lingered well past their typical mid-Sep departure date: one was seen at GLP 10/7 (JH, ph.) and another at DMP 10/11 (m.ob., ph.). A **Palm Warbler** was still at DMP 11/27 (JC, RoC, ph.). Latter-half Nov **Pine Warblers** included birds at VFNHP 11/19 (MR), Plymouth Meeting 11/24 (PB) and PERT 11/28 (JC, ph.). McCarthy Park in Whitmarsh Twp. hosted a record-late **Prairie Warbler** 10/14 (AB, ph.). In a final example of warbler lateness, a **Wilson's Warbler** was reported at SMP 11/3 (GS). This represents the first Nov Wilson's to be found in the county.

A park-first **Summer Tanager** was photographed at GLP 9/12 (JH, ph., doc. submitted via eBird). An early **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was seen in Penn Valley 8/1-3 (DH), while an exceptionally late individual, a male, was documented at the hawk watch feeders at FWSP 11/29 (LB, ph.). This observation comfortably vaulted past the old county record, 10/23/2011 (SJ), besting that already late date by more than a month. **Blue Grosbeak** family groups continued from summer at VFNHP and DMP (m.ob.), with the latter group sticking around through 9/30 (m.ob., ph.). A single Blue Grosbeak was also detected at PERT 9/7 (PD). **Dickcissel** flyovers were heard at Pennsburg 8/31 (PH) and Franconia Twp. 10/5 and 10/14 (both SG, vr.). A minimum of 4 Dickcissels were seen during three discontinuous spans at PERT 9/7-10/25 (PD, LW, LG, ph.).

*ADDENDUM:* A bird photographed 5/22 at a residence just outside of GLP was initially submitted to eBird as a Scarlet Tanager, not a rare species for the date. These photos were eventually flagged by data

reviewers and re-identified as a female-type **Painted Bunting** (LC, ph., doc. submitted via eBird). This sighting represents the first Painted Bunting confirmed in *Montgomery* since 1983, and also one of only a handful of May records for the state.

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### Montour County

Locations: Montour Preserve (MP), Fry Wetlands (FW).

Waterfowl counts of note include 5 **Black Scoters** at the MP 10/26 (AK) and 15 **Blue-winged Teal** at the same location 9/30 (AK). The 38 **Dunlins** tallied at the FW 10/26 (AK) was a notably high count for the area, and the one or 2 **Solitary Sandpipers** at the same location 10/24-29 (AK, EH) was getting late for this species.

Also getting late was a **Philadelphia Vireo** in a yard in the northern part of the county 10/9 (LS). The statewide finch invasion brought the season's highlight for this tiny county: a report of **Evening Grosbeaks** at a feeder in Danville 11/1 (JB). **Pine Siskins** were numerous late this season, but this unfortunately Common Redpoll and White-winged Crossbill were both unreported.

Observers: **Evan Houston, evanhouston@gmail.com**, Jesse Babonis, Andy Keister, Lauri Shaffer.

### Northampton County

Locations: Little Gap Hawk Watch (LGHW), Minsi Lake (ML).

Based on local reports, the **Snow Geese** were running late in their arrival as compared to recent years when high numbers of **Snow Geese** appear before Dec. This made a **Ross's Goose** found at Gremar Rd. ponds 11/22 (BW) an excellent find. A **Rufous Hummingbird** was observed at a feeder in Bethlehem 10/30 (JH, MSa). **Virginia Rail** was reported from East Bangor Dam 11/13 (SA) and at ML 8/17 (JM) and 10/18-19 (JM, MSa). On 11/14, a **Black-bellied Plover** was heard flying over at the LGHW (MSa, et al). There was a **Stilt Sandpiper** at Green Pond 10/6-7 (BE). A single flock of 150 **Dunlin** flew past the LGHW 10/25 (MS, AM, JM). Two **Dunlin** flew over ML 10/26 (JH, MSa). An impressive group of 7 **Red-throated Loons** was at East Bangor Dam 11/13 (SA). Strong winds on 11/18 provided ideal conditions for migrating loons at LGHW as 100 **Common Loons** flew past the lookout (MS, AM).

The county did not have the same showing of egrets like it did in 2019 when 41 **Great Egrets** were seen at Green Pond. The high for **Great Egret** this year was 3. The only notable heron was a young **Little Blue Heron** on the Delaware River by the Met. Ed. Plant 8/3 (SL). Away from the ridge a **Golden Eagle** was seen over Moore Twp. 10/25 (BE).

On the ridge at LGHW, a site record 22 **Golden Eagles** were counted 11/2. A **Rough-legged Hawk** was seen at Green Pond 10/26 (JH, MSa). Birder excitement was short-lived after a **Snowy Owl** was photographed in Bethlehem 11/9 (DL), because unfortunately it was found dead the next day. **Red-headed Woodpecker** reports were plenty and that included a continuing bird on Best Rd. in Moore Twp. 8/1 (TW). They were also observed 9/19 at LGHW (MS, AM), 9/26 in Bath (MS) and on 10/15 at ML (AM). On 9/6, there was a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** found in Northampton (MC) and at LGHW (MS, AM, JM). A late **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was seen at Housenick Memorial Park 10/11 (JM, SS).

Many of the winter finch species were observed this fall and the ridge proved to be a good vantage point for finding them. Decent movements of migrating birds were noted at LGHW, especially in the early morning. Early on there were good numbers of **Purple Finch** and **Pine Siskin** reported around the county. **Evening Grosbeak** was first reported 10/25 with sightings at Moore Twp. (AM) and at LGHW (MS, AM). The **Evening Grosbeak** high count was 14 at LGHW on 11/7 (AM). **Common Redpoll** was first reported at LGHW 11/9 (JH). **Red Crossbill** was observed on multiple occasions on the ridge with a high of 27 on 10/31 at LGHW (AM, JM, ZM). There were only a few **White-winged Crossbill** reports with birds at Ballas Park 11/7 (MSa) and at LGHW 11/10 (MS) and 11/24 (AM).

Good habitat at Minsi Lake where water levels remained low attracted a **Nelson's Sparrow** 10/15 (MSa). A **Connecticut Warbler** was found near the lookout at LGHW 9/5-6 (AM, MS). A **Mourning Warbler** was found at Polk Valley Park 9/30 (JY). A young male **Summer Tanager** was seen at LGHW 9/5 (AM, MS). Finally, a **Dickcissel** was found in a small patch of thick grass and brush at Hentzelman Park 10/11 (TM).

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### **Northumberland County**

Locations: Adam T. Bower Dam (ATBD), Amish Pond (AP), Elysburg (EBG), Natalie Trails (NT), Paradise Road (PR), Warrior Run Wetlands (WRW), Weiser State Forest (WSF).

Fall was a dry season across the region with normal to above average temperatures. Migrants were abundant and we saw the first push of winter finches.

**Black Scoter** is a rare visitor here, reported less than annually along certain areas along the Susquehanna River. This season, one bird was at the ATBD 11/13 (KP). Dry conditions put a damper on shorebird reports. This season's only notable report was 5 **Dunlin** at the AP 10/29 (EH). **Black-crowned Night Herons** have become regular in the fall and can be observed just below the ATBD prior to sunrise or after sunset. This season's observations included up to 3 at the ATBD from 8/4-15 (AK, KP). **Short-eared Owl** can be common in northern parts of *Northumberland* in some years. This season's first report was a single bird along PR 11/7 (DS).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** has become regular at WSF but this year's only report was a single individual 8/30 (KP). *Northumberland* got into the winter finch action in Nov when 9 **Evening Grosbeaks** were reported from a feeder in EBG 11/5 (KP). The first **Common Redpoll** moved into the county in Nov when 7 were observed along the NT 11/14 (AK). These birds were feeding on gray birch catkins in an old strip mine area. A total of 2 **Snow Buntings** were observed at the ATBD 11/5 (KP). Fall warbler reports were numerous but the most notable sighting was a **Connecticut Warbler** at WRW 10/8 (EH).

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### **Philadelphia County**

Locations: Awbury Arboretum (AA), Andorra Meadow (AM), Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), Bartram's Garden (BG), Benjamin Rush State Park (BRSP), Carpenter's Woods (CW), Center City (CC), Cobbs Creek Park (CCP), Delaware River (DR), Delaware River Trail - Reed Street (DRTR), Discovery Center - East Park Reservoir (DCEPR), Fort Mifflin (FM), Frankford Arsenal Boat Launch (FABL), Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park (FDR), Glen Foerd (GF), Haddington Woods (HW), Houston Meadow (HM), Island Green Country Club and Golf Course-abandoned (IGCC), John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge (JHNWR), Lardner's Point Park (LPP), Navy Yard (NY), Northeast Water Treatment Plant (NEWTP), Northeast Philadelphia Airport (NEPA), Pennypack Park (PP), Pennypack on the Delaware (POD), Pleasant Hill Park (PHP), Poquessing Creek Park (PCP), Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education (SCEE), Somerton Woods (SW), Southwest Water Treatment Plant (SWWTP), Tacony Creek Park (TCP), Upper Roxborough Reservoir (URR), West Fairmount Park (WFP).

Two first species for *Philadelphia* were discovered by newbie birders. A male **Vermilion Flycatcher** was at JHNWR 10/9 (DK) and is likely only the second bird for the Commonwealth after one in *Tioga* in 1991. The observer found it a week after signing up for an eBird account. Eleven days later, a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was discovered at FDR 10/20 (JSm). Both birds were unfortunately not refound.

A strong cold front moving through the area the night before made for good migration conditions including for up to 30 **Brant** as seen from various points along the DR 10/25 (m.ob.). Two **Cackling Geese** were at FDR 11/21 (BD, ED). A drake **Eurasian Wigeon** was the last of 77 species at the annual Big Sit at JHNWR 10/11 (DB, LT). Scoters are generally scarce and then mostly found along the DR. A drake **Surf Scoter** was, therefore, a nice surprise at DCEPR 11/12 (RI, et al.). **Black Scoters** were more abundant than usual with a pair spending their late summer on the DR across from FM 8/2-19 (m.ob.), seven seen from ACE on 10/25 (m.ob.) and one flying downriver at NY 11/15 (LH). Two female **Long-tailed Ducks** were at JHNWR 11/18-29 (RZ et al.). Up to 20 **Pied-billed Grebes** at JHNWR were out of the ordinary and a new high count for *Philadelphia*. A lone **Red-necked Grebe** was found at FABL 10/31 (PM).

**Chimney Swift** counts continued this year with highs of 2885 birds at Henry H. Houston School 9/14 (JSt) and 4900 at a recently identified site in CC 10/8 (VS). **Virginia Rails** were absent from typical habitat at JHNWR, but dropped in at NEPA 8/9-12 (LH et al.), POD 9/13 (GM) and outside a falafel shop in CC 10/18 (EdW, EIW). Outside JHNWR, a **Sora** was flushed at POD 9/15 (DM). An adult **Common Gallinule** returned for the winter to JHNWR 10/19-11/29 (m.ob.). On breeding grounds, the last bird was heard at FDR 10/2 (RK) and 3 immatures were at SWWTP 10/4 (HP). Now seemingly annual, a **Sandhill Crane** flew over the Mt. Airy neighborhood 11/18 (KB).

With Hurricane Isaias inundating the area 8/4, flooding JHNWR and damaging the already unreliable water control structure further, shorebirds had to be found elsewhere. The tidal flats at the confluence of Pennypack Creek and DR at POD were productive with 15 out of this season's 17 shorebird species present this season. This included two **Black-bellied Plovers** 8/2 (MD), one **American Golden Plover** 9/15 (GA, HP) and two 10/9 (GA), a **Stilt Sandpiper** and a **Sanderling** 9/15 (GA, HP) as well as up to 6 **Dunlin** 10/27-28 (GA, LH, RZ). The first **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** in about 25 years made a very brief appearance at JHNWR 10/9 (DO, GA) before heading to greener pastures at the airport. Two **Western Sandpipers** at ACE 8/22 were the first ones since 2016 (GA, HP, LH, PM).

An immature **Least Tern** was the only rare hurricane bird at POD 8/4 (GA, HM, LH, VS). The now annual **Caspian Tern** count at NY at dusk yielded 174 birds heading east to their unknown roost 8/29 (GA, LH, PM). One **Black Tern** was there 8/12 (RK). Another storm-related bird was a scarce **Common Tern** at NY 8/4 (BQ, MT). A **Royal Tern**, the first one since Hurricane Sandy in 2012, was at JHNWR 10/21 (RS) and another flew upriver along the DR seen from ACE 10/25 (m.ob.). Generally fairly rare in fall, a **Red-throated Loon** was reliably seen at

FABL 10/31-11/8 (HP, PM). The county's second **Brown Booby**, after one immature stopped at the international airport in 2018, was seen along the DR 8/21 (LH) and 8/22 (LH, PM). A great flight of 767 **Double-Crested Cormorants** was recorded at ACE 10/25 (m.ob.). New for CCP was an immature **Little Blue Heron** 9/10-12 (TC, et al.). A flyby **Cattle Egret** was an odd surprise at NY 10/21 (LH) and the 199th species for this eBird hotspot. Will it be another unusual flyby that rounds out 200 species, or one of the eight still outstanding warblers that are common (more or less) in the county? My money is on the former as port activities and other development continue to diminish valuable habitat, which now is mostly inaccessible to the general public anyway.

Fledgling **Black Vultures** in the Mt. Airy neighborhood 8/12 and at NY on 9/29 (HP) were evidence of the first broods in the city. Hawkwatch attempts in *Philadelphia's* Northwest mainly from people's backyards resulted in some great raptor numbers: 145 **Turkey Vultures** 10/27 (LH), one **Golden Eagle** 11/3 (LH et al.) and at HM 11/2 (JS, MD), 8 **Red-shouldered Hawks** 11/18 (LH), 268 **Broad-winged Hawks** at SCEE 9/19 (GA, LH) and 52 **Red-tailed Hawks** 11/3 (KB). The first **Short-eared Owl** in six years was discovered at JHNWR 11/13 (VS). Another short-eared was the apparent victim of a window strike, and was picked up at Temple University's campus around 11/20 and successfully released after a few days of rest at a wildlife rehabilitation center (SG). **Northern Saw-whet Owls** preferred CC (with its abundance of rodent prey) over any natural habitat, with 2 birds at Fidler Square 11/6 (CW) and another at a Cheesecake Factory 11/2-3 (AE et al.). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were more frequently seen at various locations in *Philadelphia's* Northwest 8/30-9/17 (m.ob.), one bird at WFP 9/25 (BB) and two individuals at FDR 9/10-24 (RK et al.). As in 2018 during another winter finch irruption, Pennsylvania's largest numbers of **Red-bellied Woodpeckers**—purported to be non-migratory—were purposefully moving southwest along the DR at POD with 61 on 10/1 (PK) and 93 on 10/3 (HP). A pair of **Monk Parakeets** likely originating from the New Jersey/New York population were at POD on 9/14 (HP).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was enjoyed by many at AA 8/30-9/6 (BR et al.). Additional individuals were seen at HM 8/31 (KJ), DCEPR 9/5 (CC, MB) and WFP 9/8 (MB). Great numbers of **Eastern Wood-Pewees** including a new high count for *Philadelphia* were at TCP 9/20 (11) and PCP 9/27 (12, HP). Unusual in early August was a **Yellow-throated Vireo** at PP 8/2 (HP). A shoutout goes to long-time birder extraordinaire George Armistead who finally saw his first **Philadelphia Vireo** in the city of the same name at AM 9/19 (with LH). More individuals were seen at DRT, GF, HM, SCEE, TCP, URR, and WFP with most of them donning their most vibrant lemon-yellow outfits. **Blue Jays** were again on the move in the second half of September with a maximum of 225 at LPP 9/20 (MD) and 402 at POD 9/23 (HP). A new high of **Fish Crows** was recorded in northeast *Philadelphia* when 127 birds were digging through trash at the *Philadelphia Mills* mall 9/6 (HP). After 2016, it appeared another good winter for **Black-capped Chickadees** was underway by season's end, although observations were still less frequent than four years ago. An enormous number of just under 1400 **Tree Swallows** likely coming from a roost (JHNWR?) made their way east through the fog at NY 10/26 (HP). Similar numbers, including the current county eBird record of 4050 birds, were observed there in October 2013/14 (GA). **Bank Swallow** burrows at ACE were destroyed by the end of August likely due to site maintenance, though suitable habitat remains for a new colony next year. A bird was late at JHNWR 10/9 (DO). A rare **Cliff Swallow** flew by NY 8/23 (GA, MD).

