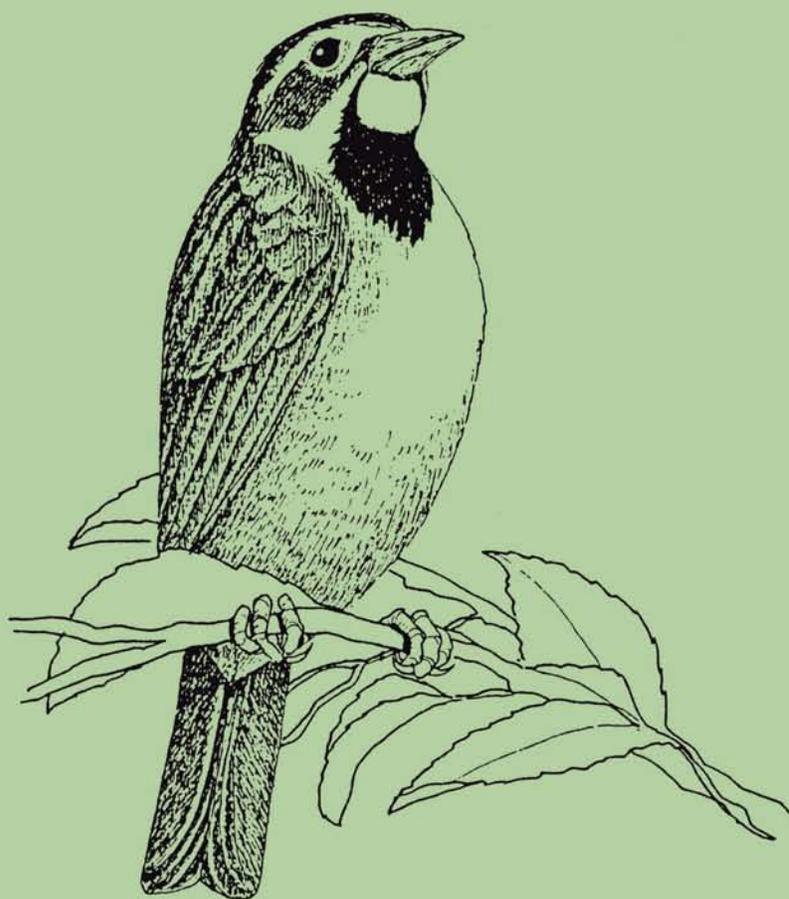


# PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS

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Volume 2, No.3

Jul-Sep 1988

# PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 3, JUL - SEP 1988

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Cover: Dickcissel, by Jim Lockyer

We have received a Challenge to Subscribers from an anonymous subscriber(s) as follows:

CHALLENGE:

To help improve the financial status of *PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS*, the following is proposed. Recently the challengers obtained four new subscribers to *PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS*. They would like to see if anyone can do better. Therefore, if someone can get more than four new subscribers by 1 April 1989, the challengers will contribute an amount equal to each new subscription in excess of four that any one person obtains. The upper limit will be nine new subscriptions. In other words, if you can get us nine new subscribers for 1988, *PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS* will realize an extra \$50.00, in addition to the new subscriptions. Just have your new subscriber indicate on the form your name and we will keep a running tally per individual. The first person to reach that goal will be determined the "winner." Their name will be published in the first issue for 1989. In addition, we will at the winner a **free** renewal. Please take the Challenge!

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We wish to acknowledge the following individuals and organizations for supporting PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS through additional gifts.

David A. Cutler  
Delaware Valley Ornithological Society  
Delmarva Ornithological Society  
John & Peggy Ginaven  
Quittapahilla Audubon Society  
Grace Randolph  
Judy Stine  
Neal Thorpe  
Tyler Arboretum  
Valley Forge Audubon Society  
York Audubon Society

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## from the Editors....

As we go to press with this issue, exciting things are happening in Pennsylvania ornithology. First, the final season of atlasing has come to an end and work is well under way towards producing the Atlas that we expect will be a model for others to emulate.

Second, a set of by-laws has been adopted and nominations are being sought for the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee. (see the article elsewhere in this issue.)

The combination of these two events will finally allow Pennsylvania to take its place alongside other states that have kept records of birds on a statewide, and organized, basis. Students of ornithology, both professional and amateur, look to projects and organizations such as these as sources of data that has passed some tests of scrutiny. The Atlas and the deliberations of the Records Committee will set the standards for Pennsylvania ornithology for many years to come.

There is much to be done on the atlas before it reaches print, and we hope that all of you will continue to lend your support if called upon to do last minute checking of records, sending in field cards, proofreading manuscripts or any of many other tasks that might require attention.

We also hope that the new Records Committee will have your support. One of its first tasks will be to review the State list and establish an Official State List as a guideline for future submissions. This will require that birders such as you will be asked to send in records that may be many years old, but need to be published or verified. There will be more on this in future issues.

We hope, in the *near* future to begin including identification articles on some of the "sticky" problems that confront us all. It would be ideal if one or more of you could send us an article on one or more of the following: Swainson's Hawk v. Rough-legged Hawk; female scoters; Franklin's Gull v. Laughing Gull; and whatever else you might think important.

Speaking of articles,

**WE NEED MORE ARTICLES.  
STILL MORE ARTICLES.  
AND YET MORE ARTICLES.**

Have you been conducting any projects over a period of time? Do you have a lot of records from one location? Do you have a favorite birding location that you would like to share? These are just some ideas for articles that you could submit. Even if you do not consider yourself a

writer, we can certainly edit or re-write your article if necessary. Please consider doing an article.

Also, we would like to use more illustrations and photographs throughout the journal. If you are an artist or know of one who would be interested in submitting illustrations, please contact us. We still cannot pay for illustrations, but we can give exposure to the artist.

One of the major events of this season was the Dickcissel invasion, mainly in the southwestern portion of the state. We have reached a milestone with the excellent article written by Robert S. Mulvihill of The Carnegie Museum. What started out as a simple report of the occurrences of the species in ten western Pennsylvania counties became a major article of significant importance. We welcome more articles of this type for publishing.

After reading the Summary of the Season, you may think there is no need to read the individual county reports. WRONG. We only chose *some* of the highlights. Since there are more than 40 individuals who compile detailed reports on 57 counties for inclusion each issue, there is no way that we can condense all of their information into one page. We hope that you appreciate the work that they do. They must check the data for historical significance, summarize the weather, weed out any sightings of a suspect nature, and then get it into readable format. And they need your input for completeness. For those of you who know the County Compiler, it is probably easy to imagine that individual sitting at the desk and writing the report; a certain style comes through.

What may at first blush look like dull reading is anything but. There are marvelous nuggets of information included. This section becomes an on-going reference book. When you find, for example, recently fledged Mourning Dove in late September in (*Berks, Butler*) you might wonder just how unusual it might be, but a quick look at the County reports would be illuminating. Is a Blue Grosbeak north of the southeastern tier counties unusual (*Cumberland, McKean, Montgomery*)? Check to see if the species is underlined as well as bolded for a first clue. Is the Red-bellied Woodpecker expanding north? Is the Red-headed Woodpecker declining in many areas? How have the strip mines impacted grassland sparrows?

The above are but a few examples of the happenings reported on in every issue. By having a quarterly journal it is possible

to compare one year to another. The covers will always give ease in doing same. Blue for Winter, yellow for Spring, green for Summer, and orange for Fall. The County maps make it easy to determine just how out of range the reported species might be.

To our knowledge, no other state journal is detailed down to the county level. And to our knowledge, no other is as large. The BBAP has filled in many of the gaps of breeding bird information, and now the gaps in the status and distribution of non-breeding birds are being filled by the reports in this journal. You can learn much from these reports.

Concerning the atlas, kudos to *Carbon* for its bang up atlas work. And *Columbia* was able to expand its breeding bird data by having someone get permission to enter the Roaring Creek Watershed to explore this wild, relatively unknown section of the county.

We would like to thank all of the Audubon Societies and Bird Clubs that have given plugs or advertised **PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS** in their newsletters and meetings. It is greatly appreciated!

As stated previously, we are keeping records in a database for future use in this journal and for research purposes by us and others. However, we have been unable to keep up with all of the data coming in and are therefore looking for a volunteer who has access to an IBM compatible computer who would like to enter the data into the database. If you are interested, please contact us.

Please note: Volume 1 Number 1 has been reprinted in laser printer format (readable printing) and is available for \$3.00 per copy.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

**Barb & Frank Haas**  
Co-editors

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Editors:

Just subscribed to **PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS** and have received two issues. Neat book. My birding buddy Al Speise kept pounding me about subscribing and now I'm very glad he did. I especially appreciated the series on the Mississippi Kite because until I read the very complete description of its flight patterns and characteristics, I probably couldn't have identified one if I found it in my bathroom. And, since I'm an avid hawk watcher and these Kites are expanding their range, now I might be able to see one and know what I'm looking at.

Meanwhile, I noticed the somewhat informal and often downright "unstuffy" tone of some of your articles and I thought **PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS** might even welcome the enclosed piece. It's a thing I've been tempted to write before, but figured most of the birding books would think it a tad too frivolous.

Hope you'll consider it for future publication.

Jerry Dyer  
York, PA

*(Can we ever identify with this article! Readers, please enjoy.)*

Dear Editors:

Short-eared Owls are still here [mid-October] (*Clarion*) and doing well. Have received more reports from hunters in other areas for last winter.

Walter Fye  
Knox, PA

Dear Editors:

After my sighting last year of a Sabine's Gull, I very quickly found the need to document all details of this sighting. Nobody, including myself, was prepared. Therefore I designed a form I will use to report rare species in the future.

I thought I would share my ideas with you. Should you decide to use it, as in **PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS**, you have my permission. You probably would want to eliminate my name at the bottom. I'm sure it could be improved upon. I've used the form for the sighting of 2 Lincoln's Sparrows this past spring.

I'm very pleased with the constant improvement of your magazine. Keep it up.

Kerry A. Grim  
@Reading, PA

*We will be doing an article in the next*

*issue on the organizing of records and record keeping, including a presentation of Kerry's form for documenting rarities. Great idea! Eds.*

Dear Editors:

As for myself the use of initials to recognize contributors isn't too important, but I think it will help sell your journal. When I buy a newspaper one thing I look for is names and they use it to their advantage.

Although yours is a state publication, I think most people buy it for what it contains in regards to their locality. I have no problem slipping over names if they are of no value to me.

I realize you call this a journal and to a large extent it has to be of scientific nature. I think what is needed to keep it from being dry is a greater emphasis on comments. Change the format and put the initials of the observers last after comments on each bird. I also think I can get better participation from our people if they are recognized for their efforts. I'm the one who has to decide if it is worthy to be submitted to you. Some lists were too long with birds I consider trivial unless they are accompanied by a useful comment. This last issue is much improved.

What I wrote above are only comments and I hope they are not negative as I would like to be active and as helpful as I can.

Al Speise  
York, PA

*We have encouraged compilers to add comments where appropriate and feel it has led to more interesting reading. Eds.*

Dear Editors,

I think **PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS** has become a valuable addition to the reference libraries of both in-state and out-of-state birders - you are doing a great job. Happy birding.

Steve Rannels  
Hershey, PA

Dear Editors,

**PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS** is now top quality!

Merrill Wood  
State College, PA

Dear Editors,

Magazine lookin' good. Work hard!  
Bob and Anne MacClay  
Cressona, PA

\*\*\*\*\*

### Mississippi Kite in Beaver County

While atlasing near the town of Baden just east of the Ohio River on 26 June 1988 I saw a Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) in the Tevebaw Road area. The sky was overcast and a 15 mph wind was blowing. As I was watching a Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), a distant raptor appeared in my field of view about half a mile away. It gradually flew closer, beating into the wind. On first impressions and in silhouette it appeared strikingly similar in size and general shape to a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), with long, sharply pointed wings. It eventually flew directly overhead and I was able to pick out the following characteristics leading to positive identification.

The overall plumage color was dark gray above and below with some brown streaking on the belly and underwing coverts. The head was quite large and rounded, protruding markedly from the body. When flapping and gliding the wings seemed very sharply pointed with fairly broad bases. The leading edge of the wing was strongly concave between the body and carpal joint, but the trailing edge was very straight, giving a very distinctive wing shape. The flight was very buoyant with flexible wing beats, despite the wind. The tail was long and narrow, being noticeably notched at the tip. It was strongly marked with alternate black and white bars, the terminal black bar being the broadest.

The bird was in view for approximately five minutes, disappearing to the northwest. The habitat in the area is dense riparian woodland with occasional clearings and breaks. This represents the third sighting for western Pennsylvania, the other two individuals being seen at Presque Isle State Park in May 1988.

Ed Kwater  
Allison Park, PA

# The Occurrence of Dickcissels (*Spiza americana*) in Western Pennsylvania during the 1988 Nesting Season--Its Possible Bearing on the Species' Unusual History in Eastern North America.

by Robert S. Mulvihill

In addition to providing unparalleled information about the biogeographical distribution of the more common breeding birds of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas Project (PBBAP) has, fortuitously, resulted in the very thorough documentation of an unexpected natural phenomenon--a mid-nesting season invasion of Dickcissels over a wide area of western Pennsylvania (PA). Only as a consequence of so many volunteers actively birding in the state throughout the late spring and summer could the nature and scope of this year's Dickcissel invasion be fully appreciated. Were it not for the PBBAP, it is likely that at best only a few occurrences of the species would have been recorded this year. Instead, it was found at 37 sites (30 blocks) in ten counties in western PA, and nesting was confirmed at five of these sites (Table 1; Figure 1).

The Dickcissel is well known for erratic annual fluctuations in abundance, particularly near the northern, eastern, and western limits of its range (Pearson 1936; Trautman 1940; Aldrich 1948; Wood 1951; Bailey and Niedrach 1965; Godfrey 1986), and for its enigmatic disappearance as a breeding bird on the mid-Atlantic coastal plain (including southeastern PA) sometime during the late nineteenth century (Stone 1894; Rhoads 1903; Eaton 1914; Gross 1921, 1956; Aldrich 1948). The historical occurrence of the species in western PA, however, is not well known, due principally to a paucity of observers and few published accounts of the birds of the region prior to the 1880's. As Todd (1940) wrote, "Early records for our region are unfortunately lacking." The few statements concerning the Dickcissel's abundance and distribution in western PA during those early years are undetailed. Pearson (1936) wrote, "About Civil War times Dickcissels were not rare in western New York and western Pennsylvania...." Warren (1890) described the species as a "Tolerably common summer resident...in some sections of southeastern, southern and western counties of Pennsylvania;" adding that it is "rare, or at least not reported to occur in the northern counties or the mountainous regions of the state." The true status of the Dickcissel in western PA during the species' purported heyday across the easternmost portion of its range (ca. 1840-1870) can only be guessed. Probably it was very localized, restricted to those lowland areas where farming was most extensive. Still, it must have been more widely distributed than it was

by the time the first significant bird records for the region were published in the 1880's. By that time the species had already begun to disappear across much of its mid-Atlantic coastal range (e.g., Rhoads 1903). In fact, any summer records of the species on the mid-Atlantic coastal plain in the early nineteenth century were noteworthy (e.g., Miller 1904). Todd (1904, 1940) and Sutton (1928) had no firsthand experience with the species in western PA, but they detail historic records (pre-1930) of the species from Blair, Clearfield, Erie, Mercer and Washington counties (all after 1880).

Although Dickcissels apparently staged an extensive eastward invasion during the summer of 1928, resulting in their appearance from New Jersey to South Carolina (including eastern PA) (Smyth 1930; Snyder and Brimley 1928; Stone 1928a, 1928b; Wetmore and Lincoln 1928), none was reported in western PA that year. The species failed to become reestablished in its former mid-Atlantic lowland range following this invasion. In modern times (after 1930), until this year, Dickcissels were only very sporadically recorded east of Ohio, with isolated nesting attempts in Pennsylvania (see Table 1), Maryland (Stewart and Robbins 1958), and New York (Bull 1974).

All summer records of Dickcissels in western PA that have come to the author's attention are mapped in Fig. 1 and detailed in Table 1. For the most part this year's invasion was concentrated in an area for which there are no previous records of the species; an area no doubt historically devoid of much suitable habitat. In terms of the natural areas of western PA outlined by Jennings (1953), Dickcissel reports during the 1988 nesting season came primarily from the Mountain Uplands, an area bounded by Chestnut Ridge to the west and Allegheny Mountain to the east. Up to six individuals were found at 19 sites in this area. Up to at least 14 birds were recorded at 13 sites in the southwestern Hill Area; up to three birds at two sites on the High Plateau; three birds at one site in the northeastern Hill Area; and two at one site on the Lake Plain. None was reported from the Glaciated Area or the Ridge and Valley of western PA, where the species had occurred in the past.

Of those sites for which details were given, 16 were large strip mines that had been reclaimed with a mixture of grasses (e.g., timothy grass, *Phleum pratense*) and legumes (e.g., clovers, *Trifolium sp.*; al

falfa, *Medicago sativa*; and bird's-foot trefoil, *Lotus corniculatus*). The species was next most frequently encountered in unmown hay fields (11 sites); these were similar in vegetative composition to the strip mine sites, though perhaps with a greater percentage of grasses. Two sites were listed as weedy, fallow or abandoned fields; two as pastures, and one as a clover field. Most Dickcissels, then, were found in habitats in western PA like those that they prefer at similar latitudes in their midwestern range (Gross 1921, 1968). One feature was shared by all the sites where the birds were found: singing and/or observation perches taller than the surrounding meadow habitat were available in the form of scattered tree saplings (especially black locust, *Robinia pseudo-acacia*), shrubs or brambles, dock (*Rumex sp.*) flower heads, bordering tree rows, or utility lines.

The timing of the Dickcissel invasion into western PA this year suggests that the movement occurred after the species' normal spring migration period and probably followed the initial stages of nesting somewhere in the species' primary midwestern range. Dickcissels were discovered at most sites in western PA after mid-June; at least nine observers independently located their first Dickcissels between mid-June and mid-July (i.e., without knowledge that the species had been sighted elsewhere). Most of the individuals who contributed records for the species had been actively birding on behalf of the PBBAP for several weeks prior; it is unlikely that so many observers overlooked so conspicuous a species earlier in the nesting season.

Trautman (1940) lists the median date of spring arrival for the species in southcentral Ohio (at about the same latitude as southwestern PA, 40° as 8 May. Spring records compiled for Leberman (1988), covering the western PA region, range from 21 April to 23 May, presuming March and early April birds to represent wintering individuals. In 1988, then, Dickcissels showed up across most of western PA about four weeks after the species generally arrives on its breeding grounds.

Distant movement by a species after its usual migration period is over is apparently rare, since the period of physiological migratory restlessness has usually been found to correspond closely to the observed timing and duration of migration in the field (references in Terrill and Ohmart 1984). However, Terrill and Ohmart (1984) demonstrated that

FIGURE 1. Map of summer Dickcissel records for western Pennsylvania through 1988 (numbers associated with each symbol correspond to numbered localities in Table 1).

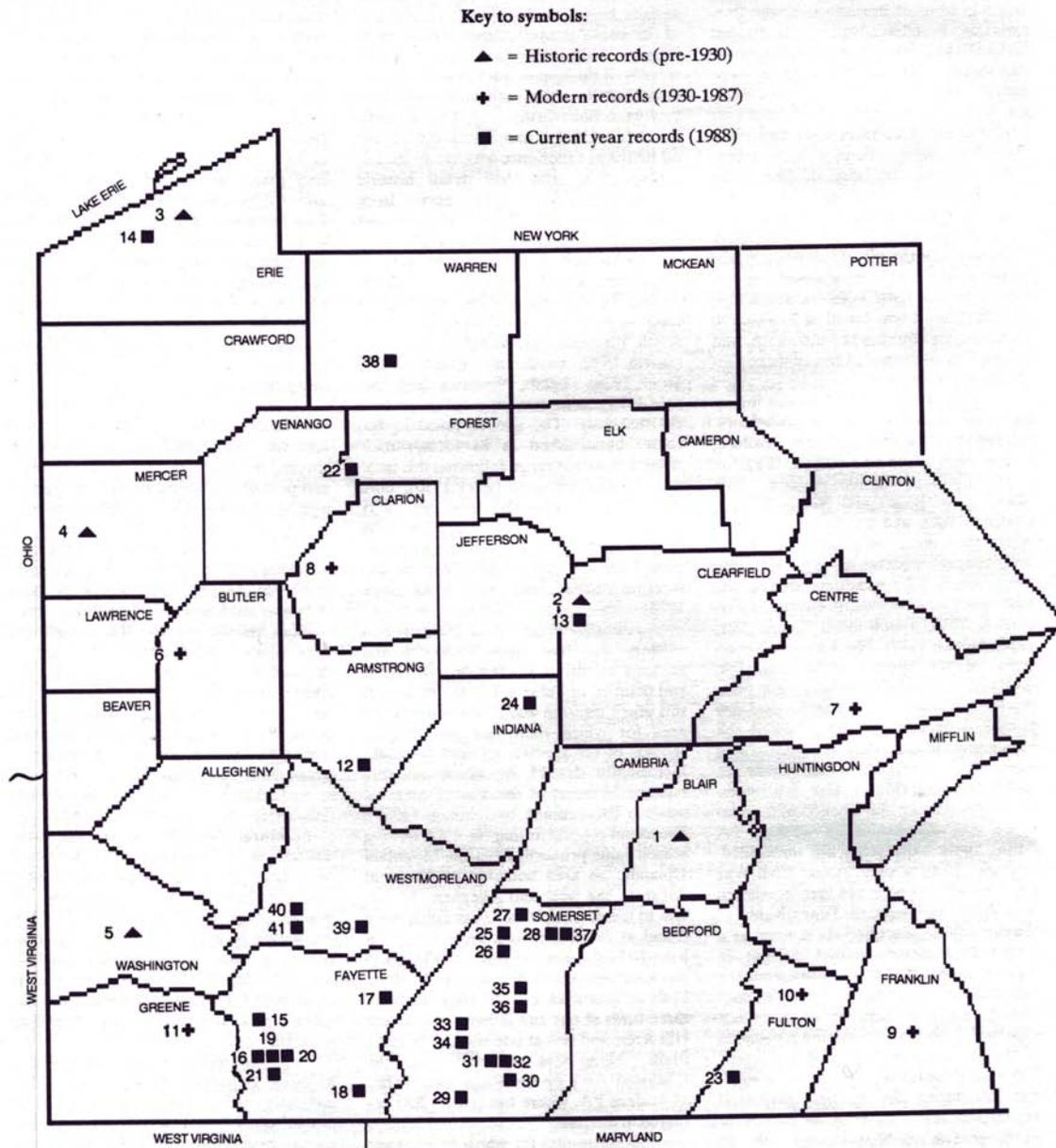


Table 1. Summer Dickcissel records in western Pennsylvania through 1988<sup>1</sup>

**HISTORICAL (pre-1930)<sup>2</sup>**

Locality (COUNTY/town)	Date(s)	No. of birds	Confirmed nesting	Reference		
1. BLAIR/Holidaysburg		3	June 1923	1	no	Todd (1940)
2. CLEARFIELD/DuBois		1884		?	no	" "
3. ERIE/Erie		1880's; 9	June 1895	6;3	no	Todd (1904,1940)
4. MERCER/New Hamburg		1885		2 - formerly not uncommon; none after 1887	no	Todd (1940)
5. WASHINGTON/E. Washington		probably early 1880's		several	no	" "

**MODERN (1930-1987)**

6. BUTLER/Moraine State Park	1969			1	no	Am. Birds 23:661
	15 June 1974			1	no	" " 28:905
	7 August 1982			1	no	" " 37:181
7. CENTRE/State College	1 June 1958			1	no	" " 12:354
	31 May - 11 July 1963			1	no	" " 17:404
						" " 17:461
8. CLARION/7 mi. s. of Knox	4 June to 11 July 1983			2	yes	Redstart 57:68-69
9. FRANKLIN/near Stoufferstown	early June 1985			2	yes	K. Gabler (pers. comm.)
10. FULTON/near Hustontown	18 June 1986			1	no	K. Gabler (pers. comm.)
11. GREENE/near Jefferson	3 May to 18 July 1967			2	yes	Am. Birds 21:567
						R. Bell (pers. comm.)

**CURRENT YEAR (1988)**

Locality (COUNTY/PBBAP block <sup>3</sup> )	First seen date	No. of birds <sup>4</sup>	Breeding code <sup>5</sup>	First observed by
12. ARMSTRONG/Whitesburg 5	12 July	1m, 2f	P	B. Lane
13. CLEARFIELD/Luthersburg 5a	18 June	2m	T	G. Berkey
" / " 5b	19 June	2m	X	" "
14. ERIE/Swanville 6	27 June	1m, 1f	P	B. Ginader
15. FAYETTE/Carmichaels 4a	23 June	2m	T	R. Bell
" / " 4b	"	2m	T	" "
" / " 4c	"	1m	T	" "
16. FAYETTE/Masontown 2	late June	1m	X	T. Trivonovich
17. " /Mill Run 2a	29 June	3m	T	R. Mulvihill
" / " 2b	"	2m	X	" "
18. FAYETTE/Ohiopyle 3	8 June	1m	X	T. Tullio
19. FAYETTE/Smithfield 1	late June	2f	X	T. Trivonovich
20. FAYETTE/Smithfield 2a	1 July	2m	X	V. Johnson
" / " 2b	"	1m	X	" "
21. FAYETTE/Smithfield 3	late June	2m, 2f	P	T. Trivonovich
22. FOREST/Tionesta 3	18 June	3m	T	R. and A. Walters
23. FULTON/Breezewood 6	early July	1m	X	K. Gabler
24. INDIANA/Rochester Mills 4	30 June	3m, 1f	T or P	R. and M. Higbee
25. SOMERSET/Boswell 4	mid to late May (?)	1m	X	G. Mock
26. " /Boswell 6	26 June	1m	T	R. Mulvihill
27. " /Hooversville 1	29 June	1m, 1f	FY	M. Mock
28. " /Hooversville 4	2 July	1m, 1f	NE	R. Sager
29. " /Markleton 4	22 June	2m, 1f (?)	T	D. Holmes
30. " /Meyersdale 2	27 June	2m	T	R. Mulvihill
31. " /Murdock 5	"	2m, 1f (?)	T	" "
32. " /Murdock 6	24 June	4m, 2f	FY	" ", K. Georg
33. " /Rockwood 2	27 June	1m	X	" "
34. " /Rockwood 4	"	1m, 1u	T or P	" "
35. " /Stoystown 3	28 June	1m	X	R. Sager
36. " /Stoystown 5	"	1m	X	" "
37. " /Windber 3	22 June	1m, 3f	NE	" "
38. WARREN/Cobham 2	14 June	1m	X	T. Grisez
39. WESTMORELAND/Mt. Pleasant 6	3 July	1m	X	J. Ward
40. " /Smithton 3a	28 June	12m, 2 or more f	FY	M. Bowers
" / " 3b	"	1m	X	J. Ward
" / " 3c	9 July	3m	X	" "
41. WESTMORELAND/Smithton 5	"	1m	X	" "

1 Numbered localities correspond to numbered symbols on Figure 1.

2 There is essentially no ornithological literature covering western PA prior to the 1880's.

3 There are six PBBAP blocks within each U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 minute series quadrangle map (western blocks within each quadrangle are numbered 1,3,5 from north to south; eastern blocks are numbered 2,4,6 north to south). Separate sites within a block are designated a,b,c,....

4 m = male; f = female; u = sex unknown; (?) = bird probably of the sex indicated.

5 Breeding codes are those used by the PBBAP: X = bird seen or heard; T = territorial behavior observed; P = pair (male and female) seen together; NE = nest with eggs found; FY = parent observed feeding young or with food for young.

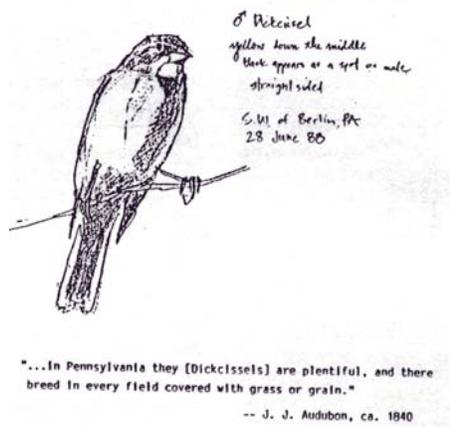
wintering Yellow-rumped Warblers (*Dendroica coronata*) may stay in a "low-level migratory state" that enables them to accomplish facultative migration; that is, birds may gauge environmental conditions (e.g., food availability, habitat quality, weather conditions) and extend their migratory movement accordingly, even outside the typical migration season for the species. Such facultative migration might go a long way toward explaining the erratic fluctuations in local abundance of the Dickcissel within its normal breeding range, as well as its sporadic extralimital appearances.

The invasion of Dickcissels in the summer of 1988 was certainly not restricted to western PA, although few areas were witness to as great a concentration of the birds. For the most part records were few and scattered in those areas bordering the western PA region. Just west of the region in Youngstown, Ohio, one male was reported (Bruce Peterjohn, *pers. comm.*), but there were generally fewer field observers in Ohio to document the invasion during the 1988 nesting season, since the state had completed its breeding bird atlas the year before. In the last few years of their atlas project, however, Ohio birders found Dickcissels unexpectedly common in the western half of the state and recorded it from scattered strip mine sites in the state's northeastern and southeastern corners (B. Peterjohn, *pers. comm.*). South of western PA in West Virginia (where a breeding bird atlas project was still in progress) there were just two records of the species (Wirt and Grant counties), but both were cases of confirmed breeding (George Hall, *pers. comm.*). North of the region in New York state, Dickcissels were recorded (but not confirmed breeding) only from Allegheny County (just north of McKean Co., PA) and near Rochester (William Boyle, *pers. comm.*). There was a scattering of eastern PA records (mostly in the southern tier counties of that region), including at least one confirmed nesting (Dan Brauning, *pers. comm.*).

The majority of summer records of the species away from western PA came from counties on the western shore and Piedmont sections of Maryland and Virginia; Dickcissels were found at 37 localities in that region and were confirmed nesting at a few of these sites (Henry Armistead, *pers. comm.*). The species was recorded no farther north on the Atlantic coastal plain than New Jersey (Wayne Peterson, *pers. comm.*); in that state Dickcissels were found at just four sites, and no confirmed nesting was reported (W. Boyle, *pers. comm.*). The species was reported nesting as far south

on the coastal plain as Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina, in late May (LeGrande 1988); it was found inland as far south as eastern Tennessee (G. Hall, *pers. comm.*).

Atypical occurrences of the species during the summer of 1988 were not restricted to the eastern part of its range; there was a noticeable lack of Dickcissels in southern North Dakota, where they usually nest, and an unusual presence of the species in the northern half of the state where it is typically absent (Gordon Berkey, *pers. comm.*). In general, according to Breeding Bird Surveys conducted in 1988, Dickcissels were found with greater than usual frequency to the north (including southcentral Canada) and east of their normal range (Sam Droege, *pers. comm.*).



The 1988 invasion of Dickcissels into western PA and other areas outside their normal (*i.e.*, modern) range was probably a consequence of widespread drought across much of North America, but particularly prolonged and severe in the midwestern prairie region (B. Peterjohn, *pers. comm.*), which is the heart of the species breeding range (Robbins, *et al.* 1986). As a result of the drought in 1988, hay fields in the midwestern prairie region essentially did not regrow following their first cutting in late May (B. Peterjohn, *pers. comm.*). The opportunities for nesting by Dickcissels in this region were consequently very poor, and this may have resulted in the mass movement of birds out of the region, particularly to the north and east, from early to mid-June. Among other things, the timing of the first appearance of most Dickcissels in western PA in 1988 lends support to this idea. The earlier appearance of Dickcissels (before mid-May) in parts of South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia (Armistead

1988; Hall 1988; LeGrande 1988) probably reflects an earlier return of birds to the southern portion of the species' normal range and a subsequent earlier eastward and northward dispersal away from this area, where drought conditions already prevailed early in the spring season (Grzybowski 1988; Imhof 1988; Lasley and Sexton 1988).

There is an interesting parallel to the idea that Dickcissels made a facultative migration eastward this year in response to drought conditions. French (1967) indicates that the timing of the species' arrival on the island of Trinidad is correlated with the onset of drought on the nearby mainland of Venezuela. Although Dickcissels arrive in Venezuela (where they winter commonly) in late September, they are not recorded in nearby Trinidad until December or January, when the llanos (lowland agricultural area) of Venezuela can become very dry. He implies that the relationship between drought conditions in this part of Venezuela and the eastward migration of Dickcissels in winter to Trinidad may provide an insight into why "...the bird is as erratic in its distribution at the extreme limit of its winter range as it is on its breeding range."

This summer's invasion by Dickcissels into areas far east of the species' modern range was of such great magnitude that it may provide an important clue as to how the mid-Atlantic coastal population of the species could have arisen and disappeared (perhaps several times in the species' history). If a drought such as was experienced this year, or one even more severe, had occurred sometime in the early 1800's (or before) and resulted in a mass eastward movement of Dickcissels, the dispersing birds would have encountered largely unsuitable habitat from about central Ohio eastward. The birds might then have "leapfrogged" over this wide wooded belt and settled on the natural and cultivated meadows of the mid-Atlantic coastal plain. In many respects, the dispersing birds would have established a mainland "island" population, disjunct from the mainland source pool. Although those individuals that reproduced successfully within the mainland "island" (and perhaps particularly those birds nesting for the first time) may have returned to the "island" range in subsequent years, it stands to reason that except during periods when adverse environmental conditions triggered a mass exodus from the species' primary range (this might be especially likely to occur at high population levels), recruitment of new individuals to the population would be minimal. Furthermore, if there is lower site fidelity on the part of juvenile Dickcissels

than nesting adults, then a significant proportion of the young produced by the "island" population in any year may have been lost to the mainland pool in the following breeding season. As Rhoads (1903) put it, "...the Mississippi Valley stock of the Black-throated Bunting [may have] gradually influenced their trans-Alleghany brethren to accompany them in their spring flight to the western breeding grounds...." The mid-Atlantic coastal population, then, might have been in slow decline almost from its beginning, due to low level recruitment and the gradual mortality of site-faithful adults.

