

PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS



Volume 36, No. 1
Dec 2021 - Feb 2022
Issued July 2022





PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS

Journal of the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology

Volume 36 Number 1 December 2021 -
February 2022

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Cover: **Glaucous-winged Gull** at Nockamixon SP, *Bucks* 20-26 (here 26) February. See page 18. (Kevin Fox)

Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology – 2022 annual meeting at Middle Creek

PSO will have a “live” annual meeting September 16-18, 2022 at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area in *Lancaster/Lebanon*. This will be a “hybrid” meeting – birders will have the option of attending events, including field trips, in person or seeing talks via Zoom. Scott Weidensaul will present, via internet, a keynote address in late afternoon. Prior to Scott, there will be three other presentations, again available via link to those who choose not to attend in person.

Registration is open via the PSO website; additional details are there as well, including the link to the recent issue of our newsletter, *The Pileated*, which contains descriptions of the field trips.

<https://pabirds.org/index.php>

Two new birds for Pennsylvania, one new species

Our cover photo is of a **Glaucous-winged Gull**, found and tentatively identified first in February in *Montgomery*, and then re-found and seen by many birders in *Bucks*. See the article by Dave DeReamus on page 17.

In January, a very unexpected swan turned up in *Lancaster*. Seen in the photo on this page, this bird apparently represents the first state record of a **Bewick’s Swan**, a Eurasian sub-species of Tundra Swan that on rare occasion has been found on the Pacific coast. Both of these records are still pending until evaluated by PORC.

Compiler news

With this issue, we welcome three new compilers. In *Armstrong*, **Jim Kellam** takes over for Marjorie Van Tassel. **Ellen Davis** is the new compiler for *Carbon* and **Andrew Hurst** in *Union*, both counties that have had no compiler recently.

The following counties need a compiler: *Bradford, McKean*, and *Perry*. Contact the editor if interested.

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



Bewick’s Tundra Swan, a Eurasian subspecies rarely found in North America, was at Middle Creek WMA, Lancaster 23 January -18 (here 15) February, likely a first state record. (Dave Brooke)

PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS (ISSN 0898-8501) is published four times per year by The Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology. Editorial and business offices are located at 2469 Hammertown Road, Narvon, PA 17555. Subscriptions, all in US\$: One year U.S.A \$30, Canada \$48, Foreign \$62. Library rate \$33. Single copies: \$9. Checks and money orders in U.S. dollars only should be made payable to PSO. Copyright © 2021 by the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology. **PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT EPHRATA, PA 17522 and additional entry offices.**
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to PSO, 2469 Hammertown Road, Narvon, PA 17555.

The 2021-2022 Christmas Bird Count in Pennsylvania

Nick Bolgiano

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was held for the 122nd time 14 December 2021 to 5 January 5 2022. (When I refer below to a single year, it is the one in which Christmas occurred.)

Eighty-one sites reported, a new high for Pennsylvania and one more than the previous high in 2019. New sites were Buchanan Trail, straddling Fulton and Franklin counties with Vern Gauthier compiling, and Potter County, with David Hauber compiling. Compared to 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic interrupted some counts, Southern Lancaster County and Washington resumed reporting, but Southeastern Bradford County did not. The 5867 party-hours was the 4th highest total historically, the 989 feeder-watch hours returned to the long-term average after a 50% increase during the first Covid-19 pandemic year, and the 296 nocturnal hours were about average.

The most popular dates were the first Saturday, 18 December, with 33 counts conducted; the next day, 19 Dec, with 14 counts; 2 January, with nine counts; and 26 December, with seven counts. Precipitation was reported for 30 of the 34 counts conducted on 18 December but reported as heavy only at Buffalo Creek Valley and Butler County.

The statewide total of count-day species was 160, which is several below average and six fewer than the previous year. Four additional species were reported during count week. **Pink-footed Goose** at Lehigh Valley and **California Gull** at Southern Bucks County were new species for the Pennsylvania CBC.

This CBC period continued a trend of many hardier birds staying to the north and many less hardy birds lingering. Seventeen species set new statewide high tallies for the Pennsylvania CBC: **Ring-necked Duck**, **Hooded Merganser**, **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, **Black Vulture**, **Turkey Vulture**, **Golden Eagle**, **Bald Eagle**, **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, **Red-bellied Woodpecker**, **Peregrine Falcon**, **Common Raven**, **Hermit Thrush**, **Chipping Sparrow**, **White-throated Sparrow**, **Eastern Towhee**, **Orange-crowned Warbler**, and **Pine Warbler**. Many of these species have been increasing in recent years, while others lingered in high numbers.

Species Numbers. Upper Bucks County was the top site for species number for the first time as the sole leader, with 102 species (Upper Bucks County tied for the top site in 2002). Southern Bucks County was second with 98 species and Lititz was third with 95.

The following table shows the top 10 list and Figure 1 shows a map of site species totals.

Top 10 Sites for Species Number

1. Upper Bucks County	102
2. Southern Bucks County	98
3. Lititz	95
4. Western Chester County	93
5. Delaware County	92
T6. Harrisburg	88
T6. Lancaster	88
T8. Central Bucks County	87
T8. Elverson	87
T8. Lehigh Valley	87

Hits and Misses. A “hit” is an unlikely species found in 2021, while a “miss” is an expected species not found (“unlikely” is assessed as being recorded in less than 40% of the previous 25 years, while “expected” is assessed as being recorded in more than 60% of those years). There were ten hits (low) and four misses (average).

Hits

Pink-footed Goose	Tree Swallow
Purple Sandpiper	Barn Swallow
California Gull	Wood Thrush
American Bittern	Clay-colored Sparrow
Broad-winged Hawk	Audubon’s Warbler

Misses

Rufous Hummingbird	Northern Goshawk
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Common Redpoll

Species Details. A total of 128,000 **Snow Geese** were reported from 18 sites, with all but one bird from the southeast, and included 117,000 at Bethlehem-Easton and 7000 at Wild Creek-Little Gap. While this is fewer than the 242,000-253,000 Snow Geese of the previous two years, it still was a top 10 count for the statewide CBC. **Ross’s Goose** was at Bethlehem-Easton, Pittsburgh, Southern Bucks County (2), and Upper Bucks County. **Greater White-fronted Goose** was at five southeastern sites and Bushy Run State Park. **Pink-footed Goose** at Lehigh Valley was a new species for the state CBC. **Barnacle Goose** was a count week species at West Chester.

The 41 **Cackling Geese** from nine southeastern sites plus Dallas Area and Tunkhannock tied for 2nd highest among statewide CBC totals, while the 19 Cackling Geese at Southern Bucks County was a new individual site high. The 142,000 **Canada Geese** was consistent with the levels of the previous seven years, but fewer than the average of 195,000 Canada Geese reported during the 1998-2013 peak period. The 390

Tundra Swans was on the low end of normal, which has become more common.

Observations of the more common puddle ducks gave mixed results. The 934 **Gadwalls** was the 3rd highest total in the Pennsylvania CBC. Wintering Gadwalls have been generally increasing in Pennsylvania since the mid-1960s, although not consistently every year. The 418 Gadwalls at Linesville was a new individual site high. The 16,246 **Mallards** and 1434 **American Black Ducks** were among the higher duck totals, but continued long-term declines.

Three diving duck species were reported in excellent numbers. The 1501 **Ring-necked Ducks** was a new high for the state CBC. They have been increasing since the 1970s, although not consistently every year. The 1213 **Buffleheads** was the 3rd highest total in the Pennsylvania CBC. The 2733 **Hooded Mergansers** was also a new high by a large margin and the 1175 Hooded Mergansers at Linesville was a new individual site high. Hooded Mergansers have been increasing since the 1980s. The distributions of these three species are shown in Figure 2. They were common at western lake sites, especially Bufflehead and Hooded Merganser at Linesville, on or near the Susquehanna River, and at sites near Philadelphia.

Three diving duck species that are sometimes reported in healthy numbers were scarce this CBC season. The third consecutive year of **Canvasbacks** being tallied in single digits is the culmination of a long decline since the 1980s. While **Redheads** have been experiencing a mini resurgence in recent years, that didn’t happen this CBC period, as only 16 were reported. There were also few **Greater Scaups**, with 19 total.

Four **Surf Scoters** were at Erie, and one at Rector. All five **White-winged Scoters** and all three **Black Scoters** were also at Erie.

While the 33 **Ruffed Grouse** was slightly higher than the 22 tallied in 2020, it ranked as the 2nd lowest Pennsylvania total since 1951, evidence of their difficulty in rebounding from West Nile Virus (WNV). The tally of 2934 **Wild Turkeys** was similar to those of the previous two years, but lower than the 3732 averaged during 2000-2017. The 709 Wild Turkeys at Pittsburgh was a new individual site high.

Only six **Horned Grebes** were reported, the 3rd consecutive year with low numbers, after an average of 46 during 2011-2018. **Red-necked Grebe** was missed entirely, but this happens about half the years. **Eurasian Collared-Dove** at Chambersburg was a count-week species. **Rufous Hummingbird** was also missed, as it was during two of the previous four years,

after being present seven straight years (2011-2016).

The only four **Virginia Rails** were at West Chester. The 305 **Sandhill Cranes** was the 3rd highest Pennsylvania tally and continued the high levels attained in the previous five years, which coincides with Grove City being a CBC site. High counts included 160 at Grove City, 137 at Linesville, and eight at Butler County. The 142 **Killdeer** was a rebound from the 54 and 66 of the previous two years but was lower than the 300-500 that are sometimes reported. **Purple Sandpiper** was a good find in Erie, where it was previously found four times this century and the only times found during the Pennsylvania CBC. **American Woodcock** was at Pocono Mountain and Upper Bucks County.

The high number of wintering gulls in the lower Delaware Valley continued to be a highlight of the state's wintering avifauna. The 880 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** was a new statewide CBC high and included 542 at Upper Bucks County, 249 at Southern Bucks County, 74 at Central Bucks County, six at Bethlehem-Easton, and nine elsewhere. The highest concentration has moved northward from Southern Bucks County to Upper Bucks County and the latter site's 542 Lesser Black-backed Gulls was a new individual site high. Across North America, the Upper Bucks County total ranked 2nd among CBC sites, behind Cape Hatteras, NC. The 37,000 **Herring Gulls** at Southern Bucks County continued to lead all North American CBC sites by a large margin. However, the 225 **Great Black-backed Gulls** reported statewide were the fewest since 1971. The peak Great Black-backed Gull total of 16,663 occurred in 2004 and their Pennsylvania wintering numbers have steadily declined since 2013.

Among uncommon gulls, **California Gull** at Southern Bucks County was a new species for the state CBC. Ten of the 11 **Iceland Gulls** were at Southern Bucks County, the other being at Elverson. The only **Glaucous Gull** was at Erie. This was the fewest Glaucous Gulls in the statewide CBC since 2001 (also one) and the first miss at Southern Bucks County since 2009.

The only two **Red-throated Loons** were at Erie. The eight **Great Cormorants** were the fewest since 2009 and included seven at Southern Bucks County and one at Pennypack Valley. **American Bittern** was at Curtin, this being only the second of the last 14 years where one was seen during the state CBC. The 938 **Great Blue Herons** was the highest tally since 2012. **Great Egret** was at West Chester. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was missed for the eighth time in the last ten years after being reported annually 1949-1993.

The 3215 **Black Vultures** and 5563 **Turkey Vultures** were new statewide highs and continued gradual increases that began in the mid-1970s. The 527 Black Vultures at Southern Lancaster County was a new

individual site high. **Osprey**, typically seen annually, was at Western Chester County. The 17 **Golden Eagles** was five more than the previous high from 2017, in part because a robust late flight of Golden Eagles overlapped with the CBC period. Four Golden Eagles were tallied at both Emporium and Hamburg and three at State College.

Accipiter numbers continued their previously observed dynamics, which may be related to WNV effects (Bolgiano 2022). The 172 **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, while not quite as low as the 168 counted in 2019, was consistent with a continued decline in this century. The 471 **Cooper's Hawks**, while many fewer than 2020's record 576, was consistent with a gradual leveling off after several decades of increasing. The 31 Cooper's Hawks at Delaware County was a new individual site high. **Northern Goshawk** was missed for the first time since 1965 and continued a declining trend since WNV arrived here in 2000.

The 1052 **Bald Eagles** blew past the previous high of 865 from 2019, with high counts of 130 at Southern Bucks County (a new individual site high), 91 at Southern Lancaster County, and 76 at Lititz. The 240 **Red-shouldered Hawks** was the 2nd highest in the state CBC, though many fewer than the 350 in 2020. The first **Broad-winged Hawk** seen in the state CBC since 2006 was at Southern Lancaster County and followed several late fall occurrences. The 2728 **Red-tailed Hawks** were the fewest since 2000, continuing their recent trend where more appear to be staying farther north. The 10 **Rough-legged Hawks** were the fewest since 1962 and provided the low point in a long decline.

Central Bucks County was the top owling site, followed by Lititz and Hamburg. The top 10 list is below. It was a relatively down year for owls.

Top 10 Sites for Owls

	Barn	EScr	GH	Barr	LE	SE	NSW	Sum
1. Central Bucks County	0	57	8	0	1	0	0	66
2. Lititz	0	44	8	0	1	1	2	56
3. Hamburg	0	35	11	3	0	0	3	52
4. Upper Bucks County	0	43	3	2	0	0	1	49
5. West Chester	0	36	6	4	0	0	0	46
6. Juniata County-Lewistown	4	26	10	1	3	0	0	44
7. Elverson	0	34	7	0	0	0	0	41
T8. Pittsburgh	0	13	19	0	0	0	0	32
T8. Reading	0	24	8	0	0	0	0	32
9. Delaware County	0	20	8	0	0	0	2	30

Four **Barn Owls** were found in Juniata County-Lewistown and one at Southern Lancaster County. After a one-year bump in numbers (to 384 birds in 2020), the 265 **Great Horned Owls** was comparable to the levels observed in 2016-2019. The seven **Long-eared Owls** at five sites were the fewest since 1990, while the six **Short-**

eared Owls, with one at each of six sites, were also relatively few.

The annual number of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** reported since 2015 has fluctuated like a rollercoaster. Statewide tallies include 850 in 2017, 281 in 2018, and 963 in 2021, the latter a new statewide high, even after adjusting for effort. Their 2021 distribution is shown in Figure 2, with the highest densities south of the mountains, in the southwest, and at Tunkhannock in the northeast, including 57 at Upper Bucks County, 48 at Harrisburg, 47 at Delaware County, and 46 at Audubon. The total of 71 **Red-headed Woodpeckers** was slightly above the 10-year average of 52 and included 17 at York Springs, 10 at Harrisburg, and six at Gettysburg. It was once routine for Gettysburg to record 20 or more Red-headed Woodpeckers, but this last occurred in 2011. The York Springs site, which began counting in 2012 and whose circle center is 18 miles to the northeast of Gettysburg's, has become the state's leading CBC site for Red-headed Woodpeckers. The 6173 **Red-bellied Woodpeckers** edged out the 6161 tallied in 2019 as a new state high, although the 2017, 2019, and 2021 tallies were all similar when adjusted for effort. As densities have increased, Red-bellied Woodpecker numbers have alternated lower and higher years, likely related to migration out of less favorable wintering habitats when food is low. Year-to-year differences between highs and lows appear to be about 15-25% of the annual total.

The 701 **American Kestrels** was near the 10-year average of 694. The 69 **Merlins** tied for 2nd highest in the Pennsylvania CBC, after 73 were reported the previous year. However, their 25-year expansion in wintering numbers may be starting to level off. Five Merlins were reported at each of Bethlehem-Easton, Pittsburgh, and Southern Bucks County. A year ago, it seemed as if wintering **Peregrine Falcon**

numbers were also leveling off, but a new high count of 50 was reached in 2021, including four each at Bethlehem-Easton, Lancaster, Southern Bucks County, and Williamsport.

The only **Northern Shrike** was at Grove City, matching the low statewide totals of 2014, 2015, and 2020. The peak tallies of up to 27 Shrikes that occurred between 1995 and 2011 have not been

replicated since. The 37,000 **American Crows** were the fewest since 1960, illustrating their difficulty in rebounding from WNV. **Common Ravens** continued to increase; their total of 779 was 45 more than the old record set the previous year.

Among parids, an uptick in **Carolina Chickadee** numbers was seen, but not for **Tufted Titmouse**. The 6656 **Black-capped Chickadees** was more than the 6015 in 2019, but many fewer than the 9790 in 2020. This suggests that many of the Black-capped Chickadees tallied in 2020, perhaps up to one-third, may have been irruptive birds from the north.

The 3348 **Horned Larks** was a relatively low total and compared to 7904 the year before. **Rough-winged Swallow** was found at two locations, with 60 at Pennypack Valley, a typical count there, and 21 at Harrisburg, far more than during the other two years when observed there. Two **Tree Swallows** were at York and **Barn Swallow** was also at Pennypack Valley.

After last year's low number of **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, the 1544 in 2021 was about average. The 507 **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** was the 2nd highest total in the state CBC, even after adjusting for effort (the high count is 555 in 1994). The Ruby-crowned Kinglet distribution is shown in Figure 2, being heavily concentrated in the southeast.

Red-breasted Nuthatch was one of the featured irruption species in 2020, when 596 Red-breasted Nuthatches were tallied at 70 sites. However, the recent CBC's 370 Red-breasted Nuthatches tallied at 73 sites was not as large a drop-off as might be expected. While the forecast was for a small echo flight of Red-breasted Nuthatches (Hoar 2021), the numbers suggest a moderate echo flight.

The 751 **Brown Creepers** was a healthy number, as were the 452 **Winter Wrens**, which have been increasing over the last 40 years. While the 5569 **Carolina Wrens** were fewer than the high count of 7281 from 2019, its numbers remain historically high. Uncommon wrens included **House Wren** at Central Bucks County, Newville, Reading, and Western Chester County and **Marsh Wren** at Lehigh Valley, and a count week observation at West Chester.

Most frugivores were reported in high numbers. **Gray Catbirds** periodically linger in relatively high numbers and the 103 tallied in 2021 qualifies as such. The Gray Catbird distribution is shown in Figure 2, with unexpected clusters in the northwest, southwest, central, and northeast. **Northern Mockingbird** is an exception to the abundant frugivore rule; its recovery has been slow after a 2008-2018 decline that may be related by WNV. After **Eastern Bluebirds** first attained an historically high level in 1999, their numbers have undergone cyclic highs and lows, involving as much as 25% of the

annual total. They appear to be expanding again. **Hermit Thrushes** have set new statewide high records each of the last two years, with tallies of 561 in 2020 and 710 in 2021 (the 10-year average is 306). The Hermit Thrush distribution is shown in Figure 2, clustered in the south-central and southeast. The 46,000 **American Robins** was the 5th highest tally in the Pennsylvania CBC and the 8322 **Cedar Waxwings** was the 9th highest. **Wood Thrush** at Lebanon County was the 12th Pennsylvania CBC report.

The **House Sparrow** decline that began around 1967 continued; the 15,000 House Sparrows were the fewest reported statewide since 1959. The 1072 **American Pipits** was one of Pennsylvania's higher pipit counts, with 383 at Western Chester County, 133 at Lititz, 120 at Lehigh Valley, and 101 at Southern Lancaster County.

After the best winter finch irruption in many years, the winter finch forecast was for a good cone crop on the southern edge of the boreal forest from Lake Superior to Newfoundland and most finches were predicted to irrupt in low numbers to Pennsylvania's latitude (Hoar 2021). This proved to be an accurate forecast.

Eight **Evening Grosbeaks** were reported, all at Clarion, compared to 303 statewide the year before. A total of 338 **Purple Finches** were reported, compared to 542 in 2020. That Purple Finch numbers didn't precipitously drop this season was consistent with Purple Finch numbers having increased in the spruce budworm infested areas of eastern Canada and most being expected to migrate south out of Canada (Hoar 2021). No **Common Redpolls** were reported, except during count week at Northern Lycoming County. The count-day miss of Common Redpoll was only the 2nd (along with 2019) since 1964. The 33 **Red Crossbills** were higher than the 22 the year before, but 22 was not many for an irruption year. The 2021 total included 22 at Benezette, seven at Rector, and four at Mansfield-Wellsboro. The lone **White-winged Crossbill** was at Hamburg; it was also a count week observation at Lancaster. Only 29 **Pine Siskins** were reported, the fewest since 2006.

Only one **Lapland Longspur** was reported, at Bethlehem-Easton, and the 15 **Snow Buntings** were also relatively few. There were eight Snow Buntings at Southern Lancaster County and seven at Grove City.

Sparrows exemplified the recent changes relative to a warming climate. The 248 **Chipping Sparrows** was the second year in a row for a new high for the state CBC (197 were reported in 2020). The 1550 **American Tree Sparrows** was the 2nd lowest tally since 1937, but above the 1358 reported in 2019. The 311 **Fox Sparrows** was the 2nd highest tally in the state CBC, although many of counts conducted before 1970 were much higher when adjusted for

effort. The 38,000 **White-throated Sparrows** and the 701 **Eastern Towhees** both set new statewide highs for the second year in a row. However, when adjusting for effort, there are several earlier years with similar levels for both species.

There has been a remarkable suddenness to recent changes for **Dark-eyed Juncos**, one of our main feeder birds. During the 38-year span 1980-2017, statewide Junco numbers showed a general year-to-year consistency, averaging 89 Juncos/10 party-hr, with occasional highs and lows (Figure 3A). The highest concentrations were in eastern and central valleys, especially at Tamaqua, Lehigh Valley, and Hamburg (Figure 3B). Then, in three of the last four years (2018, 2019, and 2021, the most recent CBC), the Junco average dropped statewide to 51 Juncos/10 party-hr, a level last observed in 1965. Junco densities may have seemed especially low in the west (Figure 3C). In 2020, when there was deep snow at many sites, Junco numbers jumped to 112 Juncos/party-hr, the most in 22 years (Figure 3D).

The uncommon sparrows included **Clay-colored Sparrow** and two **Vesper Sparrows** at Lititz, **Lincoln's Sparrow** at York, and a count week **Oregon Junco** at Gordon Glen Belsano.

The 55 **Eastern Meadowlarks** was the same tally as the year before, slightly above average, and included 13 at Gettysburg and 11 at Lancaster. A single **Baltimore Oriole** was at Southern Bucks County after eight were reported statewide the year before. After two low years, the 79,000 **Common Grackles** was a higher presence, albeit unexceptional by historical standards. Most were recorded in the southeast, with over 26,000 at West Chester being the high count and the 5000 at Juniata County-Lewistown notable for a central site.

With one exception, all warblers reported were of the five most common wintering warblers. The six **Orange-crowned Warblers** was a new high for the state CBC, one more than the previous high from 2016, and included two at Pennypack Valley and one each at Audubon, Delaware County, Pittsburgh, and Upper Bucks County. The 13 **Pine Warblers** was also a new statewide high, exceeding the 10 from 2019, and included six from Southern Bucks County (a new individual site high), two at Audubon, and one each at Bushy Run S.P., Dingman's Ferry, Johnstown, Lebanon County, and Upper Bucks County. **Yellow-rumped Warblers (Myrtle)** have generally been declining in the state CBC since 1999, but the 1131 tallied during the recent CBC was on par with many of the tallies reported during the peak years of 1979-1997. The Yellow-rumped Warbler distribution is shown in Figure 2, being highest in the southern half of the state. The seven **Common Yellowthroats** and six **Palm Warblers** were good, but not extraordinary, numbers. The one warbler

rarity was **Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's)** at Bald Eagle S.P.

A count week **Dickcissel** at Delaware County was the only uncommon member of the Cardinalidae observed.

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Site Abbreviations

AUDU	Audubon	DALL	Dallas Area	LEHI	Lehigh Valley	RYER	Ryerson
BALD	Bald Eagle S.P.	DELA	Delaware County	LWBG	Lewisburg	SCRA	Scranton
BEAV	Beaver	DING	Dingman's Ferry	LINE	Linesville	SBUT	South Butler
BEDF	Bedford County	DUBO	Dubois	LITI	Lititz	SBCK	Southern Bucks Co.
BENE	Benezette	ELVE	Elverson	LOCK	Lock Haven-Jersey Shore	SLAN	Southern Lancaster
BERN	Bernville	EMPO	Emporium	MANS	Mansfield-Wellsboro	STAT	State College
BETH	Bethlehem-Easton	ERIE	Erie	MONT	Montrose Area	TAMA	Tamaqua
BLOO	Bloomsburg	GETT	Gettysburg	NEWB	New Bloomfield	TUNK	Tunkhannock
BUTR	Buchanan Trail	GORD	Gordon Glen Belsano	NEWV	Newville	UBCK	Upper Bucks County
BUCR	Buffalo Creek	GROV	Grove City	NLCO	Northern Lycoming Co.	WARR	Warren
BUFV	Buffalo Creek Valley	HAMB	Hamburg	OHIO	Ohio pyle	WASH	Washington
BUSH	Bushy Run S.P.	HARR	Harrisburg	PECR	Penns Creek	WEST	West Chester
BUTL	Butler County	HUNT	Huntingdon	PENN	Pennypack Valley	WCHE	Western Chester County
CBCK	Central Bucks Co.	IMPE	Imperial	PHIL	Philipsburg	WSCH	Western Schuylkill Co.
CHAM	Chambersburg	INDI	Indiana	PISH	Pittsburgh South Hills	WHIT	White Mills
CLRN	Clarion	JOHN	Johnstown	PITT	Pittsburgh	WILD	Wild Creek-Little Gap
CLRK	Clarksville	JUNI	Juniata County -Lewistown	PLEA	Pleasantville	WILL	Williamsport
COW	Cowanesque Lake	LAKE	Lake Raystown	POCO	Pocono Mountain	WYNC	Wyncote
CULP	Culp	LANC	Lancaster	READ	Reading	YORK	York
CURT	Curtin	LEBA	Lebanon County	RECT	Rector	YOSP	York Springs

Figure 2. Distribution maps for eight species, with symbol sizes proportional to densities.