A harbinger of things to come was the wave of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** that seemed to wash over the entire city as early as the end of Aug. Numbers were dwindling by the end of October and only a handful of observations were made each week in Nov. A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was late at POD 11/8-10 (GA, MP), as was a **House Wren** at FDR 11/24 (HP). An extremely early **Hermit Thrush** was photographed at CW 8/28 (JG). The majority of this species generally start to pass through in early Oct. **American Pipits** were as usual frequently heard or seen migrating at spots along the DR with a new high count of 60 birds on the ball fields at POD 10/25 (PK).

As part of this year's winter finch bonanza, **Evening Grosbeaks** were seen at seven different locations 10/31-11/8 though mostly

migrating and not sticking around long enough to be enjoyed by more folks who have undoubtedly anxiously awaited their arrival. Ten birds at JHNWR on 10/31 was the maximum (JC). Even migration of **House Finches** was noticeable with an almost record-setting number of 179 flying over PHP 11/3 (HP). **Purple Finches** arrived in a similar force as in 2018 with a high count of 65 at HM 10/18 (GA, LH). The bulk of birds had moved through by mid-November. Single **Common Redpolls** were at BRSP 11/7 (GA, LH) and FABL 11/8 (PM). If one species was representative for this irruption it was the **Pine Siskin**, which seemed to be everywhere in Oct. Numbers not recorded before in the eBird database culminated in a new high of 460 migrating at BRSP 11/3 (GA). The spectacle was over by the second week of Nov. And although the frequency of **American Goldfinch** observations did not change compared to previous years, their abundance increased peaking in early November before sharply dropping off at the end of the month. New high counts of 180 and 190 birds were recorded at BRSP 11/3 and FDR 11/15, respectively (GA).

**Grasshopper Sparrows** were photographed on three occasions at POD 9/22-10/17 (JD, MG, MP, PM). New for FDR, a **Clay-colored Sparrow** was there 9/29 (AR) and 10/17 (RK). At POD the species was recorded monthly 9/15-11/8 (m.ob.). A **Lark Sparrow** at BRSP 11/3 was the third observation in three years, but only the second in 18 years at this site. An amazing 17 **White-crowned Sparrows** were counted at ACE 11/21, with at least 3 birds singing (m.ob.). Numbers were also high for **White-throated Sparrows** (155) and **Song Sparrows** (175). **Swamp Sparrows** were abundant (29) along the utility row at SW 10/17 (HP). **Vesper Sparrows** were reliably seen at POD as usual, but also at seven other locations including for the first time FDR, HM, LPP and WFP.

**Yellow-breasted Chats** were at POD 9/13-15 (GA et al.) and FDR 9/19-29 (AR, DD). A new high for recent years of 240 **Bobolinks** was recorded at ACE 9/12 (m.ob.). These numbers are no match for the tens of thousands the late John C. Miller noted for JHNWR in the 1950s, though. An astonishing five **Baltimore Orioles** were feeding at NEWTP 11/26 (PM).

An all-time high of 34 warbler species was recorded this fall. A **Golden-winged Warbler** was at PP 8/29 (PM), 2 were at TCP 9/20 (HP), and a **Brewster's Warbler** was photographed at PP 8/30 (HP). Late were a **Black-and-white Warbler** at JHNWR 11/25 (BD, ED) and NEWTP 11/26 (PM) and a **Magnolia Warbler** at SW 11/8 (HP). The overall warmer weather in Nov seemed to encourage multiple **Tennessee Warblers**, **Nashville Warblers** and **Black-throated Blue Warblers** to stick around. **Orange-crowned Warblers** were again seen at nine different locations and it is just as well that this species has been now removed from the eBird rare bird alert for the county. Up to two **Connecticut Warblers** were reliably seen at POD 9/13-10/4 (m.ob.), three one-day wonders were at FDR 9/15-10/15 (HP, JJ, RK) and observations were made at three other locations including Washington Square Park in CC 9/15 (JL). Three observations of **Mourning Warblers** were probably a new record for fall. A bird posed nicely for photos at CW 8/29 (JG et al.); other birds were at BG 8/26-31 (GA) and NEPA 9/20 (LH). A **Cerulean Warbler** at HW 9/7 represented only the third eBird record for *Philadelphia* in the fall (HP).

**Blue Grosbeaks** successfully raised offspring at IGCC and POD and possibly at Tacony Boat Launch. This was the last time at IGCC as all habitat was cleared from the entire site on 8/23 in preparation for a distribution center. Through early fall, the family at POD mingled with migrants for a new high count of eight birds on 8/30 (PM). **Dickcissels** were more frequently found than in previous years, reliably so at POD and ACE. Three November records were from BRSP (GA, LH), JHNWR (MD), and SCEE (AB).

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### **Pike County**

Locations: Delaware State Forest (DSF), Dingmans Ferry (DF), Lake Wallenpaupack (LW), Old Heller Farm (OHF), Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC).

There were numerous highlights during fall migration. Winter finches during the current irruption were plentiful. There were ample reports of waterfowl, a few shorebirds, a **Lapland Longspur**, **Horned Lark**, **Clay-colored Sparrow** and multiple uncommon warblers.

Expect to see Lake Wallenpaupack cited frequently in this report. It is the second-largest lake among those contained entirely within Pennsylvania. Not surprisingly, it attracts a high number of birds. **Northern Pintail** was reported on the Delaware R. at DF 10/17 (NF) and at LW 11/26-27 (MS, CCS, JM). Other waterfowl at LW included a drake **Canvasback** 11/30 (BW), 2 **White-winged Scoters** 10/16 (MS), a drake **Long-tailed Duck** 11/12 (BW) and 11/28 (CE) and **Common Goldeneye** 11/19-28. A high of 7 **Common Goldeneye** was at LW 11/28 (MS). There were one or two **Red-necked Grebes** at LW 11/5-28 (CF).

**Common Nighthawks** were common close to the Delaware River corridor with the first report 8/14 in DF (BW). High counts included 190 at the Flying Hawks Airfield south of Milford 8/15 (MS, CCS) and 228 over Milford 8/24 (MD). There were 3 **Virginia Rails** at Shohola WMA 8/15 (MS, CCS) and a **Sora** was found at Pecks Pond 9/20 (BW). A **Semipalmated Plover** was hanging out near the Wilsonville Point of LW 10/11-16 (MS). The lake's water level was low for several weeks in Sep/Oct. creating some shorebird habitat. Three late **Greater Yellowlegs** were at Wilsonville Point 10/29 (MS). A **Forster's Tern** was seen from Tafton Dike at LW 8/30 (BW). At the south end of LW at the Ironwood Point Recreation Area, a **Red-throated Loon** was photographed 11/15 (MS, CCS).

There were up to 3 **Great Egrets** at Shohola WMA 8/5-15 (PN). An adult **Golden Eagle** flew over Lily Pond, DSF 11/28 (MS). **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was vocally responsive during migration on Flat Ridge Rd, DSF 11/10-20 (MS, CCS) and Old Greentown Rd, DSF 11/23 (CF,RJ).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** did not seem difficult to find, with birds seen at PEEC 8/29 and 9/9 (MS), Sunny Hill Lake 8/28 (BW) and DF 8/24 (BW). **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was reported at the Bushkill Access 8/28 (BW), PEEC 8/29 (MS) and at DF, DSF 9/1 (BW). A **Horned Lark**, which is surprisingly rare in *Pike*, was photographed on Tafton Dike, LW 11/11 (MS). A migrant **Marsh Wren** was at the Dingmans Ferry mitigation ponds 10/6-11 (BW).

**Purple Finch** and **Pine Siskin** were reported often and in good numbers during the 2020 finch irruption. Of the other winter finches, only **Common Redpoll** was seen in good numbers. The first **Evening Grosbeak** report was of 12 at PEEC 10/31 (JF). **Common Redpoll** was the last finch to appear in *Pike* with 3 on Snow Hill Rd, DSF 11/11 (MS, CCS). A high of 55 **Common Redpolls** was at LW 11/22 (KJ). **Red Crossbill** was first reported in DF 10/23 (BW). A high of 26 **Red Crossbills** were at Snow Hill Rd, DSF 11/11 (MS, CCS). The only report of **White-winged Crossbill** was 11/11 at Snow Hill Rd, DSF (MS, CCS).

A **Lapland Longspur** was at Tafton Dike, LW 11/26-27 (CF), which may represent the first county record. **Snow Bunting** was first reported at LW 10/29 (MS). Another first county record was provided by a **Clay-colored Sparrow** seen near the garden at the OHF 10/11 (MS). **Vesper Sparrow** was reported from Silver Lake Rd, DF 10/23 (BW) and at the OHF 10/11-16 (MS). There were 30 species of warbler reported. **Orange-crowned Warbler** was found at Promised Land SP 10/19 (EP), OHF 10/11 (BW) and at the Dingmans Ferry mitigation ponds 10/6-16 (BW, MS). A late **Connecticut Warbler** was at the OHF 10/12 (BW) and **Mourning Warbler** was seen at DF 8/26 and the Eshbach Access area 8/29 (BW).

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### **Potter County**

Locations: Austin (AUST), Austin Dam Memorial Park (ADMP), Cherry Springs SP (CSSP), Coudersport (COUD), Cross Fork (CRFO), Denton Hill SP (DHSP), Dyer Road at Cross Fork (DRCF), Eleven Mile (ELMI), Galeton (GALE), Galeton Lake (GL), G Crippen Rd/Corcoran Rd (GCCR), Harrison Valley (HAVA), Joerg Road residence (JORG), Lyman Run SP (LRSP), Millport (MILL), Ole Bull State Park (OBSP), Oswayo (OSW), Roulette (ROUL), Shinglehouse (SH), Sinnemahoning SP (SISP), Susquehannock SF, Baker Run near Odin (SSF-Odin), Susquehannock SF (SSF), Sweden Valley (SV) and West Pike (WEPI).

Reports were taken from eBird for the fall season tallying 119 species for the county. Data for notable sightings reported below, were obtained from 25 locations, submitted by 24 observers and listed after checking the overview data page, bar charts and the species maps from eBird. Waterfowl highlights included: 3 **Snow Geese** at JORG 10/28 (SL), an unspecified number of **Wood Ducks** at SV 10/4 (CD) and **American Black Ducks** observed at GL: 2 on 10/10 (MSS), one 10/11 (SL) and one 11/2 (SL). Other waterfowl sightings included one **Ring-necked Duck** and one **Black Scoter** that were observed at LRSP 10/28 (MSS) and 2 **Hooded Mergansers** at GL 8/5 (MG). **Common Mergansers** were reported in low numbers, with four reports from GL: 2 on 8/23 (SM, RH), one 10/28 (MSS), one on 10/29, and 2 on 11/2 (SL). Notable was the only fall report in a period of twenty years of **Ruddy Duck**, a single at GL 11/2 (SL).

Four reports of **Ruffed Grouse** included one and 3 birds respectively at OBSP 11/2 and 11/15 (SL), and two reports from a nearby residence JORG: 2 birds each 10/25 and 11/12 (SL). **Wild Turkeys** were reported six times, with the two highest reports each of 20 birds at MILL 9/13 (KE) WEPI 10/4 (DKP), and another high count of 12 was made at CSSP 9/19 (AJ). A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was reported from SISP 8/20 and 8/21 (DB). Reports of **Black-billed Cuckoo** are usually low in number, with just 10 birds reported to eBird between 2010 and 2019 for June through July. This fall, one bird was reported from AUST 9/12 (ES) and one was at CSSP 8/10 and 8/11 (JG). Two reports of 2 **Chimney Swifts** came from LRSP 8/23 (SM, RH). The three historical reports found were 2 at GL 8/2/2017 (Holly Merker), one at SISP 8/17/2017, and 2 at Ulysses 8/4/2018 (Seth G). Historically, over 20 years, Chimney Swifts have been reported just five times. A single report of one **American Woodcock** came from CSSP 8/11 (JG). Since 2014, just four reports of woodcock have come from CCSP and two others were noted in the OBSP area and the SV area. At LYSP, a **Bonaparte's Gull** was present 10/28 (MSS), and **Green Heron** was also there 10/28 (SM, RH).

Three reports of **Osprey** included 3 at OSW 8/30 (KE), one at CSSP 9/19 (AJ), and one at OBSP 8/13 (MT). **Northern Harriers** included one at ROUL 8/12 and one near GA 10/13 (SL). **Bald Eagle** was well represented, reported eight times: one at OSW 8/30 (KE), one at SH 9/28 (KE), 2 at AU 9/12 (ES), 3 at CSSP 9/19 (AJ), 2 at WEPI 10/4 (DKP), 2 at ELMI 10/11 (MB), one at HAVA 10/21 (FB), and one at OBSP 10/22 (SL). A single report of a **Red-shouldered Hawk** was made at CSSP 10/28 (MSS). **Red-tailed Hawks** were widely reported as expected. A single **Rough-legged Hawk** was at GA 11/21 (KG).

One **Eastern Screech-Owl** was reported from JORG 10/22 (SL). Two reports of **Great Horned Owl** were made at JORG: one 10/14 and 2 on 11/17 (SL). **Barred Owl** thrice reported: 2 at CO 8/27 (RB), 2 at JORG 10/17, and one at JORG 10/22 (SL). A single report of an **American Kestrel** was from CSSP 9/5 (BG). American Kestrel has been reported just 13 times between 2003 and 2019. Notably, reports of Merlin from the Shinglehouse or Coudersport areas were missing this fall.

**Philadelphia Vireo** has rarely been reported over the past twenty years, with seven sightings from 2014-2017 and the most recent being one at CSSP 9/19 (AJ). The only report of **Bank Swallows** going back

20 years on eBird was from this fall: 72 at CSSP 8/1 (BG). No photographs or a description of the birds were given in the report. **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was reported twice from CCSP, one bird on both 8/11 (JG) and 10/28 (MSS), and a third report of a single bird came from SH 9/28 (KE). Two reports of a single **Brown Creeper** came from JORG 11/12 and 11/13 (SL). **Winter Wren** was reported three times: one at OBSP 10/12, 2 at JORG 10/12, and one at CRFO 11/15 (SL). A single **Swainson's Thrush** was at Dyer Road, CRFO 10/22 (AA).

There were two reports of **Evening Grosbeak** during the 2020 fall irruption: 7 at SH 10/27 (KE) and 10 at CRFO 11/18 (SL). **Pine Siskin** was expected as well, and six reports were made to eBird. The three highest counts were 15 at EM 10/11 (MB), 25 at SH 10/21 (KE), and 30 at Thompson Road, SSF 10/28 (MSS). **Fox Sparrows** included 5 at JORG 11/3 and one at CRFO 11/20 (SL). **White-crowned Sparrows** were reported from two locations: one at EM 10/11 (MB) and 2 at CSSP 10/28 (MSS). One **Swamp Sparrow** was seen at OBSP 10/12 (SL) and one **Bobolink** was at CSSP 8/10 (JG). A very large flock of 1000 **Common Grackles** was tallied at CSSP 8/11 (JG).

A **Blue-winged Warbler** was at SISP 8/23 (SM, RH). Five reports of **Black-and-white Warbler** were confined to Aug with the last observation posted from SISP 8/23 (SM, RH). **Nashville Warbler** was seen at three locations: SISP 8/23 (SM, RH), CS 9/27 (BG) and JORG 10/17 (SL). One **Mourning Warbler** was at CSSP 8/11 (JG). Two warblers were reported from SH: 2 **Magnolia Warblers** 9/15 and one on 9/16, and 2 **Bay-breasted Warblers** 9/15 and one on 9/16 (KE). One **Blackpoll Warbler** was seen at ADMP 10/17 (MSS). A single report of one **Black-throated Blue Warbler** came from SH 9/16 (KE). Two reports of **Palm Warbler** included 2 at CCSP 9/26 (BG) and one at JORG 9/28 (SL). Two **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were reported from SH 9/28 (KE), and 7 were seen at OBSP 9/14 (TKB).