Unlike the discontinuous historic colonization of the mid-Atlantic coastal region, this year's invasion serves more as an unbroken expansion of or shift within the species' normal range. Suitable habitat for the species can now be found more or less continuously in North America east of the Dickcissel's primary range. This is a consequence not only of deforestation and subsequent agricultural development, but also of the relatively recent practice of reclaiming strip mine sites as grasslands, rather than with tree seedlings. The fact that this year's invasion did not only concentrate on the mid-Atlantic coastal plain, but in the Mountain Uplands of Pennsylvania as well, demonstrates this fact. Chances for recruitment into the outlying areas east and north of the Dickcissel's central range are probably better now than they were for the more isolated historic mid-Atlantic coastal population.

Only if Pennsylvania birders continue to venture afield in the summer in the coming years, even though the PBBAP is completed for now, will we have a chance to follow the fate of this interesting species in our state.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For providing me with useful details concerning this year's Dickcissel invasion, I thank H. Armistead, G. Berkey, W. Boyle, D. Brauning, S. Drennan, S. Droege, F. and B. Haas, G. Hall, B. Peterjohn, and W. Peterson, as well as many of those individuals listed in Table 1. R. C. Leberman and K. Parkes made helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper. For permission to reproduce his field sketches as an attractive accompaniment to this article, I thank L. Barth.

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## Personality Profile:

# Joseph A. Grom

by  
Dr. Joseph R. Panza

Joseph Anthony Grom has been an active leader and member of the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania for the past 36 years. He has served the Audubon Society as: Editor of the newsletter, an expert field leader, program speaker, naturalist advisor, teacher extraordinaire and presently as compiler for bird summaries.

The Audubon Society has about 3300 members and consistently is in the top ten for number of participants in the annual Christmas Bird Count. In 1973, Joe was awarded the Audubon Society's highest honor, the W. E. Clyde Todd Award, "in recognition of outstanding effort to further the cause of conservation in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

Joe grew up on Pittsburgh's North Side. He recalls a very early interest in nature-related activities. In 1950, Joe earned a B.A. degree in Philosophy from St. Vincent's College in Latrobe.

Between 1950 and 1964 Joe taught at Maxada Woodlands School and Camp. Together with the late Miss Cyrilla Mansmann, Joe pioneered unique children's nature education programs including the "Young Naturalist" program, which is still in use today in Allegheny County. A regular radio story hour was aired with nature-related events as the theme.

From 1964 to 1970 Joe assumed a teaching position at St. Catherine's School in Wildwood, Pennsylvania. In 1970, Joe was recommended and accepted the position of Naturalist - Director for North Park in Allegheny County. He actively maintained this position as the county's premier naturalist until his retirement in mid-1988.

In 1969, Joe served as the first resident summer naturalist at Todd Sanctuary. He surveyed the breeding birds, plants, and other animals. His field data were used in "Birds of the Buffalo Creek Region" as a basis of comparison to Todd's original data.

Joe has been a licensed bird bander since 1959, doing some research and giving demonstrations. He has observed 583 species in the AOU area of the 48 continental states.

Every serious birder in western PA knows Joe Grom. He is considered by most to have the best "birder's ear" in this part of the state. His field method is to listen, look, and wait. Joe integrates habitat, behavior and sound with his visual observations. He keeps written field notes

of his outings. Joe is extremely patient, congenial, knowledgeable and helpful to all birders in the field. He reads and studies before and after outings. He has tremendous respect for the welfare and survival of all plants and animals.

I personally have known Joe for the past eight years. We have done bird photography, studied nesting sites, made sound recordings, led field outings and traveled together. I will never forget my life Vesper Sparrow with Joe Grom. He provided the species within 10 seconds of me stopping the car. He heard a call note, observed movement with his naked eye, and directed me to the exact spot of fresh tillage without either of us leaving the car.

Hal H. Harrison, in his preface to A Field Guide to Birds' Nests states, "for help in finding nests in western PA, my debt to Joseph A. Grom can never be repaid adequately." Hal also acknowledges in his Wood Warbler's World, "throughout the years devoted to research for the book, no field companions were more helpful to me than Joe Grom and Ken Vierling in Pennsylvania. Hardly a year passed that we were not together in fields, forests and swamps."

Dr. Hersch Leapman, a noted physician, botanist, and birder in his own right states, "over the past nine years I have been afield with Joe on numerous occasions, what is most remarkable about Joe's expertise as a field naturalist is his broad knowledge of all aspects of natural history. In addition to his phenomenal ability to identify birds by voice alone, he is also extremely adept in the identification of trees, wildflowers, ferns, mosses, insects, amphibians, and reptiles. I am unable to name any other individual with such an impressive understanding of nature in all its expressions and moods."

Joe's interests do go beyond nature. He is very active with the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh and is certified to teach at any level from elementary to college. He is a retired violinist, enjoys doing sketchings and watercolors. He loves all sports, especially baseball. While at St. Vincent's, he won the "Gold Medal" for excellence in the classics (Latin and Greek).

Ruth Grom has been a tremendous influence and inspiration in Joe's life since their marriage in 1970. They travel regularly to London, Ontario, to visit family and friends. Ruth is a good all around birder and botanist. She enjoys local history, photography, genealogy, and stamp collecting. She volunteers for "meals on wheels" and is actively involved with other programs in her church.

Although Joe recently retired as North Park's Naturalist, he still leads a very active life. He is a regional reporter

for American Birds, bird compiler for the Audubon Society and **PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS** (Allegheny County). Joe regularly teaches ornithology classes at the Community College of Allegheny College.

As western Pennsylvania residents, we honor Joe Grom as a model field naturalist, conservationist, and friend. For his influence in teaching more than a third of a million children we salute him as a true educator and humanitarian. We invite the readers to correspond with this informed, unique and concerned human being.

## Our Pennsylvania Big Year - 1986

### PART THREE

Barbara M. Haas

**JULY.** The month began with the resumption of atlasing in Pike and Clinton Counties. Wild Turkey were common. We found Bald Eagles at Kettle Creek State Park (*Clinton*) and although they are not known to breed there presently, perhaps someday they will.

We found out that we had missed another big bird, Am. White Pelican, at two locations on the 5th and 6th. The former spent some four hours on the Delaware River at the mouth of the Lackawaxen Creek (*Pike*) and the latter was observed at Peace Valley Park (*Bucks*). Perhaps it was the same bird, but a miss nonetheless.

Atlasing is fun and we will miss it once the project is over. We found an active Bank Swallow colony, with the young just getting ready for their first solo flights. They looked like reptiles coming out of their burrows, quite hesitant about leaving home, but being persuaded by their parents to dine outside.

We resumed our trips to Tinicum NEC (*Delaware/Philadelphia*) and added Little Blue Heron the next week. Then it became exciting again. We received calls from Rick Mellon, Sid Lipschutz, and Bob Odear (Bob-O-Link, Inc.) that a Purple Gallinule had been found at a Morrisville nursery (*Bucks*); the bird had arrived about ten days before any birder had learned of its existence. It was hanging out at an abandoned quarry and was frequently seen climbing around the willow trees! They do show up in the strangest places. We contacted Terry Schiefer about the gallinule and he said the Philadelphia sewage ponds had been productive for him the past week. We found his Stilt Sandpipers and also a Western Sandpiper.

A pair of Chukar produced 14 young in Fayetteville (*Franklin*), and we headed out to see them, knowing that they would probably not be countable birds. It was fun

to see them anyway.

We stopped along the Conejehola flats (*Lancaster*) on the return trip and found a Tricolored Heron, but that was only the tip of the iceberg for excitement. On the 29th, Bob Schutsky, Dan Heathcote, and Steve Santner had found an unusual looking white wader. It was the size of a Snowy Egret, *Egretta thula*, but a bit bulkier, had the yellow feet, but the bill was wrong for the species. It was yellow. Could it be *E. gularis*, a white phase Western Reef Heron, or even more amazing, *E. garzetta*, a Little Egret? Believe it or not, the jury is still out because some recent information found in British Birds lends some credence to the fact of the latter. We are in the process of sending a report to that publication in the hopes of finding out more information.



*Mystery Egret, Conejehola Flats, 7/29/86*  
Photo by F. Haas

The bird was well-studied and photographed by a number of other birders. While observing that bird, a White Ibis flew by, the first of the year for that location and a year bird for us. We were now at 264, plus a potential heron.

We now had over 10,000 miles on the Nissan purchased in April and knew there would more trips to Presque Isle (PISP) and elsewhere for the rest of the year.

Good news. Tinicum would be lowering the water level in the impoundment for carp control. The last time that happened it was very beneficial to shorebird watching.

**AUGUST.** The impoundment was already starting to be excellent. We found 3 Wilson's Phalarope, a Tricolored Heron, about 30 Stilt Sandpiper, a few Short-billed Dowitcher, and the expected number of peeps on our first trip there on the 5th.

Bernie Morris called us on the 10th that a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher had been spotted near Bake Oven Knob (*Lehigh*). We left immediately, without even a toothbrush, and joined several other county birders in a fruitless search for the bird. Rather than drive back home and up

again, we spent the night in Allentown and were at the site by dawn the next morning. (No decisions were necessary about what to wear.) We found and photographed the bird by 9:45 and called Bernie to update the sighting. About a hundred other people got to add it to their state list as well.



*Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Lehigh Cty, 8/11/86.* Photo by F. Haas.

Eric Witmer called about a Willet he had found at Washington Boro (*Lancaster*). We did not find that one, but did see one at PISP on the 18th. While up there we tried for the pair of Sedge Wrens found in the county. No luck.

Steve Santner had been birding at Middle Creek WMA during a storm on the 20th. He observed two Marbled Godwit, several Caspian Tern, and a Wilson's Phalarope which departed immediately after the skies cleared. Another missed species, the Marbled Godwit. The Higbees (*Indiana*) called us about two Red-necked Phalarope at Yellow Creek State Park, but we could not get out there. But we were up to 267 for the year.

**SEPTEMBER.** A good beginning. Bill Murphy (*Bucks*) called to say he had a Hudsonian Godwit at Tinicum, as well as Sanderlings, so off we went. We added not only the godwit, but our first Lesser Golden-Plover of the year.

A little aside. We were birding Tinicum and met up with Harry Goldstein who was observing the shorebirds with his Questar. We put our Celestron on the same birds and the difference was incredible. More than just noticeable. Although the purchase of one was not in the budget at all, we headed to New Hope just to look. They called two days later to say our order had been filled.

We headed up to PISP on the 5th, Questar and all, and the next morning were photographing a needed Buff-breasted Sandpiper. One thing about the Questar over the Celestron is that you can keep your camera attached all the time and take photographs by just flipping some levers. With the Celestron it is either use

the scope or use the camera. On the 7th we added **four** species, Red Phalarope, Baird's Sandpiper, Whimbrel, and Olive-sided Flycatcher and by the next day a Philadelphia Vireo was on the list. Already 275 for the year and migration was just starting.

Then it became a little dicey. John Ginaven and I were birding at Tinicum and found a Connecticut Warbler. We called Frank but he only had about 45 minutes to search for it before heading back for a meeting. I was one up and this was not an easy bird to find.

Terry Schiefer had sent us some information about finding Connecticut Warbler in the State College (*Centre*) area. We were out there on the 26th and I found my second one of the year - and showed Frank. Terry also sent information about Sunset Park and it being a good location for Orange-crowned Warbler, but the Peplinskis advised us the habitat had been changed from previous years and did not look too promising now.

On the 22nd John Ginaven and I had 14 species of shorebirds at Tinicum, including Lesser Golden-Plover, White-rumped, Baird's, and Western sandpipers, Sanderling, and Wilson's Phalarope, and we missed Ruddy Turnstone and two Red Knots seen the day before. We also had an immature Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, a late date for us.

We returned to PISP on the 26th and, although we did not add any new birds for the year, had excellent looks at a Peregrine Falcon, *F. p. tundrius*, and photographed the first *Erie* September record of a Lesser Black-backed Gull. We saw 169 species for the month and had 117 species on our PISP trip. We were now one behind Sam's record of 278, and looking forward to what we hoped would be a bountiful October.



*Hudsonian Godwit, Tinicum NEC, 10/12/86,* Photo by F. Haas.

# BIRDING AT THE HERSHEY MEDICAL CENTER

by Steve Rannels and Wade Edris

Over the past five years we have used lunch breaks to bird the grounds surrounding the Hershey Medical Center. Even in the face of rapid development, this area still provides an exciting mix of habitats for observing both migrant and resident birds throughout the year. About 60 percent of the grounds consists of parking areas, lawns, and open fields. Trees and shrubs in the parking lots attract many migrant warblers, vireos, orioles, and jays, and also serve as nesting sites for Mourning Doves, N. Mockingbirds, Chipping and Song sparrows. On several occasions Killdeer nested in the parking lot dividers within ten feet of a busy walkway. Open grass fields on the north and west sides are good nesting areas for E. Meadowlark, Savannah and Grasshopper sparrows. In recent years both E. Bluebird and American Kestrel nested in boxes placed around the animal barn on the northwest corner of the grounds.

Some of the best birding is found south of the buildings in the mixed hardwoods and open fields which represent about 40 percent of the total area. A narrow, paved road to the Human Resources facility leads to the edge of the woodlot. To bird the area, park at the building and walk (vehicles prohibited) through the woods, uphill, to the underground reservoir. Along this quarter-mile walk, several trails lead off in both directions. To the right, look for Kentucky and Blue-winged warblers and Indigo Buntings in the scattered mid-canopy openings and in the treetops. To the left, trails lead you through forested and open areas. The large mature oaks and poplars attract six species of woodpecker, including Pileated, Hairy, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in the fall. Nesting Red-tailed Hawk and resident E. Screech-Owl and Great Horned Owl can also be found. This area has Ruffed Grouse, too!

During spring migration, expect to see all thrush species, including Gray-cheeked, which was recorded three separate times in 1987. Last spring yielded several other surprises, among which were an early wave of Pine, Hooded, and Cerulean warblers, and an Olive-sided Flycatcher at the top of the drive, calling from a snag. Both Yellow-throated and Solitary vireos can be found along with large numbers of nesting Red-eyes. So far, 26 warbler species have been observed, most with good regularity between 5-20 May. The slopes to the left just inside the woodline drain to a small stream. Check this area for Winter Wren and Swamp Sparrow in April, and listen for

Worm-eating Warbler here during May.

Fall migration usually starts with large numbers of Chimney Swifts and swallows, and sometimes Common Nighthawks, moving through insect-filled skies over the fields. Blue Jays and orioles fly through in good numbers, and groups of 20 or more Killdeer are not uncommon. The wooded areas feed many warblers and thrushes, again including Gray-cheeked. This year brought more Olive-sided Flycatchers at the top of the hill on 13 and 21 September. The season can be good from early September to late October. Last year a few Black-throated Blue Warblers stayed until the third week of October. Don't forget to look up, too, for Broad-winged Hawks and Ospreys which often slip by unnoticed.

The winter months can seem long and birdless, as the westerly winds blast across the open fields. But don't let that stop you! Check the white pines on the eastern edge of the complex for accipiters, as both Cooper's Hawk and N. Goshawk have used these trees for plucking stations in the past.

Our basic strategy, even in dull times, is to expect anything at any time. For example, just as things were slowing down in early 1987, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher flew by the building on 21 January. This may have been the same bird observed earlier at two separate eastern locations near Hawk Mountain and Myerstown, but it's still a great addition to the list. Would you also believe, fly-by Sandhill Cranes in early June of '86? (Most people don't!)

Last spring we met a visitor from California who just happened to stroll up the back road through our woodlot. Within 15 minutes we were all watching a pair of Hairy Woodpeckers feeding their young, and he observed his life-list Cedar Waxwing and Black-billed Cuckoo. He missed a "Brewster's" Warbler by only 30 minutes! Mid-March is a good time for northbound Canada Geese and Tundra Swan, which fly over in good numbers. Ring-billed Gulls are also plentiful during this time and later.

From our point of view, the Hershey Medical Center grounds are indeed a valuable sanctuary for birds. Over a period of five years, 126 species have been recorded.

*(The Hershey Medical Center is located on U.S. Route 322 in Hershey, PA, Dauphin County)*

## BRUSH MOUNTAIN NOTEBOOK

by Marcia Bonta

I know it is an autumn woods now when I go walking despite the persistent calling of the E. Phoebe which has not yet headed south for the winter. The trees are scarlet and purple, gold and burnt orange, and the gray squirrels are busy hustling up food for the cold season ahead.

Huge flocks of Cedar Waxwing surge in with their keening cries to harvest the abundant crop of wild black cherries. Despite the fall webworms which have left nothing but bare limbs and simmering webs that encase hundreds of cherry trees like gauzy shrouds, the skeletonized branches are heavy with cherries. Other wild fruits are also abundant--clusters of red dogwood tree berries, clumps of frosty-purple wild grapes, filbert nut-sized scarlet hawthorn apples, and pokeweed plants bearing shining bunches of deep purple berries on their hot pink stems. One afternoon I watched deer stripping the pokeweed berries from a plant in our backyard. They went after them as if they were manna from heaven.

I still hear the calls of a few summer birds in the underbrush --Rufous-sided Towhee, Gray Catbird, and Am. Robin--but the predominant calling in an autumn woods is done by our all-year residents--Red-bellied, Pileated, Downy, and Hairy woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatch, Tufted Titmouse, Black-capped Chickadee, Am. Crow, and Blue Jay. Then, as a counterpoint to the loud calls, I hear the pure, ethereal notes of a White-throated Sparrow singing about where he spent the summer..."Oh sweet Canada, Canada, Canada." He may be merely passing through or he may choose to spend the winter in the thicket.

But my best reward this autumn day comes later when I'm sitting on the verandah watching a pair of ravens tumbling in the wind and sunlight above Sapsucker Ridge. They do loop-de-loops, flying into the wind, wings swept back, matching each other stroke for stroke, and all the while their strange, wild cries rend the air. It is a sight of sheer exuberance that I will remember a long time--ravens on an autumn wind giving me a solitary performance, lifting my spirits to an autumnal high that not even the dark gathering of storm clouds carrying a damp rain will dispel.

# Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee

Franklin C. Haas

On Saturday, 12 November 1988, the Ornithological Technical Committee of the Pennsylvania Biological Survey met in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, to adopt a set of by-laws for the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (PORC). The by-laws that were adopted are reprinted below. The committee welcomes comments and suggestions from the birding community concerning these by-laws. Please send your correspondence to:

Dan Brauning  
Academy of Natural Sciences  
19th and The Parkway  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

**More importantly, however, we are looking for persons interested in serving on the committee.** If you are interested, or know someone who is, please review the qualifications as defined in ARTICLE III, B of the by-laws.

If you want to recommend either yourself or another person for the committee, please send a resume of that person's qualifications to:

**Dr. Daniel Klem**  
**Biology Department**  
**Muhlenburg College**  
**Allentown, PA 18104**

Dr. Klem is the chairman of the nominating committee of the OTC, whose charge is to nominate a slate of candidates for the PORC. Nominations must be received no later than 15 January 1989 for consideration.

With the election of this committee in early 1989, Pennsylvania will finally have a clearing house for ornithological records. Previously, if something unusual or rare was reported, either an editor of **PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS** or American Birds would be the final arbiter as to the record's status. Now, a committee will bring its collective knowledge and experience together to determine the status of birds in our state. This will make our records more useful to bird students professional and amateur alike.

Until the committee is elected and a secretary designated, you may send any records that you would like to have reviewed by the committee to the editors of **PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS**. We will see that they are forwarded to the appropriate party as soon as possible.

We will forward to the committee any records received as editors of **PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS** which we feel require review. No longer will we be the

sole prosecutor, judge and jury on records submitted to this publication.

As stated in a previous issue, the purpose of a Records Committee is not to intimidate people, but to organize and lend credibility to a list of bird records for Pennsylvania. It will simply set the standards by which records will be assessed and classify bird sightings accordingly. Although some records will not be accepted, the submission of those records is still very important to the overall ornithological picture of this state.

For example, when birders first reported Mockingbirds in Pennsylvania, they were scoffed at, and we are sure that many such records went unreported for fear of condemnation by fellow birders. However, had a records committee been in place, and the records submitted, the pattern of the expansion of this species would have been much better documented in its early days. Yes, many of the records would probably have been "rejected" at first, but as the pattern was established, they would have been resurrected and viewed in a different light.

Some birders have asked, "What do we need a records committee for?."

In reply, we ask, "If all records submitted to birding journals were accepted at face value without question, how valuable do you think those records would be towards assessing bird populations, ranges, status, etc.?"

When I (Frank) was starting out birding, I saw birds in grassy areas with white rumps. I was unable to get close enough to see them clearly, but the white rump was obvious. I looked in my Golden Guide to Familiar Birds and properly identified them as Bobolinks. It wasn't until I got a pair of binoculars that Christmas that I got to see those birds up close and discovered they were Flickers!

Many years later, we received a call from a friend saying that there was a Gull-billed Tern on the river. We quickly drove there, saw a white tern with a black bill and added it to our list. A few years after that, we were birding in Delaware and had occasion to observe a Gull-billed Tern for an extended period of time. After viewing it for a while, we turned to each other and almost spoke at the same time. We both realized that the bird we had seen several years before probably was *not* a Gull-billed Tern, but was more likely just an albino Forster's or Common.

The point of these two stories is that we all make mistakes, both as neophytes and as experienced observers. The first mistake was due to inexperience, the second due to lack of experience with the

species and the desire to add a bird to our list. Everyone has made mistakes because of poor lighting or distance or being over zealous.

The "Bobolinks" were not reported to anybody, because I didn't know anyone to report to at that time. The "Gull-billed Tern" however, **was** reported to American Birds and accepted, as we were considered competent observers! Had there been a Records Committee to review our sighting, I am sure that it would not have been accepted.

We know that there are some birders out there who get greatly offended if someone does not believe their sightings. But, there is no point to collecting records if there are no standards by which they can be measured. No other field of endeavor brings together the professional and amateur as does ornithology. The professionals rely on us to provide them with useful reliable data to further the cause of science. A records committee is a means towards that end.

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## BYLAWS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORDS COMMITTEE

### ARTICLE I. Name and affiliation

- A. The official name of this organization shall be the "**Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee**" (PORC) (hereafter, the Committee).
- B. This is a sub-committee of the Ornithological Technical Committee (OTC) of the Pennsylvania Biological Survey (PBS).

### ARTICLE II. Purpose

- A. To determine the authenticity of rare or unusual bird sightings.
- B. To maintain the official check-list of the birds of Pennsylvania.
- C. To maintain permanently the original bird records and all Committee votes and comments for use by present and future ornithological students.
- D. To publish data on all records receiving a decision.
- E. To provide a means by which sight records can gain acceptance as credible scientific data.

- F. To establish standards in the methods of collecting and submitting quality field data.

**ARTICLE III. Membership**

- A. The Committee shall consist of seven persons, one of whom is the "Chairman" and one of whom is the "Secretary".
- B. Qualifications for Committee membership should include expertise in identification of birds, knowledge of Pennsylvania birds, and familiarity with birders and localities in Pennsylvania. A geographical balance to the Committee is desirable, but should not override the criteria above.

**C. Members**

**1. Election and term of office.**

Elections shall occur annually and nominations and elections shall be made by the OTC. The elected term shall be for three years. However, initially, the elected terms shall be staggered so that in the first year three members will be elected to three-year terms, two members will be elected to two-year terms and two members will be elected to one-year terms.

Election shall be by a vote on written ballots by the members of the OTC. The election may be conducted by mail if no OTC meeting is scheduled within 90 days prior to the end of term of office of any PORC member. Proxies shall not be used in this election, but an absent member may vote by indicating his choices to the secretary in writing prior to the meeting.

Members take office at the close of the Annual Meeting following their election and serve until the close of the third Annual Meeting after election or until their successors are elected. The members-elect may, at the discretion of the existing Committee, be seated, without vote, during the Annual Meeting following their election.

**2. Nominations.**

Nominations of members shall be made by the nominating committee of the OTC. Recommendations for nominations may be made by any person interested in the Committee and only in writing to the nominating committee at least thirty days prior to the Election. Recommendations should include a written description of the nominee's qualifications as they relate to Section III,B above. It is the responsibility of the nominator to obtain approval of willingness to

serve from the nominees submitted. A nominator may make a maximum of one nomination per each vacancy, and may not nominate oneself. If the total number of nominees is not sufficient to fill the vacant seats, it is the responsibility of the Chairman to nominate the number of persons required. The Secretary shall mail the names of the nominees to all members at least three weeks in advance of the Election.

**D. Secretary**

**1. Election and term of office**

The Secretary shall be elected for a term of one year. Election shall be by vote of five or more members present in person at the Annual Meeting of the Committee. The candidate receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected. If necessary, a tie shall be decided by an additional ballot listing only those persons tied. The Secretary shall take office at the close of the Annual Meeting at which elected and serve until the close of the next Annual Meeting or until a successor is elected.

**2. Duties**

- a. Receive, circulate, recirculate, and file all bird records and supporting data submitted to the Committee.
- b. Tabulate results of all votes of the Committee, except the election of the Secretary.
- c. Keep or cause to keep minutes of Committee meetings.
- d. Furnish members with a list of nominees for election.
- e. Furnish anyone, upon request, with all evidence, including Committee comments, concerning any submitted bird record.

**E. Chairman**

**1. Election and term of office.**

Same as Secretary.

**2. Duties**

- a. Call and preside at Committee meetings.
- b. Appoint chairmen of subcommittees.
- c. Assure that current bylaws are properly applied.

**F. Removals**

The Committee may remove, for cause, members who are delinquent in their duties. Such action requires a vote of the majority of all other members, not merely a quorum. A removal must be accomplished at a meeting of the Committee: absent members may vote by written ballot to the Committee.

**G. Vacancies**

If the Committee loses a member during mid-term, the Secretary shall immediately conduct an election,

termed a Special Election, for the purpose of filling the vacancy. A Special Election may be conducted at a meeting or by individual contact (such as mail or telephone), whichever is most expedient in the opinion of the Secretary. The person elected shall serve the unexpired term of the person being replaced.

**ARTICLE IV. Meetings**

**A. Annual Meeting**

An Annual Meeting of the Committee shall be held each year, at a time and place set by the Chairman, in consultation with the members, for the purpose of election and for transacting such other business as may be brought before the meeting. The Secretary must give to all members notice of the Annual Meeting, an agenda and a list of nominees at least eight weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.

**B. Special Meetings.**

Special Meetings may be called by the Chairman or by agreement of four or more members. Whoever calls the meeting must notify and provide an agenda to all other members prior to the meeting.

**C. Quorum**

Four members, present in person, not by proxy, shall constitute a quorum for any meeting of the Committee.

**ARTICLE V. Bylaws**

**A. Formation**

All bylaws and other procedures of the Committee are to be as determined by the Committee, provided that they do not conflict with the bylaws of the OTC or PBS.

**B. Changes**

These bylaws may be changed by a majority vote of all members of the Committee (not merely a quorum).

**ARTICLE VI. Classification of Records**

- A. The classification of bird species and observations is based on the following outline where I-S is the highest and V-C is the lowest.

**Class I-S:** An existing identifiable specimen adequately labeled as to date, place, and collector, and available for public inspection.

**Class I-P:** A diagnostic photograph adequately labeled as to date, place, and photographer, a copy of which is deposited with the Committee.

**Class I-R:** A diagnostic recording or sonogram adequately labeled as to

date, place and recorder, and available for public inspection.

NOTE: All first state records must be a Class I to be accepted.

**Class II:** An acceptable sight record documented independently by two or more observers.

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

**Class IV:** A probably correct record but not beyond reasonable doubt, therefore unaccepted.

**Class V-A:** A record that is not accepted because the identified species represents an escapee or an introduced bird not yet established in Pennsylvania.

**Class V-B:** A sight record which is likely to be correct but which is not accepted because the supporting evidence is not sufficient enough to allow for judgment.

**Class V-C:** A sight record that is not accepted because the supporting evidence does not adequately or accurately support the species identification.

- B.** The status of officially accepted bird species in Pennsylvania will be defined using the following criteria. The status of all species on the list will be reviewed five years after the establishment of the list and every five years thereafter.

### Status Definition

#### **Regular**

Species recorded 8, 9, or 10 of the last ten years.

#### **Casual**

Species recorded 4, 5, 6 or 7 of the last ten years.

#### **Accidental**

Species recorded 3 or fewer of the last ten years.

#### **Extirpated**

Established breeders that have not nested in the last ten years.

#### **Extinct**

Species which no longer exist.

### **ARTICLE VII. Voting**

- A.** The authenticity of records of rare or unusual bird sightings will be determined by votes cast by all seven members of the Committee using the five Classes discussed in Article VI above.
- B.** All written descriptions, photographs, sound recordings or

other evidence submitted by a given observer for a particular sighting will be gathered into a report by the Secretary and assigned a record number. More than one report (i.e. more than one observer submitting evidence) may make up a record.

- C.**
1. Records for which all of the submitted evidence can be adequately duplicated and mailed shall be photocopied by the Secretary and sent to all other members of the Committee simultaneously.
  2. Records for which all of the submitted evidence can be mailed but not adequately duplicated shall be routed by the Secretary, via a prescribed order, to the other members of the Committee. Each member shall vote on the record, send the record to the next member, and mail the evaluation form directly to the Secretary.
  3. Records for which all of the submitted evidence cannot be adequately duplicated nor mailed shall be voted on at a meeting. Written notification of specific bird records to be voted on at a meeting must be received by all Committee members from the Secretary prior to the meeting.
- D.** The voting process shall consist of one or two rounds. The first round votes will be cast without discussion between Committee members. If no decision is reached on the first round, (see Article VII(F) below) the record, along with photocopies of all completed first round evaluation forms, shall be mailed to all members for a second vote. Second round votes are final except as noted in Article VII(I).
- E.** When a Committee member has seen or heard a bird submitted as a record, the member is always permitted to vote Class IV or V. The member must abstain from voting when the member was one of the primary persons to discover the bird and considers the identification to be accurate. However, if the primary group includes three or more Committee members, then each member should vote. A member should vote also if he traveled to see a bird someone else found.
- F.**
1. For the purpose of Committee decisions, abstentions should be considered as Class I, II, or III votes, whichever is appropriate. In a situation where a member cannot or fails to vote within two weeks, the Secretary will ask another experienced Pennsylvania birder to participate as an alternate. However,

if six members vote to accept a record (Class III or higher), the seeking of an alternate becomes unnecessary.

**2.** A bird sighting is officially accepted when a primary vote results in at least six Class III or higher votes and any negative voter fails to provide any arguments for his vote that might influence others to change their vote.

**3.** Primary mail votes of 4/3 and 5/2, and of 6/1 with arguments provided for the negative vote shall be re-evaluated via a second mail vote. A final vote for Class III or higher of 7/0, 6/0 or 6/1 is required for a record to be permanently accepted by the Committee.

- G.** The Class of any given record will be the highest level for which there are six votes.
- H.** Members may request in writing on the evaluation form that a given record be split into two separate records or combined with another record.
- I.** After a final vote has been cast, members may request that a given record be reconsidered and voted on. The Secretary shall schedule reconsideration of a record if additional evidence has been received or new circumstances have arisen since the record was voted on.
- J.** A simple majority vote is required for acceptance of a policy, procedure or other matter unrelated to the evaluation of a record. In order to vote on policies or procedures, five members shall constitute a quorum.

### **ARTICLE VIII. Publication of results**

- A.** The results of all accepted bird sighting evaluations conducted by the Committee shall be published annually in *PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS*.
- B.** The format for accepted records will be: species, record number, date(s) seen, location, observer, where published (if applicable).
- C.** A file of all Committee procedures, policies and bird record evaluations shall be maintained by the Secretary.
- D.** Records accepted by the Committee which are indicative of a noteworthy change in numbers, range or behavior of a species will be submitted in appropriate format to the editors of *PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS* and *AMERICAN BIRDS*. Notification will also be given to said editors when a record previously printed in those publications is later determined unacceptable by the Committee.

**ARTICLE IX. Species to be documented**

- A. Any species observed which does not appear on the current Pennsylvania check-list as published by the Committee.
- B. Any species observed which is classified as Accidental or any extirpated species found nesting.
- C. Any species observed at an unusual time of year or at an unusual location.
- D. Any sighting which represents a significant contribution to the files of Pennsylvania bird records.

**ARTICLE X. Funding**

- A. Funding shall be provided by donations from the ornithological community to the PBS, ear-marked for the PORC.

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**GRASSLAND BIRDS**

by Richard Humbert

On 10 June 1988, Bill Del Grande and I made a trip to Adams County from our home in York County in search of the Upland Sandpiper, which I had discovered the year before.

The specific location is 1.8 miles from the square in East Berlin, N on Rt. 234 to an unattended lowland meadow. After some time when no sandpiper appeared, not uncommon at certain times of the summer, we stopped to talk to the farmer who owned the land surrounding the area. He suggested we take Possum Hollow Rd., a rural dirt road just past his farm on Rt. 234, as he had seen them flying in that direction several times before.