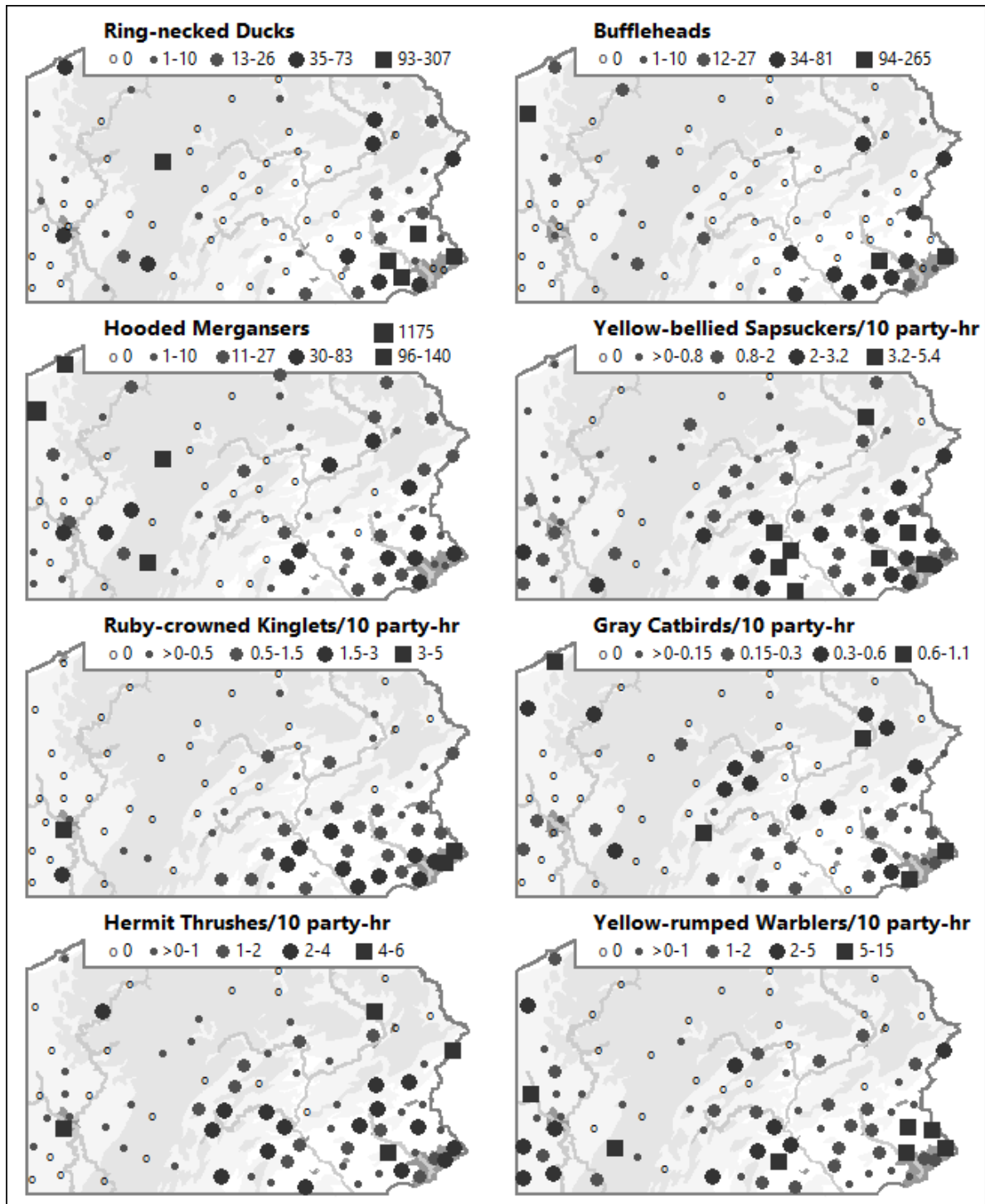
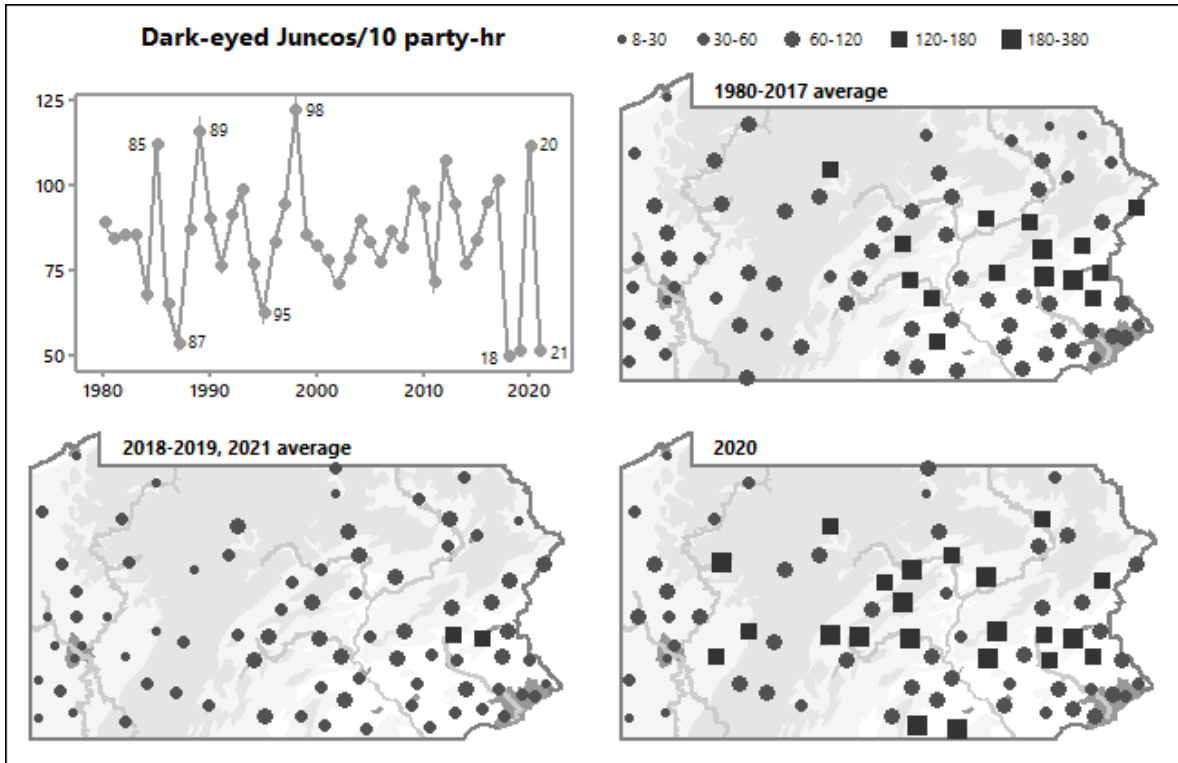


Figure 3. The 1980-2021 Dark-eyed Junco trend with some points labeled by two-digit year values (A) and distribution maps for three time periods (B-D).



SPECIES	TOTAL	10-YR AV	SITES	HIGH	HIGH COUNT	SPECIES	TOTAL	10-YR AV	SITES	HIGH	HIGH COUNT	SPECIES	TOTAL	10-YR AV	SITES	HIGH	HIGH COUNT
Snow Goose	128326	140798	18	116692	BETH	Black Vulture	3215	2297.1	38	527	SLAN	American Robin	46119	22578	79	9396	DELA
Ross's Goose	5	3.5	4	2	SBCK	Turkey Vulture	5563	3658.6	50	556	READ	Cedar Waxwing	8322	3931.8	78	532	PLEA
Greater White-fronted Go	12	6.2	6	4	LEHI	Osprey	1	1.1	1	1	WCHE	House Sparrow	14947	17952	80	727	CHAM
Pink-footed Goose	1	0	1	1	LEHI	Golden Eagle	17	8.5	8	4	EMPO,HAMB	American Pipit	1072	554.5	18	383	WCHE
Cackling Goose	41	30.5	11	19	SBCK	Northern Harrier	149	140.4	45	13	CLRN	Evening Grosbeak	8	55.4	1	8	CLRN
Canada Goose	141600	168543	79	15387	LEHI	Sharp-shinned Hawk	172	245.8	58	10	READ	House Finch	9710	9560.4	79	475	BETH
Mute Swan	213	180.9	32	57	DELA	Cooper's Hawk	471	454.2	74	31	DELA	Purple Finch	338	330.8	48	43	UBCK
Tundra Swan	390	1205.9	13	291	LITI	Bald Eagle	1052	680.8	76	130	SBCK	Red Crossbill	33	17.8	3	22	BENE
Wood Duck	117	72.1	27	22	DELA	Red-shouldered Hawk	240	177.8	54	16	WCHE	White-winged Crossbill	1	75.8	1	1	HAMB
Blue-winged Teal	4	1.2	1	4	DELA	Broad-winged Hawk	1	0	1	1	SLAN	Pine Siskin	29	632.4	8	11	HAMB
Northern Shoveler	370	253.5	12	166	DELA	Red-tailed Hawk	2728	3258.5	81	138	AUDU	American Goldfinch	7955	9581.3	81	325	PITT
Gadwall	934	634.3	26	418	LINE	Rough-legged Hawk	10	21	8	2	COWL,GROV	Lapland Longspur	1	8	1	1	BETH
American Wigeon	102	116.9	20	30	DELA	Bam Owl	5	3.9	2	4	JUNI	Snow Bunting	15	147.5	2	8	SLAN
Mallard	16246	19520.3	78	1152	LITI	Eastern Screech-Owl	601	745.2	56	57	CBCK	Chipping Sparrow	248	94.5	26	33	AUDU,HARR
American Black Duck	1434	2175.3	59	249	LITI	Great Horned Owl	265	335.6	61	19	PITT	Clay-colored Sparrow	1	0.5	1	1	LITI
Northern Pintail	414	150.4	28	284	DELA	Barred Owl	67	63.4	37	6	BUTR	Field Sparrow	593	529.8	59	42	LITI
Green-winged Teal	490	206.1	23	295	DELA	Long-eared Owl	7	13.9	5	3	JUNI	American Tree Sparrow	1550	3550.9	75	179	GROV
Canvasback	3	83.3	1	3	LANC	Short-eared Owl	6	11.8	6	1	6 Sites	Fox Sparrow	311	126.7	37	53	DELA
Redhead	16	192	3	14	BUTL	Northern Saw-whet Owl	24	28.4	13	4	WSCH	Dark-eyed Junco (State-d	29651	45027	81	1356	LEHI
Ring-necked Duck	1501	843.7	40	307	ELVE	Belted Kingfisher	738	559.8	75	33	AUDU	White-crowned Sparrow	681	1021.4	53	78	LEHI
Greater Scaup	19	158.3	3	12	READ	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	963	501.9	72	57	UBCK	White-throated Sparrow	38176	27300.2	81	2305	DELA
Lesser Scaup	146	512.7	17	40	ERIE	Red-headed Woodpecker	71	52.2	23	17	YOSP	Vesper Sparrow	2	1.3	1	2	LITI
Surf Scoter	5	6.9	2	4	ERIE	Red-bellied Woodpecker	6173	5068.3	81	258	DELA	Savannah Sparrow	95	160.4	22	16	PENN
White-winged Scoter	5	22.7	1	5	ERIE	Downy Woodpecker	5213	5701.4	81	211	DELA	Song Sparrow	10903	9969	79	677	PITT
Black Scoter	3	6.3	1	3	ERIE	Hairy Woodpecker	1522	1436.8	81	68	PITT	Lincoln's Sparrow	1	2.1	1	1	YORK
Long-tailed Duck	8	21.3	4	4	DALL	Pileated Woodpecker	876	843.6	78	33	NEWB,PITT	Swamp Sparrow	543	448.6	60	33	NEWV
Bufflehead	1213	797	33	265	LINE	Northern Flicker (Yellow-	2543	1951.3	77	130	YOSP	Eastern Towhee	701	351.4	54	103	DELA
Common Goldeneye	269	321.3	15	88	LINE	American Kestrel	701	693.9	71	36	BLOO	Eastern Meadowlark	55	42.2	13	13	GETT
Hooded Merganser	2733	1238.8	59	1175	LINE	Merlin	69	51.2	36	5	BETH,PITT,SBCK	Baltimore Oriole	1	1.9	1	1	SBCK
Common Merganser	6290	6193.2	67	2305	LINE	Peregrine Falcon	50	34.7	28	4	BETH,LANC,SBCK,WILL	Red-winged Blackbird	11441	146883.7	60	1394	WEST
Red-breasted Merganser	349	3199.4	11	293	ERIE	Eastern Phoebe	21	18.5	14	5	BUCR	Brown-headed Cowbird	3773	31134.2	43	1038	LEBA
Ruddy Duck	383	772.4	23	71	BETH	Northern Shrike	1	4.7	1	1	GROV	Rusty Blackbird	217	196.4	22	41	LEBA
Ring-necked Pheasant	135	156.9	30	32	RECT	Blue Jay	15725	13594.3	80	556	DELA	Common Grackle	78604	137332.9	36	26570	WEST
Ruffed Grouse	33	66.6	18	5	BENE,HAMB	American Crow	37312	71652.1	81	8068	LANC	Orange-crowned Warbler	6	1.7	5	2	PENN
Wild Turkey	2934	3440.3	59	709	PITT	Fish Crow	1956	2756.8	27	544	SBCK	Common Yellowthroat	7	5.2	6	2	GROV
Pied-billed Grebe	77	113.2	27	12	SBCK	Common Raven	779	506.4	76	60	HUNT	Palm Warbler	6	4.6	3	4	PENN
Homed Grebe	6	38.2	4	3	BUTL	Carolina Chickadee	3541	4498.9	39	289	HARR	Pine Warbler	13	4.1	7	6	SBCK
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pige)	23674	28106.8	80	1476	LEHI	Black-capped Chickadee	6656	8287.1	65	418	DUBO	Yellow-rumped Warbler (f	1131	473.6	60	210	UBCK
Mourning Dove	24162	27759.1	81	1441	CHAM	chickadee sp.	1737	2744.8	26	467	PITT	Yellow-rumped Warbler (f	1	0	1	1	BALD
Virginia Rail	4	1.9	1	4	WEST	Tufted Titmouse	7090	9169.7	81	485	PITT	Northern Cardinal	13099	14532.2	81	747	PITT
American Coot	288	1907.4	12	130	SBCK	Homed Lark	3348	6519.1	30	808	NEWV	Individuals	1071866	1369358.9		142964	BETH
Sandhill Crane	305	166	3	160	GROV	Northern Rough-winged S	81	98.5	2	60	PENN	Species	160	163		102	UBCK
Killdeer	142	223.1	30	38	PISH	Tree Swallow	2	0.1	1	2	YORK	Party-hours	5867	5729		212	PITT
Purple Sandpiper	1	0	1	1	ERIE	Bam Swallow	1	0.1	1	1	PENN						
American Woodcock	2	3.7	2	1	POCO,UBCK	Golden-crowned Kinglet	1544	1659.1	76	87	BUCR						
Wilson's Snipe	25	52.1	10	7	DELA	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	507	187.5	46	42	SBCK						
Bonaparte's Gull	172	2733.5	9	125	LINE	Red-breasted Nuthatch	370	384.3	73	26	EMPO						
Ring-billed Gull	35214	62163.2	58	7012	SLAN	White-breasted Nuthatch	5824	6513.2	81	184	PITT						
California Gull	1	0	1	1	SBCK	Brown Creeper	751	602.2	76	37	HARR						
Herring Gull	38510	50353.7	33	36916	SBCK	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1	0.8	1	1	PENN						
Iceland Gull	11	18.8	2	10	SBCK	House Wren	4	3.8	4	1	CBCK,NEWV,READ,WCHE						
Lesser Black-backed Gu	880	559	11	542	UBCK	Winter Wren	452	351.9	62	25	WYNC						
Glaucous Gull	1	5.8	1	1	ERIE	Marsh Wren	1	1.6	1	1	LEHI						
Great Black-backed Gull	225	2096.4	9	134	SBCK	Carolina Wren	5569	5192	80	286	DELA						
Red-throated Loon	2	2.5	1	2	ERIE	European Starling	160947	162568	81	9596	CHAM						
Common Loon	29	78.7	8	17	ERIE	Gray Catbird	103	43.7	45	11	DELA						
Great Comorant	8	25.5	2	7	SBCK	Brown Thrasher	11	12.3	9	3	DELA						
Double-crested Comoran	172	174	15	39	ERIE	Northern Mockingbird	1869	1979	68	138	YOSP						
American Bittern	1	0.2	1	1	CURT	Eastern Bluebird	7562	6893.9	80	402	UBCK						
Great Blue Heron (Blue f)	938	707.4	67	76	STAT	Hemit Thrush	710	305.5	60	42	ELVE						
Great Egret	1	1.5	1	1	WEST	Wood Thrush	1	0.2	1	1	LEBA						

The 2022 Winter Raptor Survey in Pennsylvania

Greg Grove

Introduction. The 22nd Pennsylvania Winter Raptor Survey (WRS) was conducted 13 January through mid-February 2022 with at least one route in all of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. WRS is a roadside survey with simple but specific guidelines. All raptors and vultures are recorded and for some species data are collected on sex/age/color form. Routes range in length, mostly between 20–100 miles. A map showing details of most routes is at the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology website (PSO website). Procedures and cumulative results were summarized previously (Grove 2010, Grove and Bolgiano 2012).

Effort and Weather. Over 245 routes were run, comprising 909.5 hours and 13,306 miles of observation. The hours were the highest ever and miles were second highest. For the third consecutive year, *Clarion* was tops in coverage, logging in at 32.25 hours, followed closely by *Westmoreland* and *Huntingdon* (Table 2).

Leading up to the beginning of the survey period, the winter had been relatively mild, with temperatures sometimes well above normal and little significant snow. However, that changed during the second week of January as surveys got underway – essentially normal winter weather arrived and dominated throughout the survey period. There were no major snowstorms over much of the state, but there was frequent significant snowfall and because of cold temperatures, snow cover persisted over much of the state, even measured in feet rather than inches on many surveys.

Results

Summary. The cold weather had little obvious effect on raptor numbers compared

to previous seasons. And certainly no effect on observation effort. Two species that we county might expect to be affected by snow cover, Northern Harrier and American Kestrel, were in fact not adversely affected, at least judging by numbers. Kestrel numbers were virtually identical to last year and in line with the last several years; and Harriers were well above the levels of the preceding four years. Bald Eagles, Red-shouldered Hawks, and Cooper's Hawks each topped previous record highs by a significant margin; Peregrine Falcons also established a new high.

Red-tailed Hawk. Excluding the vultures, the annual WRS Red-tailed Hawk count is more than double the count of all other raptor species combined. The WRS count of 3259 Red-tails in 2022 was the fourth highest ever, due in some part to the high hours of observation. The hourly rate of 3.58 was within 10% of the average rate of the last decade (Figure 1).

As usual, Red-tails were widely distributed, except for the expected low numbers in the north-central woodlands (Figure 2). Higher rates were generally found in Ridge-and-Valley and far western counties. *Westmoreland* led the way again this year with 175 Red-tails, well ahead of second place *Lawrence* (144) and third place *Lancaster* (113) (Table 2). Among counties with at least seven hours of coverage *Juniata*, *Lawrence*, *Northumberland*, and *Westmoreland* averaged over 5.5 Red-tails/hour.

American Kestrel. The count of American Kestrels was 639, nearly identical to the totals of 623 in 2020 and 626 in 2021. The

Table 1. Pennsylvania WRS Species Counts for 2022 and High Counts

Species	2022 total	High Count
Bald Eagle	701	701 (2022)
Northern Harrier	130	133 (2008)
Sharp-Shinned Hawk	46	62 (2017)
Cooper's Hawk	157	157 (2022)
Northern Goshawk	0	5 (2004)
Red-shouldered Hawk	236	236 (2022)
Red-tailed Hawk	3259	3584 (2016)
Rough-legged Hawk	56	341 (2004)
Golden Eagle	6	10 (2015)
American Kestrel	639	711 (2017)
Merlin	12	20 (2019)
Peregrine Falcon	22	22 (2022)
Black Vulture	978	1689 (2020)
Turkey Vulture	2975	3634 (2020)
Northern Shrike	3	10 (2012)
Hours	909.5	909.5 (2022)
Miles	13,306	13,490 (2021)

hourly rate of 0.70 was the same as in 2021 (Figure 1). The 2022 count was the fourth highest ever (record is 711 in 2017).

As usual, most Kestrels were in the central and lower Susquehanna and Juniata

River valleys, with good numbers also in the southwest, with its relatively mild winter weather (Figure 2). The importance of the less intensively developed Ridge-and-Valley for wintering kestrels is dramatic and contrasts sharply with the low numbers in the far southeast, despite even milder weather there. Once again, *Franklin* was way out in front with a total of 59, followed at a distance by *Adams* at 33 and *Huntingdon* at 32 (Table 2). In counties with at least seven hours of effort, *Adams*, *Columbia*, *Franklin*, *Juniata*, *Mifflin*, and *Snyder* had rates of at least 1.7/hr.

Of 506 Kestrels sexed, 331 (65%) were males, consistent with previous years (range: 59-66%).

Rough-legged Hawk. The count of 56 Rough-legged Hawks was the third lowest ever, excluding 2001 and 2002, when coverage hours were low. Nevertheless, the count of 56 topped the 2020 and 2021 counts of 30 and 41, respectively. The hourly detection rate of 0.062 was the third lowest ever; only 2020 and 2021 saw lower rates (Figure 1). The trend over the last decade is of a slow decline in the numbers of Rough-legs that visit Pennsylvania in winter.

Rough-legs were found in 25 counties, up from 17 and 21 in 2021 and 2002, respectively. As usual, most were in northern counties; however, a few made it

Table 2. Top species totals by county

Rank	1	2	3
Hours	Clarion (32)	Westmoreland (32)	Huntingdon (31)
Bald Eagle	Snyder (79)	Bucks (73)	Lancaster (63)
N Harrier	Northumberland (13)	Columbia (11)	Five with (6)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Crawford (3)	Lawrence (3)	
Cooper's Hawk	Westmoreland (19)	Indiana (8)	Four with (7)
N Goshawk			
Red-shouldered Hawk	Adams (32)	Mercer (16)	Hunt., Lawrence (11)
Red-tailed Hawk	Westmoreland (175)	Lawrence (144)	Lancaster (113)
Rough-legged Hawk	Centre (6)	Clarion (6)	Northumberland (6)
Golden Eagle	Elk, Lycoming (1)	N'amp, Potter (1)	N'umber, Schuyl (1)
Am. Kestrel	Franklin (59)	Adams (33)	Huntingdon (32)
Merlin	Northumberland (2)		
Peregrine Falcon	Beaver, Berks (2)	Lancaster (2)	Snyder (2)
Turkey Vulture	Lancaster (838)	Adams (315)	Chester (310)
Black Vulture	Lancaster (153)	Chester (150)	Berks (72)
Northern Shrike	Butler (1)	Lawrence (1)	Lycoming (1)

to southern tier counties, where Rough-legs were recorded in *Fulton* and *Somerset* (Figure 2). Top counties were *Centre*, *Clarion*, and *Northumberland*, each with six; *Lycoming*, with four Rough-legs, was the only other county with more than three (Figure 2).

Of the 56 Rough-legs recorded, 41 (73%) were light morph (2001-21 range = 60-78%).

Northern Harrier. The count of 130 Northern Harriers was the second highest ever, trailing only the 133 in 2008. The count was up 67% from the previous year. The 2022 rate of 0.143/hr was the best since 2017 (Figure 1). WRS harrier numbers have tended to fluctuate more widely than Red-tails and American Kestrels (Figure 1), with winter numbers likely resulting from a complex mixture of factors related to prey abundance, amount of grass cover in fields, acreage in row crops the previous summer, snow cover, and the apparent four-year cycle in harrier numbers (Wilson et al. 2010, Schimpf et al. 2020, McClure et al. (2020).

As usual, Harriers were widely scattered, but with an obvious concentration in the middle Susquehanna Valley (Figure 2). This is evident from the fact that 4 of 5 counties with over 0.5 harriers/hr are in that area: *Columbia*, *Montour*, *Northumberland*, and *Snyder*. *Northumberland* led with 13 harriers recorded, followed by *Columbia* with 11 (Table 2).

Of the total of 130 harriers, 32 (25%) were identified as immature birds. The average from 2001-2021 is 18%.

Vultures. After record-breaking totals in 2020, both vulture species have been lower in 2021 and 2022, though generally still in the range of the past ten years. The 2975 Turkey Vultures was just 4% below 2021. Black Vultures took a bigger dip, the count of 978 was down 10% from 2021 and down 42% from the record high of 2020 (Figure 1).

As always, most vultures were in the southeast (Figure 2). Also, as usual, *Lancaster* led easily with 893 Turkey Vultures, more the double the counts in *Adams* (315) and *Chester* (310). *Lancaster* also took the top spot for Black Vultures, tallying 153, just ahead of *Chester* at 150 (Table 2). *Lancaster* and *Chester* accounted for 36% of all vultures recorded, a typical result each year.

Turkey and Black Vultures were found in 31 and 28 counties, respectively, similar to the five-year average of 33 and 27, respectively. Among outliers, where not often found in winter, Turkey Vultures were recorded in *Clearfield*, *Forest*, *Lycoming*, *Luzerne*, and *Washington*; and Black Vultures in *Bradford*, *Lycoming*, *Fayette*, and *Westmoreland*. Although numbers are tiny compared to southeastern counties, a

few vultures are recorded each WRS season in the southwestern corner counties of *Fayette*, *Greene*, *Washington*, and *Westmoreland*.

Bald Eagle. The Bald Eagle explosion continues. The count in 2022 was 701, way past the previous high of 600 in 2019. The hourly rate of 0.77 was also a record high (Figure 1).

Bald Eagles were recorded in a record high 60 of the 67 counties in Pennsylvania (Figure 2), compared to 56 and 52 in 2020 and 2021, respectively. The highest counts, as usual, were in the Susquehanna and Delaware River drainages, with good numbers also from counties on the Ohio border (Figure 2). Top counties were *Snyder*, *Bucks*, and *Lancaster* with 79, 73, and 63 eagles, respectively. The high count in *Snyder* was due to congregations of eagles at chicken farms. Seventeen counties reached double digits.

Of the 701 total Bald Eagles, 44% (306) were listed as immature, similar to recent years.

Red-shouldered Hawks Aside from a modest dip in 2021, Red-shoulder WRS numbers have been increasing steadily over the last decade. That trend continued in 2022, with a record-smashing 231 birds, topping the 188 in 2020 (Figure 1). The hourly rate of 0.25 was also a record high. As usual, they were concentrated in southeastern and south-central counties and especially in the northwest (Figure 2). The top county, again, was *Adams*, which had a remarkable 32 Red-shoulders. *Mercer* tallied 16 Red-shoulders and *Huntingdon* and *Lawrence* 11 each (Table 2).

Other Raptors Cooper's Hawk set a record with 157 counted, topping the 140 in 2021; 19 of those Coop's were in *Westmoreland*. The 46 Sharp-shinned Hawks was about average.

Another record-setter was Peregrine Falcon, with 22, topping the 19 in 2019 (Table 1). Merlins were a bit low at 12, but within the range of the past decade. Six Golden Eagles were found in six different counties, about average. Three Northern Shrikes, also about average, were found, in *Butler*, *Lawrence*, and *Lycoming* (Table 1, 2).

Acknowledgements

I thank Nick Bolgiano for creation of the figures. Thanks to Frank Haas for generating the map showing WRS routes in each county (PSO website). And of course thanks go to the well over 100 birders and companions who gathered the data across the state.