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### Schuylkill County

Locations: Air Products Wildlife Sanctuary (APWS), Hawk Mountain Sanctuary North Lookout (HMS), Landingville Dam and Marsh (LVD), Lebanon Reservoir (LR), Locust Lake State Park (LLSP), Still Creek Reservoir (SCR), Swatara State Park (SSP), Sweet Arrow Lake (SAL).

eBird data were used extensively to compile this fall narrative. Many people who posted *Schuylkill* sightings to eBird have been included as observers, except for those posting exclusively from Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. The list of observers from Hawk Mountain in the fall is significant due to its popularity with birders who come to see the hawk migration. Although the Hawk Mountain Visitor Center and South Lookout are located in *Berks*, the North Lookout, where the counters are located, is in *Schuylkill*. Besides counting raptors, the counters at HMS record data on non-raptors that are used extensively in this report. Sightings at the North Lookout not attributed to a single individual have been noted as Hawk Mountain Data (HMD).

With a few exceptions, waterfowl species are generally limited in *Schuylkill* in diversity, abundance and frequency. **Brant**, a species occasionally seen every two or three years, were spotted on four occasions in October at HMS with a high count of 23 on 10/5 (HMD). Another was reported at SAL 11/5 (DD). The only **Tundra Swans** reported this year in the county were a fly-by of 8 birds 11/23 at HMS (HMD). Sixteen **Blue-winged Teal** were found at LVD 9/3 and another five 9/30 (TB). **Northern Shovelers** were found at SAL on several dates between 10/4-17 (DD, BR, TB). **Gadwall** was also at SAL: 6 were found 9/30 (DD), and single birds were present 10/9 (BR) and 11/22 (DD). A small flock of **American Wigeon** spent three days at SAL 10/26-28 (BR,

TR). This was the first fall sighting in county in ten years. **American Black Ducks** have been pretty dependable at APWS over the years and this year was no exception. This species was seen from 9/19 to 11/30 at this location with a high count of 30 (JoD, DR, RR, DG). They were also found at SAL 10/10 through 11/29 (EB, BR, P&RW, TB). **Green-winged Teal** were seen at three locations this fall: SAL from mid- to late October (BR, TB, DD), LVD 9/29 (JD) and 10/30 (BR), and HMS 10/24 (HMD). Two **Redhead** were found at SAL 10/26 (TB); the first fall report since 2010. For the fifth fall in a row, **Ring-necked Ducks** were reported; this year they were at SAL 10/15 (BR), 10/28 (TB), 8 on 11/12 (BR), and one 11/23 (BR). The first fall sighting since 2015 of **Lesser Scaup** was also at SAL 11/12 (BR). The first two eBird records of **Surf Scoter** in *Schuylkill* were made this year: one at Still Creek Reservoir 11/1 (DK) and a second at LLSP 11/29 (TB, TJ). A **White-winged Scoter** was spotted at HMS 10/24 (HMD); the last fall sighting of this species in the county was in 2010. **Buffleheads** were found at three locations this fall: an impressive flock of 21 was seen at LR 10/31 (DK), from 10/28 to 11/29 at SAL (BR, DR, RR, TB), and 3 more at APWS 10/28 (JoD). Small numbers of **Hooded Mergansers** were found from late Oct through mid-Nov at SAL (JM, BR), APWS (JoD), and LLSP (TB). Although unusual for the county in fall, **Ruddy Ducks** were found at three locations: SAL 10/16-11/18 with a high count of 8 (BR, TB, DD, JM), APWS 11/3-12 (JoD, DG), and a nice flock of 14 at SCR 11/1 (DK).

A very unusual bird for the county, a **Rufous Hummingbird** was banded at a private residence near Summit Station. It was present from 8/15-19 (RR). Although "peeps" are not at all common in the county, this year was exceptional with five species of sandpiper and a plover reported, all at LVD. **Semipalmated Plover** were found several times in mid-Aug (P&RW, DR, TB). The first eBird record of **Stilt Sandpiper** was at LVD 10/19 (TB). **Least Sandpipers** are the most expected peep in the county. This year they were found at LVD from 8/2 through 10/4 (m.ob.). The list continued with **White-rumped Sandpiper** at LVD 9/2, 9/17 and 10/4 (TB). **Pectoral Sandpipers** were also found at LVD 8/30 (JD) and again 9/2 (TB). Lastly, **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were at LVD 8/16-9/3 (P&RW, DR, TB, DK).

Gulls can be unpredictable in the county but this fall four species were seen in *Schuylkill*, almost all at HMS. Fourteen **Ring-billed Gulls** was seen in Tamaqua 11/1 (JD) and another flock of 125 was seen at HMS 11/2 (HMD). **Herring Gulls** were reported on three dates at HMS: 10/24, 11/2, and 11/23 (HMD). An extremely rare **Lesser Black-backed Gull** passed by HMS 11/23 (HMD) and an equally rare **Great Black-backed Gull** was seen at the North Overlook 11/1 (HMD). **Caspian Terns** were found at SAL 8/12 (RC) and again at LVD 8/29 (TB). The second *Schuylkill* record in eBird of **Black Tern** was made at LVD 8/2 (TB).

A very uncommon **Red-throated Loon** flew by the North Lookout at HMS 11/23 (HMS). The Kittatinny Ridge was also the only place to see **Common Loon** this fall in the county where they passed by HMS several times between 9/19 and 11/24 with a high count of 33 (HMD). Also uncommon in the fall was the **American Bittern** spotted at SAL 10/18 (BR).

Since HMS is located in the county, there are excellent records of species and dates for migrating raptors. Since these data are published elsewhere, they will not be discussed here except to mention a notable sighting of a **Rough-legged Hawk** 11/7 (HMD). A **Long-eared Owl** was heard calling near Hidden Valley 11/7 (NM). *Schuylkill* is one of the sites for on-going research into **Northern Saw-whet Owls**. This was the 24th year in an ongoing research project headed by Scott Weidensaul that examines the saw-whet movement through eastern and central Pennsylvania. The survey is conducted at three locations, including one in *Schuylkill* at Hidden Valley near Freidensburg. At Hidden Valley, it was a good but not great year for numbers. According to Scott, the fall count in the county this year was 191 compared to 52 last year. The resident population, however, has been present primarily along the two southern ridges. Single birds were found near Pottsville 11/18 and another at SGL 222 on 11/21 (DK).

To cap off a pretty good fall, there was a significant invasion of northern finches. **Evening Grosbeaks** were noted at six locations around the county including Pottsville (DK), Quakake (JSc), HMS (HMD), LLSP

(TB) and three private feeders (SS, RR, AL). **Common Redpolls** were seen at HMS 11/20-29 with a high day count of 65 (HMD). **Red Crossbills** were reported along Rte. 209 near Middleport 11/19 (DK), at LLSP 11/29 (TB), and passing by HMS 10/17-11/29 with a high day count of 28 (HMS). **White-winged Crossbills** were also seen at HMS between 11/3 and 11/28 with a high day count of 30 (HMD). **Pine Siskins** have been seen throughout the county (m.ob.).

Twenty-seven species of warblers, including both breeders and migrants, were observed in the county this fall, which was three fewer than last year. Overall, the birds passed through with little deviation from the averages. Very unusual, an **Orange-crowned Warbler** was spotted at SSP 11/14 (P&RW). Always notable, a single **Mourning Warbler** was reported along West Deerview Drive 8/30 (JD).

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### Somerset County

Locations: Berlin Area (BA), Bluebird Hill Farm (BHF) (Jerome), Confluence Area (CA), Flight 93 National Memorial (FLT93), Great Allegheny Passage Bike Trail (GAP), Hidden Valley (HV), High Point Lake (HPL), Laurel Hill State Park (LHSP), North Fork Reservoir (NFR), Payne Property on Allegheny Mt. (PP), Quemahoning Reservoir (QR), Somerset Lake (SL), Stoughton Lake (SL), Youghiogheny Reservoir (YR).

Somerset enjoyed a nice passerine migration season and a late season northern finch irruption. Shorebirds were very slow and waterfowl mediocre with SL being drawn down and the entire bottom being covered with heavy weeds. **Rufous Hummingbirds** again showed up in a small area on top of Allegheny Mountain. Generally, there has been an increase in reports being made in eBird, which may be partially due to more folks pursuing socially distanced outdoor activities in this pandemic year.

Waterfowl had a reasonable showing despite Somerset Lake being completely drained this season. A blue morph **Snow Goose** was with **Canada Geese** at QR 11/13 (LG). Also at QR were 3 **Cackling Geese** first found 11/17 (LG) and continuing through the season (m.ob.). Two **Mute Swans** were at Stoughton Lake 11/11 (LG) and 8 were near Seven Springs 8/27 (AS). In both places, they seem sedentary. **Tundra Swans** in migration included 100 at HPL 11/12, 51 at QR 11/16 (LG), and at PP 11/28 (CP, JP). A nice group of 20 **Wood Ducks** was near Boswell 10/10 (CP, JP). **Blue-winged Teal** were only reported twice: 3 at LHSP 9/9 (CT) and 3 at Boswell 10/10 (CP, JP). **Northern Shovelers** were likewise scarce with just 2 at HPL 9/24 (AG, CS, WD) and one at QR 10/30 (LG). **Gadwalls** were a bit more numerous with 15 at QR 10/16 and 22 there 10/27 (LG). **American Wigeon** were also at QR where 9 were present 10/16 (AG) and 29 were tallied 10/29 (JP). **American Black Ducks** were reported 8 times a high of just 5 in BA 11/12 (JP). **Northern Pintails** were likewise sparse with just three reports of up to 3 at QR 10/16 (LG) and in BA through 11/12 (JP). **Green-winged Teal** were better represented with seven reports, including 16 at QR 10/30 (LG). A nice count of 11 **Redheads** was made at LHSP 11/1 (MR). **Ring-necked Ducks** were found seven times with the high being 20 at QR 11/1 (T&JK). The QR had 4 **Greater Scaup** and 2 **Lesser Scaup** starting 10/30. Scoters put in a nice showing with 2 **Surf Scoter** males 10/29 (AP, JP) to 11/1 (LG), one **White-winged Scoter** 11/17 (LG) and 5 **Black Scoters** 10/29 (AP, JP) and one 10/30 (LG), all at QR. **Buffleheads** had many reports including a respectable 205 at QR 11/12 (LG). **Hooded Mergansers** were also numerous with 40 at HPL 11/12 (DB) the maximum. **Common**

**Mergansers** are more common than in past and found from 8/8 at YR (RG) to 10/29 at QR (JP). **Red-breasted Mergansers** were only found once: 3 at QR 11/19 (LG). **Ruddy Ducks** were numerous, including a good count of 193 at QR 10/29 (AP, JP).

**Ruffed Grouse** are hurting. There were no eBird reports, dedicated grouse dog people found only a few, and one lonely bird was at PP 11/29 (CP). No grouse hunter this compiler has talked to is opposed to a moratorium on grouse hunting in the county, to help them rebound. **Wild Turkeys**, on the other hand, are widely reported with the season's high count being 29 near Davidsville (LG). **Pied-billed Grebes** were a fairly common migrant with the high an impressive 24 at QR 10/29 (AP, JP). **Horned Grebes**, however, were only found twice: 4 at QR 10/30 (LG) and one there 11/27 (CP, JP, RP). Two **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were at NFR 8/1 (AM) and 2 were at PP 8/7-9 (JP). A cooperative **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at PP 8/8-10 and one was late at QR 9/16 (LG). **Common Nighthawks** were seen on four occasions: 8/24 near Fairhope (JP), 9/5 at PP (CP) and CA (BC), and a late bird at LHSP 10/4 (MR). A nice find was a calling **Eastern Whip-poor-will** at PP 10/1 (JP). **Chimney Swifts** were gone by 10/2. **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** persisted at PP until 9/28.

The **Rufous Hummingbird** show at a small area at the top of the Allegheny Mountain near Berlin continued this year. The Landis feeders had a banded female show up 9/30. Despite multiple attempts by Bob Mulvihill, it could not be captured. It is felt likely this was the bird banded there last year in July which was recaptured in September 2019. Another immature female showed up 1.5 miles away at PP 9/30 and was banded 10/5 by Mulvihill. This bird was re-found in Delaware about two weeks later with details still lacking.

**American Coots** continue to be inexplicably uncommon. One was near Boswell 10/21 (LG) and one was at QR 10/19-11/16 (m.ob.). A report of 18 **Sandhill Cranes** was made at a field near Rockwood 11/22 (*fide* TM).

After eight years of tremendous shorebirding (32 species total) at Somerset Lake, the spectacle ended this year, with the lakebed now completely vegetated. Only eight shorebird species were reported for the county, including **Killdeer**. Others included: 2 **Dunlin** 10/26 (LG) and 6 on 10/29 (AP, JP), 2 **Least Sandpipers** at QR 8/6-9/6 (LG, et al.) and one at FLT93 on 9/14 (AY, LS), **Pectoral Sandpiper** at QR 10/25-29 (LG, AP, JP), many reports of **American Woodcock**, **Spotted Sandpiper** in Meyersdale (JOD), at NFR 8/1 (AM), and a very late bird at QR 10/29 (AP, JP), **Solitary Sandpiper** as early as 8/1 at NFR (AM), a high of 5 at QR 8/28 (JP), and a late bird at Boswell 10/10 (CP, JP), 12 reports of **Greater Yellowlegs**, including 9 at QR 11/1 (R&MH) and one late bird 11/16 also at QR (LG), and 3 reports of **Lesser Yellowlegs** including birds at QA 8/28 and 10/3 (LG), and near Meyersdale 9/17 (WD).

The only **Bonaparte's Gulls** reported were 6 at QR 10/29 (LG, AP, JP). **Ring-billed Gulls** were more common migrants. Up to 27 were at QR 11/27 (LG). The two less common of our four expected terns showed up this season: a **Common Tern** was at QR 8/19 (LG) and a **Black Tern** was there 9/29 (LG). **Common Loons** first showed at QR 9/29 (LG) and persisted through the season. The high count was 17 seen at the top of Allegheny Mountain at PP 11/3, noted as flyovers during a 2-hour midmorning hawk watch (LB, CP, JP). **Double-crested Cormorants** were a bit scant with just four reports starting 9/16 and a high of 5 at QR 10/30 (SC). A single **Great Egret** was in the wetland at FLT93 from 9/14-24 (m.ob.). **Green Heron** was reported 23 times, with a high of 5 at QR 8/28 (JP). **Black Vultures** are still uncommon here; a single in Davidsville 9/24 (LG) and 3 near Fairhope 10/11 (CP, JP) were the only ones reported. **Turkey Vultures** mostly leave the county by mid- to late Nov. **Ospreys** were seen about six times 8/8-10/17, generally with one or 2 birds per sighting. Migrant **Golden Eagles** were noted seven times. The most interesting among them was a bird hunting a field just off the Allegheny Front near PP, "remotely" reported 11/26 via an old transmitter designed by Cellular Tracking Technologies. This bird had been captured and had the transmitter fitted in Alabama in late winter several years ago. Interestingly, a few days later that same year the bird was noted via the

transmitter in sw. Pennsylvania, having almost beaten the researchers who had tagged it in Alabama (ML, TrM) back to *Somerset* (where they were based at the time) as it journeyed northward on migration. **Northern Harriers**, **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, and **Cooper's Hawks** were widely reported. No Northern Goshawks were seen this season. **Bald Eagles** were reported in singles or pairs throughout the county. **Red-shouldered Hawks** had seven sightings from 9/24-11/20. **Broad-winged Hawks** were seen from 8/9-9/29.

**Eastern Screech-Owls** and **Great Horned Owls** were both represented by three reports, but **Barred Owls** were either more vocal or more common, as they were reported eight times. **Belted Kingfishers** were widely found in small numbers, including up to 4 at QR (m.ob.). **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** are found breeding at higher elevations, and most migrants were also on mountains. Only two reports of **Red-headed Woodpecker** were made this season: one at PP 8/26 (JP) and one near Rockwood 8/31 (TO). **American Kestrels** were rather spotty but there were reports of one to 7 throughout period. There was a **Merlin** at HV 9/28 (AS) and another at SL 10/8 (HPS) and 10/10 (CP, JP). Two **Peregrine Falcons** were noted: one in BA 9/21 (JP) and one at LHSP 10/4 (MR).