Along this road we saw and heard a good number of Savannah and Grasshopper sparrows and also a Bobolink calling. We also saw six E. Meadowlark, but no sandpiper. After crossing a hard road, we continued on Possum Hollow for about one-quarter mile and there on our left in an abandoned meadow were Bobolinks all over the place; we estimated there were at least 20 pair nesting.

Bobolinks are scarce in many parts of SE Pennsylvania and we knew it. After an extended period of observation, we drove on, crossed another hard road, and continued on the dirt road. Suddenly, Bill said, "Hey, that looked like a Dickcissel sitting on the wires back there." Being a little skeptical, but knowing the expert that Bill is at hearing and seeing birds, I turned around immediately and sure enough there was a male Dickcissel singing on the wire and another down the road.

What a day! It turned out to be much more than we bargained for.

To give you an update since that day. On 11 June, John and Jean Prescott saw one Upland Sandpiper, three Dickcissel plus the Bobolinks. Many watched the female Bobolinks carrying food. No one really looked for nests, but they seemed to be concealed with expert dexterity.

Al Spiese made a trip out there on 1 July. The Bobolinks had finished nesting and departed, the grass and grain fields where the Dickcissels were found had been cut to the ground and they, too, were gone. The Savannah and Grasshopper sparrows were still singing in the surrounding fields. On 9 July, 12 Upland Sandpiper were seen at one time in the meadow. By the next evening they were all gone, working their way south. Where has the summer gone?

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**CALL THE ANSWER MAN!**

by Jerry Dyer

When a heavy duty birder, say one of the typical "Biggies" who leaves his wife and kiddies cold, starving and destitute and who gets fired a lot for spending all his boss's time scoping through his office window, when such a major leaguer gets stumped, what does he do? He calls AOU or Cornell or Hawk Mountain or the Haases and finds out that what he's seen is in fact a Lesser Semipileated Azure-buffed Fly Zipper. And he adds it to his list, making a nice, round 4,967.

But.

But, what do my neighbors on Quaker Drive do when they see a bird they don't recognize? They phone me, that's what. Now, since most of my neighbors couldn't recognize a Penguin if they found one in their soup, I get quite a few calls.

Oh, it's a nasty job, I know, but somebody on Quaker Drive has to be the designated bird expert, right?

My credentials in birding expertise are, shall we say, modest. I've a rather lifeless life list - 241 species (including the Eastern Perdue Chicken). But that list includes stuff from Maine to Jamaica, England and the Southwest. I mean, one of those Super Belch-Fire, Fast Track Swamp Stompin' birders (see above) can count that many birds by accident en route to the Seven-Eleven for Tums at midnight. But, to the population of golfers, tennis players, Scrabble buffs, and cat fanciers on Quaker Drive, the fact that I have waterproof boots and a big fur hat qualifies me.

"Jer, Fred here. Got this bird out here..."

"Uh huh."

"And, like, well Jer, he's under this bush back here."

"Uh huh." (You can see right off the impact I'm having on this conversation).

"And, see, he's a pretty big bird, and..."

"What, ah, what color is he Fred?" (A question only a bird expert would think to ask, right?).

"Well, he's kinna like, well - What color would you say he is, Gladys? - What? - Oh. Brown, he's like, brown."

"Like, brown?"

"Well, like brown and he's got like, you know...speckles."

"How big is he, Fred?" (Again, the incisive question).

"Oh, he's pretty big, all right."

"Pretty big, huh? Like what, bigger than a Sparrow but smaller than say a Black Rhino?"

"Yeah." (We're narrowing it right down, now.)

"Etc., etc., etc., and etc."

Finally:

"What you got there, Fred, is what they call a Wood Thrush."

"No, it's not."

Well, we've all had variations on that theme, I'm sure.

Then there's this kind of expert consultation:

"Jer, what's a gray bird called?"

"Oh, could be either a Tufted Titmouse or a Sandhill Crane."

"Hey, great. Thanks. Beatrice, Jer says it's a Tufted Sandcrab. Yeah. Great, Jer, thanks."

"Yeah, like I said, it's kinna brick red color, about the size of a big sparrow and its got white stripes on its wings and...yeah...yeah, just as you hoped, its bill does cross over itself - never did see anything like that, Jer."

"Hey, Claude, that sounds like a White-winged Crossbill. I'm gonna run right up to your house and see it."

"No rush, Jer."

"How come?"

"Oh, the cat just ate it. Talk to you later."

"Uh huh."

## SUMMARY OF THE SEASON

### How dry was it?

The theme that pervaded the reports this season was the drought. The most alarming report came from *Lancaster* and the annual Cattle Egret count at Rookery Island which is held the first Wednesday in August. This year *only* 23 individuals were counted as opposed to the more typical 4000 for the past several years. This is the *only* known breeding location for the species in Pennsylvania. Was it the lack of grasshoppers? Were there other factors?

Until we learn more about the widespread impact of the drought on waterfowl breeding grounds we can only speculate that the early arrival of some species was also drought related. Of course there are always a few waterfowl reported during the breeding season, but it did seem more widespread this year. Were the 8 early **Snow Geese** flying by Tussey Mt. (*Bedford*) on 17 September part of the scenario?

Many reports discussed that the early summer drought and late summer precipitation led to high water in many impoundments during shorebird migration and hence few shorebirds. Other problems existed in *Philadelphia* and *Delaware*. The shorebirds arrived and fed in traditional tidal areas, but essentially had no place to go when the tide was high. The water level at Tinicum NEC was high and the Sewage Treatment Plant ponds have been filled in. Miller noted over a thousand shorebirds sitting on tree limbs and other protuberances to rest during high tide on numerous occasions.

It is particularly difficult to assess how the drought affected goatsuckers, but swifts, flycatchers and swallows may have been more impacted than first realized. Gross noted that **Tree Swallows** seemed to have difficulty finding food for nestlings in *Columbia*, citing more nest failures than usual. The early departure of many swallows in *Butler* and the late feeding of young in other areas may indicate part of the stress pattern. Several early dates of *Empidonax* may tell the story from up north. The drought did not seem to have any deleterious effect on **Carolina Wren** populations, as they were widely reported in good numbers from every area. But the **Sedge Wrens** in *Cumberland* may have been directly related to the extreme conditions that prevailed in more traditional breeding areas to the north and west.

Bell reports from *Greene* that it seemed that robins had difficulty in finding worms. From *Bedford* we learned that Dick had correspondence from monitors of bluebird trails that many young died in boxes this summer. No comments were

received as to the breeding success of other passerines. And last, but not least, was the spate of reports of **Dickcissels**. These individuals certainly were looking for greener pastures.

### Trends to ponder.

The lack of **Pied-billed Grebe** sightings may or may not have been drought related but, in any event, suggests this bird must be on the Blue List for Pennsylvania. The increased number of sightings of **Double-crested Cormorant** throughout the Commonwealth both as summering individuals and flybys at the various hawk watches reinforces its continued expansion.

Good numbers of post-breeding long-legged waders were found, although the dates recorded did not seem to indicate they were stressed by the drought, with the exception of the Cattle Egret problem noted above.

Raptor reports from the hawk watches on the ridges reflected low numbers through the end of the quarter. Reports of gallinaceous birds confirm earlier thinking, **Wild Turkey** are doing well, **Ring-necked Pheasant** and **N. Bobwhite** not so well. Rails are either under-reported or not reported often because they just are not here.

Cuckoos were more widely reported, just proving that if there is food available they will be too. Spraying for gypsy moths and other "pests" has never proved beneficial to our avian friends in any way.

The warbler migration was also somewhat lackluster, with good numbers of species, but few really big waves; *Lancaster* contributors indicated it seemed better than that of the last few years, but then those years had been considered almost terrible.

### And the rarities.

The **Least Bittern** in *Westmoreland* 7-8 July was considered too early for a migrant, but certainly not nesting at Powdermill Nature Reserve. The **Snowy Egret** in *Cambria* was a first county record and only the third southwestern record. The **White Ibis** found in *Luzerne* for five days in August was also a county record. A one-day total of 48 Glossy Ibis in *Bedford* was outstanding and the one in *Chester* was unusual. Most unusual was the **Clapper Rail** in *Westmoreland*, which met its demise as a window kill for the first s.w. Pennsylvania record. Details will be published in a later issue. *Rallidae* are notorious wanderers, so be alert to reading about some **Common Moorhen** appearances in a few counties where they are unexpected. **Black Vulture** was found

in *Columbia* for the first time. The **Mississippi Kite** in June (*Beaver*), although a late report, is not only the first record for that county but a first June record for Pennsylvania. A probable **Swainson's Hawk** was seen on the Blue Mt. flyway in *Northampton*.

Despite the comments above regarding the poor shorebird showing this season, there were some excellent finds. As usual, *Erie* and *Lancaster* led the pack, with *Cumberland* not far behind. Two **Sandhill Crane** in *Erie* may have spent *six weeks* in the area. Two **Piping Plover** were found at Presque Isle after an absence of any report in three years. The details received for the **Am. Avocet** in *Cumberland* were excellent, but unfortunately the bird did not stay for any appreciable time to be documented by photographs. *Dauphin* contributed a **Lesser Golden-Plover**. Unfortunately the information about the pair of **Black-necked Stilt** in *Philadelphia* was received too late to investigate. This only stresses the need to have reports of unusual sightings circulated to many people for either confirmation or further investigation. **Hudsonian Godwit** were found in *Lancaster* and *Erie* and a **Marbled Godwit** was also in *Lancaster*, as was a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**. Although expected at Presque Isle, the finding of **Baird's Sandpiper** in *Armstrong*, *Berks*, and *Montgomery* were worthy of special mention.

If the **Franklin's Gull** sighting in *Cumberland* and *Dauphin* meets the Records Committee criteria, it would be noteworthy not only for its rarity outside of Presque Isle, but length of time it was observed **and** unreported. Late hummingbird sightings should be investigated thoroughly to rule out the possibility of a western species. Just how violent are **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds**? (see *Armstrong*).

Unquestionably the best warbler find was the **Black-throated Gray** in *Columbia*. The **Yellow-throated Warbler** in *Lawrence* adds to the knowledge of range expansion for this species. **Connecticut Warblers** are never reported in great numbers, but how exciting it must have been to have one in your backyard in built-up *Delaware*. *Elk* reported its first **Henslow's Sparrow** this year. Blauer was surprised by a 24 July sighting of **Lincoln's Sparrow** in *Luzerne* and Peplinski had incredible numbers to report on in *Centre*.

There is plenty remaining to read.

# COUNTY REPORTS - July through September 1988

## Abbreviations Frequently Used in County Reports

**ad.:**adult, **Am.:**American, **BBAP:** Breeding Bird Atlas Project, **BBS:** Breeding Bird Survey, **c.:**central, **C:**Celsius, **CBC:**Christmas Bird Count, **Cr.:**creek, et al.:and others, **e.:**eastern, **Eur.:**European,Eurasian, **F:**Fahrenheit, **fide:**reported by, **Ft.:**Fort, **imm.:**immature, **I.:**Island, **Is.:**Islands, **Jct.:**Junction, **juv.:**juvenile, **L.:**Lake, **max.:**maximum, **m.ob.:**many observers, **Mt.:**Mountain, **Mts.:**Mountains, **NF:**National Forest, **NWR:**National Wildlife Refuge, **PGC:** PA Game Commission, **Res.:**Reservoir, **R.:**River, **SF:** State Forest, **SGL:**State Game Lands, **SP:**State Park, **sp.:**species, **spp.:**species plural, **ssp.:**subspecies, **Twp.:**Township, **w.:**western, **WMA:**Wildlife Management Area, **v.o.:**various observers, **N,S,E,W.:**direction of motion, **n.,s.,e.,w.:**direction of location, **>:**more than, **<:**fewer than, **\*:**specimen, **ph.:**photographed, **ft.:**feet, **mi.:**miles, **m.:**meters, **km.:**kilometers, **date with a + (e.g., May 4+):**recorded beyond that date. Compilers may also abbreviate often-cited locations or organizations.

## ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Joe Grom

*Locations: Frick Park (FP), Harrison Hills Park (HHP), No. Park (NoP), Pittsburgh (PGH), So. Park (SoP).*

**CORMORANT TO WOODPECKERS.** A scheduled field outing by the ASWP on 9/11 was remarkable for its large group (23) of participants. Having divided this unwieldy number into three groups, leader JP was able to point out from the advantageous overlook of HHP a **Double-crested Cormorant** flying up river.

Not too far from where the cormorant was sighted and, in fact on the same day, AH and PM watched a pair of **Osprey** patrolling the Allegheny R. near 12-Mile I. Each bird caught a fish while under observation. Two **Cooper's Hawk**, both imm., were tallied at an Eliz. Twp. backyard (MEW) and an Allison Park house (JC) 9/22 and 9/27 respectively. WH reported all three local buteos during Aug. at SoP. He and GK were the only reporters of **Am. Kestrel**. Julia Janosik (*fide* JG) found a **Wild Turkey** at Allison Park 8/28.

The only "shorebird" reported, despite a great migration elsewhere in w. PA, was **Killdeer** (m.ob.). The sole cuckoo sighting was of 1 **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** at SoP 8/2 (WH). Only WH and GK reported **E. Screech-Owl**; the former at Whitehall on three different dates and the latter investigating on 8/26 the 1 claimed by Holly and Nancy Koppel at E. McKeesport previously on 8/14.

The **Common Nighthawk** movement, which seems to have begun with WH's singleton at Whitehall 8/16 and extended to 9/4 with GK's 6 at E. McKeesport, never amounted to much. The only decent numbers were "about 40" by Meg Scanlon (*fide* JG), as she drove her pickup near NoP 8/24. A somewhat laggard **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** flitted through Shaler Twp. 9/27 (JH). **Red-bellied Woodpecker** during Aug. and **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** during Sept. were conspicuous. At FP, Hoffmann, Nickel and Novagradic tallied a half dozen of the latter 9/28. A **Pileated Woodpecker** was at SoP 9/19.

**FLYCATCHERS TO WAXWING.** Some 18 flycatcher sightings were made by WH in the s. portion and JP in the n.e. portion of Allegheny. MEW's backyard in Eliz. Twp. presented the only **Red-breasted Nuthatch** 9/25. A **Brown Creeper** at FP 9/28 did not escape the keen scrutiny of JH. With her crew of stalwarts, she was able to list an elusive **Winter Wren** at NoP 9/22, where on 9/15 she also observed the often overlooked **Gray-cheeked Thrush**. Imagine their great glee when this trio found 2 Gray-cheeked at FP 9/28! JC, who at times joins the above company, tracked down along Brown Rd. in NoP, a **Swainson's Thrush** 9/8, a **Hermit** and **Wood thrush** at the same spot 9/24.

GK had 4 **N. Mockingbird** between 8/9-23 at E. McKeesport, while WH listed 2 for Bethel Park 8/28. JP on an ASWP field outing to HHP 9/11 checked off 8 **Gray Catbird**, with an increase of 1 at Fox Chapel 9/25 for a total of 17 for two days. To round off the local mimics, JP inquires about relative lateness of 9/10 sighting at NoP of a **Brown Thrasher**. The answer is, as far as w. PA at least is concerned, that October departure dates and even November (late) abound.

CBCs often list the odd wintering thrasher. **Cedar Waxwing**, when found, tended to be larger family associations of perhaps 10 or so birds, with many young of the year.

**VIREOS TO GOLDFINCHES.** Four species of vireos (**White-eyed, Solitary, Yellow-throated, Red-eyed**) were on the move. The last White-eyed was seen 9/15 at SoP (WH); and 1 Yellow-throated at HHP 9/11 was "in full song" (JP). Warbler reports were interesting. **Tennessee** were somewhat in evidence around 9/10. Panza found a "very bland, more gray than green" **Orange-crowned** at NoP 9/10. Three **Nashville** lent good studies at HHP 9/11. **Magnolia** were on five reports, with JP's 7 at Fox Chapel 9/25 topped only by JC's 12-14 at NoP on the previous day. Hoffmann, in Shaler Twp. 9/14, added the lone **Cape May**. Other warblers of special interest must be the numerous **Black-throated Green** in all reports, up to 12 on 9/25 as "ticked" by co-leaders Hoffmann and JP at Fox Chapel. Also worthy of note are the 8 **Hooded** located at HHP (JP *et al*) 9/11, the **Mourning** (not often observed, *viz.* last spring) at NoP 9/13 (JP), the **Wilson's** at NoP 9/22 (JH,JC). One last warbler, one of the compiler's favorites, **Canada**, was in that Eliz. Twp. backyard (MEW).

The last reported **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was labeled "last seen" 9/26 at SoP (WH). The "first seen" **White-throated Sparrow** was found at NoP 9/22 (JH,JC). **Common Grackle** were just that (common) at SoP 9/30, when some 100 were counted (WH). Twenty-three seems a goodly number of **Am. Goldfinch** at Fox Chapel 9/25 (JH,JP *et al.*).

**OBSERVERS:** Jim Clark, Joe Grom, 9360 Babcock Blvd., Allison Park 15101 (412-366-9495), Ruth Grom, Walter Hammond, Amy Henrici, Joyce Hoffmann, Glenn Koppel, Patrick McShea, Joe Panza, Mike & Evaleen Watko.

## ARMSTRONG COUNTY

Margaret & Roger Higbee

*Locations: Keystone Res. (KR), Kittanning (KTN).*

Birders spent the summer wrapping up the Atlas Project. No rarity was found, but there were many good sightings, including **Osprey, Red-headed Woodpecker, Prothonotary Warbler, and Dickcissel**. Trips to KR were rather productive as the water levels were lower than we've ever seen them due to the drought.

A **Common Loon** continued to summer on the backwaters of the Allegheny R. near Tarrtown after its first appearance in June; the bird was last reported 9/11 (VL). Four **Great Blue Heron** were reported circling high over KTN 9/29 (JV). Top **Green-backed Heron** count was 4 at KR 7/28 (MH,RH). **Canada Geese** numbered 13 on 9/10 (TBC). Eighteen **Wood Duck** and 22 **Mallard** were tallied at KR 7/20 (MH,PF).

An **Osprey** was reported summering at Crooked Creek L. (BW,MM *et al.*). Another (same?) individual, was seen 7/6 and 7/12 near Nicholson I. on the river. A **N. Harrier** was observed quartering over a field near Rural Valley 8/8 (MH,GW). **Sharp-shinned, Broad-winged, and Red-tailed** hawks were all observed at KR 9/10 (TBC). Best **Ruffed Grouse** tally was 6 near KTN 9/5 (NK,NoK).

All shorebird sightings are from KR. Four **Semipalmated Plover** 9/9-10 were a nice find (BC). High count of **Killdeer** was 16 on 7/28 (MH,RH). Three **Lesser Yellowlegs** were found from 7/20 (MH,PF) through 7/30 (MH,RH). **Greater Yellowlegs** was listed only 9/10 (TBC). Top **Spotted Sandpiper** tally was 5 on 7/20 (MH,PF). Between 7/28 and 9/9, 1-3 **Semipalmated Sandpiper** were listed (MH,RH). **Least Sandpiper** were also reported in small flocks. Best find was a well-studied **Baird's Sandpiper** 9/10 (TBC). High count of **Pectoral Sandpiper** was 16 on 7/28 (MH,RH). A **Common Snipe** 9/10 (TBC) was the lone report. First **Ring-billed Gull** was listed 7/20 (MH,PF).

The **Common Nighthawk** migration was conspicuous in late Aug., with best tally of 100+ near Ford City (JW). A **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** with a large stab wound was picked up from under a feeder in KTN 9/8 (CD), but only lived for four hours. Davies felt it had been stabbed by another hummingbird. A **Red-headed Woodpecker** near Widnoon 7/26 (MH,NK,GW) was unexpected. **Purple Martin** continue to be scarce, with only one known colony near Elderton.

A male **Prothonotary Warbler** singing in a swampy pond with many dead trees near the river was observed for 20 minutes 7/5 and again 7/7 (BL,DL); the bird could not be found 7/25. Few migrant warblers were reported, but a TBC outing to KR 9/10 yielded small numbers of **Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Cape May, Prairie, Blackpoll,** and **Hooded** warblers. A **Canada** was found near KTN 9/3 (NK).

Three **Dickcissel** near Shady Plain 7/12 (BL,DL) were the county's addition to the statewide invasion. A **Dark-eyed Junco** found near Rosston 7/1 (BW) was totally out of range.

OBSERVERS: Todd Bird Club, Caroline Davies, Paula Fleming, Margaret and Roger Higbee, RD #2, Box 166, Indiana 15701 (412-354-3493), Nancy Karp, Norman Karp (NoK), Bob Lane, Denise Lane, Vicki Lunde, Melissa McSparrin, Joe Valasek, Bill Wison, Gloria Winger, John Winger.

## BEAVER COUNTY

### Ed Kwater

We are pleased to announce that Ed Kwater will be assuming the compiler's duties for Beaver County beginning with the October - December quarter. Please send any sightings for Beaver County to Ed at 2396 Highland Avenue, Allison Park, PA 15101. (412) 487-6288.

## BEDFORD COUNTY

### Thomas Dick

*Locations: Dunnings Cr. (DC), Reynoldsdale Fish Hatchery (RFH), Shawnee SP (SSP), Tussey Mt. (TM).*

The beginning of the third quarter was dry and hot; however, it ended wet and unseasonably cold. Although precipitation was near normal in Sept., the moisture still has not recharged groundwater to normal levels. The drought allowed first-time defoliation by gypsy moths to kill thousands of trees on the thin-soiled ridges. Unless otherwise noted, all observations are those of the compiler.

A skein of 50 **Double-crested Cormorant** were seen flying high and due S over the summit of TM 9/6 (RS). One **Great Blue Heron** and 1 **Black-crowned Night-Heron** cavorted at RFH 8/28 (TD,SD). An unusual sight was a flock of 16 **Glossy Ibis** followed by another flock of 32 heading S over the summit of TM 9/17 (SD,KG). On 9/13 a single ad. **Tundra Swan** was spotted flying SE over TM (RS). An early flock of 8 **Snow Geese** flew by the summit 9/17 (KG). A mixed flock of 25 **Blue-winged Teal** and 30 **Mallard** were seen lifting off a small stream e. of Everett 8/29. Thirty **Wood Duck**, 2 **Pied-billed Grebe**, and a pair of **Am. Coot** were seen in the marsh at the w. end of Gordon L. 7/25 (SD).

Early summer drought and late summer precipitation caused many impoundments to hold water to high levels, ergo shorebirds passed by without notice. **Killdeer** numbers reached their peak 9/30, when 50+ were observed near New Paris. **Upland Sandpiper** was reported in at least three areas, the only specific location being Cessna 7/14 (JS).

Our nemesis, the summer weather patterns, followed us through the month of Sept. at our hawk watch on TM. Normally winds are fairly well split between the east (a good wind for Tussey) and the west (poor); this Sept. the winds were all out of the west, dropping our count to less than half of last year's total. The big loss was **Broad-winged Hawk**, which seems to prefer the valley thermals or ridges other than Tussey. Other species with a poor showing were **Red-shouldered, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk** (down appreciably), **Cooper's Hawk**, and **Am. Kestrel**. Although coverage was down by three days (21), an increase in **Osprey** continued for the fourth straight year. Other slight increases were **N. Harrier** (earliest was an imm. at DC 8/27), **Merlin** (always modest), **Peregrine Falcon**, and **N. Goshawk**. The most surprising Sept. entry was an early **Golden Eagle** 9/26 (SD). Another entry worth noting was an Osprey working a farm pond near Everett with a yellow or white band approximately 1" x 6" attached to its right wing (MJ). Finally, a high of 50 **Turkey Vulture** occurred at TM 8/28. **Black Vulture**, 2-6, were seen throughout Sept. A full report, including the Sept. sightings, will be in the next issue.

GALLINACEOUS TO PASSERINES. A flock of 8 **Wild Turkey**

were foraging in feeder fields at TM. **Mourning Dove** survived the summer drought well. Thousands of **Chimney Swift** and some 200 **Common Nighthawk** were seen flying together in the late evening over the skies of the town of Bedford 8/29. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** reports were scarce, with feeder watchers being the only reporters. Latest birds were 9/22 and 10/2 (GH). **Belted Kingfisher**, well reported, were along most streams and impoundments throughout the quarter.

Six **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** were spotted feeding in black willows at SSP 9/30. **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, usually present in small numbers, were scarce with only 1 observed at TM 8/28. On the same date and location, 3 **Least Flycatcher** were spotted. An unusual report was of 32 **Common Raven** in one kettle and 16 in another migrating S pass the summit 9/6 (RS).

**Carolina Chickadee**, responding to pishing, were reported at Gordon L. (SD). Thus far this chickadee seems to be only found near the extreme s. part of the county, while **Black-capped Chickadee** are common throughout. The first migrant **Winter Wren** was reported at TM 9/6 (RS). **Carolina Wren**, possibly the most common wren in Bedford, were reported regularly from Tussey during Sept.

Bluebirds, although common, did not seem as abundant as in previous years. Correspondence with bluebird trail makers indicates many young died in boxes this summer (AC). Could this have been due to the extreme heat? Of the *Catharus* thrushes, only a lone **Swainson's Thrush** was reported, at SSP 9/30 (SD).

Flocks of **Cedar Waxwing**, conspicuous by late summer, were well reported from TM (SD,KG,DK). Warbler migration was either lackluster or overlooked, with few reports. In general, the **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was on schedule, with a strong early Sept. presence at TM. **Tennessee** and **Nashville** warblers were reported from DC right up to 9/28 and 10/1 respectively (GH). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was reported on TM 9/6 (RS).

On 7/16, during the extreme summer heat (102 @degrees), 6 **Louisiana Waterthrush** were cooling off in Dunnings Cr. If that were not enough, we caught the following swimming or bathing within throwing distance: 2 rabbits, 3 **Gray Catbird**, 1 **Great Crested Flycatcher**, 2 **Am. Redstart**, 1 **N. Flicker**, and 2 **Red-bellied Woodpecker** (TD,SD).

Both **White-throated Sparrow** and **Dark-eyed Junco** made an early appearance, 9/12, at TM. The only other noteworthy finch report, which hopefully is not a forewarning of winter, was an early **Evening Grosbeak** report from a feeder at Everett 8/15 (J&TC).

OBSERVERS: Jack and Terry Carnila, Andrew Choby, Sally & Thomas Dick, 1003 Eisenhower Blvd., Johnstown 15904 (814-266-7912), Kevin Georg, Gordon Hassel, Mike Jackson, Dave Kyler, Glenn & Ruth Sager, John Shaffer.

## BERKS COUNTY

### Rudy Keller

*Locations: Earl L. Poole Nature Preserve (PNP), Hawk Mt. Sanctuary (HMS), L. Ontelaunee (LO).*

The last year of the BBAP had birders busy covering new blocks and upgrading old ones, resulting in some interesting records. Accipiters are seldom reported during the nesting season, but this year there was breeding evidence for both **Sharp-shinned** and **Cooper's** hawks. After several years of scarcity, **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were easy to find, just in time for the Atlas. A singing male **Golden-crowned Kinglet** and 3 female-plumaged birds were in a mature Norway spruce plantation near Oley during the latter half of July (RK).

Fall migration was slow at HMS. Due to a lack of cold fronts in Aug. and early Sept., **Bald Eagle** numbers started low and only climbed to average by October. **Broad-winged Hawk** bypassed HMS. The big day, 9/12, total was only 1184 birds. Major flights of Broad-wings went S through central New Jersey, then W over s. PA via South Mt. (LG). The only other report was of 24 birds over Reading 9/10 (MW). Raptor totals from HMS will appear in the next issue.

Few migrant shorebirds land in Berks, so it was especially gratifying to find a buffy juv. **Baird's Sandpiper** feeding with 2 **Semipa-**

**Imated** and 1 **Pectoral** sandpiper at the settling pond of a limestone quarry near Oley 9/10 (RK). A good variety of small birds was reported, but except for the typical large flights of swallows and swifts, most species passed through in trickles rather than waves.

**GREBES TO DUCKS.** The first **Horned Grebe** was seen at LO 9/25 and 1 **Double-crested Cormorant** was there 9/11-17 (MS). **Great Egret** punctuated ponds across the county, with 9 at Angelica L. 7/29 being the earliest sighting and the largest number reported. A juv. **Snowy Egret**, along with 2 ad. and 1 imm. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** were at a pond near Oley 8/20 (RK). A Black-crowned and a **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** were at Moselem Springs Golf Club 9/8 (DL). A brood of 11 **Wood Duck** was seen on Maiden Cr. 7/2 (MS), a brood of 6 found near Manatawny Cr. 8/10 (RK), and 28 Woodies were at Peter's Cr. 8/21 (MS). The first **Am. Black Duck** were 2 at LO and 1 near Oley 9/25 (RK,MS). A **Common Merganser** was on the Sacony Cr. in Greenwich Twp. 7/23 (DL). At LO, 66 **Ruddy Duck** were seen 9/25 (MS).

**VULTURES TO TERNS.** **Black Vulture** were seen off and on all summer in e. *Berks* (PS). Four **Osprey** were at the Kutztown Rod & Gun Club pond for three hours 9/27 (DL). An ad. **Bald Eagle** was seen 9/2-3 in Bern Twp., and another at the Rt. 183 Lookout 9/11 (JS). A pair of **Sharp-shinned Hawk** observed in June/July behaved as though they were nesting, and 2 fledgling **Cooper's Hawk** were observed noisily begging for food 7/30 and 8/1 (RK). **Cooper's Hawk** were also present all summer at another location (DL). **Red-shouldered Hawk** almost certainly nested at a location where an ad. was seen and 3 other birds heard calling repeatedly in Aug. and Sept. (RK). **Am. Kestrel** were moving through the Oley Valley 9/17, when 7 were seen along a short stretch of road (RK).

Three **Wild Turkey** were near Birdsboro 7/9 (MS). Single **N. Bobwhite** were seen in Bern Twp. 7/13 and Pike Twp. 7/23 (RK, JS). The latter was very tame and probably a released bird. A **Lesser Yellowlegs** was seen near Oley 8/20, and single **Least Sandpiper** were there 8/20 and 9/17 (RK). An **Am. Woodcock** was near Leesport 9/17 (AK). Two **Caspian Tern** were at LO 9/25 (MS).

**DOVES TO THRUSHES.** A late-nesting **Mourning Dove** in Hamburg fledged 2 young 9/27 (KG). A **Barred Owl**, unexpected anywhere in the county away from the Blue Mt., was discovered being mobbed by songbirds 7/3 in a backyard near Bechtelsville, far from deep forest. It was repeatedly seen in daylight, and a favorite hunting perch was a roadside telephone wire, beneath which it was found dead 7/10, apparently hit by a car (JK). Large numbers of **Common Nighthawk** moved through in late Aug./early Sept., with groups of 10 and 20 birds seen 8/31 and 9/10 (JS, MW). A migrant **Whip-Poor-Will** was seen in Pike Twp. 9/1 (RK). **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** were reported in normal numbers by those who grow flowers attractive to them.

Pairs of **Red-headed Woodpecker** were seen near Bowers and Kutztown this summer (PS). Atlasers discovered **Pileated Woodpecker** at three locations in e. *Berks* in July and Aug. (RK,PS). One was heard at Nolde Forest S.P. 9/19 (MSI,SS). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** appeared near Leesport 9/26 (AK). An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** in Brecknock Twp. 9/2 was the only one reported (MSI). The earliest *Empidonax* flycatcher reported was one near Leesport 8/14 (AK). An **E. Wood-Pewee** was feeding 3 young at Blue Marsh L. on the late date of 9/6 (JS). Swallow migration was underway by 8/7, when about 50 **N. Rough-winged**, 30 **Bank**, and 20 **Tree** and **Barn** swallows were observed drinking at a pond near Oley (RK). Atlasers discovered a few more barns colonized by **Cliff Swallow** in the Oley Valley (RK,JP). Some other first Fall sightings included: **Brown Creeper** 9/17 Pike Twp. (RK), **Winter Wren** 9/22 Leesport (AK), **Ruby-crowned** 9/14 Leesport and **Golden-crowned** kinglet there 9/29 (AK), and **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** 9/6 Blue Marsh (JS).

**E. Bluebird** continue to flourish where nest boxes are put up in the right habitat; of 34 boxes maintained by Terry Knorr at Daniel Boone Homestead, 13 were occupied by bluebirds and fledged 55 young. Eight boxes were occupied by Tree Swallow and 3 by House Wren. The first migrant **Veery** was tallied at Leesport 8/2 (AK), and the first of many **Swainson's Thrush** were in Bern and Pike Twps. 9/12 (JS,RK). Doesn't anyone see **Gray-cheeked Thrush** in Fall?

**VIREOS TO BOBOLINKS.** Atlasing revealed that at least eight species of warblers breed on Topton Mt., including **Chestnut-sided**, **Black-and-white**, **Kentucky**, **Am. Redstart**, **Ovenbird**, **Louisiana Waterthrush**, **Common Yellowthroat** and **Hooded**. Most were seen with fledged young (RK). An award for dogged persistence should go to

the **White-eyed Vireo** that sang every day from 6/7 to 9/2 in a brushy field in Pike Twp., but failed to attract a mate. This species is expanding its range in the county (or trying to).