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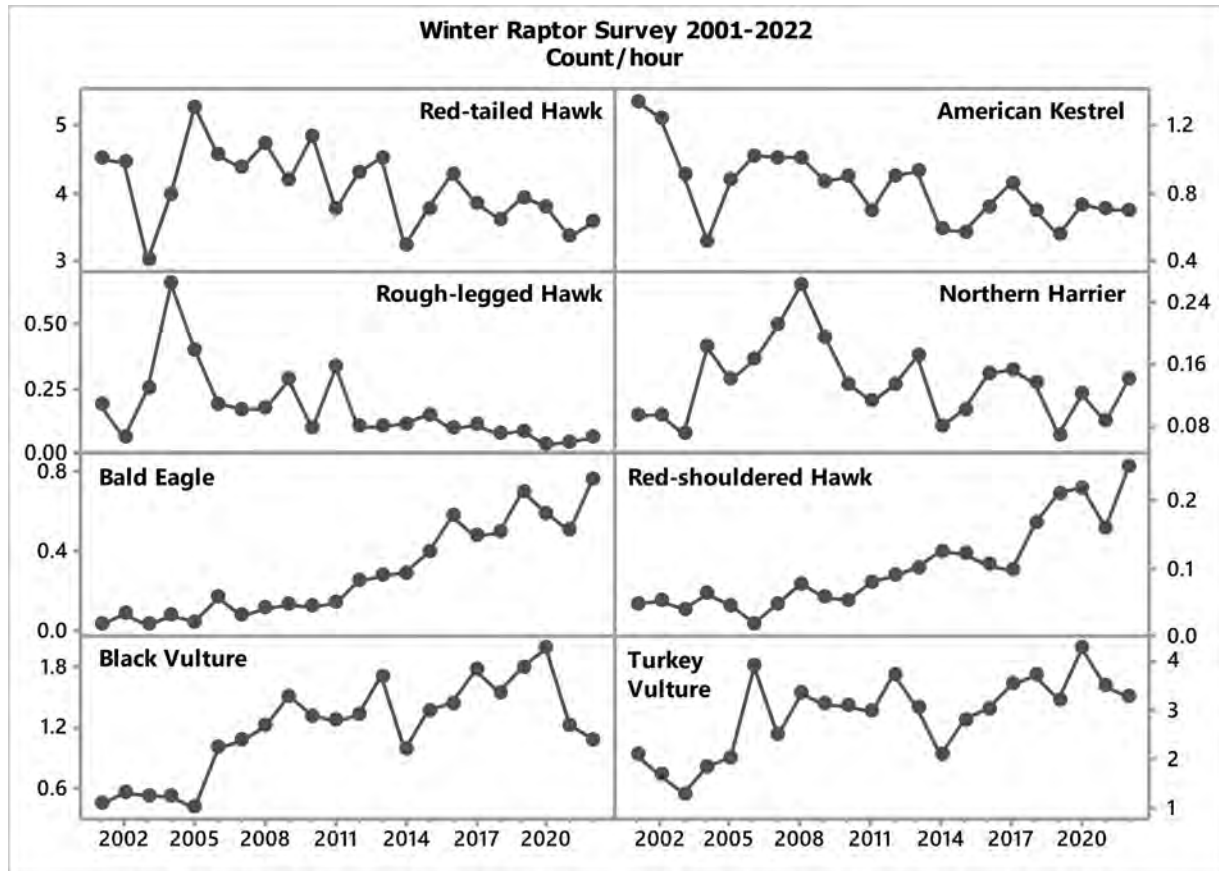


Figure 1 Pennsylvania WRS trends, 2001–2022. Data from all counties was combined and expressed as birds/hour.

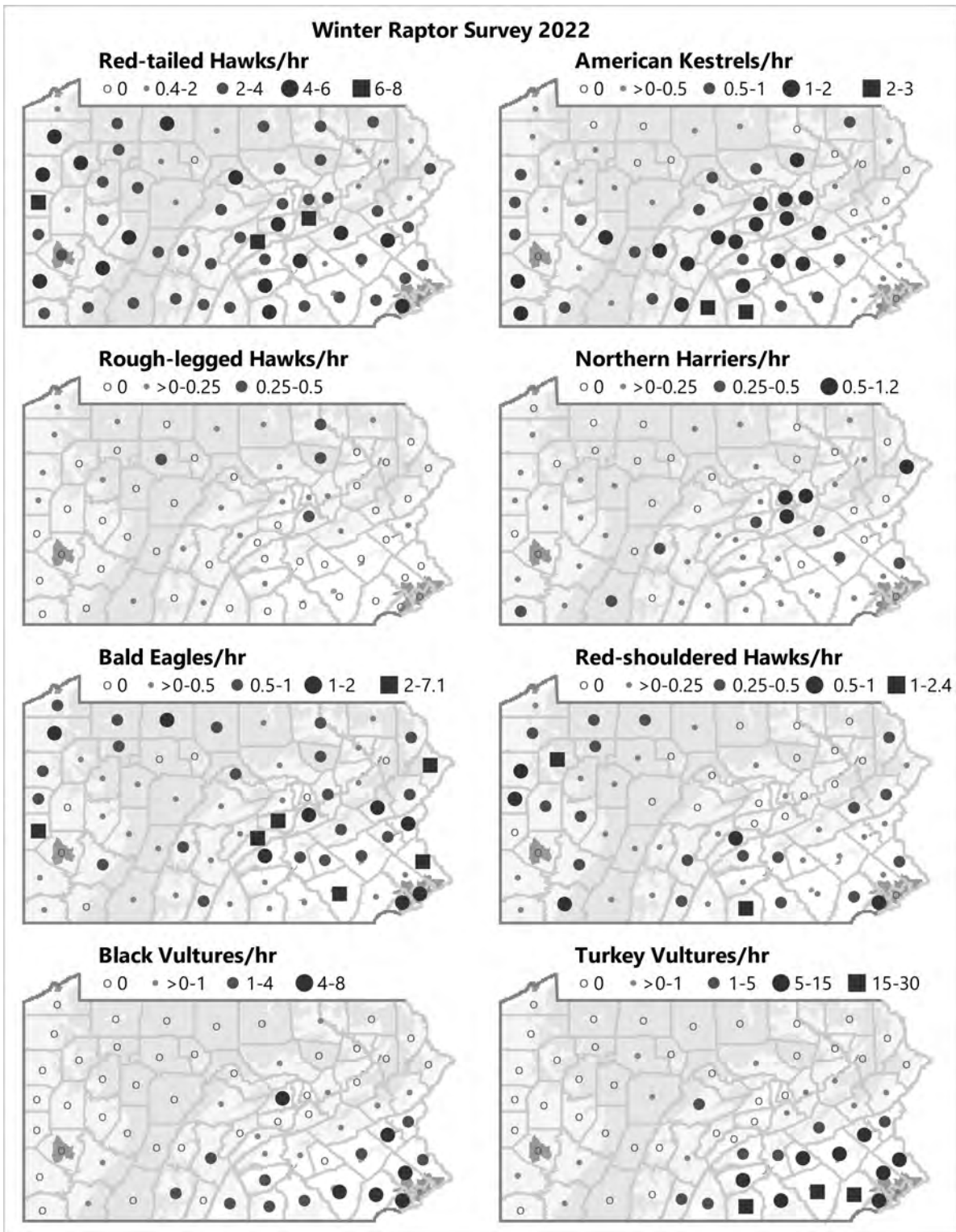


Figure 2 Pennsylvania 2022 WRS results by county. Count and effort data from all routes in a given county were combined and results expressed as birds/hour.

Appendix: 2022 Winter Raptor Survey Results

County	Hours	Miles	BE	NH	SS	CH	RS	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	TV	BV	NShr
Adams	13.75	232	4	3	1	3	32	73			33	ML	PG	315	41	
Allegheny	2.5	59						8								
Armstrong	16.25	241	3	1	1		6	64			11					
Beaver	2.5	25	5					5			2					
Bedford	8.5	202	2			2	2	31			6		2		10	
Berks	21.75	362	14	6	2	3	1	80			15			201	72	
Blair	10.5	150	6	4		2	1	26	1		14		2			
Bradford	4.5	100	3					10	2						3	
Bucks	20.5	218	73	6	1	4	10	73			4			171	70	
Butler	9.25	178		1	2	1	4	17			4	1	1			1
Cambria	10.25	176	2			1	2	25			7					
Cameron	2.5	62														
Carbon	6.5	104	8				3	16						2	4	
Centre	25.25	384	6		2	7		84	6		14			26	11	
Chester	20	343	6	1	1	2	5	57			5	1		310	150	
Clarion	32.25	413	4	2	1	7	2	89	6		7	1	1			
Clearfield	9	193	2		2	2		13			3		1	1		
Clinton	9.25	127	6			7		47			6					
Columbia	9.5	126	5	11	1	2		27	2		15			3	2	
Crawford	20.5	275	28	1	3	3	8	108	2		7	1				
Cumberland	17.5	154	5	3		4	1	100	2		24			167	48	
Dauphin	9.25	175	7	1		1	4	40			14		1	34	3	
Delaware	11	163	14	1	1	2	7	58			1		1	128	44	
Elk	6.75	110					1	7	2	1		1	1	1		
Erie	13	209	7			1	3	23	1		1					
Fayette	18.25	258		1			10	44			12			4	4	
Forest	9.5	108	6				4	19			2					
Franklin	29.25	435	9	2	1	2	5	92			59			100	34	
Fulton	9.75	135	5	2		2	3	28	1		10	1	1	20		
Greene	14	253	1	4			2	43			15	1				
Huntingdon	30.5	422	15	1		5	11	111			32			22	54	
Indiana	20	268	5	2	1	8	2	107			21					
Jefferson	13.75	215	1	2		1	2	32			1					
Juniata	11.25	227	27	1		3	6	79			21				5	
Lackawana	5	88		1	1			3								
Lancaster	28.75	414	63	6		7	3	113			24			838	153	
Lawrence	21.25	215	16	4	3	3	11	144	1		16	1	2			1
Lebanon	8.5	157	7		1	1	1	14			9		1	79		
Lehigh	9.5	144	6		1	1	2	52			3			53	45	
Luzerne	8.5	129	2	2	1			15			4			6		
Lycoming	26	296	5	3	1	4	1	67	4	1	18			4	2	1
McKean	7	136	8			2	2	28				1				
Mercer	18.25	185	10	3	2	6	16	101	1		10					
Mifflin	13.5	233	3	2	1	3	1	33	1		23					
Monroe	8.75	129	6		1		3	5					1	8	1	
Montgomery	14.75	183	3	1	1	4	2	37			3			99	68	
Montour	5.25	122		4			1	18	1		6		1			
Northampton	23.75	255	25	1	2	1	3	75	1	1	3		1	72	53	
Northumberland	13	172	18	13	1	4		91	6	1	19		1	1		
Perry	23.75	293	39	2		5	6	70			17	2		74	10	
Philadelphia	5.5	21	6					4						5	2	
Pike	6.25	21	44	4	2	1	1	22								
Potter	17.25	242	12	1		1	1	18	2	1	2					
Schuylkill	14.75	232	12	4		3	3	80	2	1	20			36	7	
Snyder	12.5	181	79	6	2	4		66			21	1				
Somerset	17.75	270	3	5		2	3	69	3		1		2			
Sullivan	3	61	2		1			8	1		4					
Susquehanna	9	98	2	1		1		21	2		6					
Tioga	17	216	4	1		5		53	3		2					
Union	9.5	166	3	1		1		30	1		13				46	
Venango	8.75	125	1		2		10	48			1					
Warren	11.75	181	9		1	1	3	25	2							
Washington	14.25	232	2	2		1	2	64			16			14		
Wayne	6.5	84	4				3	7			2		1			
Westmoreland	31.5	524	20	6		19	9	175			14			24	1	
Wyoming	4	100	1		1			7					1			
York	16	299	7	1	1	2	7	60			16			157	35	
TOTAL	909.5	13306	701	130	46	157	231	3259	56	6	639	12	22	2975	978	3

Where do birds get fat? A new application of stable isotope analysis on fat stores in migrating songbirds

Annie Lindsay -- Awardee of a PSO Student Research Grant

In early 2020, I began to prepare for the spring migration field season. I would be sampling fat from migrating songbirds at Powdermill Nature Reserve for stable isotope analysis as part of my dissertation research. Sampling fat in live songbirds in the field for stable isotope analysis had not yet been attempted and I was eager to start. However, like most spring 2020 field seasons, mine experienced covid-related stumbling blocks: the unknowns surrounding this new virus caused many organizations to shut down, and Powdermill's banding station had to suspend normal operations for the first time in 60 years. I was able to run the mist nets alone, releasing any bird that wasn't one of my focal species at the nets, but I had to figure out how to safely biopsy fat without a second person to assist. Fast forward to the end of May: the field season was a success and we transitioned into reopening the station for a normal summer season. Although I had to make adjustments to my original plan, I sampled fat from birds during three field seasons, completed laboratory work, and am in the data analysis phase of the project.

Why sample fat from migrating songbirds?

Fat fuels migration. Prior to and during seasonal migration, birds enter a period of hyperphagia during which they increase food consumption and deposit fat in the furcular area, and on the abdomen and flanks, and use this fat for energy during migratory flights. These flights can be relatively short, perhaps a few dozen miles or so between suitable habitat patches, or quite long, as in species like Blackpoll Warblers that can fly for three days non-stop between the Atlantic coast of North America and their wintering grounds in northern South America.

Less is known about birds during their migration periods than during the breeding or wintering seasons. As birders, we may spot birds foraging during a stopover event, and banders catch and examine birds, but we usually don't know where they came from or how far they've traveled. Tracking technology can be expensive and detection is dependent upon birds flying near receiving towers, or upon recovering the transmitter. However, stopover habitat is critical for survival, efficient refueling, and successful migration, because migration is the period in a bird's annual cycle with the highest mortality rate.

With continued loss and fragmentation of suitable stopover habitat patches, migratory songbirds can be constrained by their ability to find high-quality food resources during stopover events. Those that have difficulty refueling must delay migration until they have gained enough energy to make another flight, which often delays breeding and can have repercussions throughout a bird's entire life. Conservation of appropriate habitat along migration pathways depends on a thorough understanding of how far a bird can migrate before requiring a refueling stop. Stable-isotope analysis of fat deposited during migration should reflect the isotopic signatures of refueling areas and therefore might indicate approximate distances individuals can fly between stopover sites. This information can be used to show the limits of migratory flights.

For the past few decades, ornithologists have used stable isotope analysis of various tissues sampled from birds and other wildlife to track movements, feeding origins, and habitat usage of these animals. This is possible because heavy stable isotopes have measurable abundances relative to lighter forms of these isotopes, and isotopic signatures of the local environment are incorporated into growing tissue. Isotopic ratios vary predictably with latitude, altitude, and habitat and are present at the base of food webs so that isotopic signatures are passed up the food web to higher organisms. Analysis of isotopic ratios in tissues gives information



Swainson's Thrush

about where that tissue was grown. For example, stable hydrogen isotope analysis measures the relative abundances of deuterium, or "heavy hydrogen" that has one proton and one neutron, and protium, or ordinary hydrogen that has one proton and no neutrons. The ratio of deuterium to protium is present in local precipitation and varies roughly latitudinally, so stable isotope analysis of animal tissue reflects the geographic signature of where that tissue was grown (Hobson

and Wassenaar 1997). Additionally, isotopic analysis of other elements is regularly used to gain other information. For example, stable carbon isotope analysis measures the ratio of ^{13}C to ^{12}C in vegetation and represents a gradient of dry to wet habitat, and the carbon isotopic values in animal tissue reflect local vegetation types, diet, and habitat quality (Marra et al. 1998).

Isotopic signatures are assimilated into tissue as it grows and are reflected in both metabolically active (such as blood, muscle, bone, and breath) and inactive (such as feathers and claws) tissues. Knowing the turnover rate, or how quickly a tissue replaces itself, of the sampled tissue gives information about an animal's movements. Analysis of inert feathers reflects the isotopic signature of the area in which they were grown regardless of when they were sampled, whereas analysis of blood reflects the signature of the area a bird was in for a few days to weeks prior to sampling. Fat tissue is relatively inert once it has been deposited and should reflect the habitat and geographic region in which a bird refueled during a migratory stopover event, thereby indicating the relative migratory distance an individual flies non-stop, or at least without completely refueling, before arriving at stopover sites to refuel.

How do we sample fat from live birds?

I sampled fat from migrating songbirds at Powdermill Nature Reserve in spring and fall 2020 and spring 2021. Nestled in the Laurel Highlands of southwestern Pennsylvania, Powdermill is Carnegie Museum of Natural History's environmental research station. Its long-term bird banding station has operated year-round since 1961, and its annual capture rate of 13,000-15,000 birds each year makes it an ideal study site for science staff and visiting researchers.

Stable isotope analysis of fat sampled from birds has been attempted only in a laboratory setting, and never on live birds. Researchers in Europe developed a safe method to biopsy fat from small birds, and held them in captivity to monitor for adverse effects of the procedure. They found that the incisions healed within two weeks and most showed no signs of scarring, and there

were no signs of stress during or after the biopsies (Rocha et al. 2016). I slightly modified their method to sample fat from birds after the normal bird banding process. Fat biopsy involves numbing the furcular area of a bird and making a small incision in the thin skin where there is visible fat. A small amount of fat is gently pulled through the incision with sterile forceps and snipped with sterile surgical scissors, then the incision is closed with veterinary adhesive. Post-biopsy, birds are placed in a clean cloth bag to recover for about 15 minutes, the incision is double-checked to be sure it's closed, then the bird is released. Like the birds in the European study, the birds I sampled at Powdermill did not show signs of stress and all flew strongly upon release. Additionally, I compared the recapture rate of fat-sampled birds to those of the same species that I did not biopsy. The sample size for some biopsied species is low, however, the recapture rate for both groups is comparable.

The next steps

My objective for this project was two-fold: to determine whether stable-isotope signatures of fat collected in the field reflect the geographic location and habitat where the fat was assimilated, and to estimate the geographic origin where fat was deposited in migrating songbirds prior to their arrival at my study site.

The first step is local validation, that is, sampling fat from birds during a stopover event that definitely assimilated fat locally. To do this, I biopsied fat from migrating birds that had no fat at their initial capture but had gained fat when they were recaptured. The newly deposited fat should reflect local isotopic signatures. For additional local validation, I held Swainson's Thrushes with no fat reserves in temporary captivity and provided them with a known diet and local water for a few days until they deposited fat.

The second step is estimating how far individuals migrate between stopover locations, or more specifically where their stopover locations were prior to their arrival at Powdermill. To do this, I sampled birds with low fat scores the mornings after nights of heavy migration and relied on the assumption that this relatively depleted fat was unlikely to have been deposited locally.



Fat Tissue in vial awaiting extraction

At the end of the field seasons, with the fat samples stored safely in a -80 Celsius freezer, I began preparations for laboratory work at the University of Akron's Stable Isotope Facility. Although there are very few studies that have done stable isotope analysis on fat, each study seems to have a slightly different method of preparing the samples: some freeze-dry the samples to remove water, some extract lipids from the samples, and some do both or neither. Because my wild bird samples were so valuable, my collaborators and I decided to run experiments on chicken fat (from a chicken breast obtained from the local Giant Eagle!) first



Laboratory set-up for extractions

to determine if sample preparation technique affected isotopic signatures.

The chicken fat experiments showed several things: 1) there was a high degree of precision, that is, analysis of samples taken from the same specimen yielded very similar results, 2) surprisingly there was no significant difference in isotopic signatures between freeze-dried and non-freeze-dried samples, and 3) there was a significant difference in isotopic values between lipids extracted from samples and whole samples. Importantly, lipid extraction is necessary because whole samples likely contain small quantities of other tissues that probably affect the isotopic signature of the sample.

Using the information from my chicken fat experiments, I freeze-dried my wild bird samples, then extracted the lipids, and performed stable hydrogen and stable carbon isotope analysis. Results show that Swainson's Thrushes held in captivity, and birds that assimilated fat locally as determined by examining fat accumulation in recaptured birds, have isotopic signatures more negative stable hydrogen isotope values than spring migrants presumed to have assimilated fat at a more southern location, which is a pattern that is consistent with the isotopic values of precipitation at different geographic locations (i.e., more negative values at northern latitudes and less negative values at southern latitudes). Stable carbon isotope analysis shows consistencies in isotopic signatures within species and within foraging guild.

My project lays a foundation to building a map of hydrogen isotopic signatures obtained from bird fat. Ideally, I would have liked to sample fat from birds at several banding stations across the continent at latitudes that would have different precipitation signatures. Although Covid prevented travel during the field work phase of my project, this will be the next step in exploring the relationship between isotopic signatures of diet and fat tissue, and in estimating previous stopover locations during migration.

This study was part of the requirements for a PhD in the Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio. Lindsay's advisor for the project is Dr. Henry M. Streby.

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25 Years Ago in *Pennsylvania Birds*



Volume 10 No. 1

Ted Floyd discussed the effect of weather on birds – migration, breeding, and wintering.

In *Pennsylvania Birdlists*, Barb Haas had the top Pennsylvania Life List with 349 species with Frank Haas at 348!

Rare birds reported included Mew Gull (now Common Gull), 2 Varied Thrushes, and Black-headed Grosbeak.

This issue can be read at pabirds.org.

A Glaucous-winged Gull in Pennsylvania!

Dave DeReamus

In the late afternoon of February 12, 2022, Jason Hall found, photographed, and got a short video of what appeared to be a very good candidate for a second-winter Glaucous-winged Gull at the Church Road area of Green Lane Reservoir *Montgomery County*. This gull is normally found on the Pacific Coast. Unfortunately, it flew off before anyone else got to see it. Several birders, including me, spent the next day there hoping that it would return, but it never did.

A little over a week later, on February 20, Kevin Fox was at the Lake Nockamixon marina *Bucks County* where he found and photographed a second-winter Glaucous-winged Gull on and around the docks. Given the improbability of there being two different Glaucous-winged Gulls in eastern Pennsylvania, there was little doubt that this was the same bird seen at Green Lane Reservoir eight days earlier. The word didn't get out until the afternoon and, soon after, Jason Horn re-found and reported the bird at the marina, creating the opportunity for many birders to see it. It was sporadically seen there through February 26.

This gull was noticeably larger and bulkier than the surrounding Lesser Black-backed Gulls. Its overall grayish-brown coloration lacking any contrast and matching, fairly short primaries, solid black bill, along with some lighter grayish feathers on the mantle, all pointed to a second-winter bird. The only question about the bird's identification was whether it was a true Glaucous-winged since this species often hybridizes with both Western and Herring Gulls. Photos of the bird were posted on the "North American Gulls" Facebook page and the 'experts' from the West Coast all agreed that there was no evidence to contest it being a pure bird. One of the things pointed out by them was the bird's fairly straight bill showing almost no gonydeal angle, which highly favors a pure Glaucous-winged.

Interestingly, a gull with a nearly identical plumage was found in Barrie, Ontario, Canada, on November 27, 2021 and was later seen in nearby Hamilton and Brantford, where it was last reported on January 14, 2022. The only other accepted records of Glaucous-winged Gull this far east are of an adult from Newfoundland, Canada in February and March of 2005 and again March of 2006; and a near-adult bird in New Hampshire on January 10, 2009. Therefore, this bird, if accepted by PORC, would represent the only record for the Mid-Atlantic states south through Florida!



Nockamixon SP, *Bucks* 26 February (Kevin Fox)



Nockamixon SP, *Bucks* 26 February (Kevin Fox)

Summary of the Season: Winter 2021-22

Nick Bolgiano

For the winter season 2021-22, 210 bird species were reported in Pennsylvania. Irruptions were minimal and rarities were about average in number, with concentrations in the gulls, sparrows, and warblers. Highlights included waterfowl, gulls, several raptors, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and some half-hardy songbirds. **Glaucous-winged Gull** at *Montgomery* and *Bucks* was a new species for the state (see page 17 and cover photo)

The winter was relatively warm, especially in December and February. However, January temperatures were colder than average. Precipitation was above average in the west and below average in the east. Snowfall was below average, especially near Erie. Much of the snow tended to fall in January. Winter arrived late and ended early.

The effect of climate change is becoming more evident in the winter season, as some hardier species have been tending to stay farther north, especially around Lakes Ontario and Erie, and some half-hardy species have been tending to linger. The excellence of each region's observers always underlies these summaries.

Snow Goose was reported from 45 counties, compared to 36-37 counties the previous three winters. The highest concentrations were again near the forks of the Delaware and Lehigh Rivers, with the vast majority of sightings between the Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers and south of the mountains. Christmas Bird Count (CBC) numbers were moderately high, about half of the levels of the previous two winters. The relatively few sightings in the west were likely birds moving to or from their Midwestern wintering areas. Since the higher wintering concentrations in the southeast began in 2013, their state winter distributions have been generally stable, with year-to-year fluctuations in total numbers. Middle Creek WMA, *Lancaster/Lebanon*, again was a staging area in late Feb, with an estimated 150,000 on Feb 28. The Susquehanna Valley counties of *Northumberland*, *Montour*, and *Columbia* were also a mini staging area in late Feb.

Ross's Goose was reported from 12 counties, an enhanced presence compared to the four, eight, and five counties during the previous three winters. It was in *Bucks*, *Lancaster*, *Lebanon*, *Lehigh*, *Montgomery*,

and *Northampton* in the southeast; in *Bedford*, *Franklin*, and *Mifflin* in the south-central; and in *Allegheny*, *Fayette*, and *Westmoreland* in the west. (see IN FOCUS photos)

Greater White-fronted Goose was reported from 13 counties, an increase over the six the previous winter, but similar to the 14-15 counties the previous two winters. It was in *Berks*, *Bucks*, *Chester*, *Lehigh*, *Montgomery*, *Northampton*, and *Philadelphia* in the southeast; in *Centre*, *Perry*, *Franklin*, and *Montour* in the central; and in *Washington* and *Westmoreland* in the west. The high count was 22 in *Berks* on Jan 7. ((see IN FOCUS photos)

Pink-footed Goose was in *Lehigh* and *Montgomery*, thought to be the same bird crossing county lines. It was a new species for the state CBC, being recorded at Lehigh Valley. **Brant** went unreported for the second consecutive winter. **Barnacle Goose** was at *Bucks*, *Chester*, *Delaware*, and *Lehigh* (the *Chester-Delaware* sightings may have been same bird). (see IN FOCUS photos)

Canada Goose numbers according to the CBC continue to be about 25 percent lower than during the peak period of 1998-2013. The **Cackling Goose** distribution resembled the Snow Goose distribution in that the vast majority were reported from the east, but a few were in *Allegheny*, *Crawford*, and *Erie* in the west. It was reported from 24 counties, compared to 25, 22, and 26 the previous three winters.

While **Trumpeter Swan** was missed in the CBC, it was found in 12 counties: *Cambria*, *Crawford*, *Jefferson*, and *Westmoreland* in the west; *Adams*, *Centre*, *Cumberland*, and *York* in the central, and *Carbon*, *Lehigh*, *Monroe*, and *Pike* in the northeast. It was found in 6, 11, and 10 counties the previous three winters. Given that Trumpeter Swan breeding populations are expanding in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, southern Ontario, upstate New York, and Ohio, the ongoing expansion in Pennsylvania is likely to continue.

The **Tundra Swan** presence seemed to be on the low end. Only 390 were reported in CBC, like the low number from three years previous. One of the Bewick's races of Tundra Swan was at Middle Creek WMA, a potential new state record. (photo on page 1)

Duck sightings were mixed, with some species being observed in excellent

numbers, while several continued long-term declines.

Gadwalls have exhibited one of the most positive trends among wintering dabbling ducks; the CBC count was excellent. However, the steady declines of both **Mallard** and **American Black Duck** in the CBC continued. A Gadwall x Mallard hybrid was in *Berks*.

Blue-winged Teal was in *Cumberland* and *Philadelphia*; **Eurasian Wigeon** was in *Montgomery*; and the **Eurasian** race of **Green-winged Teal** was in *Philadelphia*.