**Eastern Wood-Pewees** were common until about 9/30. The only **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at PP 9/4 (JP). **Willow Flycatchers** were identified at FLT93 on 8/1 (PhL, PL) and at Kooser State Park 9/6 (P&RW). Most **Least Flycatchers** (4) were at PP from 9/4 to a late bird 10/11 (CP, JP, RP), and one was at HV 8/26 (AS). Surprisingly just one **Great Crested Flycatcher** was found, 9/14 at PP (JP). **Eastern Kingbirds** were well represented with 5 at FLT93 8/1 (PL) and the last in CA 9/19 (BO). **Yellow-throated Vireo** was the least represented vireo with only one record, but that was quite late at LHSP 10/18 (SDu). **Blue-headed Vireo** was well-represented up to Nov with a high count of 7 at PP 9/25 (JP). **Philadelphia Vireos** were more numerous than normal with nine reports in Sep. The only **Warbling Vireos** were 2 at PP 9/6 (CP, JP, RP). **Red-eyed Vireo** maximum was 13 at PP 10/11 (JP).

**American Crows** and **Blue Jays** are abundant while **Common Ravens** are an ever increasing species here. **Horned Lark** numbers are expected to build up more in winter, so 35 in Holsopple at the relatively early date of 9/17 was good (LG). Reports of swallows dropped off this season with just a few **Northern Rough-winged**, no Purple Martins, a high of 20 **Tree Swallows** in CA 9/5 (BO), many **Barn Swallows**, and a nice high of 30 **Cliff Swallows** at BHF (PL). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** started a large push 9/5 with reports of up to 7 at HV (M.ob.). **Brown Creepers** were well represented starting 9/6. **House Wrens** departed by about 10/11, **Winter Wrens** were reported wight times 9/15-11/8, and **Carolina Wrens** seem to be at very high numbers. **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers**, only mentioned three times, had a maximum of 6 at LHSP 9/10 (CT). **Golden-crowned Kinglets** bred in low numbers such as this year at PP. Migrants picked up 9/15 and continued through the period. **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** arrived 9/15 and were abundant until about 11/13. All thrushes were well represented with **Gray-cheeked** and **Swainson's** mostly detected by pre-dawn flight calls in Sep until early Oct. **Gray Catbirds** are common breeders and migrants with last report 10/22 at LHSP (MF). **Brown Thrashers** get a bit secretive late in season but were detected up to 9/15 at PP (JP). **Northern Mockingbirds** are always uncommon in county, but are most reliable in CA where they were reported 9/7 and 10/17 (BO). The only report of **American Pipits** was a rousing mob of 150 near a BA wetland 10/31 (AP, JP). **Cedar Waxwings** migrate in large numbers along Allegheny Mt. in Aug and Sep, and smaller flocks were seen until 11/3 (JP).

**Evening Grosbeaks** made a wide push through the county 10/31-11/21 after which they apparently vacated. This included a flock of 25 at PP 11/1 (JP). **Purple Finches**, which breed in county, were bolstered this fall by many reports of northern irrupters. Two or more **Red Crossbills** flew over PP 11/29 (CP). Large flocks of **Pine Siskins**, including 40 near LHSP 10/2 (J&MM) and 75 in CA 10/17 (BO), indicated a large irruption, which petered out by end of period.

Both **Grasshopper** and **Henslow's Sparrows** were found at FLT93 up until at least 8/7 (ES). The first **American Tree Sparrows** arrived at PP 10/30 (JP) and became more common at very end of period. **Fox Sparrows** arrived 10/25 and persisted through period with a high of 5 at

PP 11/12 that included an interesting partial leucistic, white-headed specimen (MD, JP). **White-crowned Sparrow** migration seemed to be from 10/5-11/12 during which 10 reports of the species were made. **White-throated Sparrows** also arrived 10/5 and were common through end of period. **Vesper Sparrows** were only reported from Markleton area with 3 on 10/21 and one 10/22 (TO). **Savannah Sparrows** was reported on just four dates 9/5-11/24. **Lincoln's Sparrows** seems to be more common in migration in recent years; this year there were many reports of up to 4 from 9/15-10/28. **Swamp Sparrows** are especially common in the weedy drained lakebed at SL. **Eastern Towhees** were conspicuous up to the last report 10/30 at QR (LG). Fifteen **Bobolinks** were near Boswell 8/18 (PL) and 2 migrants were recorded at SL 9/12 (SM, RH). There were no reports of Orchard Oriole and only three of **Baltimore Oriole**, one at NFR 8/1 (AM) and 2 at PP both 8/31 and 9/14 (JP). The only **Rusty Blackbird** was found in CA 10/18 (BO).

A total of 27 warbler species were found. Some of the more interesting included: a **Louisiana Waterthrush** along the GAP (JOD), 2 different **Blue-winged Warblers** 9/12 and 9/13 at PP (JP), **Tennessee Warblers** most days 8/31-10/2 at PP (JP), a single **Orange-crowned Warbler** at PP 10/11 (CP), **Nashville Warblers** consistently 8/6-10/11 and a very late bird at PP 11/12 (MD), a **Mourning Warbler** at PP 9/22 (JP), a **Kentucky Warbler** near Markleton 8/24 (TO), four reports of **Hooded Warbler** on Laurel Mt. through 9/6 (R&MH), many **Cape May Warblers** at PP 8/23-10/6 including a high of 16 on 9/15 (JP), five reports of **Northern Parula** through 9/24, **Magnolia Warblers** through 10/6 including 6 at PP 9/12 (JP), **Bay-breasted Warblers** 9/5-27 including 4 at HPL 9/24 (AG, WD, CS), **Blackburnian Warblers** until 9/24 and **Yellow Warblers** until 8/15, many **Chestnut-sided Warblers** through 9/24, **Blackpoll Warblers** 9/6-10/14, many **Black-throated Blue Warblers** until 10/3, 12 reports of **Palm Warblers** 9/15-10/11 including one **Eastern Palm Warbler** at PP 10/11 (JP, CP), two reports of **Pine Warbler** 9/22 and 10/14, **Yellow-rumped Warblers** starting 9/20 with high of 9 in CA 10/16 (BO), **Black-throated Green Warblers** until 10/10 at BHF (PhL) and a high of 15 at PP 9/6 (JP), only one **Canada Warbler** at PP 8/1 (JP), and 3 **Wilson's Warblers** all at PP 9/6-10/22 (JP).

**Scarlet Tanagers** were found through 9/26 with a high of 6 at PP 9/5 (CP, JP, RP). **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was found at multiple locations with the last seen 10/11 at QR (LG). **Indigo Buntings** were in modest numbers up to 9/28.

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#### **Sullivan County**

Locations: Deer Lake (DL), Dutch Mtn (DM), Eagles Mere Lake (EML), Hunters Lake (HL), Kinsley's Corner (KC), Lietzelman Road, Dushore (LR), Loyalsock State Forest, Coal Mine Road (CMR), Loyalsock State Forest, Rock Run (RR), Ricketts Glen State Park, Hayfields (RGSPH), Ricketts Glen State Park, West Boat Launch (WBL), SGL 13 Splashdam Pond (SDP), SGL 66 Shady Nook Lake (SNL), SGL 66 Shady Nook Old Home Place (OHP), White House Camp (WHC), World's End State Park (WESP).

The weather for the fall period was mostly uneventful. There were no significant storms or patterns. The winter finch irruption was evident throughout the period. The spruce budworm warbler group was also well

represented. There was nothing that would be considered an extreme rarity, but there were many excellent finds. All observations not noted otherwise were by the author.

Waterfowl reports were very typical. The best find was a **Red-throated Loon** at WBL 11/1 (SM). **Sandhill Crane** was last recorded 9/26 at the Litzelman Road location where they have nested for two decades. The birds were noted to have recently molted. They likely remained longer but went unrecorded. A search by the author during the state census period found none. A late **American Woodcock** was at RGSPH 11/8 (KD). This is a hardy species, but November on the mountain can be cold and raw.

There were some good raptor observations. A **Black Vulture** at DL 10/31 seemed late (SM). This is still not a common bird in the county. Two separate **Rough-legged Hawks** were seen at KC and LR 11/18, one a light morph and the other dark. A **Peregrine Falcon** was a good find at WHC 9/19 (JP). **Eastern Screech-Owl** was reported at RR 9/12 (JY).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** is always a good bird to find. One was seen at WBL 8/17 (DG). **Yellow-throated Vireo** is a good find in the county; one was at RGSPH 8/21 (SM). **Fish Crow** is another species still not common in the county. A single bird was observed at WBL 8/18 (DG). An **American Pipit** was found at WBL 11/6 (AK). The irruption year finches included a flock of 12 **Evening Grosbeaks** heard at DL 11/5 (WE). A nice count of 41 **Common Redpolls** was made at WESP 11/28 (CE). A **Red Crossbill** was observed at WBL 11/6 (AK). Two **Pine Siskins** were found at RGSPH 11/25 (DG).

A **Snow Bunting** was present at RGSPH 11/1 (SM). A **Fox Sparrow** was photographed at SDP 11/8 (KD). There were 6 **White-crowned Sparrows** observed at CMR 10/16 (SM). Four **Vesper Sparrows** were seen in the KC area 11/1. One **Lincoln's Sparrow** was present at OHP 9/26. An **Orchard Oriole** was a good find at RGSPH 8/21 (SM). Migrants warblers of the boreal forest seen in migration included **Bay-breasted Warbler** at RR 9/12 (JY), **Cape May Warbler** at DL 9/24 (WE), **Tennessee Warbler** at EML 10/2 (CM) and **Blackpoll Warbler** at EML 10/5 (CM). A **Palm Warbler** at DL 11/5 seemed a bit late (WE). Other good warbler sightings included a **Blue-winged Warbler** at RGSPH 8/21 (SM) and **Golden-winged Warbler** at RGSPH 9/11 (SM).

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### **Susquehanna County**

Locations: Hollister's Pond (HOL), Quaker Lake (QUA).

A single **Snow Goose** offered good views and photo opportunities by briefly joining the resident flock of **Canada Geese** on Lake Montrose 10/7-9 (DAn, TN). The best birds of this year's modest waterfowl visitations were clustered at Quaker Lake. Three **White-winged Scoters** played hard to see in the middle of 122-acre QUA 11/12 (EM). A much more accommodating **Black Scoter** foraged on the shore's edge and starred in several home movies at QUA 10/28 (EM, TN, NVC). A **Long-tailed Duck** spent a day at QUA 11/1 (EM). A **Horned Grebe** was seen and photographed at QUA 11/2 and 11/4 (EM).

The Susquehanna River meanders through the county in a generally east-west direction. It drops into *Susquehanna* from New York and 15 miles later turns north and re-crosses the state line. A particular bend in this path offers a shortcut across an open knoll for migrants that are following the watercourse. It is here that twice a year local birders lay in wait. The first ten days of Sep marked the passing of **Common Nighthawks** with sightings each evening and a high count of 33 of these consummate aerialists 9/6 (DAn, TN, SN, EM, BS, GS, NVC).

Saying goodbye to summer residents is always hard. The last reported **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was at a feeder 9/24 (EM). Our county's nesting **Virginia Rail** family vocally signaled their goodbyes for the final time 8/20 (NVC).

This year shorebird migration was concentrated at a single location. Hollister's Pond water levels were perfect at just the right time, exposing a generous, food-rich mud margin. The private location is owned by a very tolerant and welcoming landowner. He may never have seen so many visitors in such a short period of time. A **Baird's Sandpiper** was spotted among the expected species there 9/26-30 (SF, EM, TN, RS, VS, BS, GS, JSt, NVC). It represented a first county record. A **Long-billed Dowitcher**, another county first, was there 9/17-20 (EM, ON, TN, BS, GS, JS, JSt., NVC). A **Wilson's Snipe** occasionally popped out of the perimeter vegetation 9/18, 19 (ON, TN). A single **Northern Shoveler** tried, with some success, to get shorebirder's attention 9/18-26 (TN, WS, EM, ON, JSt, GS, BS, NVC). Surprise! A **Peregrine Falcon** spotted all the activity and feeding potential and joined the list of rare visitors 9/30 (CD, JSt).

The western edge of the county seems to sit under a regularly used flight path for migrating **Golden Eagles** and is the best area for enjoying their passage. One was seen in Rush Twp. 10/21 (CB, RB) and 2 were over Friendsville 10/30 and 10/31 (MM). A number of **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were mist-netted and banded at Woodbourne Forest Preserve 10/14-27 (DA, EM, TN, JS, JSt).

Climate change continues to alter the mix of expected birds. Northern tier birders like to conjecture as to what will be the next southern species to be discovered here. That question was answered for 2020 when a county first **White-eyed Vireo** was photographed in Montrose 10/2 (TN). **Horned Larks** were foraging in corn stubble south of Montrose 10/10 (TN). A pair of **Marsh Wrens** was still present on Upper Lake 10/5 (JD, KF). Eight **American Pipits** were on Hollister's Pond 9/27 (TN), four were in farm fields south of Montrose 10/14 (EM, NVC), and 2 were near Fiddle Lake 10/15 (CF).

*Susquehanna* joined in the excitement of a stellar year for visits by northern irruptive species. First reported dates were **Evening Grosbeak** 10/23 (TN), **Common Redpoll** 11/15 (CF), **Red Crossbill** 11/15 (CF), and **Pine Siskin** 10/2 (TN). Combinations of residents and migrants of more regularly seen groups resulted in good birding during these four months. A total of thirteen species of the sparrow family were present. Twenty-five different warblers provided a nice blend of resident and transient species. Overall, the fall migration period provided great opportunities for local birders to get outdoors, enjoy the season, spot some exciting birds, and temporarily set aside coronavirus concerns.

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### **Tioga County**

Locations: Asaph (ASP), Burg Rd (BUR), Cowanesque Lake (COWL), Cowanesque Lake-Nelson Cemetary (COWLN) Cowanesque Lake-Spillway (COWLS), Dean Hill (DH), Hamilton Lake (HAL), Hammond Lake-old rail grade (HLR), Hills Creek Lake Road (HCLR), Hills Creek SP (HCSP), Knapp (KNP), Lamb's Creek Trail (LCT), Leonard Harrison SP (LHSP), Mansfield (MAN), Marsh Creek/The Muck (MCM-IBA), SR660-Middle Ridge Swamp (MRS), Mills Hills Road (MHR), Nessmuck Lake (NL), Northern Appalachian Research Laboratory (NARL), Old 287 to Ives (IVES), Perry Road (PRD), Pine Creek Rail Trail (PCRT), Ridge Road (RRD), Roaring Branch (ROBR), Roseville (ROSE), Tauscher Pond (TAP), Tioga (TIOG), Tioga-Hammond Lakes (THLA), Tioga-Hammond Lakes-Ives Run Rec. Area (THL-IRRA), Tioga-Hammond Lakes-Lamb's Creek Rec. Area (THL-LCRA), Tioga SF-Morris (TSFM), Webster Road rail trail puddles (WERD), Westfield (WEST), Wildwood Nature Preserve (WNP).

A total of 190 species were reported on eBird during the fall season. Species data reported below are from 34 locations by 56 observers,



obtained from eBird using the bar charts and the species map features. Ten **Snow Geese** were seen at COWLS 11/21 (SeM). There was one report of **Tundra Swans**, 15 at a residence along Marsh Creek near ASP 10/30 (JC). **Wood Ducks** were numerous. **Blue-winged Teal** were reported from five locations, 4 at COWLN 9/5 (DW), 4 at COWL 9/6 (KC), 5 and 3 at THL-IRRA 9/12 and 9/16 (DW, JC), respectively, and 3 at ASP 9/17 (JC). One **Northern Shoveler** was at NL 9/16 (SeM). **Gadwall** included one at NL 10/16 (LD) and 6 at TAP 10/16 (LD, KC). **American Wigeon** was reported throughout Oct with the highest counts being 8 at HCSP 10/29 and 6 at TAP 10/27 (LD, KC). There were 10 reports of **American Black Duck** ranging from one to 4 birds. Most reports of one or 2 **Northern Pintails** came from NL, with additional single reports from COWL, RDP and TAP from Sep through mid-Oct (BC, JC, KC, LD). Fifteen reports of **Green-winged Teal** were noted, with the highest counts of 16 and 10 at THL-IRRA 10/13 and 10/15, respectively, and 8 at COWL 10/17 (BC, DKP, KC, LD, DW). Most of the 13 reports of **Ring-necked Ducks** came from HCSP from mid-Oct through early Nov; high the counts were 30 on 10/27 and 27 on 11/1 (LD, KC, GT). Two reports from NL were of 6 on 11/12 and 2 on 11/20 (SeM). Thirteen reports of **Buffleheads** had low numbers of birds, with the high count of 8 at COWL 11/8 (LD), and other reports came from HCSP, NL, TAP and THL-IRRA (KC, LD, DKP, GT). **Hooded Mergansers** were seen in low numbers, with most at NL and THL-IRRA. **Common Merganser** was well-reported with most of reports at THL-IRRA. High count was 165 on 11/26 (LD). **Ruddy Ducks** were reported 11 times with the highest counts from HCSP: 20 on 10/30, 18 on 10/29 and 12 on 11/17 (LD).