Observers reported 30 species of warblers and vireos in fall migration. First sightings, other significant dates and high numbers follow. Vireos: **Solitary** 9/22 (AK); **Warbling** 8/1 (AK); **Red-eyed** 8/7 (AK), and 10 at PNP 9/11 (MS). Warblers: **Blue-winged** 9/16 (JS); **Tennessee** 8/2 (MS); 1 **Orange-crowned** 9/12 in a bird bath in Bern Twp. (JS); **Nashville** 9/1 (RK); **N. Parula** 9/16 (JS); **Yellow** 8/1 (AK); **Chestnut-sided** 8/21 (AK), and 4 in a bird bath at one time 9/13 (JS); **Magnolia** 8/25 (AK); **Cape May** 8/26 (RK), and 20 at PNP 9/11 (MS); **Black-throated Blue** 8/30 (JS); **Yellow-rumped** 9/10 (MSI); **Black-throated Green** 8/26 (RK), and 12 at PNP 9/25 (MS); **Blackburnian** 8/26 (AK); **Pine** 9/29 (AK); **Bay-breasted** 9/1 (RK); **Blackpoll** 9/1 (JS); **Black-and-white** 8/13 (AK); **Am. Redstart** 8/1 (RK); **Ovenbird** 8/31 (AK); **N. Waterthrush** 9/11 (RK); **Kentucky** 8/10 (AK); 1 **Connecticut** 9/13 & 9/16 Bern Twp. (JS); single **Mourning** 8/2, 8/3, 8/20 at Leesport, where they turn up every year in Aug. (AK), and 1 that flew into a window in Bern Twp. 8/13 (JS); **Common Yellowthroat** 8/3 (AK); **Wilson's** 8/28 (MS); **Canada** 8/10 (AK).

**Scarlet Tanager** were moving by 8/22 (JS). Migrating **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** were seen near Leesport starting 8/3 (AK), but highest numbers didn't appear till mid-Sept., when about 30 were seen in Greenwich Twp. (DL), and about 10 at PNP 9/25 (MS). A female-plumaged **Blue Grosbeak** was seen in Bern Twp. 8/30 (JS), the 3rd record for *Berks* this summer! A **Swamp Sparrow**, an uncommon breeder in *Berks*, was on territory near Topton in late July/early Aug. (RK). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was seen in Bern Twp. 9/30 (JS). **White-throated Sparrow** was first reported in Bern Twp. 9/16 (JS), and **Dark-eyed Junco** in Greenwich Twp. 9/23 (DL). Five **Bobolink** were passing through the Oley Valley 9/10 and 10 on 9/17 (RK).

**OBSERVERS:** Laurie Goodrich, Kerry Grim, Rudy Keller, R.D. 4, Box 235, Boyertown 19512 (215-367-9376), Anna & Vernon Kendall, Joanne Kintner, Don Lane, Jean Patton, Peter Saenger, Peter Schreiber, Joan & Bob Silagy, Mike Slater (MSI), Matt Spence, Matt Wlasniewski.

## BLAIR COUNTY

David Kyler

*Locations: Brush Mt. (BM), Canoe Creek SP (CCSP).*

Exceptionally hot and dry described the weather. Springs and small streams that usually flow into the late summer months were dry in June and many farm ponds were experiencing record low levels. Unusual species recorded were **Little Blue Heron**, **Sora**, and **Black Tern**, which were all found at CCSP.

Two **Pied-billed Grebe** were at CCSP 9/19 (PF) and at L. Altoona 9/12 (BK). **Great Blue Heron** were present at CCSP throughout the quarter, with an ad. still feeding young on the nest near Geeseytown 9/28 (ML). **Green-backed Heron** with fledged young were at CCSP 8/20 (TW). An ad. **Little Blue Heron** was observed in the "stump" area of CCSP 7/26. The bicolor bill, dark legs, and russet neck were all described (RB).

Flights of **Canada Geese** were observed flying SE over BM 9/28, while **Osprey** were moving SW along BM 9/7 (BK). A **Sora** was found in the cattails at CCSP 8/8 (RB). **Greater Yellowlegs** were present on the CCSP mudflats 8/20 (RB) and **Solitary Sandpiper** were found along Clover Cr. 7/18 (ML) and at CCSP 9/19 (PF). Six **Common Tern** were feeding at CCSP 8/20 (RB) and a single **Black Tern** was present there 7/8-9 (TW). This individual was observed and identified by several local birders and did not show any of the usual summer mottling.

Vocal **E. Screech-Owl**, 9/9, **Great Crested Flycatcher** feeding young 7/5, **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** families 7/5, and **Nashville** and **Black-throated Blue** warblers migrating 9/16 were all reported from BM (MB). Two **Blackburnian Warbler** feeding **Brown-headed Cowbird** young were found in upper Canoe Cr. Valley 7/2 (ML). Fledged **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** were on BM 9/26 (MB).

**OBSERVERS:** Marcia Bonta, Roy Boyle, Paula Ford, Bill King, David Kyler, RD #4, Box 159-A, Huntingdon 16652 (814-643-6030), Melvin Lane, Russ Wade, Terry Wentz.

## BRADFORD COUNTY

Bill Reid

The summer can best be described as very hot and very dry. There were heavy flights of **Canada Geese** in all four counties 9/25 and the following week. Both cuckoo species were widely reported, and numbers seemed to have completely recovered from the lows of 3-4 years ago. **Whip-poor-will** were almost totally absent in the 4-county area. The only report was in *Luzerne*. **Chimney Swift** had totally disappeared by 9/20; usually they linger in some numbers into October. Breeding **Alder Flycatcher** continued to be reported in the four counties. Numbers of migrating thrushes heard at night were very low. The **Henslow's Sparrow** reported last quarter were confirmed breeding 7/9 (SC, JG).

OBSERVERS: Skip Conant, John Ginaven, William Reid, 73 W. Ross St., Wilkes-Barre 18702 (717-836-2525).

## BUCKS COUNTY

Bruce McNaught

*Locations: Delaware R., Honey Hollow Envir. Educ. Ctr. (HHEEC), Peace Valley Park (PVP).*

**CORMORANTS TO RAPTORS.** Four **Double-crested Cormorant** were seen on the river at Morrisville rapids 7/5 (SR) and 6 southbound at PVP 8/18 (FM). Two ad. and 2 imm. **Great Blue Heron** were at Churchville Res. all summer (BM). Post-breeding herons and egrets were noted at many reservoirs. Imm. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** were in Sellersville Park in early Aug. (HR), at PVP in mid-Aug., and several along the river in early Sept. A **Little Blue Heron** was on the river at Morrisville 8/28 (SR).

On 8/19, a crew of volunteers from Bucks Co. Audubon, along with the PGC and Mary Jane Stretch from the Aark Foundation, went onto the property of USX to rescue 20 oiled **Canada Geese**. While chasing geese, we noticed a great number of herons and egrets attracted to the plant's filtering ponds. The count was 3 **Black-crowned Night-Heron**, 6 **Great Blue Heron**, 4 **Green-backed Heron**, 28 **Great Egret**, 11 **Snowy Egret**, and 2 **Little Blue Heron**, all in this six-acre area (BAM). USX is supposed to do work to keep birds from getting into their oil-collection ponds.

**Wood Duck** raised a brood at PVP for the second consecutive year of the last 10. **Black Vulture** continue to be seen regularly along the river, however rarely away from there; 1 was recorded at PVP 9/14 and 3 on 9/23 (FM). The first **Osprey** at PVP was early, 8/6. Migration of Osprey along the river was good this year with 3 on 8/26 fishing at Center Bridge Rapids. Two birds remained around the Lumberville area in July, assumed to be young birds from Rymon's reintroduction program just up river in Portland. A bird with color bands, also from the project, was seen at New Hope 9/13 (BAM). The lone **Bald Eagle** report was at PVP 9/2 (FM). The 1000 **Broad-winged Hawk** in 70 minutes at PVP 9/16 was the best flight of the Fall (FM). The only report of **Peregrine Falcon** was of 1 at PVP 9/23 (FM).

**PHEASANT TO SPARROWS.** **Ring-necked Pheasant** remain critically low, with no broods reported. A **Sora**, rare for PVP, was seen near the Nature Center 9/3 and 9/10. Gravel bar exposure on the river 8/26 gave rest to 1 **Solitary Sandpiper**, 5 **Least Sandpiper**, and many **Killdeer**. High water level made shorebirds hard to find at PVP. Best was 2 **Stilt Sandpiper** 9/23 (FM). An ad. **Caspian Tern** was seen 8/7 flying up river (AG). Only **Common Nighthawk** reports were: 1 on 8/19, a few the week of 9/11 (FM), and 4 at Lumberville 9/7 (BAM).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** 9/14 made for the "normal 1 for the year" at PVP (FM). During early July, a **Great Crested Flycatcher** was observed feeding young in a cavity of an old white oak in Southampton (BM). The only **Red-breasted Nuthatch** report was 1 at PVP 9/14 (FM). Warblers came through as expected the first ten days of Sept., with no rarities reported. Not one **Lincoln's Sparrow** was found at PVP this Sept., which is unusual for this location.

OBSERVERS: Al Guarente, Bob Male, Fred Mears, Bruce A. McNaught, RD 1, Box 263A, New Hope 18938 (215-297-5880), Sue Reilly, Hart Rufe.

## BUTLER COUNTY

Barbara Dean

*Locations: Glades Wildlife Area (GWA), L. Arthur (LA), L. Oneida (LO), Moraine SP (MSP), Slippery Rock Area (SRA), Slippery Rock Univ. (SRU).*

See the *Lawrence* report for a summary of weather. Birds found an abundant natural food supply during migration. Weed seeds, nuts, and berries such as pokeweed and snowberry, and especially the black cherry tree, yielded a bounty of food, perhaps caused by the stress of the drought. Sightings by the compiler unless otherwise noted.

**HERONS TO DUCKS.** An outing at LO and MSP on 7/31 tallied 10 **Green-backed Heron** (JP, HL, WC). **Great Blue Heron** and **Green-backed Heron** vacated most favored locales by the end of Aug., unusually early (GW). A **Great Egret** was a good find near the Prospect Exit at LA 9/23-24 (JP). An imm. **Little Blue Heron** spent most of 8/21 feeding in the shallows at GWA. It flew out of the area when a Black Labrador dog disturbed it. **Canada Geese** were flocking and moving earlier than usual, with flocks of 100-150 observed 8/31 to 9/5 in SRA (GW). Two **Am. Black Duck** and 36 **Mallard** were counted at MSP 7/31 (JP, HL, WC).

**DIURNAL RAPTORS.** **Turkey Vulture** were common in the SRA/MSP area 8/27 to 9/30. It was not unusual to observe 5-15 together, leading Wilhelm to suspect a major roost near MSP. An ad. **Bald Eagle** flew over GWA 8/21. That same day, a **Red-shouldered Hawk** was also seen there. A lone **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was in SRA 9/22, but other hawks were scarce there. Two **Cooper's Hawk** and 2 juv. **Broad-winged Hawk** were at MSP 7/31 (JP, HL, WC). The **Am. Kestrel** continues its decline.

**PLOVERS TO TERNS.** **Killdeer** started their Fall staging early, with 50-100 on the SRU campus in late July. Most of these left by 8/1, with a second build-up from 9/6-30. Some 89 **Killdeer** were counted at SRU 9/29 (GW). Listed for LA and LO on 7/31 were 2 **Semipalmated Plover**, 5 **Greater Yellowlegs**, 4 **Solitary**, 2 **Spotted**, 1 **Semipalmated**, 1 **Western**, and 11 **Pectoral sandpipers** (JP, HL, WC). The 70+ **Ring-billed Gull** at LA 7/21 was an unusually high count there. Five **Common Tern** were found at North Shore, LA, 9/24 (JP, et al.).

On 9/20, Grisez saw 6 or 8 **Ring-billed Gull** at LA hovering in a stiff breeze at the top of a black cherry tree. They seemed to be trying to land on it, but were picking cherries off of the top branches, or trying to.

**DOVES TO WOODPECKERS.** Young **Mourning Dove** were just leaving the nest as late as 9/22 in SRA (GW). Cuckoos, both species, were scarce this quarter, in fact, the lowest in numbers since 1983. Only 2 **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** were observed in July and Aug. in SRA and no **Black-billed Cuckoo** was observed this quarter, a first alarming record (GW). An **E. Screech-Owl** was heard at Crestfield Camp 8/14 and 9/25 for the second year, and also at MSP 9/25. **Common Nighthawk** flew over SRA 8/28 to 9/14, a dozen per night (GW). Some 150-200 **Chimney Swift** were counted going into the chimney of West Gym, SRU, the evenings of 9/19-24 (GW).

The last male **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** left SRA 9/4; females remained there until 9/15, unusually early (GW). The **Red-headed Woodpecker** continues its decline, with only three successful nests in SRA compared to nine nests five years ago (GW). An ad. male **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was at MSP 9/25.

**FLYCATCHERS TO WRENS.** Regular breeding flycatchers had good breeding success. The **E. Wood-Pewee** stayed in SRA until 9/15, while the **E. Phoebe** was still in SRA and MSP until 9/30 (GW). Many ad. and imm. **Horned Lark** were found on Miller Rd. 8/14. **Purple Martin** vacated nest boxes in SRA/MSP area by 8/31, but so did **Tree** and **Barn** swallows, which is unusually early (GW). **N. Rough-winged Swallow** was confirmed breeding at Cooper's L. area. At least 7 **Carolina Wren** were found in *Butler* 7/31 (JP, HL, WC), as well as being found at SRA 7/24 and Crestfield Camp 9/25. The **House Wren** did not seem as common and the last one left SRA 9/10 (GW).

**THRUSHES TO WARBLERS.** **Gray Catbird** and **Brown**

**Thrasher** were absent from SRA/MSP by 9/1, very early (GW). **E. Bluebird** had a good quarter, despite the harsh weather. Some 33 were counted moving SE in SRA 9/7 and several remained until quarter's end (GW). **Am. Robin** were quiet and scarce until the Fall build-up 9/25-30 (GW). An early migrant **Swainson's Thrush** was recorded at MSP 9/3 and 4 were seen there 9/25. Ditto for the **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**.

Imm. **Red-eyed Vireo** were commonly seen after 7/24. **White-eyed** and **Solitary vireos** were at MSP 9/25. Good numbers of **Blue-winged**, **Black-and-white**, **Magnolia**, and **Hooded** warblers were seen 8/21 at GWA. The first warbler wave hit SRA 9/9, with **Am. Redstart**, **Chestnut-sided**, and **Bay-breasted** dominating (GW). We counted 10 **Blackburnian**, 13+ **Yellow-rumped**, 5 **Cape May**, 1 **Blackpoll**, 1 **Black-throated Blue**, many **Black-throated Green**, plus several unidentified warblers feeding in black cherry trees in a section of MSP 9/25. **Prairie Warbler** were at MSP 7/17 and 9/3 (MD).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES. **Scarlet Tanager** and **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** moved through SRA/MSP 9/10-12 and again 9/19-20 (GW). **Rufous-sided Towhee** and **Chipping Sparrow** were still present 9/25. A few **Swamp Sparrow** and a small flock of **White-throated Sparrow** were also at MSP 9/25. A small colony of 12+ **Henslow's Sparrow** were confirmed breeding at a reclaimed strip mine area on Book Rd. in June and July. A few **Purple Finch** were at MSP 7/16. **Dark-eyed Junco**, **Pine Siskin**, and **Evening Grosbeak** had not arrived by quarter's end.

OBSERVERS: William J. Campbell, Barb Dean, George Dean, Mary Dean, Ted Grisez, H. R. Leapman, Joe Panza, Gene Wilhelm, RD 2, Box 2120, Slippery Rock 16057 (412-794-2434).

We thank Barb Dean for doing the *Butler* report for the past three issues. She will be the permanent compiler for *Lawrence*. Gene Wilhelm, address above, resumes duties for *Butler*.

#### CAMBRIA COUNTY

Kevin Georg

This report was received too late for inclusion in the last issue.

*Location: Hinkston Res. (HR).*

A **Common Loon** was on HR 4/17 and 1 **Pied-billed Grebe** was seen there 5/6. Also 8 **Double-crested Cormorant** were at HR 4/17. An **Am. Bittern** found 5/6 was in the same area of HR where it has been seen three years in a row. A **Snowy Egret** was found on a marsh in back of HR 4/24; this was a 1st county record and only the third SW PA record (*Indiana* 8/74 and *Somerset* 4/21/88). Two **Green-backed Heron** were on HR 4/17.

An **Osprey** was seen on HR 4/17 and 5/6. A kettle of 20+ **Broad-winged Hawk** was observed moving ahead of a storm front 4/22. One **Am. Coot** was on HR 5/6. Eight **Ring-billed Gull** were at HR 5/6. **Chimney Swift** were found 4/21.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** were observed 4/2 at Stackhouse Park. **Winter Wren**, **Hermit Thrush**, and **Yellow-rumped Warbler** were seen at Stackhouse Park 4/14 (DM). Although 4/28 was a rainy, sometimes snowy, day **Yellow-rumped**, **Black-throated Green**, and **Blackburnian** warblers were seen.

OBSERVERS: Kevin Georg, Dick Mock.

**Tim Fox** will assume the duties of compiler for *Cambria*. Any help with sightings will be greatly appreciated and can be sent to P.O. Box 352, Summerhill 15958.

#### CARBON COUNTY

Bernard L. Morris

*Locations: Bear Creek L. (BCL), Beltzville SP (BSP), Mauch Chunk L. (MCL).*

A pair of **Common Loon** in basic plumage was regularly seen through July at BSP (JW). Another bird was seen 7/13 at BCL (BLM). A pair of **Pied-billed Grebe** was at MCL all summer, though no young could be found (JW). Another ad. bird was seen at BCL 7/13 (BLM). Several broods of **Wood Duck** were seen at MCL (JW), and another was seen 7/14 near White Haven (BLM). A systematic search for raptor nests by Judy Wink turned up numerous nests of **Sharp-**

**shinned**, **Cooper's**, and **Broad-winged** hawks, as well as **Great Horned Owl** nesting evidence in 42 of the county's 44 blocks! One **Cooper's Hawk** nest had three fledged young in it 7/5.

With the BBAP now through its fifth year, the contribution from *Carbon* is outstanding: 100% block coverage, with an average species count of over 78 per block. This is one of the highest in the state. Four blocks had over 100 species. All together there were 3460 individual sightings, resulting in a total species list of 152 for the county. The tally of 25 warblers, 19 of them confirmed as breeding and another 5 as possible breeders, is also one of the highest in the state. (See *PB* 2:2,65).

It is hard to believe but, even after four previous years of atlasing, we still managed to add three more species to the county list: **Pied-billed Grebe**, **White-eyed Vireo**, and **Savannah Sparrow**. The biggest surprise to me when all of the blocks were tabulated was that **Ruffed Grouse** was found in every single block! Seventeen other species were also found in every block, and another ten were found in all but one.

Five **Ring-billed Gull** were at BSP 7/3 (JH), and 3 were at BCL 8/7 (EC). A pair of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** and several **Golden-crowned Kinglet** were found in scotch pines near Mecksville 7/3 (AK, BLM). A **Brown Creeper** carrying food and a pair of **Solitary Vireo** building a nest were seen near that area 7/7 (BLM). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was seen near Lehighton 9/12 (ER). Several warblers were seen feeding fledged young: **Yellow-rumped** and **Magnolia** near Mecksville 7/3 (AK, BLM), and **Black-throated Blue** and **Hooded** near Unionville 7/9 (BLM). An agitated **Savannah Sparrow**, the 1st summer record, was seen in July near Weatherly (WT), and a good-sized colony of **White-throated Sparrow** was seen near L. Towamensing 7/2 (FB, BLM).

OBSERVERS: Fritz Brock, Ed Chubb, Jason Horn, Arlene Koch, Bernard L. Morris, 825 N. Muhlenburg St., Allentown 18104 (215-435-9134), Ed Reimann, Walter Thurber, Judy Wink.

#### CENTRE COUNTY

John Peplinski

*Locations: Bald Eagle SP (BESP), Colyer L. (CL), Walnut Springs Park (WSP).*

The heat and drought continued into this period with the average July temp of 75.5 being about 4 degrees above normal. A high of 102 on 16 July tied the all-time high for State College. The drought began to ease somewhat towards the end of July and the rainfall total of 3.35" for July was only slightly below normal. The Aug. average temp of 75.7 was almost 6 degrees above normal. After accumulating a record total of 35 days with 90 degrees or above for the period, more normal temps prevailed from 19 Aug. to the end of Sept. Precipitation for Aug. was 6.4", well above normal, but most of it fell during the last week. Sept.'s average temp of 62.1 was near normal, and the rainfall total of 3.47" was slightly above average.

A very early **Common Loon** was at CL 9/22 (BDB). Eight **Double-crested Cormorant** were seen 8/31 at BESP (PGS). Reports of **Great Egret** from BESP included individuals 8/6, 8/20, and 8/31, and 2 on 8/27 (PGS). Two imm. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** were at BESP 8/21 (MC). Some of the few waterfowl reports included 8 **Wood Duck** at BESP 8/6 (PGS), 2 **Blue-winged Teal** at BESP 8/27 (PGS), and 8 **Am. Wigeon** at CL 9/25 (KJJ). Imm. **Bald Eagle** sightings included singles 9/13 (KS) and 9/21 (JP) along Bald Eagle Mt. Reports of **Merlin** were of 1 on 9/14 (JP) and 1 on 9/25 (TK) along Bald Eagle Mt. The last report of **Whip-poor-will** was from the Barrens 9/25, when 1 was seen and another heard (JP).

Shorebirds reports from BESP this period included 1 **Semipalmated Sandpiper** 8/31, 1 **Lesser Yellowlegs** 8/27, 1 **Sanderling** 8/27, and 1 **Western Sandpiper** 8/6 (PGS). Two imm. **Bonaparte's Gull** were at BESP 8/6 (PGS). Two **Caspian Tern** were at BESP 8/20 (PGS), and 1 **Forster's Tern** was there 8/28 (MC). The only **N. Saw-whet Owl** reported during the period was the 1 seen during the day at Pine Swamp 7/17 (HH).

Single **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** were seen in the Barrens 8/21 (JBP) and 9/3 (JP), and WSP 9/25 (JP). Reports of late **Least Flycatcher** were of 3 at WSP 9/25 (JP,ES), 1 in the Barrens 9/25, and 1 at WSP 9/26 (ES). A significant movement of **E. Kingbird** occurred 8/27 when a group of 17 was observed at BESP (PGS). A flock of 25 **Fish Crow** was seen flying over WSP 9/26 (ES).

**Winter Wren** reports were of 2 in the Barrens 9/24 and 4 at WSP 9/25 (JP). **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** appeared in numbers in the State College area 9/24 when 30 were seen (JP). The only **Gray-cheeked Thrush** reported was 1 in the Barrens 9/25 (JBP). **Swainson's Thrush** were moving through State College 9/25 when 12 were seen at WSP (JP), and 3 in the Barrens (JBP). In addition, 2 were reported 9/26 and 3 on 9/27 at WSP (ES). Late **White-eyed Vireo** included single imm. 9/3 and 9/24-25 in the Barrens (JBP). A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was w. of State College 8/28 (JBP), while the only report of **Philadelphia Vireo** was of 1 at CL 9/3 (ES).

Warbler migration was rated as poor by most observers, with no large waves being noticed. Interestingly, 17 warblers were recorded on the relatively late date of 9/25. Some of the notable warbler records include an early **Tennessee** 8/27 in the Barrens (JP), 3 fairly early **Cape May** 8/27 (JP), a very late **Cerulean** 9/26 (ES), **N. Waterthrush** 9/4 (ES), single **Mourning Warbler** 9/5 near Penn State campus (ES) and at WSP 9/25 (JP), and a late **Hooded** 9/24 in the Barrens (JP). For the second consecutive year, no **Connecticut Warbler** was reported.

The best sparrow of the period was the **Henslow's Sparrow** at BESP 9/17 (HH). An incredible 6 **Lincoln's Sparrow** were at WSP 9/25, while singles were reported 9/25 in the Barrens (JP), at WSP 9/27 (ES), and at Houserville 9/29 (ES). **White-throated Sparrow** were first noted in State College 9/20, when 3 were seen at WSP (JP), while **White-crowned Sparrow** were observed 9/25 in the Barrens (JBP).

OBSERVERS: Dorothy & Blanche Bordner, Morton Claster, Harry Henderson, Katherine & Jennings Jones, Tim Kimmel, Becky & John Peplinski, 4 Beaver Branch Rd., Box 364, Pennsylvania Furnace 16865 (814-238-6541), Paul & Glenna Schwalbe, Edgar Spalding, Karl Striedieck.

#### CHESTER COUNTY

Jerry Pasquarella

*Locations: Kurtz Fish Farm (KFF), Hibernia Park (HP), Honey Brook (HB), Nottingham Park (NP), Octoraro L. (OL), Struble L. (SL).*

Water levels at all locations were somewhat high this season, resulting in a lack of mudflats, etc., for shorebirds. The highlight of the season had to be the **Glossy Ibis** found in a small pond near Honey Brook at the Tel-Hai Retirement Community. This is a very rare bird for the county. Again, I must stress the need for more reports from local birders in *Chester*.

NIGHT-HERONS TO DUCKS. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** were seen at SL 7/25 and 9/3 and at KFF 9/13-15. Two **Little Blue Heron** were at SL 8/2 and 1 was sighted at OL 9/3. The largest flock of **Cattle Egret** at Doe Run this season was 30 on 8/24. Post-breeding **Cattle Egret** were seen near SL 7/25 and 2 were at Marsh Creek SP 7/26. Two **Snowy Egret** were at OR 9/3. The **Glossy Ibis**, first seen near Tel-Hai 8/1, remained in the area until 8/30. A pair of **Green-winged Teal** were on a small pond near Mortonville 7/5. **Blue-winged Teal** were found 8/31. A female **Ruddy Duck** was seen near SL 8/2. A high count of 15 **Wood Duck** were at OR 9/3. Last date for the male **Ring-necked Duck** near HB was 7/4.

RAILS TO TERNS. An imm. **Virginia Rail** was seen throughout July near French Creek SP in a small marsh at Wilson's Corner. Five **Semipalmated Plover** were at OR when it was drained 9/3. At the small pond and adjacent mud flat near Tel-Hai, where the **Glossy Ibis** was seen, were: 3 **Greater Yellowlegs**, 3 **Lesser Yellowlegs**, 2 **Pectoral Sandpiper**, and single **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Spotted Sandpiper**, and **Least Sandpiper**. Two **Western Sandpiper** were at OR 9/3. A **Caspian Tern** was sighted at SL 8/10 and a single **Black Tern** was near SL 9/4.

EAGLES TO NIGHTHAWK. An imm. **Bald Eagle** was at OR 7/31. Most observers commented on the lack of any significant hawk flights during the season. A high count of 300 **Broad-winged Hawk** was observed over the Coatesville area 9/16, as were the following rap tors:

3 **N. Harrier**, 4 **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, 1 **Cooper's Hawk**, 5 **Red-tailed Hawk**, 2 **Osprey**, and 1 **Am. Kestrel**. A **Merlin** was seen at HP 9/22. The earliest **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was at SL 8/11. **Red-shouldered Hawk** could be seen throughout the period at OR. A **Ruffed Grouse** was on a wooded hillside above Schoen Rd., W. Whiteland Twp., during the season. Seven **N. Bobwhite** were at NP 7/31. The **Wild Turkey** continues to be seen regularly near the domestic turkey farm near HB. A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was near SL 8/8. At dusk on 8/26 over some fields just e. of Marshallton, I counted at least 125 Common Nighthawk.

WOODPECKERS TO FINCHES. **Red-headed Woodpecker** continues in the area of Pleasant View Rd. near HB. An imm. **Red-headed Woodpecker** was seen near SL 8/11. Three pairs of **Willow Flycatcher** bred near OR. **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** were reported from HP 8/25, 8/31, 9/5, & 9/21. **Horned Lark** summered near HB, with as many as 5 seen near SL 7/25. A **Winter Wren** has been at HP since 9/21. Earliest **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was 9/17. **Philadelphia Vireo** was at HP 9/5-6 & 9/15. Warbler migration was rather moderate this year, with a high count of 13 spp. at HP 9/22. A **Golden-winged Warbler** was seen near West Chester 9/25. An early **Canada Warbler** was at HP 8/8. Other noteworthy warblers were **Nashville** at HP 9/2,6,22 and **Hooded** at HP 9/2. Eighteen **Pine** were there 7/3, as were 7 **Prairie**. Two **Blue Grosbeak** were at Goat Hill, s. of NP, during the season. At least 10 **Savannah Sparrow** bred in the fields w. of SL. The first **White-throated Sparrow** appeared near West Chester 9/16. The first **Purple Finch** was a flyover near Coatesville 9/7.

OBSERVERS: Larry Lewis, Jerry Pasquarella, 2209 Cranberry Lane, Coatesville 19320 (215-486-6440), Neal Thorpe, Era VanDenburg.

CORRIGENDUM. The 40 **Wood Duck** listed in the last issue should actually read 4.

#### CLEARFIELD COUNTY

Edgar Spalding

Perhaps the large number of unpleasantly hot days this quarter was responsible for the below average coverage. Reports from only one observer were received, so a summary of the early part of migration cannot be made. However, some of MA's sightings will be of interest to other birders.

Two newly fledged **Wood Duck** were seen 7/30 at the yet undeveloped DuBois Industrial Park. Also there was a family of **Spotted Sandpiper**. The Tannery Dam, which she described, sounds like the best habitat available to any passing shorebirds. If it remains shallow with some grasses, it may produce some interesting sightings.

Her daily sightings of both **Willow** and **Alder** flycatchers, throughout July and as late as 8/8, indicate the presence of suitable breeding habitat for both species. No reports of **Henslow's Sparrow**, known to breed in *Clearfield*, were received.

OBSERVERS: Marianne Atkinson, Edgar Spalding, 115 Old Houserville Rd., State College 16801 (814-238-7973).

#### CLINTON COUNTY

Paul and Glenna Schwalbe

*Locations: Slate Run (SR), Tamarack (TM).*

During this quarter the record summer heat and accompanying drought finally broke as shown with the following. The mean low, mean high, and total precipitation respectively. July 64, 88, 4.55". Aug. 63, 84, 8.78". Sept. 51, 71, 3.45".

Raptors noted were 1 **Cooper's Hawk** at Glen Union 7/2 (SS) and 1 at TM 7/15 (PGS); 1 **N. Goshawk** was seen 7/16 (JG). A pair of **Red-shouldered Hawk** at (*location deleted. -Eds.*) (MH) and 1 at SR 7/2 (SS) completes the hawk list.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch** observed were 1 at Lucullus 7/1 (SS), 1 at Snow Shoe 7/2 (MH), and 1 at SR 7/2 (SS). A **Winter Wren** was found singing on territory at the end of an arduous hike in Renovo East (PGS) 7/7.

Several **Golden-crowned Kinglet** were seen, 1 at Lucullus 7/1 (SS), 1 at SR 7/2 (SS), 1 at State Camp 7/4 (PGS), 1 at TM 7/7 (PGS)

and 1 with fledged young at TM 7/15 (PGS). One **Mourning Warbler** was observed at State Camp 7/4 (PGS). We had our first post-breeding wandering/migrating warbler 7/16, an **Am. Redstart** (PGS). Finally, **Hooded Warbler** were seen at two locations, 1 at Glen Union 7/2 (SS) and 1 at Lock Haven 7/5 (PGS).

OBSERVERS: John Guarnaccia, Mark Henry, Steve Santner, Paul and Glenna Schwalbe, 546 Wilson St., Jersey Shore 17740 (717-398-4514).

## COLUMBIA COUNTY

Douglas A. Gross

With the exception of **Am. Black Duck**, the local waterfowl population seems fine, but the migrant population of waterfowl was among the worst within memory. A **Double-crested Cormorant** flew over Espy 7/4 (DG). The 2 **Black Vulture** sighted near Mainville in June remained in the area during July (DG). **Sharp-shinned Hawk** again successfully nested (*loc. deleted.*-Eds.), the 11th year out of the last 12 (SK). **Cooper's Hawk** returned to suburbs of Bloomsburg (HM) and Berwick (KH) in Sept. after being absent during the summer. Several observers were treated to a lot of **E. Screech-Owl** singing in Aug. A good year for Screech-Owls. Large flocks of **Common Nighthawk** were enjoyed near Martzville and Berwick 8/24 (KH,ND). More **Red-bellied Woodpecker** were found in the summer near Jonestown than in past years (SK). Warbler migration seemed fairly normal with the highlight being a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** near Berwick 9/18 (KH). (Description given to county editor was sufficient for identification.) Open field sparrows, especially **Vesper**, were less common than in the last three years near Rohrsburg (DG).

OBSERVERS: Nancy Dennis, Doug Gross (Ecology III, RD1 Berwick 18603), Karen Hiller, Scott Killam, Hugh & Diana McFadden, Autumn Pfeiffer, Dave & Linda Unger, North Branch Bird Club.

The following was received too late for the last issue.

*Locations: Briar Creek Lake (BCL), North Branch Susquehanna River, Roaring Creek Watershed (RCW).*

Many might consider the drought or the first sighting of **Black Vulture** in the county as the quarter's highlight, but I think that the exploration of wild areas the in s. end of the county was the most exciting event of the season. Credit should be given to the persistence of Dave Unger in obtaining permission to explore RCW, a wild and extensive privately owned land tract between Numidia and Centralia. He and his wife Linda staged several trips into RCW, sometimes accompanied by friends or local birders. Another intrepid atlaser, Autumn Pfeiffer, explored the nearly roadless Buck Mt. near Shumans. We all thank these volunteers for their considerable efforts.

WATER BIRDS. **Canada Goose**, **Mallard**, and **Wood Duck** nested in fairly average numbers, but **Am. Black Duck** has almost disappeared as a breeder along the river. Hybridization between Blacks and Mallards observed locally may have genetically swamped the Blacks as it has elsewhere. **Osprey** seems to get more common each spring migration. Ospreys were especially persistent at BCL, snatching stocked trout to the chagrin of local anglers. NBBC members reported Ospreys near Evansville until late May, but no nest was found.