Canvasbacks and **Redheads** were remarkably low in the CBC, with just 3 Canvasbacks and 16 Redheads statewide. However, at Presque Isle, *Erie*, one month after the CBC there, there were an estimated 800 Canvasbacks on Jan 16 and 3000 Redheads on Jan 23. Cold and ice got them moving. An estimated 1000 **Common Goldeneyes** were also at Presque Isle on Feb 26.

Ring-necked Duck, **Bufflehead**, and **Hooded Merganser** were the diving ducks for which there were excellent counts in the CBC, continuing increasing trends. The 1175 Hooded Mergansers at Linesville was an outstanding tally (see CBC report and its Figure 2). A Common Merganser x Hooded Merganser hybrid was at *Lycoming*. (see IN FOCUS photos).

During the winter of 2020-2021, the three scoters were about evenly distributed, but in the winter of 2021-2022, **White-winged Scoter** had the widest distribution, as is often the case. **Surf Scoter** was in *Erie* and *Westmoreland*. **White-winged Scoter** was in 11 counties: *Allegheny*, *Erie*, and *Fayette* in west; *Clearfield*, and *Lycoming*, and *Somerset* in the central; and *Berks*, *Carbon*, *Lackawanna*, *Philadelphia*, and *York* in the east. **Black Scoter** was in *Delaware*, *Erie*, and *Philadelphia*.

A rare **Tufted Duck** was at Middle Creek WMA, *Lancaster*. In the last decade, most reports of **Barrow's Goldeneye** have been from the Delaware R. However, this winter one was reported from *Washington*, about as opposite a setting as possible.

Ruffed Grouse was reported from 27 counties, the same number as in the previous winter and 1-2 fewer counties than in the two winters before that. However, the 33 Ruffed Grouse in the CBC, was the second lowest total since 1951, just above the 22 tallied in 2020.

Red-necked Grebe was in 6 counties: *Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Dauphin, Erie,* and *Lancaster*. Thus, there was not enough ice on Lake Erie to push many inland. **Eared Grebe**, usually annual, was in *Chester*.

Eurasian Collared-Dove was reported only from its usual *Berks* and *Franklin* locations, but its *Franklin* numbers continued to increase, with a high count of 47. Although its restricted Pennsylvania distribution has held for some time, recent *Franklin* observations indicate that this species is expanding there. There were comparatively few **Rufous Hummingbirds** compared to some recent winters, with two in *Chester* and one in *Juniata*.

Virginia Rail continued to be a winter regular at the ChesLen Preserve, *Chester*. The remains of a rare-in-winter **Common Gallinule** were found in *Allegheny*. **Sandhill Crane** was found in 13 counties, including six in the northwest, where Pennsylvania's wintering cranes concentrate. This compared to 10, 16, and 8 counties the previous three winters. **Purple Sandpiper** was recorded in *Erie* for the CBC. **Least Sandpiper** and **Spotted Sandpiper** have been the most frequently observed winter sandpipers here. They were found again this winter, Least Sandpiper in *Berks, Indiana,* and *York*, and Spotted Sandpiper in *Mifflin*.

The Laridae continued to be a Pennsylvania wintering highlight. Three rare gulls were reported: **Common Gull** in *Bucks* Feb 27 (it was formerly classified as Mew Gull and is quite rare here); **California Gull** in *Bucks* Dec 18 for the Southern Bucks County CBC and the third documented county record; and **Glaucous-winged Gull**, quite rare in the East, first found in *Montgomery* Feb 12 and then in *Bucks* Feb 20-26, a new state record.

Pennsylvania once again was a core wintering area for **Lesser Black-backed Gull**. It was found in 14 counties, including all southeastern counties from *York* eastward except for *Dauphin*, plus *Allegheny, Crawford,* and *Erie* in the west. The 880 total statewide in the CBC was a new high and 542 at Upper Bucks County was a new site high, indicating how the wintering distribution has strengthened and expanded northward. A total of 850 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were counted at Nockamixon SP, *Bucks*, and 330 at Green Lane Park, *Montgomery*, both in Feb, demonstrating their accessibility.

The 37,000 **Herring Gulls** recorded during the Southern Bucks County CBC again led all CBC sites by a large margin.

However, **Great Black-backed Gulls** have declined sharply in the CBC.

Among uncommon gulls, **Laughing Gull** was along the Delaware R. in *Philadelphia*, where annual in winter. **Iceland Gull** was in 12 counties: *Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Philadelphia, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton,* and *York* in the southeast; *Lycoming* in north central; and *Allegheny* and *Erie* in the west. **Glaucous Gull** was in 6 counties: *Berks, Chester, Bucks,* and *Philadelphia* in the southeast, plus *Allegheny* and *Erie* in the west. A **Herring x Glaucous** (Nelson's Gull) was in *Montgomery*.

Red-throated Loon was in 6 counties: *Chester, Erie, Huntingdon, Philadelphia, Pike,* and *Susquehanna*. **Great Cormorant** was at usual locations along and near the Delaware R. in *Bucks, Delaware,* and *Philadelphia*. **American White Pelican**, rare here in winter, was in *Fayette* and *Huntingdon*.

Ardeids other than the common **Great Blue Heron** were infrequently seen, but there were several noteworthy sightings. **American Bittern** was in *Berks* and *Dauphin*, the latter bird being only the second American Bittern reported during the state CBC in the last 14 years. **Great Egret**, by far the most common wintering ardeid other than Great Blue, was at usual locations in *Delaware* and *Philadelphia*. **Cattle Egret**, rare in winter, was in *Greene*. **Black-crowned Night-Heron**, once much more common here but now also rare, was in *Allegheny* and *Montgomery*.

It was a mixed report for the Accipitriformes, with established trends continuing and several unexpected occurrences. **Osprey** was in *Chester* and *Mercer*, typical occurrences for winter. **Northern Harrier** numbers were average in both the CBC and the Winter Raptor Survey (WRS).

Golden Eagle was reported in unprecedented numbers for the winter period, mostly in December. It was found in 33 counties, compared to 26, 19, and 22 counties the previous three winters. The 123 Golden Eagles tallied during December at the Bald Eagle Mt. hawk watch, *Centre*, were far more than any previous statewide December tally, with good flights as late as Dec 22. The 17 Golden Eagles in the Pennsylvania CBC was a new high, with many of these presumably being through-migrants. Compared to the average, the Golden Eagle flight was late in the fall, lagging by about three weeks, presumably because October temperatures were very mild. This may have been a preview of the future.

The CBC indicated a continued decline in the number of **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, while **Cooper's Hawk** numbers have leveled off after their long period of increase following the DDT era. **Northern Goshawk** was reported from just five counties, compared to six, nine, and eleven counties the previous three winters. It went unreported on the Pennsylvania CBC for first time since 1965. This dwindling is consistent with a steep population decline and the ending of irruptions in the Great Lakes region since West Nile Virus arrived on this continent in 1999.

Bald Eagle numbers in both CBC and WRS were the highest on record. Following some exceptionally late fall reports of **Broad-winged Hawk**, one was seen in *York* Dec 19. **Red-shouldered Hawk** numbers were the highest on record for the WRS and second highest for the CBC. **Red-tailed Hawk** numbers in both CBC and WRS were consistent with a slow continued decline following their peak level of the mid-2000s, mostly attributable to northern birds not migrating as far south as previously. A **Red-tailed Hawk-Red-shouldered Hawk** hybrid was in *Montgomery*.

Rough-legged Hawk was found in 41 counties, comparable to the 42, 27, and 48 counties of the previous three winters. However, it was the 11th consecutive winter of low counts according to WRS and the 10 Rough-legged Hawks in the CBC was the lowest total since 1962. eBird shows that Rough-legged Hawks tend to concentrate in southern Ontario and upstate New York during winter, so it does not take long for them to fly here when winter conditions become severe there. There was an uptick in numbers here during January, but most apparently returned north soon after winter conditions eased.

Barn Owl was reported from *Adams, Franklin, Juniata,* and *Lancaster*. When 384 **Great Horned Owls** were recorded in the 2020-2021 CBC, it appeared that this species might have begun to emerge from a long period of apparent West Nile Virus-related decline, as the average from the prior five seasons was 271 (range of 236-300). However, the 265 Great Horned Owls in the recent CBC made the 384 total seem like a one-year aberration. There was a modest showing of **Snowy Owls**, as it was reported from eight counties: *Armstrong, Crawford, Erie,* and *McKean* in the northwest; *Northumberland* in the central; and *Berks, Lancaster,* and *Montgomery* in the southeast.

Long-eared Owl was reported from eight counties, compared to 11, 10, and 9 the previous three winters. Only seven were

reported in the CBC, the fewest since 1990. It is possible that some are not entered into eBird to prevent roost disturbance. **Short-eared Owl** was reported from 26 counties compared to 36, 20, and 34 the previous three winters. Only six were reported on the CBC.

The Picidae continued their trend of generally faring well. The 963 **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** in the CBC was a new statewide high and followed several years of roller-coaster tallies, which is not a typical pattern for them (see the CBC Figure 2 for their recent distribution). The 6173 **Red-bellied Woodpeckers** was also a new statewide CBC high, with recent years showing an enhanced tendency for alternating lower and higher tallies.

Red-headed Woodpecker was reported in average numbers, from 31 counties: nine from the west and 21 from the central and east, similar to the 25-33 counties where it was found during the previous three winters. The CBC reported 71 Red-headed Woodpeckers compared to a 10-year average of 52. However, in *Adams*, where it attains some of its highest Pennsylvania densities, it was mainly limited to traditional areas, especially the northeast corner and Gettysburg National Military Park, the pattern observed when it is not particularly abundant.

The Falconidae continued established trends. **American Kestrel** numbers were about average in both CBC and WRS. **Merlins** continued to become increasingly common during winter. The CBC suggested a small resurgence in **Peregrine Falcon** numbers.

Say's Phoebe was the only uncommon flycatcher, at *Montgomery*. **White-eyed Vireo**, a winter rarity here, was in *Chester*. **Blue-headed Vireo** continued as one of the more common winter rarities, being found in *Allegheny*, *Clarion*, *Montgomery*, and *Philadelphia* (2 locations).

Northern Shrike was reported from 19 counties, mostly in the northwest and north central, compared to 14-16 counties the previous three winters. While common in southern Ontario and around Lakes Erie and Ontario, this was the eight consecutive winter with relatively few shrikes, according to the CBC. The **Common Raven** expansion continued, rivaling that of the Bald Eagle. The number of **Black-capped Chickadees** tallied during the most recent CBC was about two-thirds the number tallied the previous winter, when there was an observed influx of irruptives. This suggests that irruptive chickadees can make up as much as one-third of the

wintering **Black-capped Chickadee** population.

Hirundinidae presence continued to be favored by warming winters. **Northern Rough-winged Swallow**, first discovered wintering here in 2005, was found throughout the period at the NE Water Treatment Plant, *Philadelphia*, with a high of 130 on Jan 8, though dwindling after mid-Jan. Smaller numbers were at five other Philadelphia locations; up to 30 along the Schuylkill R., *Montgomery*; and up to 21 along the Yellow Breeches Creek, *Cumberland*, just west of the Susquehanna R. **Tree Swallow** was in *Montgomery* and *Philadelphia*, while **Barn Swallow** was in *Philadelphia*.

Ruby-crowned Kinglets were unusually abundant, with the vast majority being found south of the mountains, where the climate tends to be milder (see CBC Fig 2). **Golden-crowned Kinglet** numbers in the CBC were about average, after a low number the previous winter. **Red-breasted Nuthatch** appeared to show a moderate echo flight.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was comparatively scarce, as it was reported from only two *Philadelphia* locations. **House Wren** reports were typical, from *Bucks*, *Chester* (3 locations), *Erie*, and *Philadelphia*. **Marsh Wren** was more frequent than usual, being found in 6 counties: *Centre*, *Chester*, *Lebanon*, *Lehigh*, *Montgomery* (2 locations), and *York*.

Frugivores had excellent showings, although this reflects how the invasive bushes and vines are providing much of the sustaining food. **Gray Catbird** was recorded in one of its highest ever winter densities. It was found in 41 counties, present in all regions but at its highest densities near Philadelphia. High winter densities have happened here occasionally in the past, according to the CBC, so it will be interesting to see what happens in coming winters. This species is a candidate for behaving like other frugivores that have been overwintering in increasing numbers. **Hermit Thrush** have been increasing during the winter and had their best winter showing yet, being found in many locations, while densest in southeast and the central valleys (see CBC Figure 2). The CBC set a new statewide record with 710 Hermit Thrushes. High tallies of **American Robin** and **Cedar Waxwing** were recorded in the CBC and they remained common at many places throughout the winter. Uncommon thrushes included **Swainson's Thrush** in *Elk* and a **Wood Thrush** reported from the Lebanon County CBC.

The **American Pipit** count in the CBC was one of its highest, concentrated in the southeast, as is the norm.

After the excellent Fringillidae showing during the winter of 2020-2021, **Purple Finch** was the only irruptive finch species to appear in decent numbers and they tended to be localized. The results corroborated the winter finch forecast of Hoar (2021).

Evening Grosbeak was reported from just three counties, *Clarion*, *Dauphin*, and *Lycoming*, compared to the 38 counties the previous winter. However, next winter may well be different, for even during the peak spruce budworm period of the 1970s and 1980s, Evening Grosbeaks, who seek out spruce budworm caterpillars, tended to irrupt here in big numbers about every other year. (The current spruce budworm outbreak in eastern Canada continues.) The 338 **Purple Finches** in the CBC compared to 542 the previous year indicated only a modest drop-off, as was expected for a spruce budworm finch that commonly winters in the U.S. (Hoar 2021).

While **Common Redpoll** was common around the Great Lakes, in Pennsylvania it was restricted to five northwestern and north-central counties: *Cameron*, *Centre*, *Crawford*, *Erie*, and *Lycoming*. In comparison, it was found in 62 counties the previous winter.

Red Crossbill was reported in decent numbers for a non-irruption year. It was in 13 counties, mostly at higher elevations: *Butler*, *Elk*, *Forest*, *McKean*, and *Warren* in the northwest; *Westmoreland* in the southwest; *Centre*, *Clearfield*, *Lycoming*, and *Tioga* in the north central; and *Sullivan*, *Luzerne*, and *Monroe* in the northeast. In comparison, it was found in 22 counties the previous winter. **White-winged Crossbill** reports were limited to two from the CBC, in *Berks* and *Lancaster*. **Pine Siskin** was largely absent, with just 29 reported in the CBC.

The distributions of **Lapland Longspur** and **Snow Bunting** were reflective of the winter's moderately severe conditions. Lapland Longspur was found in 20 counties and Snow Bunting was found in 25 counties, compared to last winter's 36 and 43, respectively, when there was more and earlier snow. Many more Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings were found in Ohio and New York near Lakes Erie and Ontario than were found in Pennsylvania.

The CBC reported excellent totals for **Chipping Sparrow**, **Fox Sparrow**, **White-throated Sparrow**, and **Eastern Towhee**, but low totals for **American Tree Sparrow** and **Dark-eyed Junco**. These magnitudes

appear to be climate related. According to the CBC, American Tree Sparrows have been declining for some time, but more rapidly since around 2000, while the Dark-eyed Junco deficit has been more sudden (see CBC report).

Seven uncommon sparrow species were also reported, plus one subspecies, an excellent result for Pennsylvania. **Grasshopper Sparrow** was in *Lehigh* and *Snyder*. **Clay-colored Sparrow** was in six eastern counties: *Bucks*, *Lancaster*, *Luzerne*, *Montgomery*, *Northampton*, and *Philadelphia*, an unusually high total here. **Lark Sparrow** was in *Cumberland*. **Oregon Junco** was in *Blair* and *Indiana*. **Harris's Sparrow** was in *Adams*. **Vesper Sparrow** was in *Adams*, *Bucks*, *Clinton*, and *Lancaster*. **Nelson's Sparrow**, possibly the rarest of these sparrows here in winter, was in *Cumberland*. **Lincoln's Sparrow** was in six counties: *Centre*, *Delaware*, *Lebanon*, *Mifflin*, *Philadelphia*, and *Pike*.

Yellow-breasted Chat, the only member of the Icteriidae family, was in *Philadelphia*.

Large blackbird flocks were relatively scarce this past winter. While the 94,000 **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Brown-headed Cowbirds**, and **Common Grackles** in the CBC were more than in three of the past four winters, this total was not historically high. The large blackbird flocks of the past were commonly attracted to waste grain in agricultural fields and modern harvests leave less. The blackbird highlights were largely separate from large flocks. The one exception was a **Yellow-headed Blackbird** in a blackbird flock in southern *Lancaster*. There was an excellent showing for **Eastern Meadowlark**, as it was reported from 39 counties, compared to 28, 17, and 18 counties the previous three winters. In

Adams, 31 meadowlarks were counted in one flock. **Bullock's Oriole** was in *Greene* and *Huntingdon*. **Baltimore Oriole** was sporadic, found in *Bucks*, *Centre*, *Montgomery*, and *Philadelphia*. **Brewer's Blackbird** was in *Lawrence* and *Washington*.

It was a superb winter for **Parulidae** sightings, with 15 species reported, plus an additional subspecies. **Ovenbird** was in *Philadelphia*, continuing its odd tendency to be found in cities during winter. **Black-and-white Warbler** was in *Dauphin* and *Philadelphia* (2 locations). Two spruce budworm warblers, both rare in winter, appeared here for the second consecutive winter, reflecting the ongoing spruce budworm infestation: **Tennessee Warbler** in *Allegheny* and *Washington* and **Cape May Warbler** in *Montour*. **Nashville Warbler** was in *Centre* and *Philadelphia* (2 locations). **Northern Parula** was in *Centre*. **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, another winter rarity, was in *Erie* and *Philadelphia*. An **Audubon's Warbler**, the western race of **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, was in *Centre*. **Yellow-throated Warbler** was in *Juniata*. **Black-throated Green Warbler**, also a winter rarity, was in *Lebanon* and *Philadelphia*. **Wilson's Warbler** was in *Lebanon*.

Yellow-rumped Warbler, by far the most common wintering warbler here, had been declining in the state CBC since about 1999. However, the CBC total was the best in 14 years, mostly concentrated in the southwest and the southeast (see CBC Figure 2).

Uncommon **Cardinalidae** are often a winter highlight because of their beauty and tendency to reappear at specific feeders and be viewed by many, but this winter's showing was modest in both number and

site fidelity. **Western Tanager** was in *Berks* for several weeks. An **Indigo Bunting** was briefly seen in *Butler*. **Painted Bunting** was seen in *Chester* for one morning, while the male that has wintered since 2016 in *Bowmansville*, *Lancaster*, returned, but was infrequently seen. **Dickcissels** in *Delaware* and *Lancaster* were present for short periods and seen by many.

References

Hoar, T. 2021. Winter Finch Forecast 2021-2022.
<http://www.finchnetwork.org/winter-finch-forecast-2021-2022-by-tyler-hoar>.

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Ruby-crowned Kinglet in a yard in Bucks 19 February. (Kerry Loux)



One of a group of confiding Golden-crowned Kinglets in Linhart Park, Allegheny 7 January. (Christopher Turbert)

Birds of Note – December 2021 through February 2022

This report summarizes unexpected species reported in Pennsylvania for this period. As a general rule birds must have been recorded in five or fewer counties to qualify for inclusion here, but rare species recorded more frequently, or irregular species exhibiting an unusual seasonal occurrence, are also included. “Listserv” indicates records deemed credible which were gleaned from the PABIRDS listserv for counties with no reporting compiler. “eBird” indicates valid records deemed credible which were entered into the eBird database for counties with no reporting compiler.

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

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

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

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

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

*Pink-footed Goose** – *Lehigh*: one at Altburtis Rd retention ponds 12/7-25 (Jeff Vinosky, m.ob.) and seen on the Lehigh Valley CBC, also at Nestlé Way retention ponds 12/26-27, thought to be same bird as in Montgomery; *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park for second consecutive year 12/5-7 (Stephen Kerr, m.ob.).

*Barnacle Goose** – *Bucks*: one at Pine Run Dam and Delaware Valley Univ. 1/8-26 (Tom Fahie, m.ob.); *Chester*: one at Rolling Green Memorial Park and nearby locations 12/10-15 (Ross Gallardy, m.ob.); *Delaware*: one at Brinton Lake 12/16-17 (Adrian Binns, Debbie Beer) and at Springton Reservoir and Springton Lake Middle School 1/14-16 (m.ob.); *Lehigh*: one at Tillage Rd fields 2/18 (Jeff Hopkins, m.ob.).

*Tundra Swan (Bewick’s race)** – *Lancaster*: one at Middle Creek WMA 1/23-2/18 (Jeremy Kleinberg, m.ob.), a potential new state record.

Blue-winged Teal – *Cumberland*: one at West Fairview Park 2/27 (Josh McCoy); *Philadelphia*: up to 4 at John Heinz NWR throughout Dec (m.ob.).

Eurasian Wigeon – *Monroe*: one, possibly this species, at Cherry Valley NWR 1/5 (Scott Angus); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 2/12-14 (Paul Heveran).

Green-winged Teal (Eurasian race) – *Philadelphia*: one at FDR Park 2/17-20 (Holger Pflieck, m.ob.), one at John Heinz NWR 2/18-19 (Rich Zeigler).

*Tufted Duck** – *Lancaster/Lebanon*: one at Middle Creek WMA 2/24 to end of period (Roger Higbee, Margaret Higbee, Linda Wagner), a potential fourth state record and first for each county.

*Barrow’s Goldeneye** – *Washington*: one at Washington Reservoir #4 1/13-15 (Sayre Greenfield).

*Eared Grebe** – *Chester*: one at Marsh Creek SP 1/22-23 (Paul Dietz, Jeff Kenney, Ashley Rathman).

Eurasian Collared-Dove – *Berks*: up to 6 at Shartlesville (m.ob.); *Franklin*: regular reports from the south-central established colonies, with a high of 47.

Rufous Hummingbird – *Chester*: a female continued in Pottstown until 1/9 and another female was in Paoli 1/9-22 and banded there (Sandy Lockerman); *Juniata*: one at Richfield continued until mid-Jan (Norann Kauffman).

Virginia Rail – *Chester*: up to 5 at the ChesLen Preserve 12/5-1/3, with 4 recorded on West Chester CBC 12/18 (Jeff Kenney, Angela Detweiler, m.ob.).

Common Gallinule – *Allegheny*: fresh remains found in Jefferson Hills 12/21 (*fide* Bob Mulvihill).

Purple Sandpiper – *Erie*: one seen on Erie CBC 12/18 (Kendall Zook).

Least Sandpiper – *Berks*: 2 at Spring Creek inflow to Blue Marsh Lake 12/8 (Elaine Hendricks), a first Dec county record; *Indiana*: one at Yellow Creek SP beach 12/21 (Sue

Dickson, Court Harding, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, Debbie Kalbfleisch); *York*: 2 at Sheppard-Myers Reservoir 1/4 (Rob Reiter).

Spotted Sandpiper – *Mifflin*: one along the Juniata River at Victory Park 1/3 (Rob Dickerson).

Laughing Gull – *Philadelphia*: up to 7 at Pennypack on the Delaware during Dec.

*Common Gull** – *Bucks*: one at Nockamixon SP 2/27 (Kevin Fox).

*California Gull** – *Bucks*: one at Tullytown landfill during Southern Bucks CBC 12/18 (George Armistead, Liam Hart, Tom Johnson, Jason Weckstein), the county’s third documented record.

*Glaucous-winged Gull** – *Bucks*: immature bird at Nockamixon SP 2/20-26 (Kevin Fox, m.ob.), presumably the same bird that was in Montgomery; *Montgomery*: immature bird at Green Lane Park 2/12 (Jason Hall), a potential first state record.

American White Pelican – *Fayette*: one flying over Green Run Lake 2/26 (Kerry Bell); *Huntingdon*: one seen high above the Lake Raystown visitor’s center 2/28 (Alicia Palmer), also seen on the water a few days earlier, a first county record.

American Bittern – *Berks*: one at Lake Ontelaunee 12/12 (Todd Underwood); *Dauphin*: one near Millersburg 12/28-1/8 and seen on Curtin CBC 12/28 (Scott & Stephanie Bills); *Erie*: one at Tom Ridge Environmental Center 12/8 (Brian Gula).

Great Egret – *Delaware*: one at John Heinz NWR 1/9 (Deborah Hansen, Jim McConnell) and 2/6 (Kristy Eleftheriou); *Philadelphia*: numerous, with up to 13 at Southwest Water Treatment Plant 12/10-29 (Adrian Binns, Debbie Beer, Holger Pflieck).

*Cattle Egret** – *Greene*: one relocated in Centre Twp 12/10-23 (Shannon Thompson).

Black-crowned Night-Heron – *Allegheny*: an immature at Fox Chapel Marina 12/12 (*fide* Adrian Fenton, m.ob.); *Montgomery*: an immature at Lake View Shopping Center, Royersford 1/23-26 (Todd Underwood, m.ob.).

Osprey – *Chester* or *Lancaster*: one on Western Chester County CBC; *Mercer*: one in Transfer 12/3 (Kim Springer).

Broad-winged Hawk – *York*: one in eastern part of the county 12/19 during Southern Lancaster County CBC (Randy Phillips, Steve Wildasin), thought to be first county winter record.

Barn Owl – *Adams*: one at Virginia Mills 12/20 (Tony Arnold); *Franklin*: up to 2 in the St Thomas-Edenville area; *Lancaster*: one at Muddy Run Reservoir 12/19 (Tom Amico).

*Say’s Phoebe** – *Montgomery*: one Dixon Meadows Preserve 12/2-5 (Carol Bean, m.ob.), presumably re-found from 11/11.

White-eyed Vireo – *Chester*: one at Bryn Coed Preserve 12/5 (Ross Gallardy), likely re-found from 11/21.

Blue-headed Vireo – *Allegheny*: one in an Oakmont yard 12/17 (Ron Burkert); *Clarion*: one heard singing along the Redbank Valley Trail near Rimersburg 12/13 (Carole Winslow); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 1/1 (Andrew Dolan, Edward Dolan) and one at Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust 1/4 (Gail Johnson); *Philadelphia*: one at Pennypack on the Delaware 12/4 (Maria Pacheco) and one at Wissahickon Valley Park 12/18 (Keith Russell).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow – *Cumberland*: up to 21 at New Cumberland Borough Park 12/18-23 and recorded on Harrisburg CBC (Ramsay Koury); *Montgomery*: up to 30 at Oaks wastewater treatment plant until 12/2 (Paul Driver), present to 1/8 (Steve Grunwald); *Philadelphia*: at six locations (m.ob.).

Barn Swallow – *Philadelphia*: one at Northwest Water Treatment Plant through 2/8 (Christopher Hinkle, m.ob.).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – *Philadelphia*: one at Lardner's Point Park 12/4-1/8 (Patrick McGill, m.ob.) and one at Laurel Hill Cemetery 1/8 (Bernice Koplin).

House Wren – *Berks*: one during Reading CBC 12/19; *Bucks*: one in Bedminster Twp. during Central Bucks County CBC 12/26 (Eddie Parmum); *Chester*: one at Hibernia County Park 12/18-19 (RR) and recorded on Western Chester County CBC, one at Oxford Walmart Wetlands 12/24 (Joe Sebastiani), and one at Bucktoe Creek Preserve during Dec; *Erie*: one at Leo's 12/4 (Fred Losi); *Philadelphia*: one at FDR Park 12/27 (Holger Pflücke).