Single-bird reports of **Ruffed Grouse** were spread over 24 locations. High count among many reports of **Wild Turkey** was 19 at HCLR 10/29 (LD). Five reports of **Pied-billed Grebe** came from NL, the high count was 9 on 10/16 (LD), along with 13 reports from TAP, and three reports from THL-IRRA and the ponds on RRD (KC, DKP, LD, AW). Two **Horned Grebes** were at HCSP 9/19 (WE). **Common Nighthawk** was reported twice from a residence near ASP: one 8/20 and 3 on 8/26 (JC). Records from eBird over the past 10 years showed just six observations of nighthawks with two high counts: 20 on 8/25/2016 at the Fish Lab near the Pine Creek Rail Trail, and 13 at NARL (RH, JC). Single **Virginia Rails** were reported from MCM-IBA 8/23 (SM/RH) and WERD 9/14 (LD). Single **Soras** were reported from WNP 10/17 (TA) and TAP 9/29 (LD). Three **Common Gallinules** were at TAP 9/29 (LD). **American Coot** was reported eight times at TAP with the high count of 10 on 10/16 (KC). Historic records dating back to 2010 show just eleven records of American Coot, with most of the sightings at TAP, NL and HCSP.

One **American Avocet** was reported at THL-IRRA 9/6 and 9/7 (KC, LD, DKP, GT), the second record of this species in the county in the past two years. **Semipalmated Plover** was reported from COWL with a high count of 3 birds 9/15 (GT, RH, LS, DW, MW) and another was reported from THL-IRRA 9/7 (DKP). Up to 4 **Stilt Sandpipers** were seen and photographed at COWL 9/7-16 (KC, RH, DW). A **Dunlin** was reported from COWL 10/17-18 (BC, KC).

One or 2 **Baird's Sandpipers** were photographed at COWL 9/6 and 9/16 (KC, JC, RH, DKP, DW, MW) and 2 were observed at THL-IRRA 9/15 and 9/16 (JC, DKP). The first record of Baird's Sandpiper, after checking a twenty-year period, included two one at THL-IRRA 9/6 and 9/7/2016 (JC, RH). One **White-rumped Sandpiper** was reported from COWL 9/6, 10/15, and 10/18 (BC, KC) and another at HAL 9/8 (LD). Over a period from 2000 to 2019, White-rumped Sandpiper was reported 14 times between 2011 and 2018, with 12 of the observations made in 2016

Four **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at NL 11/12 (SeM). One **Great Black-backed Gull** was THL-IRRA 10/13 (BC). The only previous record of this species for the county, according to eBird, was one at the same location in Mar 2008. **Caspian Terns** were found at two locations: 3 at COWL 9/9 (KC) and 6 at THL-IRRA 9/6 (BC). One **Common Tern** was photographed at HAL 9/18 (KC, LD). One **Common Loon** was reported from NL 10/14, 10/18 and 10/29 (KC, BC, LD). Single-bird reports of **Great Egret** came from four locations; Darlington Run at PCRT 9/24, a residence near ASP 10/10, Webster Road at PCRT 9/14 and COWL

10/13 (MM, JC, LD, BC).

**Osprey** was reported from many locations over the county. Two **Golden Eagles** were reported soaring above HCLR 10/31 (LD). Single-bird reports of **Northern Harrier** came from six locations: ASP 9/19, MRS 9/20, PRD 9/21, COWL 10/15, BUR 10/18 and WEST 11/2 (JC, KC, DKP, BC, CF, MG). **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, **Cooper's Hawk**, and **Bald Eagle** were reported from many locations. One **Red-shouldered Hawk** was reported from MHR 9/8 (LD). **Broad-winged Hawk** and **Red-tailed Hawk** were reported from many locations. One **Rough-legged Hawk** was reported from HLR 11/12 (DKP).

**Eastern Screech-Owls** were reported from five locations: HCLR 8/9 (LD), TIOG 8/27 (EW, JC), MAN 9/6 (JL), WEL 10/17 (BC), and ASP 10/8 and 10/17 (JC). **Great Horned Owl** and **Barred Owl** were well reported from locations around the county. One report of **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was from WEL 10/17 (BC). Single-bird sightings **American Kestrel** were reported around the county and only one **Merlin** was reported, at COWL 9/13-14. Single **Peregrine Falcons** were observed at the ponds along RRD 9/14, at ASP 10/8, and at THL-IRRA 10/15 (KC, JC, DKP).

Single **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were reported from three locations; THLA 8/27 and 9/18 (KC), COWL 9/14 (DW), and the deer enclosures at TSFM 8/29 (JoeG). Single **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were at TSFM 8/29 (JoeG), IVES 9/1 (LD), and ROSE 9/8 and 9/11 (BS). Single **Philadelphia Vireos** were at TSFM 8/29 (JoeG), THL-LCRA 10/17 (BC), and COWL 9/15 (DW). Two **Fish Crows** were at HCSP 9/19 (WE). **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was seen at three locations; 2 at PCRT at Blackwell 10/12 (BC), 2 at LHSP 9/12 (KC, EW), and one at COWL 9/15 (DW). There were just two reports of **American Pipit**: one at THL 10/13 (BC) and 2 at COWL 10/18 (KC).

During this finch irruption year, 17 reports of **Evening Grosbeak** came from 10 locations. The two high counts were 45 at KNP 10/31 (DKP) and 23 at MAN 10/25 (DY). Another irruption species, the **Pine Siskin**, was reported 47 times from 17 locations with five high counts that included 65 each at ASP 10/17 (JC) and THL-IRRA 10/15 (DKP), 45 at PCRT at Blackwell, 36 at THL-LCRA 10/18 (KC), and 26 at COWL 10/17.

Seventeen reports of **American Tree Sparrow** came from six locations, though listing no more than 5 birds in any one sighting. **White-crowned Sparrow** was reported 31 times from eleven locations. Five reports of **Savannah Sparrow** included 3 at COWL 10/13 and 10/17 (BC), one at RRD 9/12 (DW), one at LCT 10/16 (KC), and 3 at ASP 9/27 (KC). **Lincoln's Sparrow** was reported from eight locations. **Bobolinks** were seen at just two locations, high counts at these locations were 31 at ROBR 8/23 and just 7 at MCM-IBA 8/23 (SeM, RH). **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported from five locations listing 13 sightings with a high count of 80 near ASP 10/18 (JC).

A **Golden-winged Warbler** was near ASP 8/23 (JC). Four reports **Blue-winged Warblers** included one at TSFM 8/29, one at LCT 9/1 and 9/2 THL-IRRA (JoeG, KC, LD, GT). Seven single-bird reports of **Tennessee Warbler** were noted, with 11 birds in 3 reports from COWL 9/14, 9/15 (DW, BC, LD, KC, JoeG, JP). **Nashville Warbler** was observed at four locations with high counts of 4 at both COWL and THL-IRRA 9/12-15 (KC, DW, DKP). One **Mourning Warbler** was seen at LHSP 9/19 (AT). Six **Northern Parulas** were observed in an area just southwest of COWL 9/12-14 (DW). **Bay-breasted Warbler** was reported from seven locations: 2 at LHSP 9/19, one at PCRT (Darling Run) 10/14, 2 at HCLR 9/26, one at IVES 9/12, 2 at THL-IRRA 9/12 and 9/26, and 8 at areas south east of COWL 9/14-15 (AT, JP, LD, KC DW). One **Yellow-throated Warbler** was seen at THL-IRRA 8/27 (KC) and 4 **Wilson's Warblers** were observed at COWL 9/15 (DW). One **Dickcissel** was found near a cabin at COWL 9/12 (DW), and one was at LHSP 9/12 (EW, JC).

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### Venango County

Locations: Allegheny River (AR), Buttermilk Hill Nature Sanctuary (BHNS), Justus Lake (JL), Kahle Lake (KL), Kolodick's back yard (KBY), Oil City Marina (OCM), Rhoades Farm near KL (RF).

The species count for the season was 135, down from 152 last year. That decrease, combined with no out-of-the-ordinary sightings, made for another below average reporting period.

For the fourth consecutive year, the scarcity of cold fronts during Oct and Nov apparently contributed to the low numbers and variety of waterfowl at JL and KL. **Tundra Swans** were reported between 10/28 (NB) and 11/26 (JH). The following waterfowl reports were from KL unless otherwise noted. The only **American Wigeon** were at KL 11/5 (GE). **Blue-winged Teal** were present 10/4-6 (GE), and a **Northern Pintail** was present 11/1 (GE). **Green-winged Teal** were reported at JL (RS). **Ring-necked Duck** arrived at KL 11/2 and departed 11/5 (GE), and a **Surf Scoter** was found 11/1 (JS). **Bufflehead** migration began 10/31 (RS) and continued through 11/24 (MK, NK). An early **Red-breasted Merganser** was seen on the AR at Franklin 10/22 (JH, DH). **Ring-necked Duck** was present at KL 10/22-11/19 (GE, RS). **Ruddy Duck** was present from 10/30-11/8 (GE, JS, RS). Common Loon was missed. **Pied-billed Grebe** began moving through 9/27 (MK, NK) and was last reported 11/8 (MK, NK). **Double-crested Cormorant** was last seen 11/19 (GE). **Green Heron** remained through 10/6 (GE).

The last **Turkey Vulture** was reported 11/5 (GE). **Osprey** moved through 8/9 (MK, NK) to 10/12 (JH, DH). **Northern Harrier** was seen 8/4 (MK, NK). The last **Broad-winged Hawk** sighting was 9/4 (NB).

**Sora** was seen at JL 9/5 (JS) through 10/5 (GE). On 10/29, 3 **Dunlin** were reported from KL (JS). **Wilson's Snipe** were present 9/25 (JS) to 11/4 (MK, NK). **Solitary Sandpiper** moved through 8/16 (MK, NK) to 10/1 (GE, RS). A total of 15 **Greater Yellowlegs** were at KL 9/1 (JS), and the next day 7 were still there (GE).

A count of 27 **Bonaparte's Gull** was made at KL 10/29 (JS). It was a mediocre year at the 16th annual **Common Nighthawk** migration count at the OCM 8/15-9/13 (m.ob.). The final tally was 497. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** remained through 9/21 (MK, NK) but there were no Black-billed Cuckoos found. **Chimney Swift** remained thru 9/30 (JH). The last **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was reported at KBY 9/30 (MK, NK) and the last **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was reported 10/22 (GE). **Merlin** sightings at the nighthawk watch are becoming regular. This year there were four sightings at OCM 8/20-9/10 (GE, MK, NK, RS). Additional sightings were at JL 9/5 (JS) and Franklin 10/5 (JH). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was reported 9/10 (NB). The last vireo records were: **Blue-headed Vireo** 10/15 (MK, NK), **Philadelphia Vireo** 9/4, and **Red-eyed Vireo** 9/28 (NB).

The only **Brown Creeper** reports were made 10/4 and 11/4. The last **House Wren** was reported 10/4 (RS). **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** moved through 9/22-10/24 (NB). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** began 9/1 and lasted through the period (MK, NK). **Swainson's Thrush** moved through 9/16-10/16 (NB). Last dates were 10/22 for **Hermit Thrush** (NB), 10/24 for **Gray Catbird** (NB), and 9/11 for **Brown Thrasher** (NB). The only **Snow Buntings** were 8 at KL 11/7 (DM).

Warbler migration was unspectacular. **Lincoln's Sparrow** was reported 9/5-10/14 (NB, GE, JH, JS). The first **White-throated Sparrow** record was 9/19 (NB), and **White-crowned Sparrow** moved through 9/5 (JS) to 10/28 (NB). A count of 20-30 **Pine Siskins** was made at KL 9/5

(JS). They were reported regularly 10/1-11/22.

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### Warren County

Locations: Akeley Swamp (AS), Althom (AL), Beanfields (BN), Bear Lake (BL), Benson Swamp [SGL 306] (BS), Big Four Road (B4), Buckaloons Campground (BC), Cobham Hill (CH), Columbus (CO), Duck Eddy banding site (DE), Economite Road (ER), State Game Lands 86 (GL), Hector Falls (HF), Forestry Sciences Lab, Irvine (FL), Kinzua Dam (KD), Lenhart Hill (LH), Minister Creek Trail (MC), River Road (RR), Russell (RU), Sugar Grove (SG), Swede Hill (SH), Tidioute (TI), Tidioute Trail (TT), Valentine Run (VR), City of Warren (WC), Willow Bay boat launch (WB), Youngsville (YV).

A prolonged drought, unseasonably mild temperatures, and a continuing pandemic made for an odd fall in *Warren*. A few flocks of **Tundra Swans** were seen, mostly flyovers, a notable exception was a group of 39 foraging at AS 11/12 (MS, SS). Scattered observations of **Wood Ducks** were made all season, with a maximum of 8 reported from AS 8/19 (TS). Similarly, a few **Northern Shovelers** were spotted, all at AS with a maximum count of 4 on 11/9 (AK). Adorable little **Buffleheads** made their usual appearance in numerous locations albeit in small numbers, maximum counts were 15 at RR on 11/4 (SHS) and 13 at KD on 11/14 (CW). A high count of 10 **Hooded Mergansers** was seen on B4 on 11/9 (TS). **Common Mergansers** are common year-round in *Warren*, but a sighting of 42 at TT 11/10 was exceptional (AK). **Ruffed Grouse** seemed to have had a good year in *Warren*, with as many as 9 reported from a single site at LH 8/15 (AM). Two separate groups of three **Pied-billed Grebes** were reported 11/12: one at AS (TS), the other at CD (MK, GK), the latter in the company of a single **Horned Grebe**.

**Common Nighthawks** have become increasingly sparse in *Warren*, so a sighting of 5 over TI 8/22 was encouraging (JN). A single **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was heard calling at HF 9/9, certainly a migrant (SHS). A rather late **Virginia Rail** was heard at AS 10/4 (TS). Four **Greater Yellowlegs** were spotted at WB 11/7 (BG). An early **Common Loon** was spotted flying over AL 10/27 (CB, SHS). Highly unusual was a **Cattle Egret** spotted and photographed among cattle in CO 10/25 (ES). A single **Black Vulture** was spotted soaring among a group of **Turkey Vultures** and **Ravens** above SH 9/14 (KN), this species is very rare in *Warren*. In contrast, **Turkey Vultures** are common through most of the year except in winter, and numbers peak during fall migration, a maximum of 26 were reported from KD 8/24 (SK). A single **Northern Harrier** was spotted over WR 11/9 (TS), a species that tends to be rare in this heavily forested county. An impressive 5 **Red-shouldered Hawks** were reported from CH 10/31, perhaps a family group (CW). A very early light morph **Rough-legged Hawk** made a brief appearance on GL 10/28, in rather unusual habitat: a hillside clearcut surrounded by mature forest (CB, SHS). Go figure! Another great sighting for *Warren* was a single **Long-eared Owl** flushed from a pine grove at BN 11/12 (SS, MS). A pair of **Merlins** were seen calling in SG 8/12 (KV), perhaps a new breeding pair for the county?