UPLAND GAMEBIRDS. **Wild Turkey** was reported from many parts of the county, even the edges of some towns. **Ring-necked Pheasant** has become uncommon in all but a few places. **Mourning Dove** squabs were seen as early as April as this species had another banner year. **Am. Woodcock** was found to be fairly common in SGL #226 near Millville (DG,HM).

RAPTORS. On 6/29, **Black Vulture** was reported for a *first* county record (DG). Two were seen sitting on a transmission tower in farmland near Mainville. They appeared to be paired, but gave no indication of nesting. **Red-tailed Hawk**, **Broad-winged Hawk**, and **Am. Kestrel** continued to be common nesters, but little data was received about accipiters. Unfortunately, enthusiasm for hawk-watching seemed to dissipate during their breeding season. Atlasers found **Barred Owl** to be fairly common in RCW, sometimes hearing several in a small area (DLU). They were also found on Buck Mt. near Shumans (AP). The Catawissa Mt. **N. Saw-whet Owl** did not return this year (JF), but **E. Screech Owl** was found frequently (NBBC).

NIGHTJARS, CUCKOOS, AND WOODPECKERS. **Whip-poor-will** was found to be quite common in RCW (DLU). They

were also present but sparse near Rohrsburg and Derrs (DG). Both species of cuckoo were reported as being more common than recent past years. Scattered reports were received of **Red-bellied Woodpecker** nesting in the s. half of the county.

SONGBIRDS. **Least Flycatcher** was found to be common in RCW (DU). **Horned Lark** was confirmed nesting near Stillwater, Jonestown (SK), and Waller (DG). **Tree Swallow** seemed to have trouble finding enough food for nestlings in the drought and more nests failed than usual near Rohrsburg (DG). **Cliff Swallow** were discovered nesting under the new E. Bloomsburg bridge (DG) and on a little bridge in RCW (DU). **Purple Martin** nested in Berwick, but may be declining in the area. There were more reports of **Fish Crow** nesting more than a mile from the river (NBBC). **Common Raven** were heard on Little Mt. in RCW near the *Northumberland* line (AS,DU). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** and **Golden-crowned Kinglet** nested in old RCW conifer plantings at the relatively low altitude of 1140 ft (DU). **Hermit Thrush** were not only confirmed, but fairly common in RCW, even below 1200 ft (DU). **E. Bluebird** nested in suburban Bloomsburg, perhaps for the first time (HM).

Atlasers continued to find **Solitary Vireo** nesting in streamside hemlocks at fairly low elevations (DG,DU). A good sampling of warblers, even some "northern" types, were found in both RCW and Buck Mt. Highlights included confirming **N. Parula** in RCW (DU). **Worm-eating Warbler** apparently nested on Buck Mt. (AP) and Catawissa Mt. (JF). **Pine Warbler** was more common in RCW than in any other area in the atlas region (DU). **Northern Waterthrush** remains poorly reported, so the pair found along Roaring Creek was a good find (DU). In laurel thickets of RCW, **Black-throated Blue** and **Canada** warblers were common breeders (DU). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was found defending territory in a transmission corridor near Mainville (DG).

**Grasshopper** and **Vesper** sparrows were much less common in the Rohrsburg area than in previous three summers (DG). This may be due to there being more land lying fallow (these sparrows like bare dirt). **Dark-eyed Junco** fledges were found on Catawissa Mt. (JF). **Orchard Oriole** continued to nest at BCL. Atlasers continued to find **Bobolink** singing in hilltop hayfields throughout the county. **Pine Siskin** persisted at feeders until late May, but no nesting evidence was reported (NBBC).

OBSERVERS: Nancy Dennis, Douglas Gross, Susquehanna Biological Laboratory, RD 1, Berwick 18603 (717-542-2191), Karen Hiller, Scott Kilham, John Fridman, Hugh and Diana McFadden, Autumn Pfeiffer, Allen Schweinsberg, Dave and Linda Unger, and the North Branch Bird Club.

## CRAWFORD COUNTY

Ronald F. Leberman

*Locations: Conneaut Marsh (CM), Linesville Fish Hatchery (LFH), Meadville (MDV), Pymatuning SP (PSP) (including the Causeway, Goose Mgmt. Area (GMA), Miller Pond, and the Spillway).*

All sightings were by compiler unless otherwise noted.

A **Pied-billed Grebe** was at CM 9/4. Eight **Double-crested Cormorant** were at PSP 9/4. One **Great Egret** was at Erie NWR, Guys Mills, 8/28. Latest **Green-backed Heron** was at PSP ponds 9/11. A flock of 8 **Green-winged Teal** were off the causeway 9/5 (RFL) and 1 **Ruddy Duck** was found at the GMA 9/18 (m.ob.).

Four **Bald Eagle** were observed at PSP 9/17-18 (PGFBC, m.ob.), while 1 **N. Harrier** was at CM 9/4 (RFL). A **Sora** was seen at Hartstown Marsh 9/17 (PGFBC,RFL). There were also 4 **Am. Coot** at Hartstown Marsh 9/18.

There were 20 **Common Moorhen** at Hartstown Marsh 9/18. These birds were acting strangely to me, in that they were all high up in some sort of shrub out in the marsh, clambering about eating (what? bugs, leaves, seeds?). At any rate, I have never seen a sight like that before. RFL.

A visit to the ponds 8/21 found 2 **Greater Yellowlegs**, 2 **Sanderling**, 3 **Semipalmated Sandpiper**, 5 **Least Sandpiper**, and 4 **Short-billed Dowitcher**. Six Greater Yellowlegs were at Shelitoe Pond 9/5.

Two **Lesser Yellowlegs** were found at Erie NWR 8/5, while 40 were at LFH 9/11. Another **Sanderling** was at LFH 9/11 as was 1 **White-rumped Sandpiper**. Two **Pectoral Sandpiper** were at Miller Pond 8/5, with 12 at LFH 9/11. Three **Long-billed Dowitcher** were seen at close range with a 30X scope at LFH 9/11. Five **Common Snipe** were at Erie NWR 8/5 and 3 were at LFH 9/18. Two **Wilson's Phalarope**, in winter plumage, were along the Causeway 9/4. These were our first in 4 or 5 years away from Presque Isle SP (Erie). One **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at Erie NWR 9/5 (MT). Two **Carolina Wren** were in Saeger Hill from 8/6 through the end of the quarter.

OBSERVERS: Mary N. Leberman, Ronald F. Leberman, RD #1, Saeger Hill, Meadville 16335 (814-724-5071), Pymatuning Group of Federated Bird Clubs, Marian Terwilliger.

#### CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Deuane Hoffman

*Locations: Big Springs (BGS), Huntsdale Fish Hatchery (HFH), Kuhn L. (KL), Waggoner's Gap (WG), West Fairview Boat Launch (WFBL).*

Two **Common Loon** sightings were made at WG 9/24 (2) and 1 on 9/29 (DHe). Notable heron sighting was the **Tricolored Heron** at WFBL 8/27-29 (RK). The only notable waterfowl sightings include the **Mute Swan** at WFBL 7/18 (RK) and 18 **Ruddy Duck** at Kuhn L. (previously Creek Pond Rd.) 9/25 (DHe).

Raptor numbers were down at Waggoner's Gap during Aug. and Sept., with these two months totaling only about 3600 birds! Other than WG, the only other raptor of significance was a **Merlin** at HFH 9/25 (DHe). A full report in the next issue.

Henise had three exceptional shorebird sightings. Two were observed at KL: an **Am. Avocet** 8/9 and a possible **Wilson's Plover** 9/11 (*Will be referred to the Records Committee - Eds.*). At BGS, a **Short-billed Dowitcher** was seen from 8/17-29. Another incredible sighting was a possible **Franklin's Gull** at WFBL 8/27 (RK) (*Will be referred to the Records Committee - Eds.*). It was thought to have stayed until 9/17!

The BBAP discovery of the quarter for *Cumberland* was 2 **Sedge Wren** on Stumpstown Rd. 8/6 (GR,m.ob.). A recently fledged young was observed the following month. An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at BGS 8/27 was the best flycatcher report. During Sept., 16 species of warblers were found at various locations in w. *Cumberland* (DHe).

Henise also contributed the following excellent sightings. Two **Henslow's Sparrow** were seen near Newville 7/13-15 (DH), but not later despite extensive searching. An ad. male **Blue Grosbeak** was seen in the Newville area 7/25 to 8/9. Two **Lincoln's Sparrow** were found at KL 9/18 and 1 on 9/25. Two separate **Bobolink** sightings were made; 1 at Stumpstown Rd. 8/28, the other at KL 9/24.

OBSERVERS: Don Henise (DHe), Deuane Hoffman, 3406 Montour St., Harrisburg 17111 (717-564-7475), Ramsay Koury, Grace Randolph.

#### DAUPHIN COUNTY

Joseph Church

*Locations: Stony Cr. Valley (SCV), Susquehanna R., Wildwood L. Nature Center (WLNC).*

The weather in July and the first half of Aug. was hot and extremely dry. In the latter half of Aug. the temperature became more moderate and there was some rain, but it remained below normal. The county did have one rarity, a **Lesser Golden Plover**. This summer's breeding results were about normal for the past few years. The drought in the Midwest, however, may have been the reason there was a **Ring-necked Duck** on the river at Harrisburg in mid-July and a **Tundra Swan** at WLNC at the end of July (EC).

LOONS TO TERNS. Most herons were in good numbers, with an unusual report of what appeared to be 2 ad. and 1 imm. **Great Blue Heron** seen flying the mountain ridges toward the river, but at least 15 mi from it. EC suspects that the imm. had just begun to fly and therefore thought there may be a nest somewhere in the Lykens Valley. There were 37 **Great Egret** sighted near the heronry in the river 8/19. The best count of **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was 7 ad. and 2 imm. 8/23. In comparison to last year, when the only waterfowl

reported was a **Blue-winged Teal**, by 9/30 many of the dabblers had put in an appearance. This included good numbers of **Mallard**, **Am. Black Duck**, 15-20 **Am. Wigeon**, a pair of **Gadwall**, both teal and 6 **N. Pintail**, which is rather unusual for Fall. All but the Gadwall and Pintail, which were seen only on the river, were also found at WLNC.

There have been no reports made of any real hawk migration through the county, however individuals of the expected species have been seen. The best shorebird report was the **Lesser Golden Plover** near Union Deposit 9/10 (EC *et al.*). Some 20-25 **Greater** and 10-12 **Lesser yellowlegs**, along with 9 **Least** and 5 **Pectoral sandpipers** were seen on a flat in the river near Middletown 9/2.

The gulls in general are in fewer numbers than in past autumns, but all of the normal species have been present. (*The Franklin's Gull reported in Cumberland was also reported in Dauphin - eds.*)

OWLS TO FINCHES. **Great Horned** and **E. Screech-Owl** responded to a tape at WLNC 8/31. Two **Red-headed Woodpecker** (a good find) and 5 **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** were found in SCV 9/19. Flycatchers were hard to find this year, with only the **E. Phoebe**, **E. Wood-Pewee**, and **E. Kingbird** putting in a good showing. **Hermit Thrush**, on the other hand, have been in good numbers this Fall, with 6 found on a small 1-acre lot 9/30. The other migrant thrushes went unreported.

Vireos and warblers were sporadic, with the latter part of Sept. having a better mix of species but not as many birds. After the **Red-Eyed Vireo**, the most common vireo was **Solitary**, with several groups of up to 6 being seen. The only other reported were 2 **Yellow-throated** 9/10 at WLNC. Warblers there included **Magnolia**, **Chestnut-sided**, **Black-throated Green** and **Am. Redstart** in fair numbers and single **Tennessee**, **Black-throated Blue**, **Blackburnian** and **Bay-breasted** warblers. By the end of the period, a few **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** had moved through, while a few **Dark-eyed Junco** and **White-throated Sparrow** were found at areas where they often reside for the Winter.

In last year's third quarter report, I mentioned there was a blackbird roost that begins building in July until it reaches a couple hundred thousand birds, mostly **Common Grackle**, **Eur. Starling**, and **Brown-headed Cowbird**. This year was no different and they will probably remain until the first hard frost as they have in past years. This year, while returning from work at dusk, I followed one large group (10,000+) flying N right over the railroad for 5 mi back to their roost trees. I also picked up a group of nearly a thousand leaving in the morning and followed them as they flew E alongside Linglestown Rd. for 7 mi (and it was me who turned off while they continued on). I have been told by a neighbor who has lived in this area for more than 40 years that they have been roosting there every Fall since he moved to the area.

OBSERVERS: Ed Chubb, Joe Church, 129 Lucknow Rd., Harrisburg 17110 (717-236-1868), George & Catherine Wertz.

#### DELAWARE COUNTY

Al Guarente

*Locations: Ridley Creek S.P. (RCSP), Tinicum National Environmental Center (TNEC), Tyler Arboretum (TA).*

The scorching heat was relentless (or should I use unrelenting) during the months of July and Aug., with five days over 100 degrees and 18 straight days of 90+ degrees. Finally, in Sept. relief came for the drought-stricken county when the temperatures cooled to the 80's and the rains mercifully returned.

HERONS TO BOBWHITE. On 9/10 at TNEC 35 **Great Blue Heron** were present, while 48 **Great Egret** were there 8/25 (JCM). At the TNEC entrance off Rt. 420 an imm. **Little Blue Heron** was present 9/10-11 and two imm. **Tricolored Heron** were found 8/13 (BS). The 200+ **Wood Duck** at TNEC 8/8 would seem to indicate that they had a very good breeding season this year.

An **Osprey** at Tinicum I. 7/9 raises some interesting questions about the possibility of this species breeding in this location. Osprey during Aug. and Sept. were in normal numbers, with 1 or 2 being seen in various spots, but on 9/14, during a three-hour vigil, the 15 **Osprey** over RCSP were impressive (BFH). Osprey were still coming in late Sept., when on 9/26 over Media, 3 were present during a one-hour span. On 9/11, 9/14, and 9/15 an ad. **Bald Eagle** was reported at TA (SC,JL,HMc). This is the first confirmed record for Tyler. Many people feel this was the same bird and was possibly roosting near the

Springton Res. One was also seen over RCSP 9/15 (FH). On 9/16 an imm. bird was seen over Media (JL), while on 9/26 another imm. was migrating over Media (AG).

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** certainly weren't lacking, but it was generally felt that their numbers were lower than last year. This, hopefully, will change during October, when we expect the mainstream to come through. The TA is noted for its **E. Bluebird** trail, so an unpopular discovery was made 9/24 when a **Cooper's Hawk** was found with a male bluebird in its talons. Last year no one reported any groups of **Broad-winged Hawk** numbering over 1000. This year things changed, when on 9/14 some 3339 Broadies flew over RCSP (BFH). A day later, 9/15, 1500+ were seen over Media (EGK). A pair of **Am. Kestrel** bred in the vicinity of Lenni (NP).

Another excellent find for this area was a **Wild Turkey** found in Wawa 8/13 (WC). During the early part of July, **N. Bobwhite** were heard calling in Brookhaven along Chester Cr. (NP). Also on that date a **N. Bobwhite** was calling in RCSP (SC).

**PLOVERS TO NUTHATCHES.** At least 1 **Lesser Golden-Plover** was present at TNEC from 9/11 through 10/7 (JCM,BS). The shorebird migration was off to an early start this year, when 40 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at TNEC 7/4 and by 7/21 this group increased into a mob scene of 800+ yellowlegs (JCM)! Some 2500 **Semipalmated Sandpiper** were also on the TNEC flats 7/8 (JCM). Sept. 10 produced a **White-rumped Sandpiper** (BS) and 4 **Stilt Sandpiper** at TNEC. A **Short-billed Dowitcher** was found 7/9.

An interesting find was a **Bonaparte's Gull** in heavy molt going into winter plumage at Tinicum I. 7/9 (BS). Tinicum I. also produced 2 **Caspian Tern**, 1 ad. and 1 imm., 8/28, while down river in Chester, 2 **Common Tern** were there 9/4 (BS).

May and June were almost absent of cuckoos, but July and Aug. brought both species to the area. They could be heard calling along Chester Cr. in Aston and around Neuman College (NP) and the **Black-billed Cuckoo** seemed to predominate. Both were also at the TA and a **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was seen feeding young 8/9 (JG). Earliest report of Yellow-billed in Wawa was 7/7 (WC).

Although no one can seem to find a **Common Nighthawk** nest in Delco anymore, apparently they are around. In Collingdale, 7/26, one was seen flying during the middle of the day (AG), which they tend to do if they are summer residents. Another was seen over Media 8/5 (NP). A flock of 25 Common Nighthawk was seen hawking insects during a thunderstorm 8/18 (JL), while at least 100 went over RCSP just in advance of that same storm (BHA). The late date for the quarter was 9/26, although 1 was seen 10/1 in Havertown (JH), a very late date.

An early **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen at the TA 8/13 (AG) and another found there 8/16 (JG). Yet another was seen in Media 9/15 (AG). Many **Bank Swallow** were along Chester Cr. in Aston throughout the summer months. One **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was in Media 8/31 (AG). As is usual with these early ones that come through, it only stayed for two days.

**WARBLERS TO GOLDFINCH.** A **Yellow Warbler** was still present at Tinicum NEC 9/18 (TR). These birds are usually gone from there by the end of Aug. The warblers were really moving through Tyler 9/7. On that date were **Nashville, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Pine** and **Bay-breasted** warblers. **Cape May Warbler** finally arrived in the area 9/19 in Media and 9/21 at Tyler, with a nice flock of them performing for a guided walk. A super bird to add to your yard list was a **Connecticut Warbler** in Media 9/3 (EGK). Unfortunately it only stayed for fifteen minutes, not long enough to notify other birders. A **Canada Warbler** was at Tyler 8/16 (JG) and a **Wilson's Warbler** was there 9/10.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak** numbers seemed to be low this Fall season. A **Dark-eyed Junco** and a **White-throated Sparrow** were early this year, when both were seen 9/18 (TR). Apparently **Am. Goldfinch** learn fast to stay out of trouble. During banding operations in Media, 13 goldfinches were banded at the feeders in a two-day period. Of those 13, only 1 was seen again in the area after being banded. One female returned to feed just one more time and that was the last I saw of her (AG).

**OBSERVERS:** Bill Church, Skip Conant, Walt Cressler, John Ginaven, Al Guarente, 421 Old Middletown Rd., Media 19063 (215-566-8266), Barb & Frank Haas, John Harding, Bonnie Harper (BHa), Evelyn & George Kopf, Jim Lockyer, John C. Miller, Helen McWilliams, Nick Pulcinella, Tom Reeves, Bill Stocku.

## ELK COUNTY

Leif Anderson

*Locations: Allegheny National Forest (ANF).*

Uncommon species seen during the quarter include 1 **N. Shoveler** and a **N. Goshawk** in the ANF (TS). A **N. Saw-whet Owl** was located in the Moshannon SF (MJ). A **Whip-poor-will** sighting in the ANF was a good find (TS).

A **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was observed using cattail fluff for its nest. Three **Common Raven** nests were located; 2 in the ANF (TS), and another in SGL #25 (VR). Two Common Raven were at Russell City 9/3 (BH).

Some more northerly species including **Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Pine Siskin, and Yellow-rumped Warbler** were found in several locations (v.o.). A **White-eyed Vireo** was located in the ANF (RT). Strip mines continue to produce excellent sparrow populations. **Henslow's Sparrow** were found at Kersey (DB) and at Brandy Camp (RJS) for *Ist* county records.

Species present in greater numbers than normal include **Spotted Sandpiper, Am. Woodcock, Carolina Wren, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Yellow-breasted Chat.**

**OBSERVERS:** Leif Anderson, 48 Birch St., Kane, 16735 (work, 814-362-4613), Dan Brauning, Bill Highhouse, Marsha Jeffreys, Violet Rae, Ruth & Jay Sager, Theron Steffan, Robert Tench.

## ERIE COUNTY

Jerry McWilliams

In the past ten years I have compiled a large body of bird data in hopes of better understanding the distribution and occurrences of birds in *Erie*. My primary interests have been migration and unusual sightings. I have learned that many species have an expected arrival/departure time which varies little from year to year, but the number of individuals does vary from year to year. Like many other birders, I have been concerned about low-density migrations in recent years, and we have reason to be concerned. However, it is the combined data from all regions of North America that indicate the status of a bird, unless of course it is a species confined to a local area.

With this in mind, we must be very careful not to confuse speculations with facts when we try to draw conclusions. For example, the Common Tern has been declining as a breeding bird in the Great Lakes region. Sightings of this species during migration have decreased in *Erie* in the past several years, while Forster's Tern numbers have increased. However, this species was seen in numbers in late August and early September comparable to years when they were numerous. Did Common Tern have a more successful breeding season this year or did the bulk of the population decide to use Presque Isle as a staging ground this Fall? Ruby-throated Hummingbird were reported to be very scarce or absent at feeders this summer. Was this a "down" year for this species or is it a species in trouble? And, as in the case of the Swainson's Thrush, only time and collective data from other regions will substantiate the status of these species.

Below are the following noteworthy sightings based on the Checklist of Birds Recorded in Erie County, Pennsylvania, including Presque Isle S.P. (1987). All sightings are from Presque Isle (PI) unless otherwise noted. Underlined species indicate an absence of two or more years between sightings.

**Double-crested Cormorant** were seen from 8/21-23 (m.ob.) and 9/17-24 (CB,RS). An **Am. Bittern** was at L. LeBoeuf in early Aug. (AE).

One **Great Egret** was at Siegel Marsh 8/22 (JM). Two **Red-breasted Merganser** were seen 7/2 (JM).

Early **Osprey** were 1 on 7/22 at Edinboro L. (JH) and another 7/26 (JM). One imm. **Bald Eagle** was seen 9/10 (JM). A **Peregrine Falcon** (*P. f. anatum*) was found 9/30 (LM). An **Am. Coot** was seen 7/20 (DS). Two **Sandhill Crane** were seen 9/10 at West Springfield (BSn,RW). The farmer who owns the field where they were feeding reports that they had fed there nearly every day since late July! A high count of 40 **Black-bellied Plover** was recorded 9/5 (DS,JM). **Lesser Golden-Plover** were at Siegel Marsh from 8/21-27 and at PI through Sept. (JM,EK). It was a pleasure to see the endangered **Piping Plover** again, after an absence of three years, with 2 ad. appearing 7/22 (JM,LM) and 1 of the 2 reappearing 7/24 (JHS,EK). Very rare on PI was an **Upland Sandpiper** 7/26 (JM). There were 38 **Whimbrel** reported for the fall season, with 23 seen in a single day, 7/26 (JM). One **Hudsonian Godwit** was seen 9/5 (JM,DS,BS).

The 35 **Ruddy Turnstone** 8/6 was an impressive total (EK), as were the 30 on 9/5 (DS). The 14 **Red Knot** 8/6 (EK) and the single 9/5 (DS) were the only birds reported for the season! Up to 2 **Western Sandpiper** were at Siegel Marsh from 8/21 to 9/1 (RS,JM), plus 1 on PI 8/27 (EK,MV) and another 9/5 (JM). A **White-rumped Sandpiper** was seen 9/5 (JM,DS). **Baird's Sandpiper** reports include PI sightings of 1 on 7/24 (EK) and up to 8 from 8/27 to 9/15 (EK,RS); and for Siegel Marsh, up to 4 from 8/21-24 (JM,EK) and a single there 9/28 (JM). The 1 **Dunlin** 7/17 (BS) was only the 3rd July record. At least 13 **Stilt Sandpiper** were observed periodically from 7/22 to 9/18 at Siegel Marsh and PI (JM,EK); two or three sightings per year is more average for this species. Three **Wilson's Phalarope** were at Siegel Marsh 8/16 (JM). A **Red-necked Phalarope** was seen 9/22 (BC,LM).

One **Little Gull** in second winter plumage was seen 9/25 (JM,EK). One ad. **Black Tern** was seen 7/23 (JM) and 2 ad. 7/24 (EK). The **Short-eared Owl** on 7/30 was only the 2nd summer record (BS). Two **Olive-sided Flycatcher** were seen 8/27 (MV) and 1 on 9/3 (EK). One or 2 **Connecticut Warbler** were found 9/10 (JM).

OBSERVERS: Carolyn Baxter, Bill Callista, Adah Ellis, Jamie Hill, Ed Kwater, Linda and Jerry McWilliams, 3142 W. 12th St., Erie 16505 (814-833-3169), Bob Scribner, Barb Snyder (BSn), Don Snyder, Russ States, Jean Stull, Mark VanderVen, Ray Whitney.

#### FAYETTE COUNTY

Cindy Cook

*Locations: Mill Run Res. (MRR), Normalville (NVL).*

**Great Blue Heron** and **Green-backed Heron** were at both locations between 8/14-28. One **Mute Swan** and 1 **Osprey** were at MRR 8/28. Imm. **Broad-wing** and **Red-tailed hawk** were observed at NVL 7/4. One **Am. Woodcock** was found at NVL 7/5.

Some 200+ **Common Nighthawk** were over Indian Head 8/26 (WMM). The last **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was seen at NVL 9/21. Breeding **White-eyed Vireo**, **Black-throated Green Warbler**, and **Canada Warbler** were found between 7/23 and 8/8 in NVL.

OBSERVER: Cindy Cook, RD 1, Box 259A, Normalville 15469 (412-455-7356), Willis & Mary Miller.

#### FULTON COUNTY

*Location: Tuscarora Summit*

One **Double-crested Cormorant** was seen 8/28. Two flocks of **Canada Geese** were seen 9/30; one was of 36 birds and the other was of 17 birds.

The first **Bald Eagle** of the season was seen 9/5. The Aug. and Sept. hawk watch reports were received and will be published with the complete hawk watch summaries in the next issue.

OBSERVER: Carl Garner.

#### GREENE COUNTY

Ralph K. Bell

Unless otherwise noted, all observations were on or near the Bell farm near Jefferson. July and Aug. were exceptionally hot and dry with the temperature reaching 100 degrees or more on at least five days. But the lack of summer storms should have helped tree and ground nesters alike. However, finding worms to feed young may have been a problem for some species, especially **Am. Robins**.

**Mourning Dove** were more common than usual this year and 125+ were noted here on the farm 8/22. Recently fledged young were still being captured and banded in numbers at the end of the period. The first Fall migrating **Common Nighthawk** was noted flying over on the evening of 8/16 (a bit early for here). Some 25+ were noted flying over at 11:30 a.m. 8/28, a cloudy day. This was a departure from the usual evening flights. The first arrivals each Fall are almost always flying eastward, but later individuals are often working their way westward.

The last nestling **Purple Martin** left our box 8/29. This was an exceptionally late nesting, as most of our martins had left this area by 7/26. Our colony is now recovering from the mass mortality in late June 1972 caused by Hurricane Agnes, when there were no flying insects to eat. A total of 20 pairs of martins raised young in our boxes this summer. The last 2 **Barn Swallow** were noted 9/3.

A **Louisiana Waterthrush** was chipping in our yard in the early morning of 8/6. For two years in a row this species has been noted "tipping" on our house roof. This moving about in late July or early August might be classed as a pre-migratory orientation flight. Many local birds seem to move around just before they migrate - then they are gone until the next year. In 1984, a Louisiana Waterthrush was "tipping" on our house roof as early as 7/12, but most come into the yard about ten days to two weeks later.

Lots of **Swainson's Thrush** calls at first light on 9/21 and 9/24. I am hoping this indicates a return to more normal numbers of this species. One of our local **N. Mockingbird** started singing 9/25, after being silent for about two months while going through a molt.

OBSERVER: Ralph K. Bell, RD 1, Box 229, Clarksville 15322 (412-883-4505).

#### HUNTINGDON COUNTY

David Kyler

Warm and dry weather patterns continued well into the third quarter, making this year one of the hottest on record. Sept., however, proved to be cooler with more reasonable conditions. No unusual species was observed or reported.

The newly constructed sewage ponds e. of Huntingdon provided safe habitat for **Wood Duck**, with 16 recorded 7/13 and **Blue-winged Teal** found 8/26 and 9/3. "Woodies" were also found in the Juniata R. system in post-breeding family units throughout the quarter.

**Black Vulture** sightings over Huntingdon were made 8/21 and 9/16, with 1 individual in the company of several **Turkey Vulture**. Raptor sightings included: a lone **Osprey** hovering over the Juniata R. in Huntingdon 9/10; a single **N. Harrier** (female) seen hunting over brushy fields on Piney Ridge 9/8; 4 **Sharp-shinned Hawk** heading S over Piney Ridge 9/8; a female **Cooper's Hawk** with fledged young (*location deleted*. -Eds.) 7/26; 200+ **Broad-winged Hawk** migrating along Tussey Mt. 9/14; and an **Am. Kestrel** family practicing awkward tree landings on Cyprus I. (Huntingdon) 7/6.

Shorebirds found on the exposed mud flats at Aitch Boat Launch 9/11 included: 12 **Killdeer**, 1 **Spotted Sandpiper**, and a pair of **Solitary Sandpiper**.

**Common Nighthawk** were observed in migration 8/24 and 8/26, with early evening flights of 54 and 114 respectively. **Chimney Swift**

were found in mixed swallow flocks heading S during this same period. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird**, all female or imm., left our sugar water feeders by 9/5. With feeders cleaned and stored away for the winter, we look ahead eagerly to their arrival next May.

Four separate **E. Kingbird** families were found in the Salttillo area, s. *Huntingdon*, 7/9. The same area produced a single **White-eyed Vireo** the preceding day.

**Brown Thrasher, Gray Catbird, and N. Mockingbird** were all engaged in an impromptu singing contest on 7/29. All were on perches within 100 ft of each other, each trying to out perform the other. A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** flying over ended the contest after five minutes with no apparent winner! (or loser)!!

OBSERVERS: David Kyler, RD #4, Box 159-A, Huntingdon 16652 (814-643-6030).

#### INDIANA COUNTY

Margaret and Roger Higbee

*Locations: Shelocta (SHL), White's Woods (WW), Yellow Creek SP (YCSP), Elders Ridge Strips.*

Birders were out in the field in full force finishing the final blocks of the Atlas project. No exceptional finds were made, but highlights included "**Brewster's**" and **Yellow-throated** warblers. The **Dickcissel** invasion also added a little spice.

First migrant **Pied-billed Grebe** appeared at YCSP 8/12 (GL,GS), but top count was 11 on 9/24 (TBC). **Great Blue Heron** were present at YCSP throughout the period (v.o.). Top **Canada Goose** tally was 30 on 8/23 (GL,GS). Best **Mallard** count was 38 on 8/23 (GL,GS). A **N. Harrier** quartering over the strips was found 7/21 (MH,NK). Six **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, but only 1 **Cooper's**, were reported (v.o.). A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was observed near Hillsdale 7/20 (GL,GS). Flocks of **Wild Turkey** numbering 5 and 9 respectively were listed near Dixonville and near Wandin Junction, both on 8/12 (GL,GS).

The few shorebirds reported were all found at YCSP. A **Black-bellied Plover** 9/27 was a nice find (GL). Top **Killdeer** count was 15 on 8/6 (GS). Two **Greater Yellowlegs** were spotted 8/6 (GS). A lone **Ruddy Turnstone** appeared 9/19 (GS). One **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was identified 8/23 (GL,GS); another was still present 9/15 (EH,MH,GS). High **Common Snipe** tally was 4 on 9/15 (EH,MH,GS). Six **Ring-billed Gull** were counted at YCSP 7/15 (GS); 8 were present on the IUP campus 7/20 (PF,MH). The **Great Horned Owl** resumed hooting near SHL 8/31 (MH,RH).

On 9/23 at 11:30 p.m., all three species of owls were calling near SHL (MH,RH). Two **Great Horned** were hooting back and forth to each other; 1 **E. Screech-Owl** whinnied; and 1 **Barred Owl** hooted, all within a five-minute time span. All were known to be present, but never before had we heard them all in one evening.

A **Red-headed Woodpecker** visited a yard near Nolo 9/8 (DS). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was spotted at WW 9/29 (MH,BM); 2 were found near SHL 9/30 (MH). An **E. Wood-Pewee** was still feeding young near WW 9/17 (PJ,AJ,GS). Two **N. Rough-winged Swallow** lingered at YCSP until 9/8 (AB,GL,GS). Two migrant **Cliff Swallow** visited YCSP 8/23 (GL,GS). The thrush migration went unnoticed, with lone **Swainson's Thrush** reported near WW 9/17 (PJ,AJ,GS) and again at WW 9/29 (MH,BM). **N. Mockingbird** were more numerous this summer, with several reports from Indiana (v.o.).

Atlasers received few surprises concerning warblers, but several nice observations were made. A female **Brewster's** that was apparently mated with a **Golden-winged Warbler** was well observed feeding young in SGL #276 beneath a powerline 7/13 (MH,NK). **Yellow-throated Warbler** reports continued in July, with 1 singing

along Blacklick Cr. near Campbells Mill 7/13 (MH,NK).

Warblers again dribbled through, with no real waves reported. Best **Tennessee** tally was 4 near Pine Flats 9/15 (EH,MH,GS). Three **Nashville** were listed near SHL 9/16 (MH). Last **Yellow Warbler** was listed near WW 9/17 (PJ,AJ,GS). First **Magnolia** appeared near SHL 8/29 (MH). **Cape May** was seen 9/14 near SHL (MH). A brilliant male **Black-throated Blue** was noted near SHL 9/19 (MH); a female of the same species was recorded at WW 9/29 (MH,BM). Six **Yellow-rumped** were listed near WW 9/17 (PJ,AJ,GS). Two **Blackburnian**, observed near WW 9/17 (PJ,AJ,GS), were amazingly the lone report. Five **Pine** were a nice count at YCSP 9/19 (GS); the pines lining the beach parking area have been consistently good for Pine Warbler during both Spring and Fall migrations. The only reported **Palm** was a singleton near Nolo 9/16 (GS). Top **Bay-breasted** tally was a mere 3 near SHL 9/14 (MH). **Blackpoll** were found in flocks of 2-3 after 9/22 (MH,GS). Last **Cerulean** was spotted near WW 9/17 (PJ,AJ,GS), where 3 **Black-and-white** were also found. A **Hooded** was noted singing near Nolo 9/19 (GS). Two **Wilson's** were a nice find at WW 9/29 (MH,BM).