Marsh Wren – *Centre*: 2 at Dreibelbis Birding Area 12/24 (Carl Engstrom); *Chester*: 2 at ChesLen Preserve 12/24 (Richard Candler); *Lebanon*: one continued at Snitz Creek Park 12/4 (Jonathan Heller); *Lehigh*: one during Lehigh Valley CBC 12/18 (Jason Horn); *Montgomery*: one at Gwynedd Wildlife Preserve 12/15-1/24 (August Mirabella), 1-2 at Valley Center Park 12/16-1/1 (Paul Driver); *York*: one at Richard M. Nixon County Park 2/20 (Nancy Heiser).

Swainson's Thrush – *Elk*: one feeding on holly berries along Rasselas Rd, audio-recorded 1/3 (Brendyn Baptiste).

Wood Thrush – *Lebanon*: one reported on Lebanon County CBC 12/18.

White-winged Crossbill – *Berks*: one seen on Hamburg CBC 12/26; *Lancaster*: a count-week bird on Lancaster CBC.

Grasshopper Sparrow – *Lehigh*: one at Buckery Rd 1/30-31 (John Becker, Elizabeth Brensinger); *Snyder*: one at Isle of Que Boat Access 2/13 (Andy Keister).

Clay-colored Sparrow – *Bucks*: one at Bradford Dam 1/30-2/1 (Gail Johnson, m.ob.); *Lancaster*: one at Middle Creek WMA 12/26 and recorded on Lititz CBC (Camaela Freed, Jonathan Heller); *Luzerne*: one at Plymouth Flats 12/9 through end of period (Jonathan DeBalko, m.ob.); *Montgomery*: one at Harleysville 2/11-13 (W. Brian Henderson); *Northampton*: one at Koch farm mid-Jan through end of period (Arlene Koch, m.ob.); *Philadelphia*: one at Army Corps of Engineers 12/5 (Debbie Beer, Peter Hamner, Holger Pflücke).

Lark Sparrow* – *Cumberland*: one along Mud Level Rd 1/7-19 (Vern Gauthier, m.ob.).

Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon race)* – *Blair*: one at Bell-Tip powerline cut 1/19 (John Carter); *Indiana*: one in Indiana yard during Dec-Jan (Joseph Pumford).

Harris's Sparrow* – *Adams*: one at a Winding Brook Rd feeder 1/14 (Aaron Rider), a new county record.

Vesper Sparrow – *Adams*: one in Freedom Twp. 1/19 (Tony Arnold); *Bucks*: one at Maple Knoll Farms 1/15-2/16 (Richard Smith, m.ob.); *Clinton*: one at South Avis fields 1/29 (Sarah Lindgren); *Lancaster*: 2 at Middle Creek WMA 12/26 and recorded on Lititz CBC (Camaela Freed, Jonathan Heller).

Nelson's Sparrow – *Cumberland*: one at Winding Hills Nature Trail 12/25 (Brett Matlock), a possible first state winter record.

Yellow-breasted Chat – *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz NWR 1/10-24 (Angelo DelloMargio, m.ob.).

Yellow-headed Blackbird* – *Lancaster*: an immature near Peach Bottom with a blackbird flock 1/27 (Eric Zawatski).

Bullock's Oriole* – *Greene*: one at a Perry Twp feeder 1/7 through end of period (Mary LaPlante); *Huntingdon*: one at a Huntingdon residence 1/2 and also seen a few days earlier.

Brewer's Blackbird* – *Lawrence*: one at a Shaner Rd residence 1/29-30 (Steve Gosser); *Washington*: a male at Parkview Rd 1/30 (Ryan Tomazin).

Ovenbird – *Philadelphia*: one in University City neighborhood 12/13 (Jennifer Sheffield).

Black-and-white Warbler – *Dauphin*: one in Harrisburg 12/1 (Ed Bernot); *Philadelphia*: one along the Schuylkill R. 2/5 (Daniel Singer) and one at Southwest Water Treatment Plant 12/29 (Holger Pflücke).

Tennessee Warbler – *Allegheny*: one at Shadyside 12/18 (Thomas Connor); *Washington*: one in North Strabane Twp. 1/29 (James Offhaus), a first county winter record.

Nashville Warbler – *Centre*: one at Dreibelbis Birding Area 12/31 (John Carter); *Philadelphia*: one at FDR Park 1/6 and one at Army Corps of Engineers 1/15 (m.ob.).

Cape May Warbler – *Montour*: one at the Montour Preserve 12/4 (Deb Young).

Northern Parula – *Centre*: one at Egg Hill Rd 12/9 (Debra Rittelmann).

Black-throated Blue Warbler – *Erie*: male at a feeder 1/14-25 (Katie Andersen), a first winter county record; *Philadelphia*: one at Temple Univ. 12/5 (Maria Pacheco).

Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's race)* – *Centre*: one along Bald Eagle Creek during Bald Eagle SP CBC 12/28 (Nick Bolgiano).

Yellow-throated Warbler – *Juniata*: one at Cocolamus Dam 1/16 (fide Aden Troyer).

Black-throated Green Warbler – *Lebanon*: one at Swatara SP 12/16 (Ted Keen); *Philadelphia*: one along Schuylkill R. 12/25-26 (Joel Rurik, Martin Dellwo).

Wilson's Warbler – *Lebanon*: one at Clear Spring Hollow 12/26 (Brandon Brown, Brian Brown, Justin Felty, Nate Felty).

Western Tanager* – *Berks*: a female type was at a Bloody Springs Rd feeder north of Strausstown 2/18-3/2 (Chuck Cravotta), a first county record.

Indigo Bunting – *Butler*: a female at a Stormy Oaks Nature Conservancy Wildbird Recovery feeder 1/28 (Lisa Busa).

Painted Bunting* – *Chester*: a male near West Grove 2/16 (Timothy Boyd); *Lancaster*: a male at Bowmansville for an eighth winter 1/21 and infrequently thereafter.

Dickcissel – *Delaware*: one at a Lansdowne feeder 12/4-2/5 (Sean Gallagher, Walter Randall, m.ob.); *Lancaster*: one at Noel Dorwart Park 2/7-17 (Dan Keener, m.ob.).

Photographic Highlights



Gadwall at Trout Pond Park, Lycoming 22 February. (Mike Anderson)



Green-winged Teal at Gettysburg College, Adams 19 January. (Andy Wilson)

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Wild Turkeys at Quarry Road, Westmoreland 29 December. (Tom Kuehl)



Mourning Dove, stoically waiting out an ice storm at West Chester, Chester 25 February; conditions which sometimes cost tail feathers, if not worse. (Soumyajit Roy)



Wintering **Sandhill Cranes** at Octoraro Reservoir, Chester, seen here 23 January. (Meredith Lombard)



Ring-billed Gull at Pittsburgh, *Allegheny* 8 February, with fishing lure hooked on bill. (*Dean Newhouse*)



Immature **Golden Eagle** at confluence of Lackawaxen and Delaware Rivers, *Pike* 23 January. (*Jeffrey Sidle*)



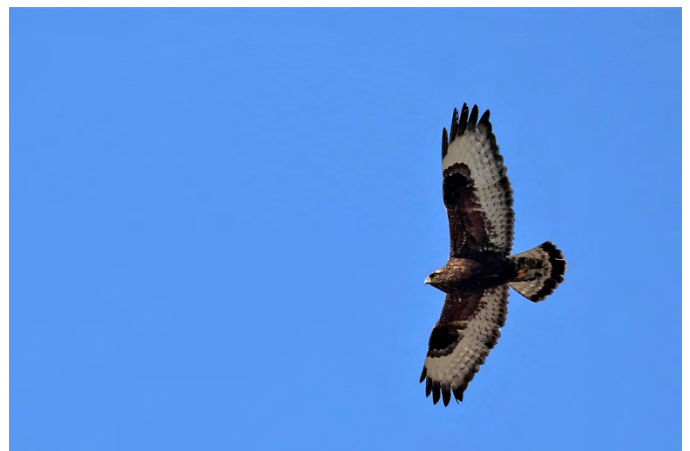
Northern Harrier in action at Blanchard, *Centre* 21 February. (*Bob Snyder*)



Cooper's Hawk ready to launch in Lower Yoder Twp., *Cambria* 27 January. (*David Poder*)



Red-shouldered Hawk spotted during a Winter Raptor Survey in *Fayette* 21 January. (*Mark McConaughy*)



Dark morph **Rough-legged Hawk** at Miller Ponds, *Crawford* 21 February. (*Jeffrey Hall*)



Snowy Owl near Bradford, *McKean* 18 December. (*Pat Frantz Cercone*)



Barred Owl at Wampum, *Beaver* 18 December. (*Mark Vass*)



Immature **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at South Park, *Allegheny* 25 January. (*John Flannigan*)



Merlin at Cherry Valley NWR, *Monroe* 13 December. (*Nancy Tully*)



Peregrine Falcon dining on European Starling at Hopewell Twp. Recreation Area, *York* 2 December. (*Bob Reiter*)



Northern Shrike at Rose Valley Lake, *Lycoming* from October through December (here 4 December). (*Bobby Brown*)



Carolina Chickadee at Church Valley Greenway, Allegheny 12 February. (Christopher Turbert)



Winter Wren in East Donegal Twp., Lancaster 20 December. (Bill Libhart)



An uncommon species in winter, this **Brown Thrasher** was at Core Creek SP, Bucks 9 (here 16) January-9 February. (Kerry Loux)



Cedar Waxwing at Gifford Pinchot SP, York 21 January. (Tom Stoddard)



American Pipit at South Avis, Clinton 31 January. (Wayne Laubscher)



Clay-colored Sparrow found at the Koch property in Williams Twp., Northampton in mid-(here 20) January; remained through end of season. (Dave DeReamus)



Gambel's subspecies (or an intergrade) **White-crowned Sparrow** photographed here upon appearance at a private residence in *Cumberland 15*, continuing through the season; note lack of black lores. (Timothy Johnson)



White-throated Sparrow at Seneca, *Venango* 8 December. (Meg Kolodick)



A rare winter species in central Pennsylvania, this **Savannah Sparrow** was in *Spring Mills, Centre* 25 January. (Debra Rittelmann)



Bullock's Oriole present near *Huntingdon, Huntingdon* a few days before being photographed and last seen 2 January; second county record after one at *Decorum* in 2012. (Jessica Meck)

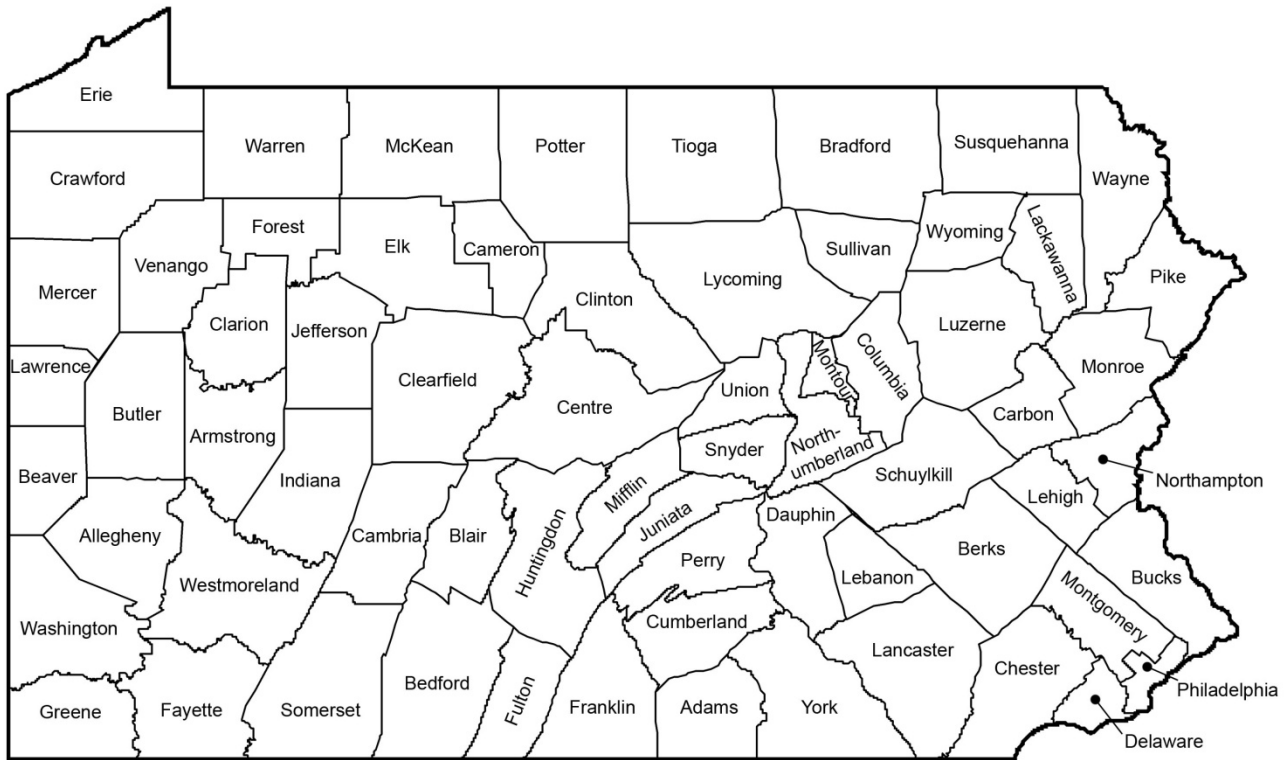


Northern Parula at *Spring Mills, Centre* 9 December; a first or second winter record for the county. (Debra Rittelmann)



Providing the first *Berks* record, this **Western Tanager** was in *Upper Bern Twp.* beginning about 18 (here 27) February into March. (Russ Hoffman)

Local Notes – December 2021 through February 2022



ABBREVIATION

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

eBird Usage: Data for these reports and throughout this journal include observations collected from the eBird database <<http://www.ebird.org>>. Citation: eBird. 2012. eBird: An online database of bird distribution and abundance [web application]. eBird, Ithaca, New York. Available: <http://www.ebird.org>. (Accessed: 31 March 2014 abundance [web application]. eBird, Ithaca, New York. Available: <http://www.ebird.org>. (Accessed: 31 March 2014)

The following counties need a compiler: Bradford, Luzerne, McKean, Snyder, and Union.

Adams County

Locations: Gettysburg College (GC), Gettysburg Christmas Bird Count (GCBC), Gettysburg National Military Park (GNMP), Lake Heritage (LH), Lake Kay (LK), Long Pine Run Reservoir (LPRR), York Springs Christmas Bird Count (YSCBC).

A very balmy Dec, 6°F above average, gave way to average winter temperatures in Jan and Feb. The period was a bit on the dry side with rainfall 2.5 inches below average while experiencing 12 inches of total snowfall. Species count at 108 was on the high side for the period, but no specific group stood out as having a particularly strong showing. The 12/18 GCBC and the Adams portion of the 12/29 YSCBC results showed typical species counts of 74 and 68, respectively. The period's individual species' highlights included rare winter sightings of **Trumpeter Swan** and **Sandhill Crane** and a county-first **Harris's Sparrow**.

All five **Snow Goose** reports (m.ob.) were of single birds and included a blue-phase adult along Weikert Rd 1/6 (MP). Single **Cackling Geese** were at LH 1/26 (CM) and GC 12/8-1/26 (TA, ML, AW). **Mute Swans** continued to be found, but no report exceeded 2 birds.

The **Trumpeter Swan** was observed and photographed at GC 1/10 (DB). Its stay was short-lived as it was first seen mid-morning and was not seen later in the day. The bird had Ontario Project Wing Tag P42 and was named "Disco." This is the first winter sighting for the county.

Tundra Swan high count was 133 at Possum Hollow Rd 2/26 (PK). **Northern Shoveler** reporting was limited to a pair at L. Mae 2/21 (J&SD). Nice counts of 400 **Mallards** and 35 **American Black Ducks** were tallied at the Rt 94 quarry 2/22 (SK). A single **Canvasback** was at LPRR 2/25 (BK). Up to 15 **Redheads** were on LH 1/26 (BKu, CM), and a single was at LK 2/4-18 (BK, DR, AW). LK produced the only **Greater Scaup** report, a single 1/26-2/20 (BK, BO, AW). The four reports of **Lesser Scaup** were paced by a nice 35-count on the GCBC. The same GCBC produced a pair of **Long-tailed Ducks**. **Common Goldeneye** singles were reported at LPRR 12/5 (R&TGS) and GC 2/23 (LT, AW), while a pair were at LK

2/1-12 (BK, AW). Four **Red-breasted Mergansers** were at LK 2/18 (BK). The grebe family went unreported.

The first **Sandhill Crane** report was one at Freedom Twp 1/5 (MS). The second report involved a 10-bird flyover at Hanover 2/7 (CL). Single reports, all of single birds, were as follows: **American Woodcock** at Mountain Rd 2/27 (R&DS), **Wilson's Snipe** at Gettysburg 12/10 (BKu), **Bonaparte's Gull** at LPRR 12/1 (BK), and **Herring Gull** on the YSCBC. Birders enjoyed a strong **Northern Harrier** showing with up to 5 at Bigham Rd 12/24-2/20 and up to 15 at GNMP 12/31-2/28 (m.ob.). Not really expected this year, a dark-phase **Rough-legged Hawk** was seen at SGL 249 on 2/13 (DTy) and at Virginia Mills 2/20 (TA). The latter site, date, and observer also produced a vocal **Barn Owl** report. With harriers present in numbers, one would also expect **Short-eared Owl**. Up to 3 showed at Bigham Rd 12/30-1/22 (m.ob.) and up to 6 at GNMP 1/8-2/26 (m.ob.).

Red-headed Woodpecker reports were limited to traditional established areas, whereas strong overwintering years have shown a wider distribution. The northeast corner of the county captured in the YSCBC continues to show a nice overwintering population with 11 birds counted, and GNMP remains an overwintering spot as well. Four reports each of **Merlin** 12/27-2/19 (TA, MD, BL, LM) and **Peregrine Falcon** 12/3-1/19 (ANON, TA, CK, NK, AW) are higher than normal.

A power-line tower in Michaux SF was a rendezvous point for a flock of 17 **Common Ravens** 12/30 (R&TGS). Four sites reporting **Horned Lark** 12/27-2/19 (m.ob.) were paced by a 60-count along Hostetter Rd 12/27-28 (MD). The limited **Red-breasted Nuthatch** flight resulted in only five reports 12/20-2/26 (m.ob.). Four reports of **Winter Wren** 12/7-1/31 (CJ, BL, RM, DS) included a nice 3 count at Showers Tree Farm 12/17 (DS).

An **American Robin** flock guesstimated at 1600 birds was over GNMP 1/1 (JG, CK). The GCBC produced a **Gray Catbird**, and Cross Keys held one 1/29 (JH). **American Pipit** reports were limited to four sites with a high count of 4 along Red Rock Rd 1/8 (TA). Winter-time blues were exacerbated by no reports of either Purple Finch or Pine Siskin. However, a dozen **Snow Buntings** along Herr's Ridge Rd 1/17 (TA) brought some winter cheer to one lucky birder. The sole **American Tree Sparrow** report came from GNMP 2/22 (BL). **Fox Sparrow** reporting was also limited with one at MTN 12/17 (R&DS) and 4 on the YSCBC.

The highlight for the period, a **Harris's Sparrow**, showed up at a backyard feeder along Winding Brook Rd 1/14 (AR) producing a new species for the county. A photo, albeit of low quality, and the observer's eBird narrative enabled a positive identification of an adult bird. A good winter find was a **Vesper Sparrow** at Freedom Twp 1/19 (TA). Three reports of **Savannah Sparrows** 12/31-1/17 (m.ob.) were led by an 8 at GNMP 1/17 (TA). The CBCs produced the high counts for **Swamp Sparrow** of the four reports received: 8 on the YSCBC and 10 on the GCBC. **Eastern Towhees** were found all period with the YSCBC producing a nice 12 count.

Eastern Meadowlarks were found from 12/18-2/28 (m.ob.). With three sites close to each other of Bigham Rd, Freedom grasslands, and GNMP, which produced individual high counts of 31, 26, and 21 birds, respectively, one wonders whether those counts represented the same flock. **Red-winged Blackbird**, **Brown-headed Cowbird**, and **Common Grackle** were found in all months. A **Rusty Blackbird** was at Turkey Pit Rd 12/27 (LM), and an impressive 30 were counted at Chapel Rd 1/1 (JG, CK).

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Tate, David Taylor (DTy), Shannon Thompson, Laura Tierney, Keegan Tranquillo, Evan Vaeth, Charles Vickers, Andy Wilson.

Allegheny County

Locations: Allegheny River (AR), Boyce Park (BP), Dashields Dam (DD), Duck Hollow (DH), Findlay Township (FT), Fox Chapel (FCH), Frick Park (FRP), Homewood Cemetery (HC), Indiana Township (INT), North Park (NP), Oakmont (OAK), Ohio River (OR), Pine Township (PT), The Point in Pittsburgh (PNT), Riverview Park (RP), Sharpsburg (SHP), South Park (SOP), West Deer Township (WDT), Wingfield Pines (WP).

Weather was quite varied during the season with rain all day during the Pittsburgh CBC, a cold spell in late January with a brief freezing of the rivers, an ice storm and a snowstorm. The frigid conditions brought rare gulls to the county for a week or two, but some were only seen for a day. Ducks increased in diversity as well, but it was not an exceptional winter. Black Vulture reports were fairly regular as this species has become more common here in recent years.

A **Ross's Goose** was found at Hampton Twp. Community Park 12/31 (DN), and surprisingly one was also found that day on Moody Road in FT (MV). The Ross's in Hampton was in the park up to 1/3 and was reported from other nearby locations in and around NP up to 1/15 (m.ob.). The FT bird was relocated on Moody Road 1/14-15 (DBe, MV). A **Cackling Goose** was on the OR near DD 12/17 (MV).

Tundra Swans were in the area in Jan with a flock of 10 flying over OAK 1/5 (RB), and 11 over FRP 1/6 (MK). Two flew over WDT 1/9 (LC), 6 flew over Marshall Twp. 1/10 (eBird), and one was at DD 1/29 (AP).

Two **American Wigeons** were at a small wetland in Harmar Twp. 1/3 (DN). A male was on a small pond along Rte 30 in Clinton 1/9-2/15 (MV, m.ob.), and likely the same bird was just down the road at Janoski's Farm 2/12-27 (AH, MV, m.ob.). Two were on the AR in Blawnox 2/12 (JV, SV, OL). A pair was at Beechwood Farms 2/24-25 (DM). Surprisingly uncommon here, this winter provided a good number of reports. Two **Gadwalls** were at the Harmar Marsh most of Dec (m.ob.). One was at Chapel Harbor 1/3 (JV, SV), one was at the Moody Road Ponds in FT 1/11 (MV), and likely the same bird was at nearby locations though 2/16 (m.ob.). Four were at Brunots Island 1/29 (LKL), and one at WP 1/29-2/21 (BM, m.ob.). A male **Northern Shoveler** was a nice find at NP 2/23 (JCK). A **Northern Pintail** was at Janoski's Farm in FT 1/2-2/12 (MV). Another was at WP 1/21-2/17 (eBird, m.ob.).

A **Canvasback** was at WP 1/21-2/7 (JF, m.ob.), a female was at DD 1/27 (DBe), 4 were at DH 1/29 (AF), 2 were at Brunots Island on the OR 1/30 (JF, JP), 3 were at the Highland Park Bridge 1/31 (RB), a male was at the SHP Marina 2/5 (JV, SV, OL, MF), and 5 were at Brunots Island 2/16 (RB). Four to 5 **Redheads** were at DD 1/27-29 (DBe, AK), 12 at Imperial 2/27-28 (MV, m.ob.), one on the AR in Lawrenceville 1/30 (LFH), 2 at Emsworth Dam 1/30 (JF, JP), and 2 at SHP 2/13 (IF). **Redheads** were at Brunots Island 1/17-2/27 (DBe, m.ob.) with a high of 30 on 1/26 (DNe, NN). Four were at Highland Park 2/14-27 (m.ob.). **Ring-necked Duck**, **Greater Scaup**, and **Lesser Scaup** were reported.

Four **White-winged Scoters** were on the AR at Verona 1/29 (MF). A **Long-tailed Duck** was at DH 1/9-26 (m.ob.) and 2 in Verona 1/19 (AH, PM). **Bufflehead**, **Common Goldeneye**, and **Hooded Merganser** were all reported. **Common Merganser** has become increasingly common over the years, and this winter the totals were quite high including 54 on the AR in Verona 1/19 (AH, PM, AP), 70 at DD on the OR 1/30 (AK), and 58 at Brunots Island on the OR 2/6 (BM, KG). **Red-breasted Merganser** reports included 8 at PNT 1/16 (KS), up to 3 at DH 1/23-27 (LK, m.ob.), one at DD 1/29 (MF), one at Verona 1/31 (MD), and one at SHP 2/5 (IF, AH). Five **Ruddy Ducks** were at DD 1/8 (AF), one was at PNT 2/5 (m.ob.), and one was at DH 1/22-29 (MF, m.ob.).

A **Red-necked Grebe** on the AR was seen from the SHP Docks 2/7 (BH, AP). The fresh remains of a **Common Gallinule** in Jefferson Hills 12/21 (*vide* BMu) were a surprising discovery so late in the year. A flock of **Killdeer** at SOP lingered through Dec (MM, JF, m.ob.). The high count was 38 birds 12/19. A late or wintering bird was at WP 1/8-22 (DNe, AF).

A brief cold snap in late Jan to early Feb brought some notable gulls

to PNT. The **Herring Gull** max count was 1200 on 2/8 (ST). A first-winter **Iceland Gull** was present 1/27-29 (BC, m.ob.) and a second winter bird was there 2/5 (BC, m.ob.). An adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was first found 1/26 (BC) and up to 2 were seen regularly to 2/7 (m.ob.). An adult **Glaucous Gull** was present 2/5 (BC, m.ob.) but not relocated after that day. **Great Black-backed Gull** was the most numerous with 3 appearing 1/29 (JF, m.ob.) and one or 2 from 1/31-2/8 (m.ob.). A great count of 10 were present 2/5 (BC) that included 4 adults, a first winter, 2 second winter, a third winter, and the remainder not specified to age. One was at McKees Rocks 2/5 (JF, AF).

A nice count of 33 **Double-crested Cormorants** were at Emsworth Dam 2/6 (AK). An immature **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was a surprise at the FCH Marina 12/12 (*fide* AF, m.ob.).

Black Vultures were reported fairly regularly. One in FCH in early Jan (SDA, BS), often perched with Turkey Vultures, wore a red wing tag, but the number was not visible. A bird two years ago in the same area had a red wing tag, so it may have been the same bird. One was photographed in Monroeville 1/18 (CT). Five were in FCH 2/24 and 2 on 2/26 (GM). One was also described in eBird by Ben Avon 2/26. **Turkey Vultures** were reported throughout the winter. Once very rare here in winter, the past few years they have been present all season.