It appeared to be a good year for **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** migration, with single birds reported from GL 8/25 (FM), and DE 8/31 (CB, SHS). Locally, **Willow Flycatchers** tend to be greatly outnumbered by look-alike **Alders**, so the count of 3 at BS 8/11 was noteworthy (TS). A group of five **Eastern Kingbirds** seen at AS 8/14 was unusual (MN), as were the 2 **Warbling Vireos** seen there on the same day (MN). **Red-eyed Vireos** tend to be common and familiar birds, but their numbers at bird-banding stations reveal their true abundance: eight individuals banded in a few hours at GL 8/24 and again at HF 9/8 (CB, SHS). High counts of six **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were reported from both MC and TT 11/10 (AK) and five **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** from GL 10/28 (CB,

SHS). An impressive six **Brown Creepers** were seen at HC 11/10 (AK). It was a good fall for **Gray-cheeked Thrushes**, with numerous single birds seen throughout *Warren* plus 2 caught and banded at GL 9/25 (CB, SHS) and 2 seen in WC on 9/11 (TS). **Swainson's Thrushes** tend to be quiet and unobtrusive, so one rarely sees more than one per day, so the 8 individuals caught and banded at GL 9/24 suggested their true abundance during migration (SHS). **Cedar Waxwings**, always social birds, tend to gather in big flocks in the fall depending on fruit resources, the largest reported from *Warren* was 50 at DE 8/31 (FM).

Like much of the northeast, *Warren* experienced one of the biggest irruptions of winter finches this year. Particularly abundant were **Evening Grosbeaks**, with flocks of up to 6 at feeders in WC 11/17 (TS), on VR 11/16 (LL), and in RU 10/31 (MB). Scattered observations of **Common Redpolls** became common starting in Nov, with a maximum of 80 feeding on birch catkins in BL 11/14 (AL). At least one **Red Crossbill** was detected in a Norway spruce in YV 11/14 (AL). On the same day, at least one and possibly two **White-winged Crossbills** were detected in WC again in Norway spruce (TS). **Pine Siskins** showed up at numerous feeders across *Warren*, with a maximum count of 40 in WC 10/13 (TS). A single **Snow Bunting** was spotted at AS 11/12 (SS, MS). The first two **American Tree Sparrows** of the season were seen 10/31 on LH (AM). **Fox Sparrows** were seen frequently this fall, with a maximum of 3 at a feeder in WC 11/2 and 3 at GL 10/27 (CB, SHS). Up to four **White-crowned Sparrows** were seen together at ER 10/17 (CW) and at FL 10/21 (CB). **Lincoln's Sparrows** seemed particularly scarce this fall, with single birds seen at ER 10/3 (CW) and outside TI 9/28 (EN) the only *Warren* sightings reported. Few **Rusty Blackbirds** were noted this fall; the high count of 15 was made 10/8 at HF (SHS).

Warbler migration seemed weak overall, perhaps as a result of the extended drought and its likely effects on fruit and insects. Relatively few **Tennessee Warblers** came through, with a high count of 15 caught and banded at Hector on 9/9 (SHS). A single report of **Connecticut Warbler** was made at BC 9/18 (TS). Highly unusual for *Warren*, a **Kentucky Warbler** was seen well on VR 8/16 (LL). A great urban find was a group of 11 **Cape May Warblers** working a single backyard tree in WC 9/17 (TS). A high count of 3 **Bay-breasted Warblers** were spotted along the TT 9/16 (SI). The true abundance of **Chestnut-sided Warblers** becomes obvious at banding stations, evidenced by the 9 caught and banded at HF 8/13 (CB, SHS). **Blackpoll Warblers** continued to be sparse this year, with a fall high of just 3 seen at DE 10/8. An impressive count of 8 **Palm Warblers** was tallied at ER on both 10/3 and 10/4 (CW). A single report of **Yellow-throated Warbler** from GL 8/24 was of a singing bird singing just uphill of a known breeding area along the Allegheny River. This species is rare but regular this far north (CL). Few **Wilson's Warblers** were reported, the high count was 2 from WC 9/11 (TS).

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### **Washington County**

Locations: Canonsburg Lake (CL), Cross Creek County Park (CC), Greencove Wetlands (GCW), Mingo Creek County Park (MC), Peters Lake (PL), City of Washington (WASH), Washington Park School pond (WPSP), Washington Reservoir #4 (R4).

As it was in most of sw. Pennsylvania, it was a notably lackluster fall for waterfowl in *Washington*. Reports of **Tundra Swans** included 20 at CC 11/12 (FK) and a small number heard at R4 that same day (RI). **Wood Ducks** collected at CC and peaked at around 40 birds in mid-Sep (FK, et al.). Very nice was the count of 52 **Blue-winged Teal** at CC 9/27 (MJ), all of which were gone by 10/2, which was also the last date for the

species anywhere in the county. An early **Northern Shoveler** was at CC 8/30 (MJ), and their season was bookended by a lingering bird at TL 11/15 (JF). Five **American Wigeon** at PL 11/12 (JF, JP, GG) were a nice find for the fall season. A **Green-winged Teal** was back at CL already by 8/17 (FK), but none were seen anywhere after 9/8. A **Redhead** was present on a pond on Bigler Road near Bentleyville from early Sep to at least 9/30 (RI). **Ring-necked Duck**, **Lesser Scaup**, and **Bufflehead** were all reported in very small numbers, mostly at R4 in mid-Nov (RI, et al.). A nice count of 30 **Common Mergansers** was made at the Ginger Hill ponds 11/14 (GG). A significant cold front passed through 10/29 and brought over an inch of rain to the Pittsburgh area. Along with this, a minor fallout of **Ruddy Ducks** occurred that day when 32 put down on PL (JF) and 27 were on CL (RM). Four **Horned Grebes** at R4 on 10/27 (RI) was a nice count.

**Black-billed Cuckoo** was reported four times, once in early Aug in Robinson Twp. (FK), probably a local breeder, and three times in mid-Sep at various locations, probably migrants. Three reports of single **Common Nighthawks** were spread across three calendar months: one at WASH 8/1 (LC), one at CL 9/5 (JP), and one at CC 10/2 (FK). A **Sora** was kicked up at GCW 10/5 (ST), the only one reported this season.

Mudflats at CC provided some exciting shorebirding this season, a rare treat in a publically accessible location in *Washington*. All reports that follow were from CC unless otherwise stated. One **Semipalmated Plover** was present 8/30 (MJ), and the top count of **Killdeer** was 70 on 10/21 (RI). A single **Dunlin** appeared 11/2-3 (JF), and a late **Pectoral Sandpiper** was also present 11/3 (JF). Up to 3 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were variously reported 8/21-9/6 (m.ob.) but the top count of the species for the season was made at Boone Res., where 7 were present 8/23 (FK). Also at Boone was the season's only **Short-billed Dowitcher** 8/5-6 (MJ). A **Spotted Sandpiper** lingered at CC to 10/23 (KS, BG, RS), and a **Solitary Sandpiper** hung on there to 10/26 (FK). A **Greater Yellowlegs** was present 11/1-12 (FK), and another (or the same) was found on the very late date of 11/25 (FK). Best of all were three juvenile **Red-necked Phalaropes** that appeared at CC 9/5 (MJ), the first for the county since 2012 and probably just the third record overall.

A **Bonaparte's Gull** at PL 10/29 (the day of the cold front that also dropped Ruddy Ducks in the area) was a nice find for the fall season in *Washington* (JF). Four **Common Loons** were on a pond near Bentleyville 11/8 (FK). For some unknown reason, CL has long been the best and most reliable spot anywhere in the sw. corner of the state for **Great Egret**, and they were present there again in small numbers this fall 8/4-9/17 (JF, et al.). The only other report was of one at Cherry Valley Res. 8/22 (MJ). **Black Vultures** continue to be on an apparent increase in the extreme sw. counties; this season 4 were noted at CC 10/23 (KS, DF, BG, RS). A lingering **Osprey** was at PL 10/31 (FK), a few days after the strong cold front of 10/29 passed through. *Washington Cemetery* has long been a reliable wintering location for **Merlin**, and one was indeed noted there 11/22 (LC). New this year, however, was one at the Queen of Heaven Cemetery in Peters Twp. 11/13-25 (RT), and 2 were noted there 11/21 (JF). Yet another **Merlin**, an early migrant no doubt, was seen along McElree Road near R4 on 8/19 (LC).

Reports of **Philadelphia Vireo** included one at MC 9/8 (JT), one there again 9/20 (JP), and one at WPSP 9/21 (LC). The colonization of *Washington* by **Common Ravens** is complete; this season there were at least 31 separate reports of the species from 15 locations. They hardly warrant mention any longer. For some reason, swallows were extremely poorly reported. Indeed, there were only three reports of **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** to eBird, and none after 8/20, and the only other swallow reported at all was **Barn Swallow**. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** irrupted here and everywhere in Pennsylvania, beginning with one in WASH 8/26 (LC). Reports of **American Pipits** were frequent at CC 9/19-11/3 (MJ, et al.) including a high count of 15 on 11/3, the last day they were noted. A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was at MC 9/20 (JP), and a **Hermit Thrush** was a surprise in a tiny patch of trees in a densely suburban yard in central WASH 10/30 (LC). The bird was found during a stakeout for Evening Grosbeaks that were reported at a feeder in the same tiny yard: a small, local example of the famous Patagonia Picnic Table Effect.

Speaking of **Evening Grosbeaks**, *Washington* enjoyed several

records of these beautiful northern finches during their invasion this fall. First was a flock of up to 20 at that feeder in central WASH 10-26-28 (CS), followed by one reported in three different locations all nearby to each other in a different part of WASH 11/8 (SG, LC), possibly the same bird seen in three different places. A nice flock of 15 was found in MC 11/22 (GG), and at least 2 remained there 11/23 (JF, JP). Like in most of sw. Pennsylvania, **Purple Finches** were present mostly at feeders in very small numbers this season, noted as early as 8/12. **Pine Siskins** were also present beginning in Oct, but the largest flock was just 20 birds at a feeder in WASH 10/8 (RI).

Two sparrows made big news in the county this fall. First was a very well described **Lark Sparrow** that was randomly happened upon along McElree Rd. near R4 on 8/12 (SG *fide* RI). This represents the first time the species has been mentioned in the *Washington* record, but one can assume that the species did indeed occur here in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Lark Sparrows briefly became a breeding species in the sw. corner of Pennsylvania at the height of the deforestation that marked the era. That said I could find no specific mention of the species being recorded in *Washington* in those years, though there are several records from *Greene*, *Fayette*, *Beaver*, and *Allegheny*. The other big sparrow find was a **Nelson's Sparrow** at GCW 10/4-5 (ST), which represented the third for the county. Both previous records were from GCW as well, in Oct 2007 and Oct 2013. A **Fox Sparrow** was a nice feeder bird in WASH 11/17 (RI), and a few **Lincoln's Sparrows** were noted in the first week of Oct, beginning with one near Muse 10/1 (FK).

**Rusty Blackbird** was noted only a CC 10/18-11/3 (FK, JF, et al.), but counts reached as many as 33 during that time. It was a very slow season for warblers. A pattern that was also evident in *Beaver*, **Bay-breasted Warbler** was rather well-reported, but fellow budwormer **Cape May Warbler** was not. A nice total of 17 **Palm Warblers** was made at CC 10/6 (KS, BG, RH), and **Wilson's Warbler** was noted at the Buffalo Creek IBA 9/12 (JT) and at WPSP 9/14 (LC).

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### **Westmoreland County**

Locations: Beaver Run Reservoir (BRR-380), Conemaugh River Lake, Livermore-West Penn Trail (CRL), Crabtree Farm Area (CFA), Donegal Lake (DL), Ethel Springs Lake, a.k.a. Derry Lake (ESL), Keystone State Park (KSP), Kuehl Property, Murrysville (KP), Latrobe Reservoir, a.k.a. Trout Run Reservoir (LR), Love Hollow north of Ligonier (LH), Mammoth Park (MP), Powdermill Nature Reserve (PNR), St. Vincent Lake and Wetland (SV), Tubmill Reservoir (TR), Twin Lakes Park (TLP), Westmoreland Heritage Trail (WHT), MAWC Beaver Run property (WHT-BRR), Delmont (WHT-D), Sarah Steel Trailhead to Saltsburg (WHT-SST), Saunders Station to Trafford (WHT-SS), Sewickley Wetlands (SW), Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve (WPNR).

A first state record (courtesy of Powdermill Avian Research Center and its staff) and irrupting species were the highlights this season.

Flocks of 58 **Snow Geese** and 107 **Tundra Swans** flew over PNR 10/30 (AY), and there were another 161 **Tundra Swans** at ESL 11/22 (AL). Seven **Cackling Geese** at BRR-380 on 11/2 (MJ) were a one-day wonder. There were several large counts made of **Canada Geese**; 306 at WHT-BRR 9/23 (KB), at 350 at SV 11/12 350 (SW), and 320 at SV 11/28 (PF). **Wood Duck** was frequently reported at LR 9/16-11/21, with the high count of 31 on 10/25 (AY, KCT). An unusual high count for the species was the raft of 64 **Blue-winged Teal** at MP 10/7 (RCh). Four early season **Northern Shovelers** at MP 8/30 (SM, LK), and all other reports were at DL in the narrow time-frame of 11/7-15 when small counts of up to 4 were made. LR was the most productive location for several of the puddle ducks: **Gadwall** was reported 10/24-11/28 with the high of 16

on 10/28 (JLK, TK, MM), the high (and earliest) count of **American Wigeon** was 35 on 10/24 (PF), and **American Black Ducks** were reported 10/4-11/28 with the high of 24 on 10/29 (AY). Also, LR accounted for both of the season's only two reports for **Northern Pintail**: one 10/24 (PF) and one 10/29 (AY). **Green-winged Teal** was first reported at LR 10/4 (AL), and this was followed by many reports there through 11/22 of up to 4 birds (AL, m.ob.). Top count for Green-winged Teal was 18 at CRL 10/24 (PF). Diving ducks were not well-reported. Canvasback was missed, and one female **Redhead** at DL 10/12 (AY) was the only report for that species. **Ring-necked Duck** showed a bit better, with reports at several locations of which DL was most productive, where 26 were present 11/1 (AL). The few reports of scaup were all very late in the season: **Greater Scaup** included 4 at DL 11/27 (AL) and one at ESL 11/28 (PF). **Lesser Scaup** had 2 at ESL 11/22 (AL) and 7 at TR 11/28 (AM). The first report for **White-winged Scoter** was 3 at ESL 10/29 (AL), and then what was possibly a continuing bird was seen at TR 10/30 (AM), which was noted again 11/4 (AM) and 11/7 (RH, SM). A **Long-tailed Duck** was at TR 11/28 (AM). **Bufflehead** was frequently reported at several locations, with high counts of 28 at TR 11/22 (AM) and 21 on 11/28 (AM), and 28 at ESL 11/22 (AL). There were no reports of Common Goldeneye. **Hooded Mergansers** were reported at many well-scattered locations during the season, with the high count of 21 at ESR 11/22 (AL). **Common Mergansers** were also widely reported for the season; notable counts made at WHT-BR which included 20 on 10/19, 35 on 10/27, and 50 on 11/10 (all KB). The season's only **Red-breasted Merganser** was photographed at BRR-380 on 10/30 (MM). There were many high counts of **Ruddy Duck** in Nov, specifically 69 at ESL 10/29 (AL), 199 at DL 10/31 (AL), 150 at TR 11/5 (MM), and 60 at BRR-380 11/12 (MM).

Sadly, there were no reports for the struggling state bird of Pennsylvania, Ruffed Grouse. **Pied-billed Grebe** was the only grebe reported for the season, with the 27 at DL (AL) the best number. A species never widely reported is **Black-billed Cuckoo**; one at LH 8/18 (AM) was probably not yet a migrant. **Common Nighthawks** in Delmont included 5 on 8/25 (KB) and 2 on 8/30 (RH, SM). A **Virginia Rail** was at DL 9/17 (AM). Not a first for *Westmoreland*, but a rare visitor was a **Common Gallinule** first located at DL 11/7 (AL, KCT) and was still there 11/8 (AM, DBr). High counts of **American Coots** were limited to BRR-380, where 62 were reported 10/30 (MM), and at DL, where 100 were noted 11/7 (AL, KCT).

Both **Spotted** and **Solitary Sandpipers** were frequently reported. Other shorebirds of note included: 4 **Semipalmated Plovers** at WHT-BRR (RC, RH, SM), 4 **Dunlin** at LR 10/29 (AY), 12 **Least Sandpipers** at CRL 8/19 (AL), one **Pectoral Sandpiper** at MP 9/20 (MJ) which continued to 10/4 (AL), 3 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** at MP 8/19 (AL) and 3 at WHT-BRR 9/1 (KB), 9 **Greater Yellowlegs** at MP 11/4 (SW), and best of all, a **Willet** at MP that was photographed by several parties 8/30 (MJ, et al.). MP was also productive for **Wilson's Snipe** 10/3-11/14, including a high count of 4 on 11/4 (SW). **American Woodcock** were only reported at PNR, where top tally was 3 on 10/25 (AL).