*Indiana* joined the list of counties participating in the **Dickcissel** invasion. A total of 4 individuals were counted near Gypsy on 7/1,12 (MH,RH,TJ,NK). An aberrantly plumaged **Chipping Sparrow**, which superficially resembled a McKay's Bunting, was the cause of some short-lived excitement in Pine Flats 9/15 (EH,MH,GS). First **White-throated Sparrow** appeared at WW 9/29 (MH,BM).

OBSERVERS: Alice Beatty, Todd Bird Club, Paula Fleming, Etta Heinlen, Margaret and Roger Higbee, RD #2, Box 166, Indiana 15701 (412-354-3493), Pat Johnner, Aino Johnston, Timmi Jones, Nancy Karp, Gloria Lamer, Beth Marshall, Dan Syster, Georgette Syster.

#### JUNIATA COUNTY

Linda Whitesel

*Locations: Clearview Res. (CR), Juniata R.*

The heat wave finally broke for the quarter in late Aug. Sept. brought some rain and subsequent flowers. No frosts in this quarter.

The **Common Loon** reported on last quarter at CR stayed through 8/7. Also at CR from 9/4-24 were 1 ad. and 1 young **Pied-billed Grebe**. Migrating **Canada Geese**, numbering 125+, were first sighted 9/25 over the river near Mifflintown. The usual Fall congregation of **Wood Duck** occurred at the Port Royal Swamp. Some 366+ were counted there the evening of 9/18. Two **Blue-winged Teal** accompanied the Wood Ducks.

I recently learned that the two **Bald Eagles** which had stayed at a pond in Pfoutz Valley near Thompsontown the summer of 1987 had returned the Spring of 1988. Shortly after their return, however, one of them died, apparently from natural causes and the other one left. The Game Commission has the dead bird. Linda Whitesel.

A small kettle of about 20 **Broad-winged Hawk** was spotted along the Tuscarora Mt. near Thompsontown 9/5 (DW). **Ruffed Grouse** seemed fewer this year, while **Wild Turkey** were in good numbers and reported consistently. Unfortunately, **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** numbers were also down this year.

Atlasing efforts produced no **Red-headed Woodpecker** this year, but did turn up a **Warbling Vireo** through 8/24 at the Muskrat Springs Access, and also confirmed **Kentucky Warbler** on SGL #171 near Thompsontown 7/15. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** reports increased to four sightings, up from the one last year.

OBSERVERS: Margaret Kenep, Berniece Miller, Dusty Weidner, Linda Whitesel, RD 3, Box 820, Mifflintown 17059-9770 (717-436-8048).

## LACKAWANNA COUNTY

Gerald Klebauskas

*Locations: Covey's Swamp (CS), Dalton (DA), Scranton (SCR), Thornhurst (TH).*

The persistently hot, dry summer days seemed to have reduced the numbers of some species seen to less than normal. This raises the question, did the drought have an effect on successful breeding or a greater effect on the perseverance and diligence of bird observers?

Single **Green-backed Heron** and **Black-crowned Night-Heron** were along the Lackawanna R. at SCR 8/13. Only the expected waterfowl, **Canada Geese**, **Wood Duck**, and **Mallard**, were found throughout the quarter.

A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was found at SCR 8/28 and DA 9/22. One **Cooper's Hawk** was seen in early Sept. in SCR. A probably active **Broad-winged Hawk** nest was found at Eagle L. One **Ring-necked Pheasant** was at TH 9/30 and a **N. Bobwhite** was found at Montdale 7/31 (released?).

Two **Common Moorhen** were found in late Aug. in DA. Single **Greater Yellowlegs** and **Solitary Sandpiper** were found at Maple L. 9/8 and at TH 9/10 respectively. A **Whip-poor-will** was heard at Montage 7/4 and 7/19. The latest **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was seen in DA 9/6.

Our expected woodpeckers were seen all summer, and **Downy Woodpecker** brought their young to suet feeders in DA. Both nuthatches were at TH 9/8. **Brown Thrasher** were noticeable absent from most reports, although 1 was in DA 8/22. **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** were moving through DA 9/22-27. A flock of 10-12 **Water Pipit** were at Maple L. 9/26.

One **Philadelphia Vireo** at CS 8/20 was the best vireo report. Migrant warblers were noted beginning 8/20 in several areas, with **Tennessee** not seen until 9/11 in DA. The latest **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was observed in DA 9/7, but a **Rufous-sided Towhee** remained until 9/29. A **Swamp Sparrow** was at CS 8/20. The latest **White-crowned Sparrow** report was in DA 9/23.

OBSERVERS: Derry & Nancy Bird, Rosann Bongey, Mike Friedlin, Gerald Klebauskas, RD 2, Box 2321, Factoryville 18419 (717-344-4690), George Mozurkewich, Jane Shulenberg, Sue & Tinka Zenke.

## LANCASTER COUNTY

Eric Witmer

*Locations: Cornwall Fire Tower (CFT), Middle Creek WMA (MC), Muddy Run (MR), Providence Twp. (PVT), Susquehanna R. including the Conejohela Flats (SRCF).*

Highlights of the season include **Hudsonian** and **Marbled godwits** and a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** on the Conejohela Flats, an **Orange-crowned Warbler** near Washington Boro, a **Connecticut Warbler** in Providence Twp., and a brief visit of **Dickcissels** at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Major relief from the heat of July and Aug. came Aug. 18,19. The warbler migration was reported to have started about Aug. 10 and some indicated it was better than that of the last few years.

A **Common Loon** was at SRCF 8/14 (JB *et al.*). A single **Pied-billed Grebe** was at MC through at least the end of July (m.ob.). An excellent count of 62 **Double-crested Cormorant** flew by the CFT 9/18 (FH), while 1-6 were at MC throughout the period (m.ob.). An **Am. Bittern** was flushed from the SRCF 9/11 (EW,TG). Some 40+ **Great Egret** were roosting below Rookery I. 9/3 (EW,TG). At least five separate imm. **Little Blue Heron** were seen throughout the county from 7/16 to 8/10 (m.ob.). The surprise of the season was the *lack of Cattle Egret* in the Washington Boro area. What few (about 25) that were present were last seen in mid-Sept. Several theories exist as to the reason for their absence, *e.g.*, drought or increased river recreational activity. Good numbers, however, of **Black-crowned Night-Heron** (100+ pairs) were on Rookery I. into mid-July. An imm. **White Ibis** and 1-2 **Glossy Ibis** were at MC 8/4-9 (DG,TG *et al.*); another (?) imm. **White Ibis** was in Warwick Twp. 8/15 (FH).

Two ad. **Bald Eagle** were at MC July to mid-Aug. (m.ob.) and

another 2 were over SRCF 9/23 (JB,TG). Two **N. Harrier** (brown-backed birds) were at MC into Aug. (m.ob.). An early **N. Goshawk** was also at MC 9/17 (SR *et al.*). A **Peregrine Falcon** flew over SRCF 9/18 (JB,TG). The total for the Sept. hawk watch at CFT was 5494 hawks, the best day 9/19, with 3332 birds. A full report next issue.

Shorebirds moved into the county early, including 1 **Semipalmated Plover**, 1 **Lesser Yellowlegs**, and 14 **Short-billed Dowitcher** at MC 7/12 (HM,DR). Single **Black-bellied Plover** were at MC 8/12 (JB,TG) and at SRCF 9/3 (TG, EW); 1-3 **Lesser Golden-Plover** were at SRCF between 9/2-24 (JB,TG). The only reported **Upland Sandpiper** were 12 in Upper Leacock Twp. 8/20 (TG). Remarkable were 4 **Hudsonian Godwit** 9/8 (JB) and a **Marbled Godwit** 7/31 (TG,EW) on SRCF. The following were all sighted at SRCF: 2 **Western Sandpiper** 7/16, and 1 on 8/21 and 9/10 (m.ob.); single **Stilt Sandpiper** 7/31 and 9/10 (TG,EW), 1 **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** 8/21 (JB,SS, TG,EW); 3 imm. **Bonaparte's Gull** 9/3 (TG,EW); 1-3 **Caspian Tern** 8/7-21 (m.ob.); and 1-2 **Common Tern** in the area from 8/3+ (m.ob.). **Forster's Tern** made another impressive showing in the L. Clarke/Washington Boro area, with the first birds seen 8/7 and building to 500 on 9/3, then decreasing to about 200 by the end of the quarter (TG,EW).

**Barred Owl** were calling in the Safe Harbor area 9/8 (SL). Several **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** were at MC 9/10-11 (TG *et al.*). A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was in PVT 9/23 (EJP). One to 3 **Philadelphia Vireo** were at MC between 9/10-18 (TG *et al.*) and another near Lancaster 9/16 (LN). Single **"Brewster's" Warbler** were at PVT 8/18 (EJP) and at MC 8/21 (TG). A **Golden-winged Warbler** was also in PVT 9/9-10 (EJP). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was below Washington Boro at Wissler's Run 9/8 (JB). The Pedersons reported more **Magnolia** and **Canada** warblers and fewer **Tennessee** than in previous autumns in PVT. A **Prothonotary Warbler** was still singing on Rookery I. 7/30 (JB,TG). A **Connecticut Warbler** was at PVT 9/12 (EJP) and a **Wilson's Warbler** was at MC 9/11 (DS).

The 14 **Dickcissel** found at MC 8/8 (RM,TM) could not be relocated later. Were the 1200 **Bobolink** found on SRCF 9/11 roosting? (TG,EW).

OBSERVERS: Jerry Book, Don Garner, Tom Garner, Fred Habegger, Sally Lownbery, Tom McKinne, Randy Miller, Harold Morrin, Linda Nachtrab, Ed & Jo Pederson, Steve Rannels, David Rich, Steve Santner, Dick Schott, Eric Witmer, 805 Pointview Ave., Ephrata 17522 (717-733-1138).

## LAWRENCE COUNTY

Barb Dean

*Locations: Cascade Park (CCP), Harlansburg Area (HBA), McConnells Mill SP (MMSP), New Castle Area (NCA), Plain Grove Area (PGA).*

The first half of July was hot and dry in *Butler* and *Lawrence* with a string of 13 days of record-breaking temperatures over 90 degrees. Shallow ponds and smaller wetlands dried up. **Green-backed Heron** were gorging themselves on the bounty of fish that remained in the few puddles. July 16 was the hottest day on record, with 102-106 readings depending on where you were. On 7/18-19 *Lawrence* received 2" of rain, which was enough to put a dent in the drought. We finished the month with about 4" of rain, slightly above normal. Aug. precipitation was slightly above normal with 3.8", and Sept. precipitation was normal.

LOONS TO DUCKS. A **Pied-billed Grebe** was found in PGA 7/17 and 1 at Vosler L. 8/14. Adult and imm. **Great Blue Heron** were commonly seen at many locations and the 6+ nests at PGA were active (NR). Pairs of **Green-backed Heron** were found at a half-dozen locations in NCA, Pulaski, and Edinburg. Breeding was confirmed in NCA, but none was recorded after 9/18. **Wood Duck** were successful breeders at NCA and HBA. A surprising 46+ were at a small cattail marsh in NCA 8/23. At least 100 **Mallard** were in a flock on the Neshannock Cr. in downtown New Castle 8/7.

RAPTORS TO SHOREBIRDS. One to 4 **Turkey Vulture** were seen throughout the quarter. An ad. **Sharp-shinned Hawk** 7/13 and an imm. 8/28 were seen in NCA and 1 ad. 7/24 and 1 on 9/27 were in HBA. One ad. **Red-shouldered Hawk** was in HBA 7/14 and earlier in the season courtship took place, but breeding could not be confirmed. Many pairs of **Am. Kestrel** were seen, with 1-4 imm. noted.

**Ring-necked Pheasant** with young were in HBA 7/2 and 2 young

males were also at Swamp Rd. **Wild Turkey** were heard in SGL #216. Nine **Ruffed Grouse** were counted near Ellwood (BW). **Sora** and **Virginia Rail** were not seen or heard this period. Some 150-200 **Killdeer** were at Vosler L. and Amish areas 7/23 and many were at MMSP in Sept. **Spotted Sandpiper** were seen 7/2-17 at HBA and PGA. A **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at an Amish farm pond 8/14. **Solitary Sandpiper** were noted 7/23 to 9/11 at various locations.

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS. Recently fledged **Mourning Dove** were in our garden 9/16. Two **Black-billed Cuckoo** migrated through between 9/10-16. Few **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** are seen in *Lawrence*, but 1 migrant was in NCA 9/16. **E. Screech-Owl** were frequently seen or heard calling from the 20+ county locations.

**Common Nighthawk** were seen migrating 8/23 through 9/4. **Chimney Swift** numbers were excellent all quarter. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** enjoyed a successful breeding season and numbers peaked at 15 here in the garden 8/21. Many left 8/29 and by 9/7 all the ad. and imm. males were gone. Our "regular" ad. female left 9/16 and the last migrant was seen 9/22. A high of 15 **N. Flicker** were in NCA 8/21. Pairs of ad. **Pileated Woodpecker** were in HBA and NCA 9/16. **Red-headed Woodpecker** were in HBA and NCA and on 8/14 newly fledged young were observed in Amish areas; some of these were seen to the end of the period. On 9/29-30, a total of 3 **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** were seen in Bessemer and Amish areas.

FLYCATCHERS TO THRASHER. A rare, but regular migrant **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was on Vosler Rd. 9/18. We had good numbers of **Acadian** and **Willow** flycatchers, but very few **Least Flycatcher**. **E. Wood-Pewee** was not heard after 9/16. Pairs of **Great Crested Flycatcher** increased this year. Silent *Empidonax* started moving 8/28.

Adult and imm. **Horned Lark** were found at Bessemer and Amish areas. **Purple Martin** were confirmed breeding and the Amish had taken down most of their boxes by 8/14. **Tree, N. Rough-wing**, and **Barn** swallows had an average season. Few **Barn Swallow** were seen after 9/5. The small colony of **Bank Swallow** at CCP was vacant by the end of Aug. A **Brown Creeper** was at Coverts Crossing 9/18. The **Carolina Wren** had a great resurgence this season. They were seen or heard all quarter in backyards, cemeteries, and many were along a 7-mile stretch of the Neshannock Cr. **House Wren** had an average season and a few remained at CCP with Carolina Wrens 9/30+.

MIMIC THRUSHES TO WARBLERS. **Brown Thrasher** was in average numbers, with a few seen until 9/10. Adult and imm. **E. Bluebird** were seen all period and at least 15 were at MMSP 9/25. **Am. Robin** had a successful breeding season, but preferred cemeteries, parks, etc., to the usual lawns, which were browned out and parched. **Wood Thrush** were in good numbers, but the **Veery** was only found on territory in two locations. Migrant **Swainson's Thrush** made a strong showing 9/18-30, but no **Hermit Thrush** was recorded.

Good numbers of **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** were migrating 9/25-30. **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** numbers were in extremely low numbers when compared to 1987. **Cedar Waxwing** seemed in low numbers the whole period, but imm. were seen with ad. 9/18-30. Recently fledged **Red-eyed Vireo** were everywhere 7/23. The **White-eyed Vireo** was more common than in 1987. **Yellow-throated** and **Solitary vireo** were recorded most often during Sept. migration, but **Warbling Vireo** were in low numbers all quarter.

**Blue-winged, Yellow**, and **Common Yellowthroat** warblers had a most successful breeding season. Two BBAP volunteers in the NCA "threw in the towel" when **Yellow-breasted Chat** actually "organized" and hired two Doberman pinschers to guard their family lives. The chats gave the workers a "T" (for trying). Warbler watching was good all Sept. at NCA and MMSP. Good numbers of **Cape May**, **Black-and-white**, **Am. Redstart**, **Magnolia**, **Blackburnian**, and **Nashville** were observed. (Many went by unidentified.) **Black-throated Green** came through in very low numbers, but **N. Parula** surprised us with a strong showing in NCA. A few **Canada**, 1 **Wilson's** 9/3, and only 3 **Ovenbird** were seen. A **Yellow-throated Warbler** appeared in the Bessemer area again 8/29. The large sycamore trees attracted this bird to the same general area for the second straight year. Waves of **Yellow-rumped Warbler** appeared 9/25-30.

BLACKBIRDS TO FINCHES. **Bobolink** had a poor season. Very few were in the area. **E. Meadowlark** were in good numbers, but few young were seen. Many **Scarlet Tanager** and **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** and a few **Indigo Bunting** and **N. Oriole** remained until 9/25. The **Rufous-sided Towhee** was still singing in many areas 9/30. **Chipping, Field**, and **Swamp** sparrows were still here at quarter's end.

A few **Vesper Sparrow** were in Amish areas 9/10. **White-throated Sparrow** arrived 9/18. A single **Dark-eyed Junco** was in Volant 9/30.

OBSERVERS: George and Barbara Dean, 321 E. Meyer Ave., New Castle 16105 (412-658-3393), Nancy W. Rodgers, Bob Ross, Bob Walczak, Gene Wilhelm.

## LEBANON COUNTY

Steve Santner

July was hot and very dry while Aug. and Sept. were somewhat cooler and wetter. By the end of the period, however, there was still a substantial (4") deficit in precipitation for the year. There was no rarity reported this quarter.

Heron and egrets went unreported. This is the first summer in many years in which no **Cattle Egret** was found. An imm. **N. Goshawk** was seen s. of Campbelltown 9/25 (RB), probably a very early migrant. There were several **Sharp-shinned Hawk** reports this summer, while no **Cooper's Hawk** was found. This pattern, which has occurred the past 3-4 years, is a reversal of the pattern of the previous 5-10 years in which the Cooper's clearly outnumbered the Sharp-shinned in summer. The first **Peregrine Falcon** was found at the Second Mt. hawk watch 8/17 (EB,MC).

The temporary ponds were all dry and few shorebirds were found, due to the drought. The Middle Creek shorebird pond was drained in early Aug. A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was found 8/7 (SS) with a few **Least Sandpiper** and yellowlegs.

**Common Barn-Owl** reports continue to be received for the BBAP, mostly from farmers finding them in their silos or in hollow trees. So far, they have been found in 11 of the 39 blocks. **Common Nighthawk** was widely reported; 13 were seen migrating by day 9/3 at the Second Mt. hawk watch (EB,JB,MC).

Landbird migrants, particularly warblers, were in good numbers, although no rarity was found. Warbler migration started on schedule (mid-Aug.) and continued through the end of the period. There were several days in which large numbers of migrants were seen. The best day was 9/11, when over 200 individuals of 18 species were seen in SGL #145 near Mt. Gretna (SS). Of these, 25-30 were **Black-throated Green**, 20-25 were **Magnolia**, a surprising 15 or so were **Canada** and there were even 8-10 **Ovenbird**, a species not seen commonly in Fall migration. On the other hand, only 4 were **Black-throated Blue** and none was **N. Parula**. This Fall, no **N. Parula** was reported in *Lebanon* during Aug. or Sept.

OBSERVERS: Robert Bauer, Ellis Blauch, January Buckingham, Morris Cox, Steve Santner, 3 Overbrook Village Green Apt., Elizabethtown 17022 (717-367-5857), Del Zimmerman.

## LEHIGH COUNTY

Bernard L. Morris

The season was about average. A good warbler flight balanced out a poor hawk flight in Sept. The most unusual bird was a **Common Moorhen** which was seen in a tiny drainage pond near Allentown for most of July.

A **Snowy Egret** was at Spring Cr. 8/13 (BLM), and was still there 8/23, along with an imm. **Little Blue Heron** (RW). Five **N. Shoveler** were at Jordan Springs 9/26 (RW). A fledged **Broad-winged Hawk** with its parent was seen near Slatedale 7/17 (BLM). The best Broad-winged flight reported was just a few hundred at Bake Oven Knob 9/24 (FB). A **Bald Eagle** was seen that same day. Three others were seen there 8/21 (RW), and another was sitting in a tree near Leaser L. 9/10 (FB,SS). On South Mt. in Emmaus, a **Peregrine Falcon** was seen 9/19 and a **Merlin** 9/29 (JH). A **N. Bobwhite** was heard calling near Macungie 7/11 (RW).

A **Lesser Golden-Plover** was seen near Macungie 9/18 (RW). A **Whimbrel** was heard, but not seen, flying overhead, at this spot 8/1 (RW). This is the 1st county record. **Upland Sandpiper** were seen at their usual spot at the ABE Airport 8/8 (FB,DD), but a bird seen near Leaser L. 7/23 was unexpected. On 8/13, Spring Cr. produced 2 **Least Sandpiper** and 2 **Pectoral Sandpiper** (BLM). On 9/10, these species as well as both yellowlegs, **Common Snipe**, and a **Solitary Sandpiper** were there (FB,SS). The **Common Moorhen** was found by Bob Rogan, who lives next to a small drainage pond near Allentown. The bird was seen on-and-off all through July, but not later (m.ob.).

Late cuckoos of both species were seen near Macungie on the late date 9/26 (RW), and late **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** were seen in Emmaus 9/19 (JH). An ad. **Red-headed Woodpecker** was seen near Breinigsville 8/13 (BLM). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was seen at Bake Oven Knob on the early date 8/21 (RW), and a **Least Flycatcher** was seen near Leaser L. 7/2 (JH). This is not an area where the birds were previously known to occur in summer. A flock of 20 **Horned Lark** was seen near Leaser L. 7/23 (FB, BLM). This is probably a breeding area for the birds. A flock of about 600 **Bank Swallow** was noted near Macungie 9/5 (RW). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was found at the Walter Tract 9/3 (BLM). The best warbler migration was 9/24, when 14 species were seen at the Walter Tract (FB). A **Blue-winged Warbler** was seen feeding fledged young at SGL #205 on 7/26 (BLM). **Connecticut** and **Mourning** warblers were seen in a weedy field near Macungie 9/18, and on 9/26 three Connecticut and another Mourning were seen there (RW). Two **Palm Warbler** were also seen at this spot 9/27 (RW). About 150 **Bobolink** were seen near Leaser L. 7/2 (JH). **Lincoln's Sparrow** were seen near Macungie 9/18 and again 9/27 (RW).

OBSERVERS: Fritz Brock, Dave DeReamus, Jason Horn, Bernard L. Morris, 825 N. Muhlenburg St., Allentown 18104 (215-435-9134), Steve Smith, Rick Wiltraut.

#### LUZERNE COUNTY

Bill Reid

Refer to the *Bradford* report for introductory comments.

Locations: *Forty Fort (FF)*, *Frances Slocum SP (FSSP)*, *Wyoming (WYO)*.

Five **Great Egret** were at FF 7/23 (WR); 3 at Harding 8/7 (JS, JH); and 2 at Wilkes-Barre (JS). A **Snowy Egret** was at WYO 8/7-15 (JS, JH *et al.*). The most interesting record of the period was an imm. **White Ibis** at WYO 8/10-15 (WR, m.ob.) for a 1st county record. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** were scarce throughout the summer, but there were a couple at WYO along with the Snowy Egret and White Ibis. About 20 **Blue-winged Teal** were at WYO in mid-Aug.; a **Gadwall** was there 8/10-11 (WR, JH); and a **N. Shoveler** was noted 8/27 (WR). At Harding there were 28 **Common Merganser** 9/13 (BT). An ad. **Bald Eagle** flew over Council Cup, Wapwallopen, 9/15 (DG). An early **Am. Coot** was at Harveys L. 9/11 (WE). The first report of migrating shorebirds was 8/5, when 2 **Semipalmated Sandpiper** and a **Greater Yellowlegs** were at FF (WR). On 8/7, 3 **Pectoral Sandpiper** and 4 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at Exeter (JH, JS).

**Common Nighthawk** numbers were noticeably lower at Wilkes-Barre. *Luzerne* had the only report of **Whip-poor-will** for the 4-county area. An imm. **Red-headed Woodpecker** at Sweet Valley 9/18 (JH) was the only report for the 4-county area. An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was in the Susquehanna Riverlands 9/7 (DG). **Winter Wren** nested successfully at Council Cup (DG, ES). A **Marsh Wren** was seen at FSSP 9/11 (JH, KM) and 9/24 (JS). Five species of vireos (**Red-eyed**, **White-eyed**, **Yellow-throated**, **Solitary**, and **Philadelphia**) were at FSSP 9/24 (JS). **Yellow-rumped Warbler** apparently nested near Hunting Mills (DG). **Wilson's Warbler** were seen at FSSP 8/27 (WR) and 9/14 (BT). An early **Palm Warbler** was at Harveys L. 9/11 (WE).

An amazing record was a **Lincoln's Sparrow** seen n.e. of Ricketts Glen SP at 2300 ft elevation 7/24 by MB, a competent observer who has seen the bird on numerous occasions. The bird was seen for several minutes at close range and all points were noted. The habitat was typical of that used by the species further north. Attempts to find the bird using tapes on 7/27 were unsuccessful.

OBSERVERS: Mark Blauer, William Evans, Doug Gross, Jim Hoyson, Kevin McGuire, William Reid, 73 W. Ross St., Wilkes-Barre 18702 (717-836-2525), Jim Shoemaker, Eric Supey, Bruce Troy.

The following was received too late for the last issue.

Locations: *Beach Haven (BH)*, *Huntington Mills (HM)*.

A **Double-breasted Cormorant** was sitting on rocks in the Susquehanna R. near E. Berwick 5/24 (DG). Again, **Red-shouldered Hawk** apparently nested (*location deleted. -Eds.*) (DG). A pair of **Red-bellied Woodpecker** nested for the first time in the Wetlands Nature Area, BH, but their nest snag was toppled by a thunderstorm (JF). A pair of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** surprised DG by nesting in a white pine planting by a farm pond, HM. Another pair nested on Council Cup, Wapwallopen (DG, ES). For the first time, **Winter Wren** nested on

Council Cup at a remarkably low 850 ft elevation (DG, ES).

**Wood Thrush** populations were at an all-time low in a Council Cup BBC. **E. Bluebird** were having a record-setting nesting season in the Susquehanna Riverlands, BH, after a rough start in early spring (JF). **Yellow-throated Vireo** seems to be expanding its breeding range to some upland oak forests near BH (DG). Populations of **Red-eyed Vireo**, of all species, seems to have increased dramatically in two BBC plots in the w. part of the county (DG). A **Kentucky Warbler** was defending territory at a new location on Nescopeck Mt. near Briggsville (DG). A **Northern Waterthrush** was singing in a small wet woodlot near HM 5/31 (DG). At least 2 **Myrtle Warbler** defended territory in pine-hemlock groves near HM (elev. 1100 ft) from 5/31 through June (DG).

**Bobolink** were commonly encountered in large hayfields near HM (DG). **Vesper** and **Grasshopper** sparrows were found in farmlands near HM (DG).

OBSERVERS: John Fridman, Douglas Gross, Eric Supey.

#### LYCOMING COUNTY

Stanley C. Stahl

Locations: *Montoursville (MTV)*, *Rose Valley L. (RVL)*.

A **Great Egret** was at Larrys Cr. for three days in early July (RW). A juv. **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was seen at RVL 9/6. **Nesting Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** were again found in a small bog in the Tiadaghton SF, Sullivan Mt., near Ralston (DG). A young fledgling was discovered. The male Yellow-bellied responded to a whistled imitation of its "chu-wee" call. Two singing **Swainson's Thrush** were found near Rock Run between Ralston and Ellenton in early July. There was no evidence of nesting, but territorial behavior was observed (DG). **Cedar Waxwing** were abundant in Sept., feeding on the varied berry supply at MTV. They were seen throughout the period in the Muncy-Picture Rocks area. One seen at MTV 9/23 had an orange tail tip. A few others with orange tail tips were seen in early October (WE). (See **PB** 2:3).

In recent years, **Merlins** have been seen in Montoursville during Fall migration; there was even one Spring record. This Autumn, one was observed chasing a Eurasian Starling, one was feeding on a male House Finch, and one was feeding on an unidentified bird. The Merlins were usually located when Blue Jays uttered alarm cries and Starlings wheeled in tight-knit flocks. They perched on the tops of poles, in treetops, and even on a television aerial. One was seen briefly with an **Am. Kestrel** diving at a perched **Red-tailed Hawk**. The first Merlin was seen 9/18 and they continued to be seen well into October. At least three individuals were seen.

A pair of **Cerulean Warbler** was confirmed nesting n. of Tivoli in a mature oak forest 7/10 (DG). The pair was feeding a recent fledge. A **Hooded Warbler** was seen at Huntersville 7/18. Several **Cape May Warbler** were seen from 9/12 well into October at Indian Park in MTV. A few **Tennessee Warbler** were seen as well. **Blackpoll Warbler** and **Yellow-rumped Warbler** appeared toward the end of Sept. The first reported migrants in the Jersey Shore area were **Black-and-white Warbler** and **Am. Redstart** 7/16 (PGS). A **Mourning Warbler** was found at Indian Park 9/12. A few **Wilson's Warbler** were seen in willow scrub at MTV 9/11, with 4 in one bush. A **N. Parula** was seen there the same date.

OBSERVERS: Wes Egli, Doug Gross, Paul & Glenna Schwalbe, Stanley C. Stahl, 610 Chestnut St., Montoursville 17754 (717-368-1194), Robert Williams.

The following was received too late to include in the last issue.

A **Barred Owl** flew in front of a BBS volunteer before dawn just n. of Ralston 6/24 (DG). As usual, **Common Raven** were heard in June on Sullivan Mt. (DG). Two singing **Swainson's Thrush** were counted on a BBS route in Tiadaghton SF near Ellenton (2100 ft.). They were both within shouting distance of a logging operation in a fairly mature upland hardwood forest (DG). A **Yellow-breasted Chat**

was singing in an overgrown field near Picture Rocks 6/29 (DG). At least two pairs of chats resided in a transmission corridor near Elimsport (JM). Two singing **Purple Finch** were encountered on a BBS route 6/24, one along Lycoming Cr. near Ralston and the other in the McIntire Natural Area (DG).

Observers: Doug Gross, James Montgomery.

### MC KEAN COUNTY

Leif Anderson

*Location: Allegheny National Forest (ANF).*

Some uncommon species sightings for the quarter were a **Virginia Rail** near Bullis Mills, **N. Saw-whet Owl** at two locations in the ANF (TG,LA) and at Cyclone (JD); **Red-headed Woodpecker** at Hazelhurst and Cyclone; **Alder Flycatcher** near Hazelhurst; and a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** near Cyclone (TG). **Golden-crowned Kinglet**, **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, and **Pine Siskin** were found in many locations (v.o.). Unusual warblers were **Worm-eating** at three locations (v.o.), and a **Prothonotary Warbler** near Westline. A **Blue Grosbeak** was discovered in the ANF in late June (SR). **White-throated Sparrow** were found at four different locations (TG,LA).

The first major **Canada Goose** migration was of 5 flocks 9/28 (BN). The only shorebirds observed were 24 **Killdeer**, 4 **Pectoral** and 2 **Spotted** sandpipers 7/28, followed by 11 Killdeer, 1 Spotted, and 1 **Greater Yellowlegs** 8/19. The Bradford Sewage Treatment Plant continues to provide a variety of species. It isn't as good as Presque Isle SP, but it sure is closer! Everyone should take time to check out the treatment ponds in his/her area. Who knows what can be found.

Some species that seem to be present in greater than normal numbers include **Am. Black Duck**, **Osprey**, **Spotted Sandpiper**, **Common Snipe**, **Am. Woodcock**, **N. Rough-winged Swallow**, **Carolina Wren**, **Yellow-throated Vireo**, and **Yellow-breasted Chat**.

OBSERVERS: Leif Anderson, 48 Birch St., Kane, 16735 (work, 814-362-4613), John Dzemyan, Ted Grisez, Brad Nelson, Scott Reitz.

### MERCER COUNTY

Marty McKay

*Locations: Celery Swamp (CS), Hermitage Area (HA), Shenango River Res. (SRR, including the Propagation area).*

Three **Pied-billed Grebe** were at CS 7/17. Two **Am. Black Duck** rode out a heavy rainstorm on a pond in HA, and 2 were noted on SRR mud flats 8/16.

The Brucker Great Blue Heron Sanctuary, PA's largest, continues to thrive and grow. Final figures were 435 fledged from 196 active nests (EB). A **Great Egret** was at SRR mud flats 8/23. Six imm. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** were on the SRR mud flats 8/7, and 3 **Green-backed Heron** at CS 7/17. Noteworthy were the 2 **Am. Bittern** 7/23 at CS, and 1 imm. 8/12 gulping a frog at the same site (NR).

A flock of 24 **Killdeer** and 1 **Common Snipe** were at SRR 8/2. Also at the SRR mud flats, 1 **Greater Yellowlegs** showed up 8/25 (MM) and 4 **Solitary Sandpiper** 8/20 (EK), with 3 of the latter at CS 7/17 and 1 at SRR 9/18 (MM). Thirty **Pectoral Sandpiper** were at this site 8/20 (EK), with 1 there 9/9 (MM). Also at SRR 8/20 were 8 **Semipalmated Sandpiper**, 1 **Baird's Sandpiper**, and 6 **Short-billed Dowitcher** (EK).