A light morph **Rough-legged Hawk** was in FT 1/28-2/7 (MV, m.ob.). **Merlins** were scattered in the county. Up to 2 were present at Schenley Park the entire season (m.ob.) at the longstanding roost site at the golf course. Other reports include single birds at Highbury Park in INT 1/1 (DYE), OAK 1/5 (eBird), RP 1/6 (eBird, ph.), in a yard in INT 1/12 (BS), McCandless Twp. 1/22 (EPH, EHo), and HC 12/28-2/13 (MK, JC). One was in PT2/8 (KC), one was reported in FRP from mid-Dec to 2/23 (m.ob.) which could have been the same bird seen in HC, which is across the road from the park. One was at FCH Marina 2/16 (RB) and one was in Mellon Park 2/18 (MKu).

A late **Eastern Phoebe** was in INT 12/19 (BS). A very late **Blue-headed Vireo** was photographed in a yard in OAK 12/17 (RB). The **American Crow** roost moved from its usual location in Oakland this year. For weeks, the birds' choice of an overnight roost was a mystery until they were discovered on the North Side of Pittsburgh. High counts include 4400 on 1/18 (RB), 3000 on 1/26 (ST), and 3500 on 1/28 (ST). A bird with white in the wings was spotted in Mount Lebanon 12/21 (SS). High counts of **Fish Crows** included 65 at FRP 12/11 (MK), 25 at Duquesne University 1/11 (TC), and 19 at Squirrel Hill 2/21 (MKu). **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** is very uncommon here in winter. Two were seen during the CBC at RP 1/1 (MJT), one at WP 1/3-10 (DNe, et al.), and one in WDT 2/7 (LC).

Hermit Thrush winters in small numbers. Up to 2 were at Beechwood Farms Dec to Feb (m.ob.). Most of the reports were of a single bird that continued from Nov. There are eBird entries for most of Jan at two locations in NP (m.ob.). One was at SOP 12/19 (BV, et al.), one in PT 1/10-2/1 (PL, SL), one at FRP 12/10-2/21 (m.ob.), 2 at BP 1/30 (EH), one in FCH 1/21-2/8 (EL) one at WP 2/1 (DNe, NN, et al.), and one at Hartwood Acres 2/2 (DN). Large numbers of **American Robins** were seen apparently commuting to roost sites. A tally of 755 was made in Plum Borough 1/13 (CBo), 1000 were seen in Bridgeville 1/14, and 2000 on 1/16 (RT).

There were a number of late **Gray Catbird** reports this season including one at Imperial 12/14 (RB), 2 at BP 12/21 (EH), one at RP 12/29 (MJT), one at SOP 2/7 (JF), one relocated at BP 2/12 (PBt), and one at Deer Lakes Park 2/21 (RB). An out-of-season **Brown Thrasher** was photographed in FCH 1/26 (LKI). An **American Pipit** was spotted along the AR in Verona 2/4 (MD) and again nearby in OAK 2/19 (MD). A **Pine Siskin** was at FRP 1/14 (TC), the only report for the season. I rarely see reports of large flocks of **American Goldfinch** here, but this winter produced some large counts including 65 at a backyard in Natrona Heights 2/6 and 84 on 2/19 (DB). A **Snow Bunting** was spotted in FT 2/6 (MK) near Janoski's Farm, which has been a good location for them in recent years.

A late **Chipping Sparrow** was at FRP up to 12/5 (MK) and continued into Jan; one continued from Nov at Beechwood Farms 12/7 (BS) and was seen again in early Feb (LKI). Four were at SOP 12/15 (JF), and four in INT 1/1 (SG). A leucistic bird was photographed at

Allegheny Cemetery by a birder from California 2/20 and, based on size and shape, was thought to be a Chipping Sparrow. Photographs are in eBird. There were reports in eBird in various locations into Feb, which is more than usual. **Field Sparrows** are uncommon in winter. Reports were scattered in the area during the season. There were several late **Fox Sparrow** reports in Dec. Birds reported in Jan and Feb could have been overwintering. This area is just north of the winter range for this species so some may have overwintered. One was in Churchill 12/19 (CT) and 12/24 (EH), one was tallied on the CBC in INT 1/1 (SG), up to 2 were in NP from late Dec to early Jan (m.ob.), one visited a feeder in OAK 1/23 (RB), one was spotted along a roadside near Barking Slopes in Plum Borough 1/30 (AH, PM), and one was in FRP 2/5 (MK).

Rare in winter, a **Lincoln's Sparrow** was in PT 1/17 (PL, SL). A **Swamp Sparrow** was reported at WP all season (m.ob.). Several were in FCH at a reliable location during the CBC 1/1 (BS). A late **White-crowned Sparrow** was in Churchill 12/24 (EH). One was in NP 1/1 (LS) and 1/27 (LC), one visited a feeder in Monroeville 1/7-2/23 (SM, RH), one was in WDT 1/10-2/28 (LC), 3 were at Imperial 1/29 (MV), and 2 were in Natrona Heights 2/18 (PK). There were a few other eBird reports during the season. Oddly there were no reports from the most reliable wintering location in the county at Strauss Farm in FT. A **Dark-eyed (Cismontanus) Junco** visited a feeder in INT 1/24-28 (DYE). Two were present 1/29 and 2/5.

Eastern Towhees were reported through the season in eBird. This species probably has been annual in winter but not widely reported. This winter there were over 20 reports in eBird. An **Eastern Meadowlark** in WDT 2/19 (LC) may have been a returning migrant. A female **Baltimore Oriole** was photographed at a feeder in Elizabeth Twp. 1/29 (KCf).

A small flock of **Red-winged Blackbirds** was seen coming to the pond in HC to roost nearly the entire winter (MK). Eight visited a feeder in Elizabeth Twp. 1/17-18 (SF), 21 visited a feeder in PT 1/18 (PL, SL) during a snowstorm, and several remained 1/23-25 (PL, SL). There are numerous eBird reports during the season. A flock of 48 **Brown-headed Cowbirds** visited a feeder in PT 1/1, and 2 were there 1/18-19 (PL, SL). There are also numerous reports in eBird for the season. A very late **Tennessee Warbler** was photographed in Shadyside 12/28 (TC). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** visited a feeder in Oakland 12/30-1/6 (FI).

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Armstrong County

Locations: Armstrong Trail at Manorville (ATM), Crooked Creek Lake (CCL), Lock & Dam 7 (LD7), Rosston Boat Launch (RBL).

First, I thank Marjorie Van Tassel for her many years of service in writing reports for *Armstrong*. I am new to being a compiler, and Marjorie has been so gracious in sharing observations and birding advice relevant to *Armstrong* with me.

The winter seemed fairly average in terms of species and number of birds present, but that doesn't diminish the joy that comes from seeing various northern species that spent time in *Armstrong*. This includes one **Snow Goose** observed at CCL on six separate occasions 12/4-23 (DB, JB); then one was spotted in the Parks Bend Farms Industrial Park and adjacent Kiskiminetas R. 1/4-22 (MVT, CH, JK). Finally, one was sighted at Sisterville Road 2/24 (DB). Many of the typical ducks were absent in Dec, but that might have been due to lower count effort instead of a true population trend. **Canvasback** showed up at both LD7 and ATM on 2/12 (TR, KSJ), and again at RBL with a **Redhead** 2/17 (TR). A female **Red-breasted Merganser** was found on the Kiskiminetas R. near Leechburg 2/13 (MVT). One **Ruddy Duck** was found at CCL 12/23 (DB), and 2 were observed at LD7 on 1/12 (TR). The average max count for this species during the winter period reported by eBird is 9.5, so a max of 2 seemed unusually low.

A single **Ring-necked Pheasant** was spotted in late Jan on Claypoole Road on different days (JH, MVT). One **American Woodcock** was found at Porcupine Hollow 2/21 (MW), and 2 detected on SGL 247 on 2/26 (DB). One **Bonaparte's Gull** was at RBL during the CBC route 12/18 (TR).

Rough-legged Hawks showed up in force this winter. From 1/22-2/14 up to 5 birds were spotted in fields south of Worthington (m.ob.). Five sets the high-count record for *Armstrong*. One additional report was along Stone House Road 1/31 (AB). The southern Worthington area was also the place where up to 300 **Horned Larks** were found repeatedly 1/5-2/13, plus up to 2 **Snow Buntings** during the same time span (m.ob.).

A **Snowy Owl** frequented the Keystone Power Plant property for several days and was therefore not accessible by the public (*fide* MVT, ph.). Good for the owl! There have been only two eBird reports of this species in *Armstrong*: one from 2017 and the other in 2012. There were two sightings of **Short-eared Owls**; both were on Green Acres Road 12/23 and 2/8 (DB). This location also hosted a flock of 9 **Eastern Meadowlarks** 1/21 (DB). One **Merlin** was spotted on the ATM 12/2 (MH, RH). This was a good year for those who spotted a **Northern Shrike** along Olivet Road, found 1/16 and 2/18 (MH, RH). The species has only been found in *Armstrong* three other times according to eBird (1987, 2018, 2019), and all sightings have been in the same general area.

There were several observations of single birds found at just one location each: A **Winter Wren** was spotted six different days 12/1-2/7 along Armstrong Trail North of Dam 8 (TR). Only one **Gray Catbird** was observed this winter; it was at the corner of Miller Lane and Tr849 on 12/28 (TR). One **Rusty Blackbird** was seen on Airport Road in Vandergrift 1/26 (RE).

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Beaver County

Locations: Rochester – Beaver River mouth (RCH).

It was a very quiet winter season in *Beaver*. A brief spell of cold weather in late Jan and early Feb brought some waterfowl to RCH but even among these there wasn't much to talk about. Four **Northern Shovelers** were at RCH 2/22 (DZ). A **Gadwall** on Cork-Bocktown Road in Independence Twp. 1/13 (JM) was the only one reported. Small numbers of **American Black Ducks** were noted in four locations. Unusual for early Jan was a **Northern Pintail** at the Siebel farm in Independence Twp. 1/1-2 (MV), and 2 were at New Brighton 1/7-8 (MV).

Up to 6 **Canvasbacks** were at RCH 1/13-2/9 (DZ), and they were joined by as many as 12 **Redheads** over most of that time (DZ). A tarrying **Ring-necked Duck** was at Enon Valley 12/11 (MV), after which they reappeared at RCH by 1/24 (up to 10) and remained into late Feb (DZ, et al.). Two **Greater Scaup** were at RCH 1/22-2/26 (MV, et al.). The

only true highlight among ducks was a **Long-tailed Duck** at RCH 2/14 (DZ). Top counts of **Bufflehead** and **Common Goldeneye** at RCH in early to mid-Feb were 24 and 35, respectively (DZ). A nice count of 22 **Common Mergansers** was made at Raccoon Creek SP 1/3, and smaller numbers were around the Beaver R. through the season.

A **Bonaparte's Gull** was at RCH 1/24-25 (DZ). The cold in late Jan brought up to 200 **Ring-billed Gulls** to RCH on a few dates (MD, DZ, et al.) but no rarities were among them.

Two **Northern Harriers** were found in Independence Twp. 1/12 (JP, JF), and one was there again 2/11 (JM). Two more were in the vicinity of the former Little Blue L. 2/12 (KJ). A **Rough-legged Hawk** was also at Little Blue 2/12-16 (KJ). One or 2 **Peregrine Falcons** were seen consistently in the RCH area, mostly around the P&LE rail bridge, throughout Jan and Feb. **Common Ravens** were noted in at least seven different locations.

A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was at Sahli Nature Park 1/22 (DK, DF, KS). This seldom-birded park has seemed to be a good place for this species even in non-invasion years. An **American Pipit** was a nice Jan bird at New Brighton 1/8 (MV). Up to 3 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** persisted at Rocky Bend Nature Preserve to 12/29 (DZ), and one was there 2/2 as well (DZ).

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Bedford County

Locations: Belden Road (BR), Blackberry Farm Fields (BF), Dutch Corner (DC), Foor Farm (FF), Hillside Drive (HD), Mountain Meadows (MM), Rural Home Site (RS), Shawnee State Park (SSP).

A mild, rainy day resulted in more birds than expected for the 33rd Bedford CBC. The lack of snow cover, open water, and calm winds meant birds were on the move. Although visibility was reduced due to constant rain, counters had a successful day tallying 59 species, a bit above the average of 55. There was an uptick of individual birds for a total of 6942, which was 1409 more than last year. Record-breaking numbers for were 120 **Wild Turkeys**, 698 **Mourning Doves**, 10 **Belted Kingfishers**, 85 **Downy Woodpeckers**, 22 **Northern Flickers**, and 142 **Northern Cardinals**. Raptor numbers were down, no doubt due to the rain, but the 38 **Red-tailed Hawks** were close to the all-time high of 42 tallied in the previous count. Waterfowl diversity was higher with 22 species compared to 16 last year.

Two **Snow Geese** were seen at Mountain Road 12/31 (AB). A **Ross's Goose** was reported at SSP 2/13 (m.ob.). A high count of 10 **Gadwalls** were at SSP 2/26 (AB). A dozen **American Wigeons** were reported at L. Gordon 2/18 (J&BC) and SSP 2/26 (AB). Eighteen **American Black Ducks** were seen at SSP 2/25 (AB). **Northern Pintail** were reported from three locations, with a high of 11 at SSP (AB).

A high of 8 **Redheads** was reported 2/12 at SSP (AB). Multiple sightings of **Ring-necked Ducks** were reported with a high of 138 at SSP 2/26 (Anon.). Just one report of **Long-tailed Ducks** for 2021 was at SSP 12/18 (RG, MG). A high of 2 **Ruddy Ducks** made a brief appearance at SSP 1/8 (AB). Just one **American Coot** was reported, at SSP 2/26 (AB).

Killdeer were reported each month, with the most consistent sightings in DC in Feb (AB). One **American Woodcock** was at RS 2/12 (J&BC). Unlike last year, when only one gull sighting occurred, there were numerous reports. **Ring-billed Gulls** were frequent visitors at SSP, with a high of 837 on 2/27 (ST). A high of 4 **Herring Gulls** was reported 2/27 (ST). A surprise sighting of 2 **Great Black-backed Gulls** in a farm pasture occurred at Lutzville Road 12/29 (BP).

Black Vultures were seen infrequently, with a high of 10 at Pennknoll Intersection on 1/1 (DG, GG). **Turkey Vultures** returned to the county at two places on 2/9: one along Black Valley Road (M&LJ) and the other at Union Memorial Church (EB). A high of 19 **Golden**

Eagles was reported at the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch 12/5 (EB). There were very few scattered sightings of **Northern Harriers**, with the last one reported in DC 2/26 (AB). **Bald Eagles** sought SSP with numerous sightings; the high was 9 on 2/27 (J&BC). Two **Red-shouldered Hawks** were regular visitors to a nest site used the last three years, observed at FF 12/2-2/24 (EB).

The only consistent sightings of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were at MM 12/1-3/5 (M&LJ), but there were single reports from five other locations. A high count of 6 **American Kestrels** was reported at Birch Lane 1/1 (JD). The only **Merlin** was at BF 1/13 (AB). There were scattered **Common Raven** sightings (m.ob.), with a high of 12 at SSP 12/19 (EB).

There were few reports of **Horned Larks**, with a high count of 48 on 1/27 (TK). Six sites reported **Golden-crowned Kinglets** with a high of 8 at SSP 1/1 (DG, GG). The best place to find **Red-breasted Nuthatches** was at SSP, with a high of 3 on 1/5 (T&JK). Just four sites reported **Brown Creeper**, but one was reported regularly at FF 12/10-2/25 (EB) and at MM 1/4-2/28 (M&LJ). A **Winter Wren** was at BF 1/1 (JC, BS).

An early **Gray Catbird** at SSP was a surprise 2/26 (AB). The only **Hermit Thrush** was seen at SSP 1/1 (DG), and the only **American Pipit** was at DC 2/20 (AB). Sightings of **Purple Finch** were numerous last year, but this year reduced to three with a high of just 2 at BR 1/29 (AB). There only **Pine Siskins** when 27 at SSP 12/28 (SC).

Single **Field Sparrows** were reported from five locations in the county (m.ob.). A high of 12 **American Tree Sparrows** was seen at Astor Road 1/1 (JC, BS). Reports of **White-crowned Sparrows** were scarce, but the most consistent were at BR 1/23-2/23 (AB). **Swamp Sparrows** were at HD 1/1 (MB) and Teaberry (Anon.).

Red-winged Blackbirds were reported in scattered locations with a high of 75 at Sam's Road 1/1 (M&LJ). **Brown-headed Cowbirds** were also reported from scattered locations, with a high of 50 at HD 1/1 (MB). After a seven-month absence, **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported from four sites with a high of 3 at HD 1/1 (MB). **Common Grackles** were scarce, but a high of 25 were at HD 1/1 (MB). The only **Pine Warbler** was one at SSP 12/4 (AB). A high of 2 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** was seen at SSP 12/4 (AB).

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Berks County

Locations: Blue Marsh Lake (BML), E. J. Breneman Quarry (BQ), Christmas Bird Counts: Reading (RCBC), Hamburg (HCBC); Conestoga Landfill Pond, New Morgan (CON), French Creek State Park (FCSP), Hawk Mountain Sanctuary (HMS), Kempton Valley, Albany Township (KEMP), Kittatinny Ridge (KR), Lake Ontelaunee (LO).

December was again a fairly mild extension of Fall, but January and February were sharply colder, freezing lakes and ponds for weeks. Snow cover was not continuous. As often before, a warming trend in mid- to late Feb triggered strong migration of waterfowl, gulls, crows, and blackbirds.

Snow Geese, the most dramatic of migrants, quickly increased from winter numbers to 50,000 migrating over Penn Twp. (BP) and 20,000 resting at Gotwals pond in Oley (RK) 2/28. Flying with Snow Geese over KEMP were 22 **Greater White-fronted Geese**, a large number for Berks, 1/7 (BB). One or 2 **Cackling Geese** were detected in **Canada Goose** flocks at 11 locations during the period. An apparent family group of 4 to 5 **Mute Swans** was at LO till freeze-up, then dispersed to other locations (m.ob.). **Tundra Swans** began increasing at BML and LO in mid-Feb, peaking at 48 at LO 2/27 (TU).

One or 2 **Wood Ducks** and one to 3 **Northern Shovelers** lingered

at a few places till the hard freeze, then a few began returning in Feb. The wintering **Gadwall** flock around LO numbered about 24 this year (RK), and counts of a wintering flock at Morgantown L. ranged from 2 to 20 (m.ob.). With the LO flock was a **Gadwall x Mallard** hybrid drake, the "Brewer's Duck" of Audubon, first seen on the HCBC 12/26 (RK) and again at LO 2/18 through the period (RK, TU). This hybrid, probably this individual, has been coming and going with the **Gadwall** flock since 2017. One to 12 **American Wigeons** were seen on various dates through winter at BQ, a deep quarry that doesn't freeze solid. Numbers increased in Feb, building to 65 at LO 2/26 (RK). Winter counts of **American Black Ducks** never exceeded the 33 seen on the RCBC 12/19, a very low number of a species that has been declining here for years. Single **American Black Duck x Mallard** hybrid drakes were reported among **Mallards** at six places during the winter (m.ob.). Up to 3 **Northern Pintails** were seen at BQ this winter, and the Feb thaw brought 40 to LO 2/22 (RK). **Green-winged Teal** can move to small springs when ponds freeze, which was the case with 11 birds, the seasonal high count, showing their teal green in a shallow roadside spring 1/30 (RK).

All five native *Aythya* ducks were here, four of them all winter. The exception was **Canvasback**, the sole report consisting of 4 at SGL 182 at Kutztown 2/19 (KT). Several birders commented on the excellent looks they had at **Redheads** at BQ, where 2 to 32 of mostly males could be seen on almost any day from 12/28-2/28. Leisurely comparative studies in low-angled light could be made of one or 2 **Greater Scaup** with about 5 **Lesser Scaup** that wintered at BQ. The latter increased to 51 at LO 2/26 (RK), while counts of the former did not exceed 8.

A flock of 6 **White-winged Scoters** at BML 2/18 (BP, JSp) was a good catch for the three birders who were there at the right time. Several birders saw the 4 **Long-tailed Ducks** that stopped at BML 12/8 and 12/18. Four more **Long-tailed Ducks** were at BML 1/15 (AW). One to 7 **Buffleheads** bobbed up among other diving ducks wintering at BQ and LO, their number growing a little in late Feb. The highest count of **Common Goldeneyes** was of 12 at CON 12/25 (FH). They were quite uncommon everywhere else. Up to 60 **Hooded Mergansers** were at LO till freeze-up in mid-Jan (RK), and 20 to 47 were at CON through the winter (FH). **Common Mergansers** pushing the ice line quickly increased to 1050 at LO 2/26 (RK). A small flock of **Ruddy Ducks** has wintered at BQ for 20 years. Counts of this winter's birds ranged from one to 30 (m.ob.).

Local **Wild Turkey** populations have boom and bust cycles. Currently they appear to be most common in northern *Berks* along the KR, where 58 visited one feeder 2/20 (CC). That said, 29 strolled through a yard near Douglassville at the opposite end of the county 1/3 (LI). The only report of **Ruffed Grouse**, perhaps too rare and local now to have boom and bust cycles, was of 5 on the KR during the HCBC 12/26. Put-and-take **Ring-necked Pheasants** were seen bumbling cluelessly along paths and roads at a few places, mostly near SGLs.

One to 3 **Pied-billed Grebes**, a normal winter number, were seen diving with the ducks at BQ through the period. The only reported **Horned Grebe** was at BML 12/12 (JV). List-padding birders reported one to 6 **Eurasian Collared-Doves** in Shartlesville on various dates, but none outside the town this season. Among the winter regulars at BQ for about 20 years has been **American Coot**, one to 6 of which were seen there during the period.

Two Least **Sandpipers** were seen foraging among 18 **Killdeer** at the muddy inflow of Spring Creek into BML 12/8 (EH). This is the first Dec record of a peep that is usually gone by early October, if not earlier than that. The first peenting **American Woodcock** of spring was heard in KEMP 2/11 (BB), but others were soon reported elsewhere. **Wilson's Snipe** was scarce, but birders managed to find one to 3 in a few traditional spots.

A **Bonaparte's Gull** stopped briefly at LO 12/12 (RK, TU). The Feb thaw brought a surge of 8000 **Ring-billed Gulls** to BML 2/26 (RK). First-winter **Iceland Gulls** paid brief visits. A light bird was at BML 1/8-15 (JD, RK, P&JW), joined by a dark, possibly thayeri type 1/14 (RK) just before the lake froze. After the Feb thaw, a light bird was at BML 2/12 and 2/26 (JS, MS). Counts of one to 3 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** on a few dates at BML were at the low end of normal winter numbers. Eleven **Lesser**

Black-backed Gulls at LO 2/12 (TU) were migrants. A second-winter **Glaucous Gull** was at BML 1/13-14 (RK, P&JW). A few late migrating **Common Loons** appeared in Dec, the last of which was seen at LO 12/29 (TU). The last of a few lingering **Double-crested Cormorants** was also seen at LO 12/29 (TU). An **American Bittern** photographed at LO 12/12 (TU) joined a very short list of these birds recorded in winter.

Record-setting vulture counts on CBCs included 227 **Black Vultures** on the HCBC 12/26, 556 **Turkey Vultures** on the RCBC 12/19, and 245 **Turkey Vultures** on the HCBC 12/26. **Bald Eagles** followed that trend, with new high counts of 14 on the RCBC 12/19 and 21 on the HCBC 12/26. All three species have shown multi-year increases at hawk watches. **Golden Eagles** continued migrating past North Lookout at HMS through Dec, but 2 birds, an adult and a juv., in KEMP 2/1 (BB) were wintering. More **Northern Harriers** were reported than usual. Of about 30 reports, repeat sightings or multiple birds were recorded at SGL 280 at BML, Pheasant Valley Farm in Robesonia, Big Woods Trail in FCSP, and Blue Mt. Academy in Hamburg. All these sites have vole-producing habitat in the form of fields that were converted to grasslands or, in the case of the Academy, a grass airstrip and nearby hayfields.

Two prized raptors made short single visits. A dark-morph **Rough-legged Hawk** was seen in KEMP 2/1 (BB), and a **Snowy Owl** was seen perched on a utility pole near Bethel 12/6 (GR). A **Short-eared Owl** was seen at Pheasant Valley Farm 2/2 (LI). This farm has attracted these owls in previous years, but seeing one takes patience and luck. Three **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were heard on the HCBC 12/26. Considering their decline, the number of **American Kestrel** reports was encouraging and a little surprising. They, like Northern Harriers above, were featured on a good number of single-species eBird checklists, perhaps indicating that birders are more aware of their status and are taking the time to record all they see. There were scattered reports of **Merlins**, mostly at BML, where they were not as regular as in past years (JS). Reading's **Peregrine Falcon** pair was in residence. Seven reports of one or 2 Peregrines at other locations during the winter may have been of peregrinators or of the residents out hunting.

Of 6 reports of **Eastern Phoebes**, the latest was of a bird at Reading Airport 1/21 and 2/6 (JSp). A **Northern Shrike** was in KEMP 1/17 (BB), another single sighting of a rare bird this winter. **Common Ravens** lived up to their name. There were widespread reports, often of multiple birds. The record count of 39 on the RCBC 12/19 would have been inconceivable before now. In this non-irruption year, a few **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were found on the CBCs, and one to 3 were reported later in winter at each of 12 locations with conifers or feeders. At least 5 of many reports of **Winter Wrens** were of birds present all period. A **House Wren** stayed long enough to be found on the RCBC 12/19.

Single **Gray Catbirds** apparently lived through the winter at three sheltered places (RH, RK, CL, AW). A much rarer **Brown Thrasher** was seen at Rodale Experimental Farm 1/8 (SB) and another near Mohrsville 2/11 (SS). With a strong showing on the CBCs, there were many reports of **Hermit Thrushes** in Dec and Jan with fewer in Feb. All the winter fruit eaters benefited from an unusually abundant fruiting of native and exotic shrubs and vines this year. **American Pipits** were common in early winter on farms in the Mertztown and Topton areas, where 120 were seen 12/18 (TU) and 135 on 1/7 (JH). Smaller flocks were seen elsewhere during the same period. Winter weather may have pushed them out, as there were no Feb reports.

Small flocks of **Purple Finches** migrated through the county in Dec, some tallied on CBCs. Numbers quickly declined in Jan, and few were left by Feb. The seasonal high count of 60 **Pine Siskins** was of migrants passing North Lookout at HMS 12/7, and 11 were seen on the HCBC 12/26. The only report after that was of 2 at a feeder near Reading 2/21. A **White-winged Crossbill** seen on the HCBC 12/26 was an anomaly. Unlike last winter, arctic field birds were scarce. A **Lapland Longspur** was near Lyons 1/7-11 (SB, JH, JV), and 2 near Fleetwood 1/29 (MW). A **Snow Bunting** was near Fleetwood 1/29 (MW), and 8 were in KEMP 2/1 (BB).