There were very few reports of gulls; probably the most "notable" was the 11 **Ring-billed Gulls** at ESL 11/28 (PF). A **Common Loon** at LR 11/28 (AL) was the only one reported. No more than 2 **Double-crested Cormorants** were mentioned on any report, and interestingly there was no overlap in time among the reports at the two productive locations: TLP from 9/6-10/5 and DL 11/7-29. One **Great Egret** was at MP 8/3 (RCh) and 8/18 (SW), probably two different birds considering the time elapsed between sightings. The second bird was reported several times through 8/26 (RCh).

As expected, **Black Vulture** was reported in the Ligonier Valley; the high count of 10 at a deer carcass submerged in water at LH 9/11 (AM). Curiously, there were no Turkey Vultures on this carcass, only Black. Another 3 **Black Vultures** were spotted while driving on the Pennsylvania Turnpike near Irwin 9/29 (AL). There were many reports at scattered locations for **Osprey** and **Bald Eagle**, including one checklist that reported 4 Osprey and 2 Bald Eagles at the Bush Recreation Area on Loyalhanna Creek 8/15 (RC). The only report of the season of **Northern Harrier** was one incidental sighting made at Grand View Farm near Wilpen 11/30 (AM). A rare sighting, one juvenile **Northern Goshawk** was perched close enough for the white supercilium to be seen clearly during

a walk along the WHT-BRR 10/17 (KB). A pair of **Red-shouldered Hawks** that nested in the area were seen and heard at the KP many times during the season 8/3-11/28. There were just a few scattered reports of **Broad-winged Hawk** mostly during their typical migration window, although one at KSP 8/2 (MJ) could be assumed to have been a breeding bird.

There were scattered reports for **Eastern Screech-Owl**, **Great Horned Owl** and **Barred Owl**. All of those owl species were reported at PNR, 9 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** and one **Eastern Screech-Owl** were also captured and banded. **Barred Owls** were head many times at the KP 8/1-10/11. Among the few reports for **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was one at the KP 10/20 (JLK, TK). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** continued at the Rolling Rock Reserve in Laughlinton; 2 were there 9/26 (AM). Five reports of **Merlin** for the season was an unusually high total. The earliest was one at PNR 9/16 (AY). Likely one of the Tarentum Bridge nesting birds, a **Peregrine Falcon** was reported at Robinson Street in New Kensington 11/2 (LM).

Two **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were caught at PNR this season, and one was photographed perched, unsurprisingly, on a snag at Hempfield Park 9/2 (JP). Rare reports for **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** away from PNR were one at LH 9/5 (AM) and one on the WHT-D 9/18 (KB). Birders usually have to record Willow and Alder Flycatchers as Traill's Flycatcher at this season, but a bird in hand is different story. The PNR Banding Program Manager (AL) reported one **Alder Flycatcher** there 9/4 using its wing formula and bill measurements. The earliest of the several field reports for **Philadelphia Vireo** was one at SFB 9/6 (MK) and the latest was 2 WHT-D 10/1 (KB, LH). Field reports indicated **Red-eyed Vireos** were very abundant this season, and this was confirmed by banding results at PNR where the 2004 record of 304 birds was smashed by the 641 new bandings for 2020. Including recaptures, PNR ended up just short of capturing 1000 Red-eyes for the season. Providing confirmation that **Common Raven** continue at lower elevations in *Westmoreland* were the many at several WHT locations (KB), and at a residence in Delmont (KB), beginning 8/9 at WHT-SS) through 11/21 when 2 were at Delmont.

Quite a flock, a mix of adult and juvenile **Purple Martins** totaled 200 perched on telephone wires at BRR-380 on 8/15 (MM); last report there, a traditional nesting location, was 6 on 8/26 (MM). The high among just a few reports was 25 **Bank Swallows** at TLP 9/12 (PC). Three **Cliff Swallows** at BRR-380 8/3 (MM) were the only ones reported. First arrival of the irruptive **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was one heard at Cloverleaf Golf Course 8/20 (TK); other early records included 2 there 8/27 and 9/3 (TK, MM). WHT-D was productive for **Brown Creeper**, where earliest report was one 10/3 (KB) and last was one 11/20 (PF). The WHT-BR was the most productive location for **Winter Wren**, with reports of one 10/14 (KB) and 2 on 10/15 (KB). A stunning photo of a **Marsh Wren** was made at DL 10/31 (C&CF). They were also noted on five dates at PNR 9/15-10/13, including captures and re-captures. The only report of **Gray-cheeked Thrush** away from PNR was one at WHT-D 9/28 (KB); 61 were banded at PNR 9/15-10/11. **Swainson's Thrush** and **Hermit Thrush** were both well-reported at PNR and elsewhere. Some substantial counts of flocking **Cedar Waxwings** included 80 at DL 9/5 (ST) and 70 at WHT-BR 10/21 (KB).

*Westmoreland* was not left out of the winter finch invasion this fall. All reports for **Evening Grosbeaks** were in the Laurel Highlands. High counts included 30 at PNR 10/25, 35 at LH 10/31 (AM), and an estimated 25 at DL 11/1 (AL). An example of their own irruption 11 **Purple Finches** were at a Ligonier residence 10/17 (JW), where 40 **Pine Siskins** were counted the same day. Many reports of Pine Siskins were made at PNR, beginning with 19 on 10/8 continuing through 11/7 (RH, SM). The 117 bandings of Pine Siskin for the season was the fifth highest ever there. There were also low elevation reports of both species, including first 9 Pine Siskin at the KP 10/9, and 3 Purple Finches and 25 Pine Siskins there 11/12 (JLK, TK). At Delmont the high count was 15 on 10/26 (KB). A timely visit to the CFA provided the only **Snow Bunting** for the season: 2 on Helen Drive 11/21 (AL).

Likely a breeder on territory, the only **Grasshopper Sparrow** was one heard on Springertown Road near Kecksburg 8/1 (JLK, TK). **Fox Sparrows** were widely reported. Good locations were PNR 10/15-11/12 and SV 11/3-11/27. One was photographed at a residence in Murrysville

11/15 (EP). **White-crowned Sparrows** were reported at several reliable locations, including the CFA where 4 were tallied 10/28 (JLK, TK, MM) and at the feeders at the WPNR where the first report was 2 on 10/15 (PC). Rarely reported, a **Vesper Sparrow** was at a home in Stahlstown 10/17 (DB). As is typical, the best location for **Lincoln's Sparrow** was PNR, where 31 were captured 9/29-10/25.

Lingering on territory, or perhaps late migrants, were one **Bobolink** at PNR 9/5 (AP) and one at LH 9/6 (AM). It was quite a spectacle at the KP a mixed flock of 1000 or more **Common Grackles** and **Red-winged Blackbirds** lifted off from the trees in the backyard woods in the early morning 10/1. It was nice to see **Rusty Blackbird**, a rare migrant and winter visitor, was reported at several locations, including one at SW 10/16 (LK, SMu), one at DL 10/26 (ST), 2 at MP 11/6 (SW), and one at SV 11/9 (RCh).

There were no reports of two local breeders that are elusive in migration; Worm-eating Warbler and Cerulean Warbler. Otherwise it was a strong season for warblers with reports of 31 breeding and migrant species. One **Golden-winged Warbler** captured at PNR 8/13 was the only one reported. A **Prothonotary Warbler** was at MP 9/11 (SW). Two reports of **Orange-crowned Warbler** included one at WHT-D 9/4 (PF) and one at PNR 10/11. An astounding 21 **Connecticut Warblers** were noted at PNR 9/4-10/8, but they were not found elsewhere. The WHT-D was a prime location for "Bay-Poll" warblers; among the many reports were 2 **Bay-breasted Warblers** 10/1 (KB, LH) and 2-3 **Blackpoll Warblers** 10/1 (LH, KB). Nice counts of **Palm Warbler** at WHT-SSH included 6 on 9/27 and 4 on 10/10 (both KB). Another high-count was the 5 **Pine Warblers** at DL 9/9 (SW). A **Wilson Warbler** on the WHT-D 9/18 (KB, PF, LH) was a nice find away from PNR.

Quite exciting was the capture of a rare bilateral gynandromorph **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at PNR 9/24. This rare bird had the male pink wing pits on the right side and the female yellow on the left side. It is one of fewer than ten bilateral gynandromorphs ever banded at Powdermill. Detailed knowledge of flight calls allowed for a report of one **Dickcissel** at PNR 10/1 (AY).

Banding Program Manager Annie Lindsay of PNR provided the following report of a first state record. "A **Brewer's Sparrow** was captured at the banding station 9/4. The bird was found in a middle net in a set of nine mist nets called "Long Lane". Long Lane spans a wetland created by a natural spring and is capped by transitional habitat on either end. This area is quite productive for species like Common Yellowthroats, Gray Catbirds, and Swamp Sparrows. The Brewer's was extracted by Kevin Chumpitaz, our field tech from Peru, during the 7:35am net round. Kevin had never seen a Brewer's Sparrow, nor had he been to the western U.S., but his instinct was that it was a Brewer's Sparrow. He had the benefit of being unencumbered by knowledge of this species' normal range, something that made the rest of the banding crew hesitate to immediately call it a Brewer's Sparrow. The crew excitedly gathered around the banding table with reference materials while I carefully keyed out the plumage characteristics and measurements and confirmed Powdermill's first Brewer's Sparrow capture. As to be expected, listsers rushed to the Banding Station, submitting eBird observations by the afternoon. The Brewer's Sparrow was not always reliable, but many additional observations were reported on eBird through the afternoon of 9/6. The bird was recaptured three times, each time gaining fat and mass and the last report was a recapture of the bird 9/10."

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Tammy Arnold, Kerry Bell, Ken Byerly, Dave Brook (DBr), Dick Byers, Pete Campolongo, Rich Carlson, Richard Chirichiello (RCh), Chad and Crystal Fike (C&CF), Patience Fisher, Rebecca Hart, Linda Huber, Matt Juskowich, Michelle Kienholz, Lydia Klimchock, Janet L. Kuehl, Annie Lindsay, Andy Mack, Steve Manns, Mark McConaughy, Lynn Mosovsky, Sean Mueseler (SMu), Elspeth Pierce, Aidan Place, Joseph Pumford, Shannon Thompson, Kevin Chumpitaz Trujillo, Steve Wagner, Judith Wilson, Aaron Yappert.

## Wyoming County

Locations: Beaumont (BM); Aldovin Pond (AP); Davis Crossing (DC); Iroquois Trail; Tunkhannock (IT); Jennings Pond (JP); Lake Carey (LC); Lake Sheridan (LS); Lazybrook Park (LP); Little Rocky Glen (LRG); Mulligan's Pond (MP); Nesbitt Road (NR); Oxbow Lake (OL); Perrin's Marsh (PM); Phelps Swamp (PS); Riverside Park (RP); Russell Hill (RH); Scavazzo's Pond (SP); Scottsville Road (SR); Sharpe's Lake (SL); State Game Lands 57 (SGL); Vosburg Neck (including the Endless Mountains Nature Center, Camp Lackawanna, and the Howland Preserve (VN).

This summary contains primarily the visiting transients that were recorded in *Wyoming*. None of these birds is a confirmed breeding species.

**Tundra Swan** was recorded 11/11 when 2 stopped by briefly at LC (JD, MC). **Gadwall** at PM included 2 on 11/24 (RK) and a single 11/30 (EZ). **American Wigeon** made an appearance at two local waterways during the period: 8 on 10/20 and 4 on 10/30 both at SP (JD), and 14 stopped by LC 10/30 (JD). A surprise find was the appearance of 10 **Green-winged Teal** at AP 10/29 (JD), a very small pond near a long-abandoned dairy. They were also recorded in two other locations: 2 at PM 11/24 at PM (RK) and 4 there 11/30 (RK). **Ring-necked Duck** is a regular visitor during migration, this year reports included 12 at SP 11/1 (JD) and 5 at OL 11/26 (JD). **Long-tailed Duck** is rarely reported in *Wyoming*. This fall, the only was of 3 birds at LC 10/26 (MC). **Bufflehead** is usually recorded during both spring and fall migrations, and they were reported at four different locations this season, by five different observers (AK, DL, DT, JD, and JM), usually in numbers of 5 or fewer. An exception was the flock of 40 at LC 11/12 (JD). Another surprise find and an uncommon record were 4 **Common Goldeneye** that made a brief stopover at OL 11/22 (JD). Reports of **Red-breasted Merganser** usually include very few individuals. However, 20 were recorded at LC 10/26 (MS) this season. Finally, among non-breeding species, **Ruddy Duck** is recorded every migration season, and this year, the species was recorded on three different waterways in the county—LC, OL, SF—usually in numbers of one to 5 (AK, JD, MC, RK). The largest group was 20 at LC 11/12 (JD).

**Pied-billed Grebe** is a species listed a possible breeder during the Second Breeding Bird Atlas and so far as I know, there has not been any more recent data to increase its status to probable. There was but one record this season, that of 2 birds at LC 10/16 (JD). **Double-crested Cormorant** was recorded at five different locations: 2 at VN 8/29 (RL), one at LS 8/30, 2 at LC 9/3 (MC), one at PS 9/27 (JD) and one at OL 10/23 (MC).

The Second Breeding Bird Atlas listed **Black Vulture** as a possible (PO) breeder in *Wyoming*, and there was no data since to upgrade that listing, until this year. All of this year's records were outside the listed safe dates for the species, but in late September, a local resident reported 2 adults with 2 young using her barn and her roof as a roost over a couple weeks. Might they have bred there on her property? We'll have to keep a close eye on the premises next season. Other records of Black Vulture included 2 over Meshoppen 8/13 (RL) and 17 over Tunkhannock 11/14 (RK). A single **Golden Eagle** was recorded over VN 10/17 (JD, AT).

Three species of sandpiper dropped in for short visits on their way to wintering grounds. A single **Solitary Sandpiper** visited DC 9/3 (JD), a there were several other records of them at SGL: one 8/10 (DG), 4 on 8/14 (DG, RS), one 8/18 (DG), one 9/13 (SM), and 4 on 9/15 (SM). There was one record of 2 **Greater Yellowlegs** 9/20 on the river near Vosburg, and one record of one **Lesser Yellowlegs** in SGL 9/15 (DG).

Two **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were observed foraging in the roadside shrubbery at VN 10/14 (JD). There were two reports of **Common Redpoll**, 8 at SGL 11/25 (DG) and 100 at NR 11/30 (EZ). **Pine Siskin** was reported three times: 2 in downtown Factoryville 10/29 (TS), 32 at Falls 11/13 (JM), and 4 in Factoryville 11/10 (TS). **White-crowned Sparrow** was recorded only once, at LC 10/26 (MC).

CORRIGENDUM: A correction is needed to summer report (volume 34, no. 3) where a sentence about Peregrine Falcon nesting was inadvertently moved to the next paragraph, about Swainson's Thrush

nesting. The corrected text is inserted here:

A pair of **Peregrine Falcons** fledged at least one offspring last year from a cliff site near Laceyville. This year, two young were fledged from a different but nearby ledge, and fledging was confirmed 6/12 (JD). I do not know whether either of this year's adults was from last year's breeding pair.

We can raise the status of **Swainson's Thrush**, from probable (PR) during the BBC, to confirmed (CO). The species was observed several times in July at several locations in SGL: 8 birds 7/7 (EZ); a single bird 7/16 (JDe); and up to 11 birds from 7/14 to 7/30 (DG). Importantly, recently fledged young were observed at Somer Brook headwaters in SGL 7/30 (DG).

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## York County

Locations: Codorus State Park (CSP), Fairview Township (FVTP), Gifford Pinchot State Park (GPSP), Hopewell Township Park (HTP), Lake Redman (LR), Lake Williams (LW), Long Arm Reservoir (LAR), Rocky Ridge County Park (RRCP), Shepperd Myers Reservoir (SMR), Spring Valley County Park (SVCP), State Game Lands 242 (SGL2), State Game Lands 243 (SGL3).