It is too early to report either success or failure of the recently stocked **Sichuan Pheasant** (EC). At HA, an imm. **Cooper's Hawk** missed its target, a chipmunk, and landed in a heap on the ground 8/18. It righted itself, fluffed and preened for 3 minutes before flying away. The whole event was witnessed by an exposed and astonished gray squirrel not 10 feet away. Two **Great Horned Owl** owlets were in the HA throughout the period.

Three young **E. Wood-Pewee** were begging for food and being fed by 1 ad. at HA 9/21. A **N. Mockingbird** was at SRR 8/2. A small flock of **Black-throated Green** and **Bay-breasted** warblers were mixed in with 10 **Black-capped Chickadee** in the HA 9/21.

OBSERVERS: Ed Brucker, Ed Carlson, Barbara Dean, Shirley McCarl, Marty McKay, 2320 Valley View Road, Sharpsville 16150 (412-962-7476), Nancy Rodgers, Bill Sarver.

### MIFFLIN COUNTY

Margaret Kenepf

All sightings were in Bratton Twp. unless otherwise noted.

On 9/27 two **Great Blue Heron**, **Green-backed Heron**, 1 **Tundra Swan**, 12 **Canada Geese**, and an **Am. Black Duck** with 4 young were observed at Horningsford. Great Blue Heron were absent from mid-June to mid-July again this year.

An **Osprey** was seen near the new bridge at Mattawana. It appears that the nest which was begun several years was still not used. The area has more recreational use each year. A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** has been observed frequently snatching a songbird from the backyard feeding area, with expected silence following from the survivors. **Am. Kestrel** numbers seemed about average this season. During Aug., the flock of **Wild Turkey** increased from the usual 7 to 42. **Ring-billed Gull** were seen 8/20.

**E. Screech-Owl** were still calling in the early evenings of Sept. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** activity was regular at the feeders until 9/5, then none was observed until 9/19-21, when several imm., probably migrants, were seen. The next sighting was a single bird 9/30 which made only one stop at the feeder, but drank excessively from moisture which had collected on several chestnut leaves near the house. This was the last sighting.

During Sept., **Common Raven** began to come to the corn fields; this is the first experience I have had to hear them anywhere except on the ridges. A **Red-bellied Woodpecker** arrived with 1 young 8/5. It was interesting to watch **White-breasted Nuthatch** and **Tufted Titmouse** teach their young to open sunflower seeds. **Carolina Wren** had fledged 4 young by 7/12. I counted 21 **E. Bluebird** bathing in a shallow part of a stream 8/18 in the company of cardinals, grackles, finches, a Song Sparrow, and several swallows. Recently fledged robins, Cedar Waxwing, cardinals, and grackles were seen in or on the same old apple tree within the span of one week at end July.

The warbler migration seemed excellent during mid- to late-Sept., with expected species observed. The first **Dark-eyed Junco** was seen 9/27, but only for the one day. The best sighting was of a small flock of **Bobolink**, which stopped for several days in early summer near the Carlisle Gap Rd. This was the first sighting in this area, to my knowledge, in over 40 years.

OBSERVER: Margaret Kenepf, Box 343, RD 2, McVeytown 17051 (717-899-6252).

### MONROE COUNTY

*Locations: Brady's L. SGL #127 (BLSGL), Hungry Hill Monument (HHM), Pocono L. Preserve (PLP).*

The following sightings were sent to us by Bob Lewis of Basking Ridge, NJ, who has a summer place at PLP and birds the area at every opportunity. He sent records from 12 days of birding this quarter, which included a total of 79 species. Some records follow.

Single **Great Blue Heron** were seen at BLSGL 8/4 and at PLP 9/1. A **Green-backed Heron** was at SGL #127 on 8/4. Four **Wood Duck** were found at PLP 9/1, a high of 6 **Mallard** were there 7/16, and 3 **Gadwall** were noted 9/1. **Osprey** were observed 7/16, 7/28, 8/18-19, and 9/1 at PVP, but all sighting were of single birds. Accipiter reports included 1 **Sharp-shinned Hawk** 9/1 and 1 **N. Goshawk** 7/16 at PLP. **Broad-winged Hawk** and **Am. Kestrel** observations rounded out the raptor sightings. **Ruffed Grouse** and **Wild Turkey** were found, with a high of 19 of the latter seen 9/1. **Barred Owl** was found 8/21 and 9/3.

Both nuthatches were found on almost every trip, as well as **Brown Creeper** on 75% of the outings. The best find was a **Yellow-throated Vireo** in deep woods near his cabin. It is an unusual bird at Pocono L. Fifteen species of warblers were found within the safe dates, and by 8/10 **Tennessee Warbler** were migrating and **Cape May Warbler** were coming through by 8/21.

OBSERVERS: Bob Lewis.

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Neal Thorpe

*Locations: Barnes Arboretum (BA), Green Lane Res. (GLR), Ft. Washington SP (FWSP), Unami Creek Valley (UCV), Upper Perkiomen Valley Park (UPVP), Valley Forge Nat. Hist. Park (VFNP).*

Most of the pre-migration season excitement was at GLR, which was well monitored in spite of the baking heat that made being out in the field a trial. A **Tri-colored Heron** was there from 8/5-13, and another (presumably the same bird) lingered at nearby UPVP from mid-Aug. to 9/10 (m.ob). This is only a 3rd record. More expected water birds at GLR included up to 3 **Great Egret**, a **Snowy**, and 2-4 imm. **Little Blue** that summered there from late July through Aug. An imm. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was also seen there 8/10 (NT). Two **Snow Geese** went over FWSP 9/25. Up to 3 out-of-season **Green-winged Teal** were there from mid-July to 8/8 (GAF, GLF). Three early **Am. Wigeon** were at UPVP 8/28 and 1 early **Ruddy Duck** was there 9/29. Other pre-migration notables at GLR were 11 **Wild Turkey** 7/7 (KC), a imm. **Sora**, rare, 8/30 (GAF), and all six members of the swallow family were seen 7/19 (GLF).

You never know what you'll find where. A very small pond behind a very busy school bus parking lot in Erdenheim was home in Aug. to 2 **Great Egret**, a **Green-backed Heron** and a **Black-crowned Night-Heron** as well as a **Belted Kingfisher** (DT). The Murphys, atlasing in the UCV, listed 91 possible breeders, over half confirmed. Species included at least 9 families of **Wood Duck**, **N. Bobwhite**, at least 4 pair of **Pileated Woodpecker**, 16 species of warblers (including **Yellow-throated**, **Cerulean**, **Worm-eating** and at least 9 pair of **Kentucky**), **Grasshopper Sparrow** and several pair of **E. Meadowlark**.

Migrant water birds in the upper Perkiomen area included 4 **Double-crested Cormorant** at GLR 8/28 (GLF) and 2 at UPVP 9/24 (GAF). A daily hawk watch, organized by Marylea Klauder, was begun in early Sept. on Militia Hill in FWSP. The Sept. count was 2117 raptors. A full report will be made in the next issue. A promising new area monitored this quarter was the arboretum at the Barnes Foundation. RK, there daily, saw 10 **Broad-wing Hawk** take off from roosts within the arboretum 9/15 and another 32 fly over the same day. By next day only 1 **Broad-wing** was found in the arboretum.

A red-letter day for shorebirds at GLR was 8/21, when 5 **Western Sandpiper**, a juv. **Baird's** and an ad. **Long-billed Dowitcher** (breeding plumage) were all present among many other shorebirds, including 3 **Short-billed Dowitcher**. The Long-billed was "carefully studied and compared with the 3 races of Short-billed" (BLM), photographed and heard (RW). The 42 Short-billed at GLR 7/21 was a good count (RW). A **Baird's** was first seen at GLR 8/19 (GAF), and 2 were observed 8/24 (GLF, RW). Two early **Dunlin** were seen 8/22 and 1 **Stilt Sandpiper** on the record early date of 7/15 (KC, GAF) and 5 on 7/21 (RW). Two **Caspian Tern** were noted 8/20 (GAF).

Best migrant flycatchers were **Olive-sided** and **Yellow-bellied**. One each of the former was at White's Mill 7/25, another record early date (JH), and at VFNP 9/6 (RG). A **Yellow-bellied** was at VFNP 8/30 (RG), another in the UCV 9/13 (GLF). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was calling at BA 9/2 (RK), a **Winter Wren** was at VFNP 9/29 (RG), and a **Gray-cheeked Thrush** at FWSP 9/14 (WNM).

Three **Solitary Vireo** were seen in the UCV 9/14 (WNM) and three 9/18 (GLF). A **Yellow-throated Vireo** was at FWSP 9/7 (WNM) and 2 were in the UCV 9/11 (GLF). Both species were outdone by **Philadelphia Vireo**: 1 at FWSP, also 9/7 (WNM), 2 in the UCV 9/2 (GLF) and 9/14 (WNM), and 1 in VFNP 9/15 (RG). All observers reported some good warbler-wave days, although RG described the warbler season at VFNP as "about average," and GLF described it from GLR as "not very good here, below average." Nevertheless, reports from all quarters covering late-Aug. through Sept. added up to 23 species, including a **Golden-winged** and a **Wilson's**, both at VFNP 9/15 (RG). The **Golden-winged** at VFNP was first since the Fall of 1983. A late **Blue-winged Warbler** was seen 9/22 (WNM). A female **Summer Tanager** was seen and heard at FWSP 9/6 (WNM) and 2 juv. **Blue Grosbeak** were at VFNP 9/10 (NT).

Some high and low counts: 9 **Great Egret** at GLR 9/1 (GLF), a max. of 58 **Wood Duck** at UPVP 8/28 (GAF), 60 **Broad-wing** flying over Plymouth Meeting 9/14 (RK), 10+ **Solitary Sandpiper** at GLR 7/16 (RG), and a max. of 30 **Pectoral** there 8/28 (GLF). **Black-billed**

**Cuckoo** may be making a comeback, for both it and **Yellow-billed** seemed to RG in above average numbers. Thirty-five **Common Nighthawk** were counted over N. Wales at 5 p.m. 8/31 (DT). At least 700 **Chimney Swift** were convening over the Rt. 29 bridge across the Schuylkill 9/24-25 (NT). Migrating **E. Wood-Pewee** seemed especially abundant in Sept., and **Willow Flycatcher** seemed unusually easy to find in Aug., while **E. Phoebe** numbers seemed unusually low. Both kinglets came through everywhere on schedule in good numbers, with a max. of 6 **Golden-crowned** at BA 9/27 (RK). Twelve migrant **E. Bluebird** came through GLR 9/27 (GLF), 3 **Swainson's Thrush** were counted in BA 9/20 (RK), and 5 **Nashville Warbler** in FWSP 9/22 seem worth noting (W&NM). On the down side, there was no report of **Connecticut**, **Mourning** or **Hooded** warbler or chats. RG reports that this is the second fall in a row that the first two have not been seen at VFNP. Also conspicuously absent there was **Scarlet Tanager**. Juvenile **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** were widely seen in Sept., however, and some 300 **Bobolink** came through GLR 9/3 (GAF).

OBSERVERS: Kevin Crilley, George A. Franchois, Gary L. Freed, Ron Grubb, Jason Horn, Rudy Keller, Bernie L. Morris, William & Naomi Murphy, Neal Thorpe, Box Q, Mont Clare 19453, Dale Twining, Rick Wiltraut.

## MONTOUR COUNTY

Allen Schweinsberg

A female **Common Merganser** with 6 young was seen on 7/3 on Roaring Cr. (CS). A **Least Flycatcher** called on 7/12 along Indian Run in Valley Twp. (AS).

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

## NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

Rick Wiltraut

*Location: East Bangor Dam (EBD), Little Gap Bird Observatory (LGBO), Minsi L. (ML),*

Eighteen **Double-crested Cormorant** flew past LGBO 9/11 (SB). A **Great Egret** was at ML 9/21 (RW). Five **Blue-winged Teal** and 45 **Wood Duck** were counted at EBD 9/21 (RW).

### The Dangers of Fishing Line

During the summer I'm employed as a naturalist at Locust Lake State Park, *Schuylkill*, and I've found the birding there to be quite productive. There's a good mixture of southern and northern birds breeding in the same areas, including **Brown Creeper**, **Solitary Vireo**, **Acadian Flycatcher**, **Least Flycatcher**, **Cerulean Warbler**, and **Canada Warbler**. **N. Orioles** are regular breeders in the Park, and the birds seem to find an abundance of nesting material in the form of nylon fishing line left along the shoreline by careless fishermen. On 14 July I was stunned to find two female **N. Oriole** strangled to death in the same tree. Both had been strangled by fishing line. Fishermen, birders, and other people who spend a lot of time in the out-of-doors should keep their eyes open for clumps of fishing line and other hazards that can cause agonizing death for our feathered friends and remove them. Rick Wiltraut.

Two **Black Vulture** were present throughout the summer at Portland (SB). Good counts of **Osprey** included 26 on 9/24 and 24 on 9/28 (BS). Of 7 **Bald Eagle** seen at LGBO, 5 were ad., 2 imm. (SB, GY). Good early flights of **Sharp-shinned Hawk** at LGBO included 51 on 9/9 (SB), 171 on 9/21 (BS), and 149 on 9/22 (SB). About 600 hawks, mostly **Broad-wings**, were noted at LGBO 9/12 (ER) and about 300 **Broad-wings** were seen kettling over Williams Twp. 9/16 (AK). An ad. **Red-tailed Hawk** was observed feeding on a gray squirrel road-kill near ML 9/21 (RW). A probable **Swainson's Hawk** was observed in Williams Twp. 9/7 (AK). A **Golden Eagle** went by the LGBO 9/30 (SB). A count of 17 **Am. Kestrel** was made 9/9 (SB) and

9 **Merlin** were seen between 9/25-30, with a peak of 3 on 9/30 (SB,GY). A very early Merlin was seen at Klecknersville 9/1 (SB) and **Peregrine Falcon** flew by LGBO 9/25 (GY) and 9/27 (SB).

A **Common Moorhen** was observed throughout July at a small drainage pond near the ABE airport (BLM, m.ob.). A battle between 2 **Belted Kingfisher** was observed at ML 9/21 in which 1 of the birds knocked the other into the water! (RW). A **Horned Lark** was noted at Graver's Hill 7/2 (SB) and 2 **Common Raven** were seen at LGBO on the early date 9/11 (SB). No northern finches were reported along Blue Mt. in Sept.

OBSERVERS: Steve Boyce, Arlene Koch, Bernie Morris, Ed Rymon, Brad Silfies, Rick Wiltraut, 54 Pershing Blvd, Whitehall 18052 (215-435-8632), Gordon Yoder.

The following was received too late for inclusion in the last issue.

GREBES TO WATERFOWL. A **Horned Grebe** was at ML 4/4 (SB). A **Great Cormorant** was reported from Morgan's Hill 4/23 (DD), a 1st county record. The bird was observed flying with 3 **Double-crested Cormorant**, and both the larger size and white belly were noted by this competent observer. This species has been occurring regularly in winter along the lower Delaware R. An **Am. Bittern** was at EBD 5/3 (BS) and a **Cattle Egret** was observed in Williams Twp. 9/9-11 (AK). Four **Blue-winged Teal** were at EBD 5/12 (BS) and 2 **Oldsquaw** were at ML 4/4 (SB). **Eight fledgling Common Merganser** were observed along the river at Portland 6/22 (SB).

RAPTORS. The **7 Black Vulture** seen at Portland 6/22 was an excellent count, and 2 were seen near Doe Hollow Boat Launch 4/27 (EC). An interesting sighting was a **Turkey Vulture** and a **Black Vulture** feeding on the same road-kill near Martin's Cr. 5/29 (SB). The pair of **Osprey** that started building a nest on a 65-ft high transmission tower along the river at Portland in late March apparently gave up after few weeks (RM, TM). Unquestionably the best bird of the season was the imm. **Mississippi Kite** observed for about 5 minutes at Morgan's Hill near Easton 4/23, 1st county record. Coincidentally, a Miss. Kite was observed about an hour earlier along the Delaware in *Bucks*, only a few miles s. of Morgan's Hill (RH). (for more details see PB 2:2). An ad. **Bald Eagle** was observed being harassed by 2 **Red-tailed Hawk** at Danielsville 4/10 (BS). A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was observed carrying a frog or a toad at ML 5/3 (BS). A flight of about 200 **Broad-winged Hawk** was noted at Morgan's Hill 4/23. A male "bluejack" **Merlin** was observed chasing swallows at EBD 4/23 (SB) and an imm. male was at LGBO on the late date 5/8 (SB,RW). A **Barred Owl** was heard along National Park Rd. 4/27 (SB).

SANDPIPERS TO FINCHES. 7 **Spotted Sandpiper** were seen at ML 4/26 (SB). Cuckoos had a great year; 2 **Black-billed** were seen at Danielsville 5/13 (BS). Where are all the hummingbirds? **Pileated Woodpecker** were noted along Nat. Park Rd. 4/27, at ML 4/29, and at Portland 6/4 (SB). An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen at Jacobsburg SP 5/15 (TM). About 150 **Tree** and 3 early N. **Rough-winged** swallows were at EBD 4/2 (SB) and an early **Barn** was at LGBO 4/6 (BS). Nesting **Rough-winged** were found at Monocacy Nature Ctr. 5/14 and in a dustpile at the Keystone Cement Co. 5/16 (BS). Other **Rough-wing** were found nesting at Mt. Bethel in a colony of **Bank Swallow** (SB). About 100 **Bank Swallow** nesting burrows were counted at this site (SB). A pair of **Cliff Swallow** attempted to nest in Williams Twp. 6/21, but departed two days later (AK). A **Fish Crow** was at ML 4/26 (SB). This species has become quite common along the lower Lehigh R., even in winter. An early **Gray Catbird** was seen at Danielsville 4/10 (BS).

Four **White-eyed Vireo** were seen at MNC 5/14 (BS) and 2 were found near Portland 6/22 (BS). A **Golden-winged Warbler** was observed singing a **Blue-wing** song at Easton 5/10 (AK). I observed the same thing in May 1987 at Locust Lake SP (*Schuylkill*). A "**Brewster's**" was seen at Pt. Phillips 5/14 (TM). A singing **Prairie Warbler** was present at LGBO in May (BS,RW) and 8 yellow **Palm Warbler** were seen at ML 4/26 (SB). Four **Kentucky Warbler** were found along the Blue Mt. near Smith Gap 5/28 and 1 was at Portland 6/4 (SB). A singing **Cerulean Warbler** was at Gradwohl's 4/30 (RW). Three singing **Wilson's Warbler** (some videotaped) were observed at EBD 5/12 (BS).

Two **Orchard Oriole** were seen migrating over LGBO 5/88 (RW). Others included a singing bird at Gradwohl's 5/5 (RW), 2 at MNC 5/12 (TM) and birds on territory in June near Martin's Cr. (TM) and Steel City (DD). An early **House Finch** nest with 4 eggs was found in a spruce at Bath 4/7 (RW) and a late **Pine Siskin** was at Easton

5/28 (AK). **Red Crossbill** were observed along the Monocacy Cr. 4/7 (JZ) and 6 were seen in Palmer 5/4 (RW). The 8 **Evening Grosbeak** at LGBO 4/6 were the only ones reported (BS).

OBSERVERS: Steve Boyce, Fritz Brock, Ed Chubb, Dave DeReamus, Ray Hendrick, Arlene Koch, Terry Master, Rick Mocklock, Bernie Morris, Brad Silfies, Rick Wiltraut, 54 Pershing Blvd, Whitehall 18052 (215-435-8632), Joe Zajacek.

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY

David L. Unger

*Locations: Roaring Creek Water Co. (RCW), Rush Twp. (RT), Ralpho Twp. (RaT).*

Please note there is a new compiler for *Northumberland* listed below. I would appreciate any sightings concerning this county, especially from the n. and s. areas. Due to the extremely hot weather in the beginning of the quarter most sightings were from the BBAP. All sightings by the compiler unless otherwise noted.

**Wild Turkey** continue to increase in the county especially in RCW. A flock of 17 was seen in Bear Gap 7/4 by several residents and a smaller flock of 9 on 7/25 in RCW. **Ruffed Grouse** were common in RCW and **Ring-necked Pheasant** continue to decline in the county although 6 juveniles were seen 7/10 in RT.

Both **Sharp-shinned** and **Cooper's** hawks successfully nested in RCW. A Sharp-shinned Hawk with recently fledged young was observed 7/26 and a Cooper's Hawk, also with recently fledged young, 7/5. **Red-tailed Hawk** were commonly seen near agricultural areas. **Am. Kestrel** were holding their own, with 7 observed 8/4 during a drive through RT and RaT, all near historical breeding territories. **Mourning Dove** were abundant and swelled in numbers with the arrival of migrants; over 150 were seen on power lines 9/19 in RT.

A **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** nest was discovered 8/8 in RT. Two young fledged, 1 on 9/5 and the other 9/7.

Both the **Yellow-billed** and **Black-billed** cuckoos were common in RCW, RT, and RaT. It is possible the reemergence of the gypsy moth in these areas accounts for the increase. Both **Red-bellied** and **Pileated** woodpecker were seen throughout the quarter in RCW and RT. **Acadian Flycatcher** was the most numerous flycatcher in the RCW. The **Bank Swallow** colony in Riverside had left by early Aug. after a successful breeding season.

A **Brown Creeper** was seen 7/26 in RCW with 2 recently fledged young. **Golden-crowned Kinglet** were common in spruce plantations throughout the quarter in RCW. **Brown Thrasher** successfully raised 2 young in RT.

**Solitary Vireo** were fairly common in RCW. **Red-eyed Vireo** seem to be decreasing in RT, as only one pair was observed in a woodlot where six were last year. **Blackburnian** and **Pine** warblers were confirmed breeders in RCW. **Parula**, **Black-throated Green**, and **Black-and-white** warblers were also common in RCW, but could not be confirmed. **Worm-eating** warblers again nested in RT. A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was seen w. of Elysburg 7/16 and another 7/18 in RT (CS). **Grasshopper Sparrow** were seen in several locations in RT and RaT and 1 with fledgling young was observed 7/23 (CS) near Stonington. A small flock of **Vesper Sparrow** was seen early in the morning on several occasions on SR 2006 in RT throughout late Aug. and Sept. A single **Dark-eyed Junco** was seen 7/9 in RT. Was it an early migrant, or did it come from a nesting area nearby? The blackbird roost in Riverside began building in mid-July and by the end of the quarter numbered over 150,00 birds, mainly **Common Grackle**, **Eur. Starling**, **Brown-headed Cowbird**, with some **Red-winged Blackbird**.

OBSERVERS: Christine Smull, Linda and David Unger, RD6 Box 246, Danville 17821 (717-672-3254).

## PERRY COUNTY

Deuane Hoffman

*Locations: Liverpool (LP), Tuscarora SF (TSF).*

All sightings were from BBAP outings. A **N. Bobwhite** was calling near LP 7/14 (DH). Six **Whip-poor-will** were observed in Kennedy Valley 7/6 (DH). A **Winter Wren** was observed singing on territory in the TSF in early July (RK,GR,JE). Two separate **Hermit Thrush** were heard in the Hemlocks Natural Area, TSF, 7/6 (DH).

On a follow up visit 7/17, Hoffman confirmed **Golden-winged Warbler** (nest found) near LP. The bird was originally found in June (DH,RK). This bird is becoming very uncommon in our region. Lastly, in July, **Dark-eyed Junco** was listed as "probable" breeding s. of Ickesburg (CM).

OBSERVERS: Jane Earle, Deuane Hoffman, 3406 Montour St., Harrisburg 17111 (717-564-7475), Ramsay Koury, Clyde Miller, Grace Randolph.

## PHILADELPHIA COUNTY

Edward Fingerhood

*Locations: Bartram's Gardens (BG), Carpenter's Woods (CW), Harper's Meadows (HM), Pennypack Park (PP), Wissahickon area (Wiss), Tincicum Nat. Envir. Center (TNEC).*

The summer's drought continued unabated until mid-July when heavy rains for a week brought relief, but hot, 90s, moist air with no rain, the classic Bermuda High, returned and lasted until 17 Aug. It then rained and daytime temperatures dropped into the mid-80s. An early cool spell hit the area 6-8 Sept., when nighttime temperatures dipped into the high 40s, but the remainder of the season was as expected for early autumn.

**BITTERN TO DUCKS.** **Am. Bittern** were confirmed nesting at TNEC, but the young escaped banding efforts (JCM). Ten pair of **Least Bittern** nested at TNEC (JCM). Post-breeding herons, a **Great Blue** at City Line Ave 7/28 and an imm. **Little Blue** at BG 9/17 (EF) make occasional forays into the city. More than 35 pair of **Green-backed Heron** nested at TNEC (JCM), and 1 was seen at HM 9/26 (RZ). An imm. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** at BG 9/17 (EF) may have resulted from the 70+ successful breeders at TNEC (JCM). **Wood Duck**, present at TNEC all summer, seem to have reached a high 9/24, with a 50+ count (MD). An early female **N. Pintail** was at the refuge 9/5 (SS).

**RAPTORS.** Three **Osprey** were found at TNEC 9/15 (JCM) and another 9/17 (EF). Five days later a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** circled the TNEC headquarters (EF), evidently pausing on migration. An imm. **N. Goshawk** at PP was seen on the early date 9/28 (FW). Buteos were represented by a **Red-shouldered** at TNEC 9/17 (EF), and a flight of 40 **Broad-winged** 9/16 at CW (MD). The pair of **Peregrine Falcon** remained at the Schuylkill R. bridge throughout the period despite the loss of their young (EF *et al.*).

**SHOREBIRDS TO WOODPECKERS.** All observers agree that shorebirds were poor this season. Perhaps the heavy late rains which kept water levels high discouraged stopovers at the traditional areas. A rather significant report was received of 2 ad. **Black-necked Stilt** observed 7/1-5 at the Sewage Treatment Ponds in s.w. Phila. The following was sent to the editors: "I saw these birds with a telescope from I-95 and am quite sure about the adults. On one of the days, during a light rain, an ad. bird appeared to be brooding some smaller birds, but I was unable to see them clearly and cannot confirm this activity (MB)." Only the **Stilt Sandpiper** at TNEC 8/1 were noteworthy (BS). A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was found on the Wiss 9/26 (RZ). During the period 8/10 (EB) to 9/28 (MD), **Common Nighthawk** were reported migrating over the city. Peak flight was 51 on 9/12 over the Wiss (MD). Ten to 12 **Chimney Swift** were noted swarming as early as 8/9 in w. Phila. (EB), 6 were found over Vet Stadium 9/16 (EF,SS), and several were at HM 9/26 (RZ). Exceptionally good for the city was an imm. **Red-headed Woodpecker** at PP 9/26 (FW) and **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at CW 9/25 (MD) and 9/26 on the upper Wiss (RZ).

**FLYCATCHER TO ORIOLES.** **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** were seen in a n.e. Phila. garden and PP 8/22, 25 and 28 (FW), and a

late **Least Flycatcher** was identified at CW 9/25 (MD). At least 150 pair of **Tree Swallow** nested at TNEC this season (JCM). **Brown Creeper** appeared at HM and CW 9/26 (RZ,MD). **Winter Wren**, usually scarce in Phila., appeared first 9/24 (FU), 3 followed in PP 9/29, and 1 in n.e. Phila. 9/30 (FW). Two **Marsh Wren** were still singing at TNEC 9/24. Drake reports that they seemed more plentiful than in recent years, though Miller felt them about average. The earliest kinglet, a **Ruby-crowned**, was reported at HM 9/26 (RZ).

A **Swainson's Thrush** was found on the Wiss 9/15 (RF), and 9/26 (DT) and that same day in CW (MD). **Solitary Vireo** were moving through CW 9/16 and 9/25 (MD), 1 each day. Two **Philadelphia Vireo** appeared in PP 9/6 (FW). Most observers felt there was a good Fall warbler flight. Windfelder, commenting on PP, called it "excellent," and Drake noted that **Black-throated Blue** were "plentiful" after a poor spring showing. Some of the more noteworthy sightings follow: **Yellow**, TNEC 9/17 (late) (EF); **Chestnut-sided**, CW 8/18 (early) (MD); **Prairie**, Wiss 9/6, unusual (MD); both waterthrushes, Wiss 9/14-15 (late, especially the **Louisiana**) (RF); and **Canada** CW 8/18 (a tad early) (MD).

**White-throated Sparrow** made their first reported appearance 9/25 in CW (MD) and a pair of **Orchard Oriole** with 3 young were found at the Andorra Nature Center 7/22 (MD).

OBSERVERS: Michael Brawley, Erica Brendel, Michael Drake, Edward Fingerhood, 541 W. Sedgwick St., Philadelphia 19119 (215-843-5818), Ron French, John C. Miller, Sandra Sherman, Bill Stocku, Fred Ulmer, Frank Windfelder, Ruth Zumeta.

## SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Tom Clauser

Tom reports that he was out of the county for virtually all of this quarter. Additionally, he did not receive any reports from his stalwart birders for inclusion. We all hope this will not be the case next quarter. We look forward to including the Hawk Mt. Sanctuary raptor migration report in the next issue.

An early **Common Snipe** was at Lakeside 8/18 (RW). A **Pine Siskin** was found dead near Tuscarora SP 6/26 (RW).

OBSERVERS: Tom Clauser, 213 Deerfield Dr., Pottsville 17901 (717-622-1363), Rick Wiltraut.

## SNYDER COUNTY

Allen Schweinsberg

Six ad. and 25 imm. **Wild Turkey** made an impressive sight on Hunter Rd. on Jacks Mt. 7/2 (RPW). An **Am. Coot** on Walker L., 7/8-20 (RPW), appeared to be solitary. Ad. and young **Red-headed Woodpecker** were seen along Middle Cr. near Paxtonville 7/4 (RPW). The **Purple Martin** house at famed Walnut Acres still contained residents 7/9 (AS).

**Black-and-white** and **Hooded** warblers were confirmed nesters near Troxelville 7/2 (RPW). **Grasshopper Sparrow** were very common 7/9 in farmland s.e. of the village of Penns Cr. (AS). **Bobolink** were found at a new site in Spring Twp. 7/14 (RPW).

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

## SOMERSET COUNTY

Glenn & Ruth Sager

*Locations: High Point L. (HPL), Hooversville (HVL), Jennerstown (JNT), L. Somerset (LS), Quemahoning Dam (QD), Rockwell L. (RL).*

Scattered frost in some sections of Somerset was a visible sign of record low temperatures in the first week of July. By the 9th, however, record high temperatures began, leading to a drought which held sway until mid-Aug., when cooler weather and some rain brought relief. Activity of birders was lessened as temperatures in the 90's continued day after day and few reports were received for the drought period. Sept. was dominated by westerly winds and rain and southerly winds

generated by hurricanes. This resulted in a very dull migration picture.

An ad. **Bald Eagle** was observed at RL the last three weeks in Sept. (PL). An imm. **Bald Eagle** seen 8/21 (RM) and 2 **Rough-legged Hawk** seen 9/27 (JL) in the same area near JTN point to the importance of this wetlands area as a birding hot spot.

Waterfowl counts were low, not beginning until mid-Aug. Included were: 1 **Common Loon** at QD 9/29. High counts of **Pied-billed Grebe** were 3 at Laurel Rocks Pond 9/12 (AM) and 9 at QD 9/29. A **Double-crested Cormorant** was seen at LS 8/14-20 (AM). Single **Great Blue Heron** were at QD 8/13-24 and at Hollsopple 9/22. Five **Green-backed Heron** were the high Aug. count and 2-3 were seen 9/1-15 at QD.

Thirty-one **Canada Geese** were at LS 8/18-20 (AM) and several flocks were heard flying over QD 9/28. **Wood Duck** peaked at 50+ at LS 8/20 (AM), with 1 at QD 9/29. There were 3 **Blue-winged Teal** at LS 8/18, 1 there 8/20 and 1 teal *sp.* at HPL 9/5 (AM). There were 50+ **Mallard**, including a late brood of 4 ducklings no more than 2-3 weeks old, at LS 8/20 (AM).

**Turkey Vulture** appeared in above average numbers throughout the county; 25+ were observed 7/3 using a roost at Fort Hill (AM) and a high count of 10 passed over the HVL hawk watch 9/14. Thirty hours on hawk watch in late Aug. and Sept. at HVL resulted in very low counts, indicated by the following; 1 **Osprey** each 9/15 and 9/24; 1 **N. Harrier** 8/30; 1-3 **Sharp-shinned Hawk** throughout Sept. and 8 migrants 9/26-30; 1 or 2 local **Cooper's Hawk** throughout Sept.; 5 local **Broad-winged Hawk** 8/24, and only 40 migrants through 9/26; local **Red-tailed Hawk** seen daily; and 2 **Am. Kestrel** each 9/15 and 9/16.

Other water related reports included: 1 **Common Moorhen** at LS 8/20 (AM); 41 **Killdeer** on an idle strip mine near New Centerville 8/5 (AM) and a high 42 at QD 9/1 with several lingering to the end of Sept.; 1 **Solitary Sandpiper** at QD 8/24; and 1 **Am. Woodcock** at QD 8/10. Three **Ring-billed Gull** were at LS 7/12 (AM).

**Black-billed** and **Yellow-billed** cuckoos were common the first two weeks of July and each diminished quickly to a few reports by the end of Aug. Owl reports were unremarkable. **Common Nighthawk** migration numbers were very low, 35 seen 8/18 at Glessner's Mills and singles at HVL 8/22 and 8/27. Concern about the **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** in the previous quarter dissipated, as apparently normal numbers frequented feeders and were seen from July to early Sept. A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was seen at HVL 9/27 and several migrating **N. Flicker** were seen there in the last half of Sept.

**E. Wood-Pewee**, **Acadian**, **Willow**, **Least**, and **Great Crested** flycatchers numbers were above normal in early July, but very few were seen in migration in Sept. The **Blue Jay** migration numbers were exceptionally low for the period. Flocking of **Am. Crow** was first noted 8/15 and continued throughout the quarter.