Chipping Sparrows, traditionally rare in winter, are now more often reported. This winter they were seen at about a dozen locations on various dates through the period. Most were singletons, but a flock of 8

was at FCSP 1/9 (TU) and a flock of 15, possibly very early migrants on a warm front, was at Union Meadows Park 2/20 (LI, P&JW). As many or more Chipping Sparrows as **American Tree Sparrows** were reported, which may become a trend. Winter reports of **Fox Sparrows** also continued an upward trend. Many of the birds reported in Dec, such as 15 at Big Woods Trail in FCSP 12/15, were probably still migrating. But there were at least 6 reports of birds seen at various places in Jan and Feb, some repeatedly at the same location. **Eastern Towhee** repeated and magnified the Fox Sparrow scenario. There were reports of 3 to 5 birds, probably migrants, at each of several locations in Dec, but at least a dozen places still hosted single birds in Jan and Feb.

Moving along from slow, steady increase to steep decline, there were just two reports of **Eastern Meadowlark**, a bird seen on the HCBC 12/26 and one seen at Blue Mt. Academy 2/6 (EK). There were a few more reports of **Rusty Blackbirds** than usual, but numbers were low. The season's high count was of 8 at Peters Cr. at LO, a traditional stopover site, 12/1 (AM). Five were found on the HCBC 12/26 and 5 in KEMP 2/19 (BB). The others were scattered singletons.

A **Western Tanager** that appeared at a feeder on Bloody Spring Rd. north of Strasstown on or about 2/18 and was last seen there 3/2 (CC) was the first recorded in Berks. The bird was in female type plumage and had an orange bill (see photos in this issue and in eBird). At the feeder, the bird preferred shelled peanut halves. It also spent time on the ground, apparently foraging in leaf litter. Sometimes it flew to a silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*) and pecked at honeydew, the hardened sugary excretion of spotted lanternflies that had infested the tree in fall, though the honeydew was covered with sooty mold. **Cedar Waxwings** were also observed feeding on this.

A striking male **Northern Cardinal**, colored yellow and rosy red rather than cardinal red, was photographed in Hamburg 2/13 (see photo in this issue) and seen again 2/15 (MW). Research by the observer indicates that the bird exhibited xanthochromism, a genetic condition that inhibits conversion of dietary carotenoids into red pigment, resulting in a largely yellow bird.

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Blair County

Locations: Bells Gap Trail (BGT), Plummers Hollow (PH), Watts Pond (WP).

Information for this report was obtained primarily from eBird data. Additional information was pulled from the 53rd Culp CBC held 12/18. The winter weather brought a moderate amount of precipitation accumulation and average to below-average temperatures in February causing much of the big water to be frozen during most of the winter. A total of 84 species was reported and included some rare and uncommon visitors such as one **Northern Shrike** on near East Freedom exit 12/31 (KR).

A flock of **Snow Geese** flew over residence in Bellwood 2/28 (JC). There were 66 species observed during the CULP CBC. Notable sightings during the CBC included 4 **Killdeer**, one **Red-headed Woodpecker**, 2 **Rusty Blackbirds**, and 36 **Horned Larks**. Other high counts for the CBC included 3 **Bald Eagles**, 26 **Mourning Doves**, 27 **Red-bellied Woodpeckers**, 29 **Carolina Wren**, 6 **Hermit Thrush**, 59 **Eastern Bluebirds**, 4 **Eastern Towhees**, 3 **Fox Sparrow**, 193 **Dark-**

eyed Junco, 25 **White-crowned Sparrow**, 399 **White-throated Sparrow**, and 3 **Swamp Sparrow**.

There were 13 waterfowl species sightings which included a single **Gadwall** at PSU's Altoona Pond 1/3 (LP), 3 more near Tyrone Milling 2/28, and 2 **Gadwalls** on WP 2/4 (JC). A group of 12 **Green-winged Teal** were at Mines Royer Rd 1/23 (DG, GG), and 3 more on WP 12/18 (JC). Nine **Lesser Scaup** and 4 **Buffleheads** were at Canoe Creek 12/18 (LJ, MJ). Two **Redheads** were at BGT 1/8 (JC).

The first-of-the-year **Ruffed Grouse** was noted at SGL 198 (DD), while a lone **Wilson's Snipe** was observed on T505 Rd 1/11 (JC), and one was spotted at SGL 278 North 1/16 (LC, MN).

Raptors that were documented included a high count of 4 **Black Vultures** at PH 2/23 (MB), and 20 **Turkey Vultures** in Altoona 2/21 (CH). As many as 3 **Northern Harriers** were noted in the Sinking Valley area (m.ob.) There were five separate reports of lone **Sharp-shinned Hawks** and an impressive 16 separate sightings of single **Cooper's Hawks** across the county. **Bald Eagles** continued to be reported widely in the area, there were five reports of single **Red-shouldered Hawks**. **Red-tailed Hawks** continued to be reported consistently across the county, especially along the I-99 corridor. One of the more uncommon raptors documented included a light-morph **Rough-legged Hawk** near Crawford Rd 1/27 (JC).

A **Barred Owl** was heard in PH 1/26 (MB), and 2 **Great Horned Owls** duetted on BGT along with a single **Eastern Screech-Owl** 1/19 (JC). A red-morph **Eastern Screech-Owl** was photographed at Canoe Creek SP 12/4 (LP).

A winter highlight was 4 **Eastern Towhees** at a residence near Bellwood 2/14 (JC), and 3 more at PH 12/18 (CE, KE). A **Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)** was at BGT 1/19 (JC). A high count of 5 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were there 1/4 (MB).

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Bucks County

Locations: Christmas Bird Count: Central *Bucks* (C-CBC), Southern *Bucks* (S-CBC), Upper *Bucks* (U-CBC); Core Creek Park (CCP), Delaware Valley University (DVU), Maple Knoll Farms in Buckingham Township (MKF), Nockamixon State Park (NSP), Peace Valley Park (PVP), Penn-Warner Tract (PWT).

December was extremely mild (+4.7°F) and moderately dry (-2.80") compared to the average. January cooled off drastically (-4.1°F), with average precipitation (+0.09"). February was not too far from the average temperature (+1.1°F), as was precipitation (+0.07"). Such a mild December resulted in large numbers of some of our "half-hardy" species, while duck migration again remained quiet until it really got colder. The total number of 132 species puts our five-year winter average at 136. Rare geese kept regional text and alert groups buzzing, but the real bonanza occurred at the end of February at NSP when multiple rare gulls brought people in from far and wide. Other highlight rarities for the season weren't abundant but included **Pink-footed Goose**, **Barnacle Goose**, **Ross's Goose**, **Sandhill Crane**, **Golden Eagle**, and **Clay-colored Sparrow**.

The 54th U-CBC was on 12/19, with mild temperatures leading up to the count followed by chilly conditions after a strong cold front. An average total of 28,154 birds comprised 102 species, the count's second highest species total in history. The nine new or tied high counts were certainly buoyed by some waterfowl numbers in the *Montgomery* portion of the circle, and the count's first **Orange-crowned Warbler** technically occurred in *Lehigh*. The 56th C-CBC occurred 12/26, with 22,266 individuals slightly below average but 86 species was above average. Four new high counts were set. The 75th S-CBC happened 12/18, with

an average total of 63,691 birds of 99 species. Despite many numbers being a bit low, 10 species had new or tied high counts. The count added not one but 2 **Ross's Geese** as a new count species. Reports were not as specific this year about weather conditions for the C-CBC and S-CBC. Please note that every area has at least some space in a different county. Thanks to Mark Gallagher for the S-CBC, Diane Allison for the C-CBC, and Bill Etter for the U-CBC for providing summaries and/or spreadsheets, as well as August Mirabella for compiling general notes and observations. Ken Kitson's 1998 *Birds of Bucks County* and past updates from this journal were referenced for some historical information.

The only standout high count of **Snow Geese** was not of migrants, but of an estimated 5000 birds heading to feed near Riegelsville 1/24 (EB). The adult **Ross's Goose** found at CCP in the autumn (DD) lingered in the area of Lower Makefield Twp. through 1/25 (BS ph.). This bird, plus an immature that joined it 12/15-12/19, furnished the first S-CBC record (LJ, JV, CM). **Greater White-fronted Goose** put in a fair winter showing. One was at the Delaware Canal SP at Washington's Crossing 12/7 (SB), and one was audio recorded at PVP 12/26 (AH vr.). One was at the CCP area 12/4-12/18, including on the S-CBC, and then 2 were there 12/19 (Shane Murphy, MG). Three fortunate observers watched a **Pink-footed Goose** land in Yardley 1/13 (BS, PS, WS). This species is now nearly annual in *Bucks*. A **Barnacle Goose** was enjoyed by dozens of birders 1/8-26 as it bounced around between Pine Run Dam and the DVU farm campus (TF). This is at least the 12th county record, with sightings on the rise for these small visitors as well. **Cackling Goose** was well reported this winter, as expected. The site high count of 6 occurred at CCP 12/18, contributing to a new S-CBC high count of 19 (JV, CM). Among all these uncommon geese was a **Snow Goose x Canada Goose**, also at CCP 12/18 (JV, CM).

Mute Swan numbers hovered around usual winter numbers at PWT and surrounding areas, including 38 on 1/9 (KL) and a total of 50 on the S-CBC. **Tundra Swans** made a few welcome appearances, including one at PVP 12/3 (TF) and 2 there 12/12 (GK). Six were at PWT 12/12 (DD), followed by 7 there 12/26 (RHw) and then 3 on 1/23 (DF).

Twenty duck species graced our waters this winter, roughly average. On 2/17, a flock of 21 mostly male **Wood Ducks** in Upper Makefield Twp. were certainly incoming migrants (BB). Up to 34 **Northern Shovelers** at a Bristol pond 1/16 was not a bad number for modern times (KL). The high of 31 **Gadwall** at their usual Silver Lake Park location occurred 12/22 (RN). The high count of 39 **American Wigeons** at PWT 2/19 far surpassed other county tallies and was squarely in this species' early migration window. Lake Towhee C.P. hosted its usual flock of **American Black Ducks**, up to 50 on 12/23 (PT). **Northern Pintail** flocks during the early spring were small, with one raft of 25 at NSP 2/22 being the highest tally (PH). Good-sized flocks of **Green-winged Teal** have often inhabited PWT, though 29 on 2/22 wasn't a very high count (AH).

Single **Canvasbacks** were at PVP 12/4 (HD) and Pine Run Dam 2/9 (TF), while 12 were at Neshaminy S.P. 12/26 (DD). Three **Redheads** were at Pine Run Dam 1/20 (KR), while they were found at PWT on three dates. At least 2 were there 1/23 (DD, DF), 8 were there 2/5 (KL), and 2 more 2/27 (MG). The sum of high counts at four **Greater Scaup** locations was 19 (m.ob.), while doing the same for **Lesser Scaup** yielded a sum of 25 at six locations (m.ob.).

Two **Long-tailed Ducks** were at PVP 1/8, with one on 1/13 maybe a new bird (TF, HB, FB). High counts for **Common Goldeneye** included 31 at Morrisville 1/9 (KL) and 29 at NSP 2/22 (PH), likely representing wintering individuals as well as a few migrants in the latter case. An estimated 2500 **Common Mergansers** were at PVP 2/26, a typical higher count that occurs annually at the park (DH). Also at PVP, numbers of **Red-breasted Mergansers** did not exceed 3, that number being on 1/2 (DB, AB) and 1/13 (WC).

Ruddy Ducks could only be found in low numbers, the meager high of 15 being at PWT 1/8 (DD). One photographed at Churchville Park 1/30 was very unusual in that the bird was standing on ice, giving a rare look at its clownish stance and huge feet (DD). Single **Horned Grebes** could be seen in deeper water at PWT 1/18 (DD) and NSP 2/27 (JV). One **Red-necked Grebe** was found 12/3 and seen by many 12/4, a decent winter find (TF).

This winter's top **American Coot** count was of 130 at PWT 12/18 on the S-CBC (VP, RH). This year, the **Sandhill Crane** pair at Pine Run Dam returned 1/4 to stay through the period (CC, m.ob.). One **American Woodcock** on the U-CBC was a good winter bird. As usual, one to 3 **Wilson's Snipe** spent most of the period in good habitat at Bradford Dam (m.ob.). No other unusual winter rails or shorebirds were found, contrary to some recent years.

You may be wondering, why so much attention to gulls at NSP this winter? Wonder no more, unless you'd like to read the *Montgomery* side of the story first. On 2/20, mobile chat groups exploded when photographs surfaced of a putative **Glaucous-winged Gull** at NSP (KF ph.). Dozens, if not hundreds, of birders visited to see this gull until it left for good on 2/26. If accepted by PORC, this will be a first state record and one of the only records in the eastern states, certainly a first for the Mid-Atlantic region. This bird's plumage closely resembles that of an immature seen extensively in Ontario, Canada, earlier in the winter. It was not hard to assume that these sightings were of the same individual.

An outstanding ten gull species were found, including some real haymakers. One **Bonaparte's Gull** at PVP 1/20 was not common for the date (KR.), and one made it on the S-CBC. On 2/27, a photographer at NSP captured what looks to be a **Common Gull**, formerly "Mew Gull (Common)". If accepted by PORC, this may be just the 3rd documented county record of this species complex (KF ph.). Two previous entries have been accepted by the committee, one as Common Gull and one as the more general Mew Gull. Five historical reports were not submitted to PORC and include at least one claim of what is now **Short-billed Gull**. See the following table for this winter's CBC gull numbers.

SPECIES	U-CBC	C-CBC	S-CBC	TOTAL
Bonaparte's Gull			1	1
Ring-billed Gull	2603	171	983	3,757
California Gull			1	1
Herring Gull	150	53	38,916	39,119
Iceland Gull			12	12
Lesser Bl.-backed Gull	542	74	249	865
Herring x Lesser Bl. Bk.			5	5
Glaucous Gull				0
Herring x Glaucous Gull			1	1
Great Black-backed Gull		8	134	142
TOTAL	3,295	306	40,302	43,903

The birding party at the Tullytown landfill discovered an adult **California Gull** on the S-CBC, just the county's 3rd documented record (GA, LH, TJ, JW). **Iceland Gulls** had an average showing on the S-CBC. However, they were detected in excellent numbers elsewhere. Overall, they were found at five locations this winter (m.ob.). Most consisted of one bird at a time, but at NSP a bare minimum of 10 individuals could be picked out from numerous photos during the second half of Feb (m.ob.). These included excellent photos of 2 adult "Thayer's" **Iceland Gull** types (JM, LS), and possibly an immature too (BF ph.). Another winter arrived, and another new high count for **Lesser Black-backed Gulls**. The U-CBC conservatively recorded 542, a new CBC circle record to my knowledge. Estimates during late Feb at NSP reached up to 850 on 2/26 (BC, EW), while a careful count by fives reached at least 775 on the same day (JM ph., vr., LS).

Glaucous Gull was a surprising first miss on the S-CBC since 2003, although singles were picked up at PWT 1/23 and at Morrisville Levee 1/30 (DF). Two were seen on a return trip to the landfill 2/16, including a beautiful adult (GA ph., DG, TJ).

Red-throated Loon was missed for the second straight winter. Only 2 **Common Loons** made themselves known: one at PVP 12/5 (TF) and one at Churchville Park 12/13 (JC). Two different counts of 8 **Great Cormorants** on the lower Delaware R. on 2/21 were spaced nearly a mile apart and likely were not all repeats (CH). The sum of site high

counts was 32, a bit lower than last year (m.ob.).

A subadult **Golden Eagle** was beautifully photographed in Riegelsville 1/29, solidly in a wintering date range for this bird on the northern edge of the county (EB, DBn ph., EN). Reports of **Northern Harriers** were slightly better than last year, with at least 28 birds at 22 locations (m.ob.). Although the 5 harriers on the S-CBC were the most there since 2005, both the U-CBC with zero and C-CBC with 2 had low numbers. Perhaps one could say it was a mixed bag of news. **Bald Eagle** numbers do nothing but rise nowadays, it seems. Both the U-CBC at 22 and S-CBC at 130 had new all-time high counts, the latter of which may be a statewide record. Throw in the C-CBC's second-best count of 21, and 2021-2022 was a banner eagle winter. Interestingly, **Red-shouldered Hawk** numbers were quite down from the past two unprecedented years. The CBC total of 16 was still above historical averages, but last winter that total was 46. Was mild weather the cause of this? We will have to wait for next winter's totals to learn more about their changing winter habits.

Only 104 **Eastern Screech-Owls** could be found on the three CBCs, quite a low total. High winds affected the normally record-high U-CBC totals. Of concern, the total of 12 **Great Horned Owls** was right down there with the lows of two and three years ago. Perhaps last year's bounce-back was short-lived, or maybe weather really did cut into totals. One **Long-eared Owl** was on the C-CBC for one of few winter reports. One was seen at PVP only on 2/6 (AH ph.). A visiting birder also discovered one by chance in the southern part of the county 12/27 (JA). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was on the U-CBC, while singles were also photographed near Chalfont 1/22 (SS *fide* AH) and at PVP 2/12 (CM, JV).

Many woodpecker numbers remained high on the CBCs. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** featured prominently, with the U-CBC's record count of 57 contributing to a CBC cumulative total of 99. **Red-headed Woodpeckers** made it on two of three CBCs, surprisingly. The U-CBC had one, and the C-CBC had a record 3. A resident pair at NSP through the period attracted scores of birders for a quick look, often as a "package deal" with the rare gull cocktail at the marina. The Buckingham Twp. pair were also seen as usual (DS). The C-CBC's total of 24 **Pileated Woodpeckers** was good for second best all-time, while the S-CBC had a record 16.

Although the C-CBC's 5 and the S-CBC's 2 **American Kestrels** were on the low side of the modern average, the U-CBC's count of 16 Kestrels was the best tally since 2005. **Merlin** was found in all three circles, with the 5 seen on the S-CBC providing a new maximum for that count circle. **Peregrine Falcons** had a good year, too, with 4 on the S-CBC and a record-breaking 3 on the U-CBC.

The fact that **Eastern Phoebes** had one on the C-CBC and 2 on the S-CBC gave an indication of the mild start we had to the winter. Last year it was **Blue Jays**; this year it was **American Crows**. Crow numbers hit record lows with 285 on the U-CBC and 130 on the S-CBC, far below even the next lowest tally. The C-CBC had a record 17 **Common Ravens**, over 150% higher than the previous high count of 11.

Unfortunately, **Carolina Chickadee** numbers remained down, with the S-CBC's tally of 71 being the first time that circle had fewer than 100 Carolinas. **Black-capped Chickadees** did not have an irruption year, given 6 on the U-CBC and one on the C-CBC as totals in the single digits. One other report from Jamison 1/5 was the only individual documented in eBird for the winter (BB). Numbers from the U-CBC fell shockingly low for **Tufted Titmouse**, with 33 being less than half of the previous low count. The C-CBC's total of 100 was still quite low. Only 26 **Horned Larks** were reported from all three CBC circles, indicative of snow-free ground and warmer temperatures. Top high counts at three winter sites were 20 at DVU 1/13 (WW, NW), 42 at MKF 2/1 (RS), and 50 at the preserved Patterson Farm 1/8 following a light snow (MG ph.).

The cumulative CBC total of 66 **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** almost beat the 68 **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, including setting a new S-CBC high of 42 rubies. A solid total of 16 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** made it on the CBCs. A single observation of 4 Red-breasts at NSP 1/23 supports these numbers, too (DF). Close to 25 birds were reported at 18 sites outside of the CBCs, a decent total (m.ob.). A **House Wren** in Bedminster Twp. made it on the C-CBC 12/26 as that circle's fifth record

(EP). Generally, CBC numbers for both **Brown Creeper** and **Winter Wren** were up, while **Carolina Wren** seemed to be lower.

Another indicator of mild CBC weather was the cumulative total of 13 **Gray Catbirds** across the three circles. At least 8 other catbirds were detected in other locations during the winter season (m.ob.). One **Brown Thrasher** made it on the U-CBC and the S-CBC. In addition, CCP hosted a thrasher 1/9-2/9 (m.ob.), including 2 on 1/16 (BK). Another appeared at a Tincum Twp. feeding station 2/25 and 2/27 (DA), plus one at PVP 1/25 (TF). All three CBCs had low **Northern Mockingbird** tallies, the C-CBC's count of 24 being the lowest since the first year of the count in 1966.

The U-CBC's 402 **Eastern Bluebirds** were the highest count there since 2008. **Hermit Thrush** had another strong CBC showing, with the cumulative total of 69 easily beating previous highs. This was certainly helped by a new high count of 23 on the S-CBC. **Cedar Waxwings**, another fruit-eating passerine, had above-average counts across the CBCs. It gives this writer some joy to write that **House Sparrow** numbers continue to be low on the CBCs, although declines in their native ranges aren't quite so cheerful. A couple moderate flocks of **American Pipits** were found, including about 50 that made for a good C-CBC total near MKF 12/26 (RS, BS, WS, PS). Forty-five Pipits were also at PWT 1/8 (DF).

Purple Finches seemed to have an "echo" flight after last year's large irruption. This time, birds didn't travel so far south but actually stayed through the whole winter. The cumulative CBC total of 52 reflects that over last year's 19. The single-site high count was of 12 foraging in sycamore trees in Upper Makefield Twp. 2/22 (MG). The Purple Finches did not bring variety with them, though, as not a single other irruptive finch species could be found this winter. A lack of major snowstorms meant that both Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting missed the winter report entirely.

Just like the past few winters, **Chipping Sparrow** numbers were high. This year's CBC totals were at record numbers, with the U-CBC of 29 and C-CBC of 15 setting new high counts by a large margin. Outside the CBCs, the sum of high counts at 19 or more sites totaled 122 individuals (m.ob.). This species has truly established itself as a regular wintering bird in Bucks. With so many "Chippies" around, it's maybe not shocking that a **Clay-colored Sparrow** was photographed well at Bradford Dam 1/30-2/1 (GJ). Once again, **American Tree Sparrows** were little more than a blip on the radar. The CBC total of 15 meant that all three circles had numbers at or near all-time lows. A small flock of 6 at NSP 1/27 were all that could be cobbled together as a high count (DA).

While this didn't play out at all the circles, folks on the S-CBC noted 30 **Fox Sparrows**, about twice the average. A few local sites for **White-crowned Sparrow** were topped by a good flock of at least 15 in Milford Twp. 2/7, including adults and immatures (PH). A rare winter **Vesper Sparrow** was seen by many at MKF 1/15-2/16 (RS ph.), just one of four eBird records in the state this winter season. A total of 19 **Savannah Sparrows** were reported from all three CBCs, a fairly light total. Likewise, the CBC total of 24 **Eastern Towhees** was on the lower side of average for recent years.

Eastern Meadowlark was a miss on all three CBC circles, but 8 were counted in East Rockhill Twp. 12/27 (AH) and 2 at the DVU farm 1/13 (WW, NW) for the only reports. Last year's **Baltimore Oriole** hotspot held up to 4 from 12/15 through the period, including the first one on the S-CBC since 2008 (CF). Single orioles could also be found at the PWT area 1/2 (DD), at PVP 1/23 (KF), and in Chalfont 12/8-2/20 (CCo). Two of these were bright male birds. Eighteen **Rusty Blackbirds** on the U-CBC and 25 on the S-CBC contributed to a fair total, although no other decent flocks were located during the period. Technically, the U-CBC's first **Orange-crowned Warbler** was on *Lehigh* turf, but the lower Delaware R. produced a bird that was photographed at Silver Lake Park on four dates 12/1-2/11 (DD, RS).

Avid scrutinizers of gulls at the PWT area found a "**Western**" **Palm Warbler** as a good bird for the S-CBC (JW ph.). The mild start to winter meant that two other lingering Palm Warblers were found. One was described in Doylestown Twp. 12/5 (NG), and one in Bristol 12/2 was seen well enough to declare it as the "**Yellow**" **Palm Warbler** subspecies (MD, AK). At least 17 **Pine Warblers** were documented at

12 locations (m.ob.), including up to 4 in Lower Makefield Twp. through much of the period (CF). One on the U-CBC was just the seventh known occurrence for that circle, while the 6 on the S-CBC were a new high count. **Yellow-rumped Warblers** showed very well on the CBCs. The cumulative total of 364 included counts of 210 on the U-CBC and 104 on the C-CBC that had not been recorded since the late 1990s. **Northern Cardinal** CBC numbers were lower than average, but overall not as bad as some recent years.

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Butler County

Locations: Bear Run Boat Launch (BRBL), Lake Arthur (LA), Lake Oneida (LO), Seven Hills Road (SHR), Slippery Rock (SR), South Shore (SS), Waterfowl Observation Area (WOA).

Migrant ducks were present in low numbers through December into January but disappeared after the third week of January as Lakes Arthur and Oneida froze over. After a flurry of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** in November, some thought that it might be a good winter incursion but most reports were of less than 5, the exceptions being 12 seen at the Moraine State Park's South Shore entrance 1/8 (MC) and 27 in small groups there 1/22 (MC). In January, where 24 inches of snow fell over five days in Slippery Rock and, shortly after a 10-inch snowfall, an immature **Baltimore Oriole** appeared at a feeder there 1/17 (GW). Otherwise it was a non-descript winter season. No Evening Grosbeaks, no redpolls, no scoters, no Trumpeters, no rare gulls despite a few being seen in nearby *Allegheny*.

The winter months have usually produced at least several hundred **Canada Geese** roosting at LA, but in Jan LO hosted up to 730 on 1/11, dwindling to 500 on 1/16 and 250 by the end of the month. A **Mute Swan** was seen 1/15 at Bear Run Boat Launch and one, probably the same bird, was at South Shore the next day (m.ob.). Fifteen **Tundra Swans** were at BRBL 12/12 (MV), and nine were at SS the same day (MC). They were not reported again until the first week of Jan when flocks were seen at five different locations including 81 near Chicora 1/9 (SB).

Most **Wood Ducks** were gone by Dec but one late bird showed up at LO 1/2 (KB). Up to 6 **Blue-winged Teal** and up to 12 **Northern Shovelers** remained at the WOA through 12/24 (m.ob.). Double-digit totals of **Gadwall** grazed there through early Jan when LA froze over, much to the dismay of birders and much to the delight of numerous ice-fisher folk. Seven tallies were in the high 30s with the high count of 47 at WOA 12/5 (RN). **American Wigeons** were scarce with only three reports, all from WOA 12/19-1/1, while **Mallards** were present through the season with the migrant push in early Dec featuring totals of 96 and 100 at WOA 12/2-5 and 109 there 12/16 (GK, MAK, MV). Low numbers, up to 10, of **American Black Ducks** associated with Mallards through Dec until 1/21, most at LA (m.ob.).

Northern Pintail and **Green-winged Teal** were also scarce, each species making a handful or less than six appearances until mid-Jan. Fourteen **Redheads** gathered at North Shore 12/18 (MC), and a flock of 20 was at SS 1/10 (GK, MAK); 10 **Redheads** appeared there 1/16 (KB). Before the big lakes froze over, **Ring-necked Ducks** were much more numerous with close to 30 reports, most from LA. However, when the early migrants

arrived 2/27, all Ring-necks were at LO. Most Ring-necked Duck reports were single digits, but a nice tally of 86 was seen at Johnson Road 1/8 (DB). Only a handful of **Lesser Scaup** reports came in, but the high count was 31 at SS during the Bartramian Audubon's CBC 12/18 (MC, RW).