Where to start?!? A new fall record was set with 224 species reported, far eclipsing the prior high of 198 in 2017. There were numerous late departure dates. And there were plenty of rarities: **Ross's Goose, Trumpeter Swan**, a sweep of the **scoters, Sandhill Crane, Hudsonian Godwit, Rufous and Calliope Hummingbirds, White Ibis, Evening Grosbeak, Golden-winged Warbler, and Connecticut Warbler**. Obviously, the birds were here and it was evident too that birders were out in record numbers, turning in record observation hours.

A **Ross's Goose** was well photographed at LR 11/9-15 (DA, CE, RG, BR, AS). Singles of **Cackling Goose** were be sorted out from the Canadas at LR 11/1 (BR) and LAR 11/22 (DA). A **Trumpeter Swan** was at CSP 11/22 (DA) and, as can occur, proved challenging to differentiate from Tundra Swan. Six sites produced reports of **Tundra Swan** (m.ob.) including 55 over North Codorus Twp. 11/21 (SS). The following species were reported multiple times but none in big numbers: **Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Green-winged Teal, and Ring-necked Duck. Northern Pintail** were tough to find with singles at LAR 10/10 (DA), LR 10/28-31 (BR), and CSP 11/8 (DA). A pair of **Canvasbacks** was at LAR 10/30-11/1 (DA, CB, DN, AS). Ten **Redhead** were at CSP 10/25 (EV), a single was at LAR 10/30 (DN), and 4 were at LW 11/22 (DA, AM, BR, RS). A **Greater Scaup** was at CSP 11/10 (BR) and a nice count of 14 was made at GPSP 11/12 (DN). **Lesser Scaup** were found at three sites with LW producing a count of 26 on 11/12 (DA, AM, BR, RS). A clean sweep of the scoters was a first in this compiler's 11-year tenure. Two **Surf Scoters** were at CSP 10/29 (CB) and 5 were at GPSP 11/12 (DN). A single **White-winged Scoter** showed up at LAR 11/15 (DA, DH, DNN). Two **Black Scoters** were at CSP 1029 (CB) and a single was at LAR 11/15 (DA, DH, DNN). A trio of **Long-tailed Ducks** was at CSP 10/29 (CB). A nice count of 11 **Common Goldeneye** was made at GPSP 11/28 (DNN). An unusually early female **Common Merganser** was at LR 8/12 (BR). A single **Red-breasted Merganser** at GPSP 11/20-26 (m.ob.) provided the only report.

PGC stocking efforts produced observations of up to 4 **Ring-necked Pheasant** at SGL2 and SGL3 from 9/6-11/20 (DA, DNN, BR, DT) and up to 5 at CSP 11/2-9 (HM, FX). **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** continued to be widely reported, while the only **Black-billed Cuckoos** were singles at SGL2 on 8/15 (DBF) and 9/15 (DT). There were some impressive counts

of **Common Nighthawk**: 42 at Springettsbury Twp 8/29 (CM), 55 at Green Lane Farms 8/29 (RK), and 61 at RRCP Hawkwatch 9/24 (m.ob.). Additionally total fall count at the hawkwatch was 158 nighthawks. Latest **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was in FVTP 10/3 (NZ). Not one, but two **Rufous Hummingbirds** were tagged (SaGL) in the county. Hatch year males were at Seven Valleys 10/10-12/4 and York New Salem 10/5-11/30. Topping those, however, was a hatch year male **Calliope Hummingbird** in FVTP that was also banded (SaGL). Its cooperative nature, very long stay 10/23-12/19, and a very gracious homeowner afforded many birders an opportunity to see this state rarity and county first. A **Sora** was detected at LR 10/10 (BR) and 11/5-6 (MH, DNN, BR). The RRCP Hawkwatch produced the vantage point for the observation of a northward-heading pair of **Sandhill Cranes** 9/12 (CE, PK, RP, et al.).

Good finds were **Black-bellied Plover** at LAR 11/5-15 (HM, et al.) and an **American Golden-Plover** at both CSP 9/21-28 (BA, et al.) and LAR 10/7-11 (DH, CKu). A single **Semipalmated Plover** was at LAR 9/1-19 (DA, DN). The shorebird of the season was a **Hudsonian Godwit** that moved between the three Hanover area reservoirs, CSP, LAR, and SMR 10/6-21 (DN, et al.). One of the observers (DA) witnessed the bird probing with covered in mud up to the forehead and suggested "*Mudsonian Godwit*" might be a fitting appellation. County records document two prior sightings; 10/20-31/1992 at Brunner Island and 10/4-5/1997 at SMR. A **Sanderling** was at CSP 9/27 (HM) and, as is typical, was the only report. Assumed to be the same flock; **Dunlin** numbering up to 25 moved between CSP and LAR 10/17-11/19 (m.ob.). Notations involving late departures of **Least Sandpiper**, **Semipalmated Sandpiper**, and **Spotted Sandpiper** are captured in the table below. **Pectoral Sandpipers** were found at Memorial Hospital grounds 9/21-10/10 (DA, BR) and moving between the three Hanover Area reservoirs 9/13-11/16 (m.ob.) with a high count of 21 at LAR 10/2 (HM). **Wilson's Snipe** singles were on the Memorial Hospital grounds 9/22-26 (DA, BR), LAR 10/10 (DA), and HTP 10/13 (DF).

Best count of **Bonaparte Gull** was 30 at CSP 11/12 (CB). **Great Black-backed Gull** was over Wrightsville 9/26 (CMA) and 11/15 (AW), and at the Riddle Rd. landfill 11/18-28 (DA, CB, DN, BR). Three reports of **Caspian Tern** 8/4-9/18 (SA, CB, BR) were paced by 3 at CSP 9/18 (SA). A trio of **Common Terns** was found at LAR 8/26 (DA) and CSP produced a pair of **Forster's Terns** 8/29 (BB) and a single 11/3 (DH).

A very strong count of 46 **Common Loons** was made at GPSP 10/25 (DNN). A **Little Blue Heron** was at LR the morning of 8/5 (CMA, BR) and likely the same bird was at Sunnyside Rd. early evening 8/5 (CB). Another Little Blue was at CSP 10/18-22 (m.ob.). A photo of a **Cattle Egret** in a rather steep pasture near Craley was posted to Facebook 11/27 (*fide* CB). A visit the following day came up empty. **Black-crowned Night Heron** was reported at three sites 8/1-9/6 (m.ob.) with a high count of 7 at LW 8/5 (CK). A juvenile **White Ibis** at LAR 8/22-25 (DN, CB, DH, NH) was a great find.

The RRCP Hawkwatch enjoyed another year of excellent coverage, and results are summarized in the hawkwatch migration summary in this issue. Away from the site, Sam Lewis State Park produced 168 **Broad-winged Hawks** 9/15 (ML). **Eastern Screech-Owl** and **Great Horned Owl** were found at 13 and 21 locations, respectively. **Barred Owl** reporting was at normal levels with five reports. **Short-eared Owl** was first detected at HTP 11/21 (RP) with as many as 4 being seen thereafter (m.ob.). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was at Ski Roundtop 10/31 (CH). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were reported at 14 sites with a high count of 9 at GPSP 11/29 (NW). Away from the RRCP Hawkwatch, **American Kestrel**, **Merlin**, and **Peregrine Falcon** reports numbered 20, eight, and three, respectively.

Good fall season finds were an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at SGL2 8/18 and 9/14 (both DT) and at RRCP 9/7 (DWe) and 9/9 (DN), and a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** at RRCP 9/12 (DA) and 9/15 (CB). Some nice counts of vireos included 9 **White-eyed Vireos** at SVCP 9/6 (DA), 6 **Yellow-throated Vireos** at GPSP 9/7 (DA), and 9 **Blue-headed Vireos** at RRCP 10/3 (DA). If all reports reflect correct identifications, the 12 sites reporting **Philadelphia Vireo** was unprecedented. Further details on late departures of Yellow-throated, Philadelphia, and **Warbling Vireo** are contained in the table.

**Horned Larks** were at HTP 8/30-11/29 (m.ob.) where the high count

was 20 on 9/10 (BR). The only other report was of 3 along Clark Rd 11/7 (DA). As publicized, **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were widespread (m.ob.), as were **Brown Creeper** and **Winter Wren**. Uncommon, a probable **Marsh Wren** was detected at LR 11/9 (AS). **Gray-cheeked Thrush** singles were found at GPSP 9/15 (NZ) and 10/17 (DA), at RRCP 10/4 (QP), and SGL3 on 10/31 (DT). Nice counts of 10 **Swainson's Thrushes** 9/20 (DA) and 9 **Hermit Thrushes** 11/26 (AWg) were made at RRCP and GPSP, respectively. Five sites reported **American Pipit** counts of 15 at Heindel Rd. 11/15 (EP) and GPSP 11/20 (DN). Top **Cedar Waxwing** flock was about 100 birds at SGL2 on 9/13 (DNN).

Anticipation was high but, as is typical, the **Evening Grosbeak** movement was only witnessed by a fortunate few. A bird was at a Loganville feeder 10/31 (CE, BR), up to 5 were at LR 10/31-11/1 (DA, AM, RS), and 9 were seen in flight at RRCP 11/6 (JB). **Purple Finches** were widespread with a half-dozen sites producing double digit counts, topped by 20 birds at SGL3 on 10/16 (DT). It was likewise for **Pine Siskin**, with 118 noted during a five hour period at RRCP (CE). **American Goldfinch** seemed to say "Hey, don't forget about us!" when least 200 were seen feeding in a sunflower plot at SGL2 on 9/1 (SB).

Reports of **Grasshopper Sparrow** included a single at Highpoint Scenic Vista 8/2 (DNN) and up to 3 at HTP 8/1-10/13 (CE, DF, NH, BR). Eight **Chipping Sparrow** reports were made in Nov with a bird at FVTP 11/22 (DN) the latest. With the balmy November, **American Tree Sparrow** didn't make their way into the county until 11/24 (DCa) at Dover Twp. Three other reports (CB, AM, DN, RS) through the remainder of the month suggested a decent movement once it started. **Fox Sparrow** was reported at 13 sites starting 10/22. A nice find was a **Vesper Sparrow** at SGL3 on 10/14 (DT). **Savannah Sparrow** enjoyed wider reporting than usual, with birds found at six sites. As always, HTP led with way, with birds present all period, and an impressive high count of 23 on 10/3 and 10/13 (both DF). Ten sites yielding **Lincoln's Sparrow** 9/15-10/31 (m.ob.) and 13 sites yielding **Swamp Sparrow** 9/15-11/30 (m.ob.) were both impressive. **Yellow-breasted Chat** singles were found at SVCP 9/6 (DA) and GPSP 9/15 (DN). A single **Bobolink** was in Longstown Village 10/5 (LV), and HTP produced up to 25 birds 8/30-10/3 (DA, DF). Five sites holding **Eastern Meadowlark** was more than usual and they were present at HTP all period. High count was 36 on 11/24 (DNN). Very late, a **Baltimore Oriole** was at a suet feeder in Goldsboro 11/16 (BS). **Rusty Blackbirds** were found at five sites, all singles with the exception of up to 7 birds at LR 10/11-11/23 (m.ob.).

With 32 warbler species reported it would be tough to say there was a "miss" in this group. However, in some fall seasons, isolated reports of Yellow-throated Warbler and Wilson's Warbler are received, but there were none in 2020. Highlights in this group included a **Golden-winged Warbler** at RRCP 8/26 (FB) and 9/7 (DeW). **Prothonotary Warbler** singles were at SGL2 on 8/15 (DBF) and Gut Rd. 9/5 (CE). **Tennessee Warbler** was found at 15 sites, including 15 in a wave of warblers moving thru SVCP 9/19 (DA). Eight sites held **Nashville Warbler** with a high count of 5 at RRCP 9/15 (CG). A target county bird for many, but rarely found, an immature **Connecticut Warbler** was photographed at RRCP 9/8-9 (FB, BR). **Mourning Warblers** included singles at RRCP 8/27 (BR) and 9/15 (DCa) at Dover Twp., and 9/17 at FVTP (NZ). The only **Kentucky Warbler** was a single at RRCP 9/4 (FB). Notations on departure dates for **Northern Parula** and **Magnolia**, **Blackburnian**, **Chestnut-sided**, **Blackpoll**, and **Black-throated Blue Warblers** are in the table. LW produced a nice count of 6 **Bay-breasted Warblers** 9/27 (CKa), and SVCP held 10 **Chestnut-sided Warblers** 9/13 (DA).

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Koury, Crystal Kunst (CKu), Trudy Kyler, Sandy and Gary Lockerman (SaGL), Meredith Lombard, Craig M, Henry McLin, Anna Martin (AMa), Carolyn Mathur (CMa), Zach Millen, Joshua Moritz, Callan Murphy (CMu), Anne Murren, Dean Newhouse, Dean and Norma Newhouse (DNN), Jacob Owings, QP, Brandon Pentz, Richard Peters (RPe), Renee and Richard Peters, Ann Pettigrew, Randy Phillips, Elizabeth Pokriva, Bob Reiter, Brain Rolfinger (BRo), Ernest Scribner, Brian Shade, Alice Simmons, Stephanie Smay, Robin Smith, David Taylor, Evan Vaeth, Linda Vegh, Dennis Weaver (DeW), Donald Weidemann, Dave Wildasin (DWi), Patricia & Richard Williams, Andrew Wolf, Nina Wolf, Andrew Wolfgang (AWg), Felix Xie, Nathan Zalik.

Based on eBird data, it was apparent that the fall of 2020 was marked by a remarkable number of tardy or downright late departures. Using "Annotated List of the Birds of Pennsylvania, Second Edition" (F.C. and B.M. Haas, 2005) and "Records of York County Birds" (Al Spiese, 1999), the following late departures were significant:

Species	Last seen
Chimney Swift	10/24
Least Sandpiper	12/15
White-rumped Sandpiper	11/14
Semipalmated Sandpiper	11/11
Spotted Sandpiper	11/1
Great Egret	11/26
Yellow-throated Vireo	10/17
Philadelphia Vireo	10/7
Orchard Oriole	9/6
Baltimore Oriole	11/16
Prothonotary Warbler	9/5
Northern Parula	10/26
Magnolia Warbler	10/28
Blackburnian Warbler	10/16
Chestnut-sided Warbler	10/15
Blackpoll Warbler	10/31
Black-throated Blue Warbler	10/22
Blue Grosbeak	10/3

Some of the reasons involve continuing moderating temperatures, and more and better birders spending longer hours in the field in all months. That said, were other factors involved to explain the extent of late birds in York this fall?

**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).

Solicitations window for photos for each issue of Pennsylvania Birds are posted to statewide e-mail lists and Facebook groups by the Photo Editor when submissions are preferred to be received. Digital photos or scanned image files sent for consideration must be sent to radickerson@gmail.com in JPG format and submitted as attachments and not embedded in the e-mail. Horizontal images (preferred) MUST be able to be cropped to 1050px x 700px with a resolution of 300 px/in and vertical images MUST be able to be cropped to 1050px x 1313px at 300 px/in. Images will not be enlarged/upscaled. High-resolution images are requested during initial submission. Submissions must also include pertinent information for captioning to include species, location photographed, county photographed, date of photo and any other information of significance regarding the sighting. Submitted photos may be cropped or adjusted for color, brightness, or contrast as the editor sees fit without notice to the photographer. Photos with copyright or signature text visible in the image will not be accepted. Photographers will be acknowledged in the photo caption.

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## IN FOCUS – FALL 2020 - FLYCATCHERS FEATURED



Providing the second state record, this **Vermillion Flycatcher** was at John Heinz NWR, *Philadelphia* 10/9; first was in *Tioga* 1991. (*Daniel Kalamarides*)



**Western Kingbird** at Hog Island Rd., *Delaware* 8/22-24 (here 22) August. (*Brian Byrnes*)



This **Gray Kingbird** represents the second state record, seen at Van Sciver Lake, *Bucks* 10/2; first was in *Chester* 2004. (*Mark Gallagher*)



**Olive-sided Flycatcher** in Great Bend Twp. *Susquehanna* 16 August. (*Barb Stone*)



Much sought-after migrant, found more often in fall than in spring, this **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at Wells Road Wetland, *Chester* 4 September. (*Barry Blust*)



Unidentified to species., this **Empidonax** flycatcher in Tinicum Twp., *Bucks* 26 November was thought to be either a western species or a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. (*Andrew Harrington*)