A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** appeared at HVL 8/18 through at least 9/30. Three **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** were there 9/29. The first **Am. Robin** movement also was noticeable 9/29, when small flocks of up to 20 moved through. Mimic thrushes were also moving through the last week of Sept. A flock of 50+ **Cedar Waxwing** at Markleton 9/3 (AM) was the highest count. Several **Solitary Vireo** were at HVL 9/9-15. **Red-eyed Vireo** were in good numbers there 9/1-10, but few thereafter. Warblers trickled through and there was nothing to report as a "wave" in the HVL records which include: 1 **Tennessee** 9/27; 2 **Nashville** 9/23, 5 on 9/24, 1 on 9/28; 8 **Magnolia** 9/11; 2 **Cape May** 9/23 and 3 on 9/24; 1 **Yellow-rumped** 9/29; 5 **Black-throated Green** 8/30 and a high of 12 9/24 and 9/28; 2 **Blackburnian** 9/27; 1 **Louisiana Waterthrush** 9/27; 10 **Common Yellowthroat** 9/2 and several throughout Sept. At HVL there were good mixed flocks moving through mornings and evenings during the first several days of Sept., with the peak 9/2, but few of the following species were noticed after the 10th: **Scarlet Tanager**, **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, and **N. Oriole**. The numbers were all below normal. Average counts of **Rufous-sided Towhee** continued to the end of the month.

Sparrows appeared to be above average as breeding birds early in the quarter and as wandering flocks throughout the period. Perhaps they were more noticeable this year because of the sparse grass cover due to the drought. **Henslow's** and **Grasshopper** sparrows were found in a number of new locations in Windber, Hooversville, Central City, and Stoystown areas in July. Two **White-throated Sparrow** were at HVL 9/27 and 6 on 9/29. **Dark-eyed Junco** were present in July as breeding birds in the higher elevations near Windber and in the Laurel Mts., but no Fall migrants were reported, indicating a late arrival.

OBSERVERS: Paul Labovitz, John Lehman, Anthony Marich, Richard Mock, Glenn and Ruth Sager, RD 1, Box 176-B, Hooversville 15936 (814-798-3242).

## SULLIVAN COUNTY

Douglas A. Gross

**Osprey** were sighted at some remote ponds and lakes in the county in July (DG). Rumors of summering **Bald Eagle** in the Dushore area for the last few years reached the county editor. The experienced birders that work the area did not report them this year. Everyone seemed to report broods of **Ruffed Grouse**. **Alder Flycatcher** were found and confirmed breeding in more locations near Laporte and Ricketts (DG,BS). **E. Bluebird** nested in Eagles Mere (NS). Breeding **Swainson's Thrush** were found near Nordmont in SGL #13 along Glass Cr., mid-July (DG). **Mourning Warbler** returned to their roadside spot between Muncy Valley and Eagles Mere (DG,BS). Atlas volunteers kept finding **Yellow-rumped "Myrtle" Warbler** in several locations across the county. **Bobolink** were reported even in fields near the forested town of Eagles Mere (NS).

OBSERVERS: Skip Conant, Doug Gross, RD1, Box 147, Orangeville 17859, Barbara Sonies, Nancy Spaeth.

The following was received too late for the last issue.

*Location: Wyoming S.F. (WSF).*

The county was not well served by atlasers this year, because more emphasis was placed on covering blocks in adjacent *Wyoming* and *Lycoming*.

WATER BIRDS. A **Pied-billed Grebe** was swimming in Deer L. near Glen Mahr 6/27 (DG). This species has nested in recent years in *Sullivan*, so it may have been more than a straggler. **Great Blue Heron** probably nested in SGL #13 on North Mt., as they were often seen on ponds there. The **Canada Goose** invasion continued in many small ponds throughout the county. **Am. Black Duck** nested at Splashdam Pond (DG) and **Wood Duck** nested at several ponds. **Hooded Merganser** produced young at a pond near Lopez (CM) and another pond in SGL #13 n. of Ricketts Glen (SC). **Common Merganser** may also have nested near Lopez (CM). A flock of **Ring-billed Gull** were flying around Eagles Mere 6/30 (DG). A **Belted Kingfisher** surprised DG deep in the heart of perfectly good forest (WSF) in late June.

RAPTORS. **Red-shouldered Hawk** were found in more locations (*deleted. -Eds.*). A **Red-tailed Hawk** surprised SC by being in a fairly dense forest on Kahill Mt. On 6/17, a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** nest was inadvertently found on a BBS route (DG). Fewer than normal **N. Goshawk** sightings were reported and rumors reached this atlas coordinator that at least 2 Gos pairs failed to nest due to human disturbance. Logging on private grounds eliminated one traditional nest site. **Barred Owl** were heard on North Mt. and in SGL #13 (DG). Two **N. Saw-whet Owl** responded to calls on North Mt. in early May and 1 was observed hunting in the twilight near Splashdam Pond 5/24 (DG).

SONGBIRDS AND OTHERS. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** seemed more common than in past summers (SC,DG). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** were found in virtually every newly covered block and were more common on all of Gross's BBS routes in *Sullivan* than in the previous five years. In spite of the fact that 2 **Olive-sided Flycatcher** were found near Lopez in May (SC *et al.*), none of these boreal birds has been found in appropriate habitat in the breeding season in this area in recent times. It was once a nester in PA boreal bogs. **Common Raven** persisted in areas reported last year (SC,DG). **Tufted Titmouse** was more common than any previous year on two BBS routes (DG) and may be expanding its range in this county. **Winter Wren** had a population increase in WSF, probably in response to logging and the resultant beech brush. **Swainson's Thrush** was not found in WSF locations where it was found in recent years. A **Solitary Vireo** nest was found by NBBC in a hemlock grove at the foot of North Mt. (about 1100 ft) near Jamison City 5/14. Believe it or not, **Red-eyed Vireo** numbers were higher than most previous years on BBS routes (DG). For the first time, a **Pine Warbler** was heard on a BBS route in n. *Sullivan* at Camp Brule 6/24 (DG). **Yellow-rumped "Myrtle" Warbler** had young out of the nest 6/30 near the Crestmont Inn, Eagles Mere (DG). Meanwhile, ER reported that in 1948 he found breeding Myrtles at Shuman's L. (where SC finds them in more recent years). This may mean that the Myrtle population along

the PA northern tier is not as invasive as some believe. We need more historic and current data. At least one of the **Mourning Warbler** found between Eagles Mere and Muncy Valley in 1987 returned this year (DG,BS).

OBSERVERS: Skip Conant, Douglas A. Gross, Susquehanna Biol. Lab., RD 1, Berwick 18603 (717-542-2191), Jim Lockyer, North Branch Bird Club, Tom Reeves, Edward J. Reiman, Barbara Sonies.

### SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY

Bill Reid

Refer to *Bradford* report for introductory remarks.

A **Sora** rail was heard at Lewis Corners 7/17 (BFH). A **Winter Wren** was seen at Salt Springs Species 9/26 (WR). A **Marsh Wren** was heard at Lewis Corners 7/17 (BFH). Two **Swainson's** and 1 **Gray-cheeked** thrush were at Montrose 9/19 (WR).

OBSERVERS: Barb & Frank Haas, William Reid, 73 W. Ross St., Wilkes-Barre 18702 (717-836-2525).

### TIOGA COUNTY

Martha Copp

Two flocks of **Canada Geese** were flying south on the early date 8/21 (MC). Two Canada Geese mated with domestic geese and produced some rather odd-looking offspring in the Brownlee area. Two female **Common Merganser** were in the Babbs Creek area 9/17 (MD). An **Osprey** was observed in the Pine Creek area 9/17 (MD). Three **Bald Eagle**, including 1 imm., were seen along Rt. 15, n. of Tioga (CCW).

Three **Common Snipe**, with 1 imm., were found in the Brownlee area 7/26 (MC,JS). Snipe were only reported in two areas of *Tioga* for the BBAP; the other area was near Millerton. An **E. Phoebe** was singing loudly n. Wellsboro 9/23 (BR). Four colonies of **Purple Martin** with young were found in the Wellsboro area. **Barn Swallow** had left by mid-Aug., which is early for the area. A few **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** were found w. of Wellsboro (MC,JS). **Black-and-white Warbler** were flocking in the Asaph area 8/31 (BR). A flock of about 200 **Common Grackle** were found feeding on beech nuts in Woodland Park, Wellsboro, 9/18 (BR).

OBSERVERS: Cindy Copp-Wilcox, Martha Copp, R.D. 3, Box 197, Wellsboro, 16901 (717-724-7751), Marge Dunlop, Bob Ross, Joanna Stickler.

### UNION COUNTY

Allen Schweinsberg

A delayed report brings word that a pair of **Hooded Merganser**, spotted in mid-June s. of Cowan, may have been nesting (RH). The 2 **Eurasian Jackdaw** still resided at the Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary in Sept. (JP). **Common Raven** were seen in farmland in Aug. (AS) and Sept. LM commented that they were not to be found in the valleys 30 years ago. A **Cedar Waxwing**, barely out of the nest, was seen on the Bucknell campus 8/2 (AS).

LM made a concentrated effort to observe fall warblers the first week of Sept. The most unusual for the season included **Golden-winged** and **Cerulean** warblers at R.B. Winter S.P. and **Pine Warbler** and **N. Parula** on New Berlin Mt. **Magnolia Warbler** was the most widespread. Earlier in the summer, **Nashville Warbler** and **N. Waterthrush** were confirmed nesting in July near White Deer Cr. in the State Forest (RF).

OBSERVERS: Roy Fontaine, Robert Holman, Larry McQueen, John Petery, Allen Schweinsberg, 1200 Zeigler Rd., Lewisburg 17837 (717-524-0432).

### VENANGO COUNTY

Gary Edwards & Russ States

*Locations: Clintonville Pond (CP), Kahle L. (KL), Oil City (OC), Oil Creek SP (OCSP), Two Mile Run L. (TMRL).*

It was a slow and uneventful quarter. Probably part of the reason was the hot and dry summer, but it did rain in time so that the winter food crop is better than might have been hoped. Fall migration was slow and produced few birds. Shorebird sightings were almost nonexistent. And the absence of **Great Crested Flycatchers** should be noted. **Cuckoos**, however were numerous.

The first **Pied-billed Grebe** of the season were at CP and TMRL 9/25. One **Ruddy Duck** was on Shaffer Pond 9/30. Fifteen **Semipalmated Plover** were at HP 9/25 and a **Lesser Yellowlegs** was at CP, also 9/25. **Ruffed Grouse** were heard drumming 9/23 and 9/25 at OCSP. **Broad-winged Hawk** were seen until 9/9 at TMRL.

**Yellow-billed** and **Black-billed** cuckoos remained vocal and common throughout July. The last **Common Nighthawk** in OC were seen 9/1. **Pileated Woodpecker** were common this quarter. Again, there was no sighting of **Red-headed Woodpecker** this period. The **Red-bellied Woodpecker** is becoming a little more common, but most sightings are still in the s. portions. **E. Phoebe** were observed through the end of the quarter, and **E. Wood-Pewee** were last seen at OCSP 9/2. An **Alder Flycatcher** was seen near Clintonville 7/5.

The last **Tree Swallow** were seen at OC 9/5. **Chimney Swift** left on time; the last sighting at OC was 9/19. A **Brown Creeper** was seen 7/10 near Pithole. Wrens seemed a little more numerous this quarter. **House** and **Carolina** wrens were observed in several location in OCSP through 9/30. A **Gray Catbird** was seen in OCSP 9/25. Several small flocks of **E. Bluebird** remained in the OC area through 9/30.

A **Red-eyed Vireo** was found at OCSP 9/25. **Yellow-throated Vireo** were found in s.w. *Venango* 7/9. And a **White-eyed Vireo** was singing in the Rockland area 7/6. A flock of **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was seen near Clintonville 9/25. Several **Golden-winged Warbler** were singing near Pithole 7/10-16. A pair of **Mourning Warbler** was observed feeding a fledgling near Pithole 7/10. The second **Yellow-breasted Chat** found in *Venango* this year was seen in the OC area.

**E. Meadowlark** was observed throughout the quarter in fields in the southern portion. A female **Scarlet Tanager** was seen near Clintonville 9/25. **Dark-eyed Junco** were found in several more locations in the northern portion during the breeding season. First **White-throated Sparrow** was seen in OCSP 9/23.

OBSERVERS: Gary Edwards, 450 Stevens Dr., Apt. 304, Pittsburgh 15237 (412-931-4379), Russ States, 24 E. 5th St., Oil City 16301 (814-676-6320).

The following was received too late for the last issue.

*Locations: Allegheny R., Hovis Pond (HP), Kahle L. (KL), Oil City (OC), Oil Creek SP (OCSP), Two Mile Run L. (TMRL).*

Only 1 **Common Loon**, KL 4/23, was reported. **Pied-billed Grebe** were present until 4/24 in several locations. **Great Blue Heron** were found on nest by 5/27. Eight **Blue-winged Teal** were seen at TMRL 4/18-24. Fifteen **Bufflehead** were at TMRL 4/25 and 2 **Ruddy Duck** were at HP 4/18. **Osprey** were common from 4/23-27 in several locations each day. A **N. Harrier** was seen on strip-mined fields 4/10 in s. *Venango*.

Hovis Pond provided our only reliable shorebird spot this quarter. Sightings included: **Semipalmated Plover** 5/8, **Greater Yellowlegs** 4/18-25, **Lesser Yellowlegs** 4/23, **Spotted Sandpiper**, **Solitary Sandpiper** 5/8 (also observed at Shaffer Pond 5/9), **Pectoral Sandpiper** 4/18-23, and **Common Snipe** 4/23. **Ring-billed Gull** were observed on four occasions from 4/23 to 5/9 and **Bonaparte's Gull** at TMRL 4/18 and 4/24. Terns were seen for the first time in several years. Five **Common Tern** were on the river and 1 **Forster's Tern** was at HP, both 4/24. The latter is believed to be the 1st county record.

Cuckoos were very numerous. In the past they were hard to find, but this year they were vocal and fairly easy to spot, with the **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** the more common and even singing at night. **Common Nighthawk** were first seen in OC 5/11. Woodpeckers were found in good numbers, especially the **Pileated**, which seemed more numerous than usual. This is the second year that no **Red-headed Woodpecker** was seen, the **Red-bellied Woodpecker**, though still far from common in *Venango*, are being reported more often.

Flycatchers, on the other hand, were very scarce. There are only two reports of **Great Crested Flycatcher** for the whole quarter! (NK,GE,RS). **E. Kingbird** are only slightly more numerous, and even **E. Phoebe** numbers are down. Only **E. Wood-Pewee** seemed common. On a more positive note, however, **Alder Flycatcher** has been added to two more blocks for the BBAP (bringing the total number of blocks to three).

**Horned Lark** were again found in only the southernmost portions. **Chimney Swift** arrived 4/23. Our 1st June record, 6/27, of a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was near Sunville. **Carolina Wren** were singing 6/26. **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** were around until 4/24 and a singing **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was seen near Sunville 6/27. Vireo reports include the **Red-eyed Vireo**, a **Warbling Vireo** near Sunville 6/2 (these vireos seem to be present only in the n.w. corner), a **Philadelphia Vireo** at OCSF 5/14, as well as good numbers of **Solitary** and **Yellow-throated** vireos.

While warblers were in small numbers in migration, they did show a very good variety. There were 29 species observed, with three found in April (**Yellow-rumped**, **Pine**, and **Nashville**). The best May find was an **Orange-crowned Warbler** at OCSF 5/9. Absent this year was the **Kentucky Warbler**, though it was looked for in locations where they had been found in previous years.

**Vesper Sparrow** were first seen 4/25 and **Henslow's Sparrow** 4/23, both in the s. portions. **Grasshopper Sparrow** were found 6/20 in mid-Venango County, Oil City, for the 1st time. **Pine Siskin** were found until 4/26, though only 10-12 at a time rather than the 200-300 previously seen. **Evening Grosbeak** were seen through 4/24, though they were in small numbers.

OBSERVERS: Gary Edwards, 450 Stevens Dr., Apt. 304, Pittsburgh 15237 (412-931-4379), Nick Kerlin, Russ States, 24 E. 5th St., Oil City 16301 (814-676-6320).

#### WARREN COUNTY

Ted Grisez

Locations: *Allegheny Res. (AR), Kinzua Dam (KD).*

A **Common Loon** was on the AR 7/1 (KC). There were 4 **Double-crested Cormorant** on the Allegheny R. at Starbrick, just w. of Warren, 7/2 (MB). Bleech said he had heard reports of them there all summer, but this was the first time he saw them. Also, 6 were there 7/28 (DAD). About 45 **Common Merganser** were in Sugar Bay and 25 were in Hodge Bay on the AR in Aug. (JS). And a flock of 90 was at Tidioute 9/9, no doubt females and young of the year raised locally (JK).

Some interesting banding information to report: 1) A female **Am. Kestrel**, banded by Grisez and Watts near Lander as a nestling 6/21/86, was trapped and released by William Symonds at Hamlin, NY, 1/16/88. This was 115 mi. northeast, and 2) A **House Finch** banded as a hatching-year bird near Elton, NY, by D. F. Clark on 7/14/86 was caught at Warren, 55 mi s.w., by Grisez 4/18/87.

An estimated 50 **Turkey Vulture** were along the hills bordering the Allegheny R. w. of Warren 8/14 (GB). One **Osprey** was at Tidioute 9/20 (NTG) and 1 was on the AR 9/10-11 (KC). An ad. **Bald Eagle** was seen along the river between Warren and the KD 8/8 (KC) and an imm. was observed over Warren 9/10 (RB). A **N. Harrier** was observed in a tornado swath e. of Warren 8/18 (DW). Another was found 8/21 near the Jct. of Yankee Bush Rd. and Irvine Run Rd, n.w. of Warren, the general area where they have been seen before. Two **N. Harrier** were near Lander 9/5 (KC). One **Stilt Sandpiper** was found feeding with some **Solitary Sandpiper** in a drained 10-acre pond in Lander 9/7 (JM).

There has been a **E. Screech-Owl** at the Putnam's home in N. Warren most of Sept., and 1 was reported at Warren 9/28 (RL). A **Carolina Wren** was at the Palmer residence on Hatch Run near N. Warren 7/27 for their first record. Twelve of the 36 bluebird houses monitored by Highhouse were occupied by **E. Bluebird** for both first and second nesting. One **White-eyed Vireo** was found at Saybrook 7/8-9 (MN). Two **Palm Warbler** were at Akeley Swamp 9/19 (TG).

OBSERVERS: Mike Bleech, Ralph Brown, Greg Burkett, Keith Confer, Dan and Autumn Doherty, Nancy and Ted Grisez, 8 Belmont Dr., Warren 16365 (814-723-9464), Bill Highhouse, Jim King, Rick Lyle, Jerry McWilliams, Marjorie Neel, Jan Palmer, Chase Putnam, John Schultz, Don Watts.

#### WESTMORELAND COUNTY

Robert C. Leberman & Robert S. Mulvihill

Locations: *Donegal Lake (DL), Latrobe Res. (LR), Linn Run SP (LRSP), Powdermill Nature Reserve (PNR).*

The following observations are by both compilers unless otherwise indicated.

CORMORANTS TO SANDPIPERS. A rare bird in this region, a **Double-crested Cormorant**, was seen at LR 9/26 (RCL). Surprising was a **Least Bittern** at PNR from 7/7-8; too early to be a migrant, but certainly not nesting at PNR or anywhere nearby, this bird was probably a stray displaced by this summer's drought. A somewhat early **Sora** was seen at DL 8/14 (MEW). The bird of the season, not just for this county but for all of western PA, is the **Clapper Rail** found dead near Latrobe in late Aug.! Details of this unique area record will be published later. The area's best shorebird record was a **Black-bellied Plover** at DL 9/15 (MEW). First **Solitary Sandpiper** was at PNR on the very early date 7/7; first **Lesser Yellowlegs** was at DL 7/19 (also an early arrival for *Westmoreland*). Our first **Pectoral Sandpiper** was also at DL 7/19 (an average arrival). Six **Short-billed Dowitcher** at DL 7/20 constituted one of just a few records of the species in the county. An **Upland Sandpiper** was a good find at LR 9/15 (MEW).

CUCKOOS TO WRENS. Like last year, both cuckoo species (and particularly the **Yellow-billed**) were seen, heard and banded in above average numbers; there was a noticeable increase in the number of gypsy moths in much of the county. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** staged another very good flight at PNR (142 banded), notwithstanding the fact that many hummingbird feeder watchers believed there were many fewer than usual (could it be that hummingbirds are simply becoming more widely distributed among the ever-growing number of feeders?). **N. Flicker** were more abundant in late Sept. at PNR than they have been in many years; as many as 30 could be flushed from berry thickets at the Reserve on several of the last few days of this quarter. An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was seen at PNR 9/10 and 1 was banded 9/24. **E. Wood-Pewee** were caught in below average numbers, but the *Empidonax* flycatchers and **E. Phoebe** were all banded in about average numbers. A single **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was banded 9/21, and a few others were observed in the area during the last week of the quarter. **Carolina Wren** were common throughout; they have not been so numerous locally since 1975 (just prior to the very severe winter of 1976). We banded our first **Winter Wren** on the somewhat early date 9/8, and we banded an unusually high total of 10 before quarter's end. We banded a single **Marsh Wren**, a regionally uncommon bird, 9/20.

KINGLETS TO VIREOS. In an above average flight based on PNR banding totals, 61 **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** were banded between their 9/15 arrival and 9/30. Our total of 17 **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** indicates an above average flight for this species as well. Banding totals indicate a below average flight of **Wood and Swainson's** thrushes and a just average flight for **Veery** and **Gray-cheeked Thrush**. We recorded our first **Hermit Thrush** 9/27. Evidence that the **White-eyed Vireo** continues to expand its range northward, as well as increase locally as a breeding bird, is provided by our above average late Summer and Fall totals. Although common as a nesting bird atop Laurel Hill, a **Solitary Vireo** caught at PNR 8/19 was early. With 37 banded after a 9/7 arrival, **Philadelphia Vireo** staged a much better than average flight. Our total of 177 **Red-eyed Vireo**, however, is just average at best.

WARBLERS TO TANAGERS. Based on PNR banding totals the following warblers had good to very good flights: **Nashville**, **Yellow**, **Black-throated Blue**, **Cerulean**, **Ovenbird**, **Hooded**, and **Louisiana Waterthrush**. A longer list of warblers had apparently below average flights: **Tennessee**, **Chestnut-sided**, **Magnolia**, **Cape May**, **Black-throated Green** (only 13, compared to about 80 in each of the previous two years), **Blackburnian**, **Bay-breasted**, **Canada**, and **N. Waterthrush**. An early Bay-breasted Warbler was seen at LRSP 8/18 (JTG). With just 39 banded, **Scarlet Tanager** had an apparently very

poor flight through PNR.

DICKCISSEL TO FINCHES. **Dickcissel** were discovered at still more localities in July, following their general invasion from mid- to late-June. Nesting was confirmed at one site locally (for more details see the article by RSM in this issue). During field work for the BBAP, we found **Henslow's Sparrow** at several new locations in the e. half of the county, but many fewer birds than usual were found in a usually large (10+ pairs) colony at PNR. After a 9/10 arrival, 28 **Lincoln's Sparrow** were banded (above average). A very early arrival of **White-crowned Sparrow** 9/18 foreshadowed an unusually large presence of this species during the next quarter. **House Finch** continue to increase locally at a surprising rate; 271 were banded during the quarter, exceeding all our annual totals for the species prior to 1987.

OBSERVERS: Jim and Trish Gruber, Robert C. Leberman and Robert S. Mulvihill, Powdermill Nature Reserve, Star Route South, Rector 15677 (412-593-7521), Willis & Mary Miller, Mike and Evaleen Watko.

## WYOMING COUNTY

### Bill Reid

Please refer to the introductory remarks in *Bradford*.

*Locations: Stevens L. (SL), Tunkhannock (TNK), White's Ferry (WF).*

An imm. **Little Blue Heron** seen at WF 8/11 (WR) may be the 1st county record. A resident reported 2 female **Hooded Merganser** at WF (along with **Common Merganser**) throughout the summer; and there is an as yet unconfirmed report that young were seen there in July. Twenty-seven Common Merganser were seen near TNK 7/2 (WR). Two **Bald Eagle** were reported in the Laceyville area 8/20 (JJ, JM). An imm. **Virginia Rail** was seen near TNK 8/2 (WR).

When the river levels rise, as they did in mid-Sept., most of the favorable shorebird sites along the Susquehanna R. are inundated, and migrating shorebirds must either pass over the area or find appropriate feeding areas away from the river. One such place this year was SL, n. of TNK, where the Fish Commission lowered the water level of the lake, exposing considerable mudflats. A **Western Sandpiper** was there 9/19; 3 **Pectoral Sandpiper** 9/19 and 6 on 9/23; and 2 **Stilt Sandpiper** were there 9/14-15 (WR).

**Whip-poor-will** seem to be making a comeback in w. *Wyoming* (SC, DG). On 7/29, Reid watched a territorial **Olive-sided Flycatcher** near Mehoopany (2300 ft elevation) for 45 minutes, a location where the bird was also seen in 1987. A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was seen at S. Eaton 9/2 (WR). On 8/5, near TNK, WR noted an *Empidonax* flycatcher which was not calling, but which was in habitat suitable for **Alder Flycatcher**. When he played **Acadian** and **Least** flycatcher recordings there was no response; but when he played the **Willow** call, the bird responded with the **Alder** call; and it continued to respond with the same call when the **Alder** call was played.

**Fish Crow** was confirmed as nesting at WF, the first confirmed record of the species that far up the river (WR). A colony of at least 10 pairs of **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was in a large stand of red spruce and hemlock in SGL #57 (DG). A **Kentucky Warbler** was present near Lemon in July. **Canada Warbler** and **White-throated Sparrow** were common in brushy wetlands of SGL #57 (SC, DG). The **Henslow's Sparrow**, which had been reported last quarter were confirmed breeding near Tunkhannock (WR).

OBSERVER: Skip Conant, Doug Gross, John Jakoby, John Meglish, William Reid, 73 W. Ross St., Wilkes-Barre 18702 (717-836-2525).

The following was received too late for inclusion in the last issue.

Several **Whip-poor-will** were seen and heard in SGL #57, vocally competing with howling coyotes in the twilight 5/24 (DG). One pair was watched in courtship flight and copulation. Whip-poor-will also seem to be making a comeback near Schmitthenner L. (SC). **Alder Flycatcher** were confirmed at the headwaters of South Brook (DG). Apparently Alders have been in this general area since the late 40's (ER). Several **Winter Wren** were found in the glens of SGL #57 to the delight of ridge-running atlasers (SC, DG). At least 7 of these diminutive singers were heard in each of two nearby hollows. **Golden-crowned Kinglet** were singing in red spruce-eastern hemlock stands of SGL #57 (SC, JG, DG).

**Nashville Warbler** seemed to hold its own in isolated areas e. of Lopez (SC) where it has been reported since 1948 (ER). Breeding **Magnolia** and **Myrtle** warblers were also found in native conifer stands of SGL #57 (SC, JG, DG). DG found **Canada Warbler** to be one of the most common breeders in the brushy second-growth woods in SGL #57 n. of Ricketts Glen.

**White-throated Sparrow** were fairly common breeders in the wet meadows and brushy wet woods of #SGL 57 (DG) and in moist woods e. of Lopez (SC, ER). Although a declined species in our area, **Purple Finch** is fairly common near Schmitthenner L. (SC), and was found by atlasers in SGL #57 (DG) and near Coalbed Swamp (DG, SC, JL, TR).

OBSERVERS: Skip Conant, John Ginaven, Doug Gross, Jim Lockyer, Tom Reeves, Edward Reimann.

## YORK COUNTY

### Al Spiese

*Locations: Brunners I. (BI), Codorus SP (CSP), Collinsville (CVL), Gut Rd. (GR), Long Arm Dam (LAD), Marsh Run (MR), Reservoir Hill (RH), Rocky Ridge County Park (RRCP), Sheppard Myers Dam (SMD), Spring Grove (SG), Susquehanna R. at Washington Boro (SRWB).*

July and Aug. were extremely hot and dry. Sept. saw an unusual number of days with winds from the N and NW.

LOON TO DUCKS. Six imm. **Common Loon** remained at CSP all summer and were last seen 9/26 (RR). Three **Pied-billed Grebe** were at CSP 8/19 to 9/28, but they are usually sighted somewhere in the county during the summer (KL, RR). Long-legged wader reports were interesting and include: 20 **Snowy Egret** at BI 8/10 (AS); 1 **Little Blue Heron** at SRWB 8/3 (JD, BDG, DH) and 1 at SMD 8/8 (AS) were the only reports; 1 **Tricolored Heron** at SRWB 8/31 (DH, BDG, JD); 4 **Green-backed Heron** at CSP 9/28 (late); 1 imm. **White Ibis** at SRWB 8/31 (DH, BDG, JD). **Am. Black Duck** nested at SG and the 8 seen there were in molt and could not fly. The 30 **Blue-winged Teal** at CSP 8/9 were an early migrant record (RR).

RAPTORS TO DOVES. Fifteen **Black Vulture** were seen circling Muddy Cr. Ford 7/25 (AS). The preliminary report from the hawk watch at RRCP is encouraging. The first **Bald Eagle** was seen 8/9 (JED), with a total of 4 in Sept. One **Merlin** was seen 8/15.

On 9/19 I arrived at the Rocky Ridge County Park hawk watch at 8:45 a.m. The wind from the ENE never exceed 5 mph all day. Soon the Broad-winged Hawks started coming. James Beath joined me and by noon we had counted 553 bird. He had to leave then, but over the parking lot he found a kettle of 205 individuals. From noon until 2 p.m. there were only 14 more, but then they started coming again. By 2:15 a kettle formed nearly overhead and as they departed I counted 1160. Dennis Weaver from Mt. Joy arrived and took a position about 400 ft from me. At 3:30 he spotted a kettle to the NW out over the valley and by the time we counted them, a large kettle, once again, formed nearly overhead. By 3:50 we had tallied another 1226. We left for the day with a total of 3158 birds. Our total for September was 4820. Al Speise.

One imm. **Sora** was seen walking around on dried up mud flats at MR 7/4 (SS). Only 3-4 imm. **Common Moorhen** were found at SG, indicating a decrease from previous years (BW). The 2 **Am. Coot** at CSP 8/6 to 9/28 were a rare summer record (RR). A **Black-bellied Plover** at CSP 8/14 was only two days later than our earliest record (KL). One **Semipalmated Plover** was at SRWB 8/3 (AS, *et al.*). All tern reports were from SRWB. There were some 25 **Caspian Tern** found 8/31 (JD, BDG, DH). **Forster's Tern** reports includes 1 on 8/3 and about 25 on 8/31 (JD, BDG, DH). An estimated 200 **Mourning Dove** were in one mowed field in Krentz Cr. Valley.

OWLS TO FINCHES. Two **Common Barn-Owl** were near Lewisberry 7/5 and two days later 3 recently fledged young were seen (DH, JD). Two **Barred Owl** were calling at SGL #242 (MS). The **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** seen at CSP 9/13 was a local late date (RR). An **Alder Flycatcher** was singing at Indian Rock Dam on SGL #446 on 7/22 (AS).

All **Purple Martin** boxes from the previous two years were occupied and a few new locations were reported. The est. 1700 **N. Rough-winged Swallow** seen on wires about 1/2 mi w. of Long Level 8/1 and another 1000 on the river 8/19 were good size concentrations (AS). **Cliff Swallow** were found in three locations, at CSP (RR), Marsh Run (AS), and Wrightsville bridge (JD). Two **Winter Wren** found at 9/29 were seen for three days (AS). A singing **Marsh Wren** at MR was in a historic location (SS). The **10 Golden-crowned Kinglet** at RH 9/28 was a good number (BDG,JD). A complete albino **Am. Robin** was seen all summer through 9/12 on Druck Valley Rd. The **Philadelphia Vireo** seen at CSP 8/31 was rare (DHe).

**Nashville Warbler** is a locally uncommon migrant, so the ad. male seen 9/26 along GR was a good find (AS). A **Yellow Warbler** was found at LAD 9/12 (RR). Other late dates include 2 **Ovenbird** 9/28 and 1 **N. Waterthrush** 9/5 at CSP (RR). Some 20 **Indigo Bunting** were found on GR 9/29 in a weedy field with plenty of seed plants. None showed any blue (AS).

The final report of our field near Collinsville was impressive. It had been discovered by Bill Del Grande while doing Atlas work. Many birders came to visit and gave data to us. They included Jack Downs, Barb and Frank Haas, Dick Humbert, Harold Morris, Russell Ryan, and Al Spiese. Bob Mitchell contributed some excellent photographs of the Dickcissel. The final list was: 1 N. Bobwhite; 5-6 pairs of Dickcissel plus several with young; several Vesper Sparrow, including some feeding young; 4 Savannah Sparrow; some 25 Grasshopper Sparrow, including many feeding young; about 12 Bobolink, including a possible family feeding young; and 1 E. Meadowlark.

**Vesper and Grasshopper** sparrows were found at several other locations near CVL.



*Dickcissel, York County, 7/9/88. Photo by Bob Mitchell.*

OBSERVERS: Bill Del Grande, Jerry E. Dyer, Jack Downs, Dan Heathcote (DHe), Dick Humbert, Karen Lippy, Russell Ryan, Mike Sankovich, Al Spiese, 4086 Old Orchard Rd., York 17402 (717-755-8309), Stanley Stahl, Bill Welsh.