Bufflehead were plentiful with up to 17 present continually at LA through 1/19 (m.ob.). **Common Goldeneyes** were much scarcer with only six reports of up to 3 birds seen. **Hooded Mergansers** and **Common Mergansers** were plentiful before the lakes froze with up to 98 Hoodies at SS 12/4 (GK, MAK) and 80 Common Mergansers at LO 12/1 (KB). Five reports of **Red-breasted Mergansers**, all from LA, were capped by a high count of 54 at SS 1/19 (EH). **Ruddy Ducks** reflected the overall underwhelming picture with a high count of 75 at SS 12/1 (MC), then steadily decreasing in numbers through 1/21 (m.ob.). Overall, 18 duck species were reported, with no really high counts.

The only **Ring-necked Pheasant** report was from Christy Road 12/30, and the only **Ruffed Grouse** was at Butler-Freeport Trail 2/15 (LC). The Game Commission has been reporting declining **Wild Turkey** numbers and has requested reports of turkey flocks to be submitted by the public to facilitate the trapping and applying of GPS trackers. The birds will not be moved, but released on site to help monitor population and to launch a large-scale hen study. Turkey numbers here seem to be steady with flocks of 55 at Kelly Road 1/1 (KB) and 41 at Stoughton Road 2/19 (MC), along with a number of widespread smaller flocks.

Pied-billed Grebe and **Horned Grebe** were both reported less than 10 times, all at LA, with the high count of Pied-billed Grebes being 11 at SS 12/4 (GK, MAK), while Horned Grebes were seen only as singles or twosomes. **American Coots** were very scarce with only three reports of one or 2 birds. The first **Sandhill Cranes** seen were 4 at Swope Road 2/20 (MC), followed by one or two spotted at SGL 95 through the end of the month. **Killdeer** arrived on schedule at the end of Feb, and an early **American Woodcock** appeared at Slippery Rock 2/28 (BB).

The only **Bonaparte's Gulls** seen were 2 at LA during the Bartramian Audubon CBC 12/18 (MC, RW). **Ring-billed Gulls** that often gather in large numbers at LA continued during the winter as 343 were present 12/2 (GK, MAK), with numbers increasing to 500 12/6 (MC), reaching a high of 700 on 12/14 (ST). By the time the lake froze in Jan, numbers had decreased to under 100. Smaller numbers of **Herring Gulls** appeared at LA 12/2-1/14 (m.ob.). **Common Loons** made a paltry showing, with most sightings being single birds 12/2-1/1.

Turkey Vultures only started appearing 2/16. **Northern Harriers** were seen sporadically through the season at various locations. Three were seen at Stoughton Road 2/27 (MC). Not often seen in *Butler*, a **Rough-legged Hawk** was at County Line Road 2/8 (RS), one visited Reichert Road 2/11 (MAK, GK), and one was enjoyed at nearby Miller Esker 2/15 (OM), perhaps the same bird as both were dark phase.

Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported periodically through the season at Claytonia Road (BB). A **Merlin** was scoping out a feeder near Portersville 12/24 (MC), and one was seen in the area several times in Feb (MC, EH, RN). A **Northern Shrike** flew over Slippery Rock Elementary School 1/26 (GW).

One or 2 **Common Ravens** continued to be seen intermittently in various locations. This was intriguing because, as far as the author can determine, ravens have not been conclusively confirmed to be breeding in *Butler*. A pair was described as courting in Cranberry Twp 2/28 (AH): "Around 10 am: circling together over the front woods. They joined in the air briefly multi times appearing to lock toes and then did a synchronized dive and roll very close together until they disappeared behind the treeline. I think they are in love."

American Robins were plentiful through the season with many remaining in the same areas, evidently finding abundant food, including over 100 staying at SR 1/31 through the end of the season (GW). A few nice tallies of **Cedar Waxwings** were enjoyed, including 120 feeding with 400 **European Starlings** at SS 1/10 (MAK, GK) and 175 at WOA 2/26 (MC). The lone report of **American Pipits** came from Porter's Cove 12/5 (RN).

Consistent with the decline of **American Tree Sparrows**, most reports were of small numbers, but a fine total of 80 foraged at BRBL during the Bartramian Audubon's CBC 12/18 (MC, RW). **Fox Sparrows** frequented the evergreen groves at the Pleasant Valley entrance to Moraine SP through Jan, where up to 8 were seen foraging along the road with up to 60 **White-**

throated Sparrows (MC, ST). A **cis-montalis Dark-eyed Junco** was photographed at Seven Hills Road 2/4 (KB). More frequently seen during migration, up to 8 **White-crowned Sparrows** were seen in various locations 1/15-2/19.

Small numbers of **Red-winged Blackbirds** were present in several locations 1/2 through the end of Feb (m.ob.). Unusual among the reports was an estimated tally of 220 at Wright Road 1/2 (KB) and 75 at Butler Twp. 2/18 (MAK, GK). Certainly not unknown during the winter, 20 **Brown-headed Cowbirds** showed up a feeder at SHR 1/6 with the number swelling to 175 on 1/8 and 225 on 1/9 (KB). Double-digit tallies in the 60 to 90 birds gathered with up to 14 Red-winged Blackbirds under the feeder the last week of Jan. Double-digit flocks remained through Feb with numbers gradually decreasing. **Rusty Blackbirds** were seen 12/2 and 12/18 near what's left of Muddy Creek Wetlands (KB, EH), and 6 were at Swope Road 2/26 (MC).

The only warblers reported were **Yellow-rumped Warblers** with up to 3 seen, most around Moraine SP. A female **Indigo Bunting** was at a feeder at Stormy Oaks Nature Conservancy Wildbird Recovery 1/28 (LB).

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Cambria County

Locations: Prince Gallitzin State Park (PGSP).

There is little from the 2021 fall migration due to mild temperatures and very few bird lists reported to eBird during this period. In early Dec, a large variety of waterfowl was reported at PGSP including 100-plus **Ring-Necked Ducks**, one **American Wigeon**, 2 **Common Loons**, and many **Hooded Mergansers** 12/9 (VC). On 12/25 a **Trumpeter Swan** associating with 12 **Canada Geese** was reported on a private pond located on Noll Road. (KL, AN)

On January 14 a nice variety of waterfowl was observed at PGSP, including one **Green-winged Teal** and one **Gadwall** (JC). From that point, the waters in *Cambria* remained mostly frozen for the rest of this reporting period. One **Rough-legged Hawk** was reported as a flyover at PGSP (TA).

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Cameron County

Locations: Emporium (EM), Sinnemahoning State Park (SSP), Sterling Run (SR).

Emporium held its 33rd-consecutive Christmas Bird Count on 19 December with 28 participants. Forty-seven species were reported.

Two **Buffleheads** stopped at SR 2/22 (SS). Six **Hooded Mergansers** were at SSP 2/26 (AS). An early **Common Merganser** was seen there 2/9 (GJ). Seventy **Wild Turkeys** were found at SR 1/15 (DS), and 3 **Ruffed Grouse** were at Sterling Run Mines 2/16 (ES). Ninety **Mourning Doves** were at SR 12/21 (ES).

The CBC reported 4 **Golden Eagles**. Two **Red-shouldered Hawks** were at EM 2/20 (AS). Four **Eastern Screech Owls** were found at SR 12/19 (GJ). CBC highlights included 11 **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, 12 **Northern Flickers**, and a **Merlin**. A **Northern Shrike** was at Hicks Run 2/7 (GJ).

The EM CBC also totaled 53 **Common Ravens** and 26 **Red-breasted Nuthatches**. A **Gray Catbird** was found at EM 1/24 (AS). The CBC counted 4 **Hermit Thrushes**, 275 **Cedar Waxwings**, and 26 **Purple Finches**. Three **Common Redpolls** were at SSP 1/29 (m.ob.). Eight **Snow Buntings** were near Sizerville 2/19 (RB). A **Chipping Sparrow** was at SR 1/5, and a **Fox Sparrow** was there 1/28 (BH).

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Carbon County

Locations: Beltzville Lake (BL), Beltzville State Park (BSP), Penn Forest Reservoir (PFR), Strohl's Valley Road (SVR).

BSP held the most species starting with approximately 1000 **Snow Geese** 2/23 (MY). Two **Trumpeter Swans** and 3 **Tundra Swans** were feeding and resting there 2/28 (m.ob.), and 7 **Wood Ducks** put in an appearance 2/12 (RR).

Other ducks at BSP included 2 **Northern Shovelers** and 3 **Gadwalls** 2/23 (MY) when weather was mild in the low 50's F, a male and female **American Wigeon** (pairing up?) 2/2 (RR), **Mallards** throughout Feb (RR, BW, et al), 3 **American Black Ducks** 2/6 (MY), up to 11 **Northern Pintails** 1/12-2/12 (RR), one **Canvasback** 2/20-27 (RR, MY), 7 **Redheads** 2/16-29 (m.ob.), and up to 28 **Ring-necked Ducks** 1/4-2/28 (m.ob.).

Of the scaup at BSP, top count was 12 **Greater Scaup** 2/26 (BW) and 6 **Lesser Scaup** 1/4 (MY). One **Long-tailed Duck** was at BSP 2/18 (RR), up to 9 **Buffleheads** were there 1/4-2/27 (MY), and 3 **Common Goldeneyes** 1/4, and then 5 cruised BL 2/23 (MY). Also at BSP were a high of 6 **Hooded Mergansers** 1/4 (MY), up to 52 **Common Mergansers** 1/19 (RR), and 3 **Red-breasted Mergansers** 1/22 (RR). One **Ruddy Duck** made an appearance 1/29 (BW) and then at BL 2/6 (MY) when weather was sunny and the temperature was 23 to 26 degrees F.

Away from the water 2 **Ring-necked Pheasants** were at BSP 2/20 (MY). Back on BL, a **Horned Grebe** was spotted 1/30 (TF). Even an **American Coot** appeared at BSP 1/24 and 2/26 (GD, RR). Birds and birders were scarce for Penn Forest Reservoir, yet 3 **Killdeer** were there 2/11 (RR), Also at BSP was a **Bonaparte's Gull** 12/8 (RR), 4 **Ring-billed Gulls** 2/6-23, and at least 4 **Herring Gulls** 2/6 and later (m.ob.). Two **Common Loons** hung around BSP 2/23-26 (m.ob.). One **Great Blue Heron** visited a homeowner's yard 2/26 (JB). A **Black Vulture** was seen 2/12, and 2 **Turkey Vultures** soared over BL 2/26 (RR).

One **Golden Eagle** were seen at Mountain View Circle bordering Bethlehem Water Authority 12/21 (JA). A **Northern Harrier** was first spotted at BSP 12/19 (DD), then seen 1/4 and 2/26 (m.ob.). A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** appeared at BSP 2/27 (RR), and one **Cooper's Hawk** was there 1/2 (RR), when the weather was sunny with a temp ranging between 14 and 17 degrees F. **Bald Eagle** sightings were numerous with the high count of 7 at BSP 2/12; this day six imms. and one adult harassed a female Mallard (RR). One **Red-shouldered Hawk** and one **Red-tailed Hawk** were at BSP 2/6 (RR) on that sunny day.

An **Eastern Screech Owl** 1/24 (RR) and a **Great Horned Owl** 1/10 (GD) were lucky BSP sightings. One **Barred Owl** was seen at Mountain View Circle bordering Bethlehem Water Authority 12/21 (JA), and a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was around Blue Mt. Ski Resort 12/29 (RR). Only one **Hairy Woodpecker** was at PFR 2/11 (RR). An **American Kestrel** 1/4 and **Merlin** 1/30 (RR) were also lucky sightings at BSP.

A **Red Breasted Nuthatch** seen at PFR 12/27 (RR). A **Brown Creeper** was at BSP 1/21 (JG), as was one **Winter Wren** 1/1 (RR). A **Northern Mockingbird** was at SVR 1/25 (PN), and one was was even hanging around BSP 1/25 (PN). A **Hermit Thrush** at BSP 12/30 (RK) was rather uncommon.

Three **House Finches** were seen at SVR for the first time 2/12 (RR), and then 2 **Purple Finches** were at White Haven 2/19 (RG). There was only one **American Goldfinch** at BSP 1/1 (RR). Nice finds included 5 **Chipping Sparrows** at BSP 12/28 (TS) and 2 **Field Sparrows** at Yoo's Sanctuary 12/30 (MY), one **Fox Sparrow** at BSP 12/28 (TS), and only one **White-crowned Sparrow** spotted at BSP 2/18 (RR). Up to 25 **White-throated Sparrows** were at BSP 1/4-2/27 (m.ob.) in addition to one **Song Sparrow** there 1/4 (m.ob.) and one **Swamp Sparrow** viewed at Tippits Pond 12/30 (JD). Approximately 150 **Red-winged Blackbirds** flocked at SVR (RR). Another nice find was a **Yellow-rumped Warbler** at BSP 2/12 (RR).

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Centre County

Locations: Bald Eagle State Park (BESP), Colyer Lake (COL), Dreibelbis Birding Area – formerly known as Julian Wetlands (JUL), Duck Pond/Centre Furnace Pond (DUCK), Fairbrook Wetland (FAIR), Johnson Road Pond (JRP), Pennsylvania State University (PSU), State College (STCO), University Park Airport (UPA).

Several seasonal records were reported. The STCO CBC was held 12/19; 34 birders reported 64 species (JL). Nineteen birders reported 61 species during the Bald Eagle SP CBC 12/28 (BS). The following species were identified in at least five locations and will not be discussed further: **Tundra Swan**, **Wood Duck**, **Northern Pintail**, **Redhead**, **Hooded Merganser**, **Common Merganser**, **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Merlin**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, **Winter Wren**, **Gray Catbird**, **Hermit Thrush**, **Fox Sparrow**, **Swamp Sparrow**, **Red-winged Blackbird**, **Brown-headed Cowbird**, **Rusty Blackbird**, and **Common Grackle**. Information for this report was obtained from eBird and the STCO Bird Club listserv with background and status from *Birds of Central Pennsylvania* by Nick Bolgiano and Greg Grove (B&G, 2010).

Fifteen **Snow Geese** were observed: 6 near the Curtin Wetland 12/18 (AB) and 9 at BESP 2/21 (MS). Two **Greater White-fronted Geese** were at BESP 2/20-21 (JPI, et al.). Up to 6 were seen 2/20-21 at DUCK (KP, et al.). First reported in 1972 at FAIR, this species has been observed nearly every year since 2016. Up to 3 **Cackling Geese** were present 2/19-21 at JRP (JPI, et al.). An accidental juv. and an ad. **Trumpeter Swan** were present at FAIR 1/8 (KE, et al.).

A **Northern Shoveler** accompanied a flock of **Mallards** at FAIR 12/27-2/13 (CE, et al.). **Gadwall** were noted at four locations: one 1/5-23 at the Benner Spring State Fish Hatchery (RF, JPI, JC), up to 4 at DUCK 1/11-2/28 (MB, et al.), 4 at BESP 2/23 (JPI), and 2 at the PSU retention pond 2/23 (JK). A female **American Wigeon** was present at the Axemann Rd. pond 1/10-27 (KE, et al.), and up to 4 at BESP 2/18-23 (MS, et al.). Two were identified near the intersection of Nursery Rd. and Dowdy's Hole Rd. 2/26 (KP). Up to 7 **Green-winged Teal** were found at FAIR 12/3-15 (NV, et al.), and 3 were at COL 12/17 (RF). Four **Ring-necked Ducks** were seen at BESP 12/26-2/26 (JH, et al.), and one or 2 frequented DUCK 1/30-2/27 (MR, et al.). Three were located at FAIR 2/17 (JG), and one was seen at the Cold Stream Dam RA 2/28 (KS).

A **Greater Scaup** was present at JRP 1/9-2/21 (KK, et al.). **Lesser Scaup** were also observed, with singles reported at COL 12/13 (DR), at JRP 1/10-2/2 (JV, et al.), and at DUCK 2/20 (NV). Up to 43 were spotted at BESP 2/22-26 (JPI, BS, KP). A **Long-tailed Duck** was seen off Pine Grove Rd. 1/2 (RF, SB). One or 2 **Buffleheads** were at BESP 12/1-2/26 (TD, et al.), while 30 were reported in Howard 12/5 (BS). JRP hosted one-2 1/31-2/27 (RF, et al.), and one was spotted 2/27 in SGL 333 (DRY). **Common Goldeneyes** were also reported, with one to 2 seen at COL 12/5-28 (KO, DR, JC) and up to 30 at BESP 12/29-2/26 (CE, et al.). A female was observed at the Benner Spring State Fish Hatchery 1/24-26 (RF, JL, KE) and a male off Waddle Rd. near Toftrees Ave. 2/22 (MB). One to 2 **Ruddy Ducks** were present at COL 12/1-17 (DR, CK, RF), and single birds were spotted at BESP's Eagleville Rd. bridge 1/13 (both EZ), and JRP 1/24 (SaB).

Up to 3 **Pied-billed Grebes** were observed at COL 12/5 (CK, et al.), and as many as 5 at BESP 12/13-1/14 (LR, et al.). An early migrant was spotted at DUCK 2/26 (NV). One to 2 **Horned Grebes** were at BESP 1/2-11 (MK). A **Sandhill Crane** was spotted at FAIR about 2/11 (TS *vide* JV). Five **American Woodcocks** were observed 2/11 with 4 at the Scotia Barrens (JB, KP) and one in Boalsburg (AK). Singles were heard 2/23 at TwinOaks (TC) and along Rte. 2011 west of Coburn (AF). Three **Wilson's Snipe** were flushed near the Tadpole Rd. - Whitehall Rd. intersection 12/22 (CE). As many as 12 were reported at FAIR 1/8-2/28 (KE, et al.). A birder also spotted a dozen at a different location on Tadpole Rd. 1/30 (RR).

One **Common Loon** was spotted at COL 12/5 (KO), and as many as 11 were at BESP 12/1-2/23 (TD, et al.). A **Double-crested Cormorant** was at BESP 12/7-17 (MS, DI). **Great Blue Herons** were widespread, but an unusually high number of 74 were observed "taking off from Fisherman's Paradise" during the STCO CBC 2/19 (NBo, BM).

Black Vultures are uncommon, and until recently **Turkey Vultures** were "uncommon or absent in winter" (B&G, 2010), but many "Black Vultures [were seen] rising and swooping around the treetops on Cedar Ridge near Stormstown 12/2 ... all heading in a general SW direction," as did several "huge kettles of almost entirely Black Vultures." The flight continued for roughly four hours, until it started raining. In total, 132 Black Vultures and 72 Turkey Vultures were counted (PS).

The **Golden Eagle** observations at the Bald Eagle Mtn. Hawk Watch yielded a record 351 Golden Eagles, exceeding the 2019 record of 346. Over 87% were adults. These "are the two highest season total in the Eastern Flyway and indicate the exceptional value of the Bald Eagle Mt. - Allegheny Front fall migration corridor." Next fall's count will "concentrate on Golden Eagles ... [beginning] in late October and go into mid-December. The goal is to better understand how Pennsylvania's western fall Golden Eagle migration corridor works" (NBo post to STCO Bird Club list 12/24). An imm. **Northern Goshawk** flew by the Tussey Mtn. Hawk Watch 12/13 (DO).

Up to 9 **Short-eared Owls** were observed at the UPA 2/26-28 (KP, et al.). Three **Peregrine Falcons** were reported, one each on Upper Flat Rock Rd. 2/15 (LC) and on I-99 west of Harrison Rd. 2/18 (MC), and one chasing pigeons at the PSU campus farm 2/23 (JG). **Northern Shrike** were sighted at two BESP locations – an adult 12/31 (BS) and another 1/31 (JC). One was present 1/23-31 at Mid-State Airport (JPI, et al.).

The second winter record of a **Marsh Wren** was at JUL 12/24 (CE). The first record was in 2018. Single **Brown Thrashers** were observed at BESP 12/26 (JP) and 2/22 (AB), and at the Calvay Harvest Fields east of Boalsburg 2/20 (CEh). A female **Red Crossbill** was spotted feeding in the road at Mid-State Airport 1/23 (RF, KE). A first-year female **Lapland Longspur** was found in a flock of **Horned Larks** on Feidler Rd. 2/1 (JL). A **Snow Bunting** was seen feeding in the snow, also with **Horned Larks**, on Heckman Cemetery Rd. 1/25 (DR), and 2 were observed at the intersection of Middle Rd. and Ridge Rd. near Penn's Cave 1/29 (JG). A female was spotted 2/2 on Feidler Rd. (JPI).

Single **Chipping Sparrows** were reported in Port Matilda 1/19 (RR) and at a feeder in Marywood 2/8 (KO). One to 2 were in STCO 2/16-24 (DRY). Up to 9 **Savannah Sparrows** were at Whitehall Farms 1/23 (JG), and at least one was seen on Immel Rd. 1/25 (DR). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** stayed at the Haugh Family Preserve 12/22-1/15 (CE, JCo). As many as 5 **Eastern Towhees** were present at BESP 12/24-1/31 (GM, et al.). One was seen in STCO 2/8 (JD).

Two **Eastern Meadowlarks** were seen on Little Marsh Cr. Rd. at Summit Hill Rd. 12/28 and on the Bald Eagle SP CBC (DB). Up to 6 were present on Woodward area farmland 1/8 (JPI, DR), and as many as 4 were observed 2/22-27 at the UPA (JG, SM). *Centre's* first winter record **Baltimore Oriole** was a "first-year/juv." who visited suet feeders in Marywood 12/20-1/23 (DK, KO).

This was a warbler winter. A casually occurring imm. **Orange-crowned Warbler** frequented suet feeders at two locations in STCO 12/7-2/18 (CMc, et al.). It is possibly the same bird that was seen on the PSU central campus 12/13-14 (CE). Earlier records include one from 2018 and reports from STCO in Dec 1953 and Jan 1954, which may have been the same bird (B&G, 2010). A **Nashville Warbler** was observed at JUL 12/31 (JC). This was the third winter record, having previously been reported in 2009 and 1970 (B&G, 2010). Single **Common Yellowthroats** were observed at the PSU Arboretum 12/2-4 (JG), at the PSU Retention Pond 12/23 (CE), and on the PSU central campus 1/16 (CM). The first two reported birds were males. Since these locations are roughly a mile from each other, it is possible they were of the same bird. *Centre's* first winter **Northern Parula** was spotted foraging and eating a caterpillar 12/9 on Egg Hill Rd. (DR). While Yellow-rumped Warblers are not rare, **Audubon's Warblers** are. One was identified during the Bald Eagle CBC 12/28 at the mouth of Bald Eagle Cr. with about 8 **Myrtle Warblers** (NBo).

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Chester County

Locations: Chambers Lake (CL), ChesLen Preserve (CLP), South East Chester County Refuse Authority (SECCRA), Struble Lake (SL), Western Chester County (WCC), Westtown Lake (WL),

Overall it was a mild winter with little actual snowfall, characterized by many temperature fluctuations. Generally, there was an absence of species from the north, and of lingering birds from the summer/ fall.

Greater White-fronted Goose reports, initially of 3 birds at Glenville Farm Pond 11/23, continued with sporadic reports of one bird 12/31 (JK) and 1/2 (MG, PM); likely this same bird was 1.5 miles south at several locations on 1/3 (JK, MG, AB, AD, TW). Coatesville Res. hosted one bird 12/8 (SS, CH, DL, RR) and again 1/2 (KF). A steady stream of reports from WL began 2/12 (RG, m.ob.) and surrounding area, numbering one or 2 birds; the last was from Fern Hill L. 1/16 (DB).

WL and surroundings had already become a prime destination when a **Barnacle Goose** was relocated 12/11 (RG, m.ob.) and stayed through 12/15. This bird was first discovered at Rolling Green Memorial Park 12/10 (RG, m.ob.). No longer considered rare, **Cackling Goose** remains a nice find, often among the much more numerous Canada Geese. Reports were widespread throughout the period at most bodies of water, and sometimes feeding on the turf, where a high of 8 were counted at Rolling Green Memorial Park 12/12 (JV).

The end of Feb was the time for max. **Tundra Swans**, with 340 recorded the week of 2/22. It was a quiet winter for ducks; a single **Redhead** was at West Vincent Twp. Sewage Pond 1/30- 2/27 (CH, MD, m.ob.), and another single at Tel Hair Pond 2/8-27 (LL, m.ob.). Canvasback was not reported. **Greater Scaups** were identified at several locations, with most observations coming from Upper Uwchlan Twp.'s Rte 100 WTP (JD, m.ob.) with a high of 6 on 12/27. Two female **Long-tailed Ducks** were almost overlooked in a flock of **Buffleheads** at CL 2/23 (RR, AB); reports of singles came from MCSP 12/7 (RG, MG) and another 1/8 (AB, m.ob.). Originally found 11/20, the county's only **Red-breasted Merganser**, a female, continued at SL through 12/5 (m.ob.).

Four grebe species were reported. In addition to the common **Pied-billed Grebe**, single **Horned Grebes** were at SL 12/19-20 (LL, RR), and MCSP 12/4-16 (BB, m.ob.). Mapleflower Homeowners' Association, a personal location not often the source of bird reports, hosted an impressive 8 Horned Grebes 12/18 (TU), then 3 the day after. MCSP was also the location for the only **Red-necked Grebe** of the season, reported only 2/16 (AC, LL). A great find for *Chester* was an **Eared Grebe**, yet again at MCSP 12/22 (PD, JK, AR) and 12/23 (LL). One must look back to 1997 for the last report for Eared Grebe, also at MCSP. This year's bird was travelling with several **Ruddy Ducks**, and originally identified as a Horned Grebe. The value of social media was evident as photo review from fellow birders was able to accurately identify the bird as Eared Grebe 12/24, although by this time the bird was no longer present.

Dated information was received of an adult female **Rufous Hummingbird** that was banded at a residence near Pottstown, but was in *Chester* 11/14. This bird was first observed 11/9 and not seen after 1/9. And, yes, a second adult female Rufous Hummingbird was observed at a feeder in Paoli 1/9. Banding was performed on 1/21, and this girl departed 1/22 (SL). Homeowner privacy prevailed in both cases. Vocalizing **Virginia Rails** were

recorded at CLP 12/5-1/3 (JK, AD). Last season's **Sandhill Crane** continued at Octorara Res.'s Mt Eden Rd, occasionally in *Chester*, but more frequently in *Lancaster*. Then 2 birds were found 12/4 (PM) and continued throughout the period (m.ob.). Quite a sight for *Chester* was a flock of 16 cranes, first heard then seen and photographed flying over Rushton Farm Banding Station 12/1 (AC). Very cool, man!

Successful gull-watching in *Chester* requires visiting the local landfills or, if preferred, the larger lakes! **Bonaparte's Gulls** with up to 18 birds were at MCSP 1/25 (LL, m.ob.); MCSP was again a place for **Iceland Gull**, with a single bird present from 1/23-28 (LL, m.ob.). Iceland Gull was also at the Conestoga Landfill Ponds 12/20 (FH), and at SL on 12/1 and 2/27 (LL). From MCSP came the first report of **Lesser Black-backed Gull** 1/23 (LL, m.ob.), then 4 birds 1/24. Sightings continued until 2/25. One was at SECCRA 2/8 (LL, GT); 3 were at Conestoga Landfill Ponds 2/20 (FH). Lastly one was at SL 2/22 (LL). Back to SECCRA for the season's only **Glaucous Gull**, an imm., on 2/11 (LL). Hard to miss - **Great Black-backed Gull** was at SECCRA 1/17-2/17 (BQ, CH), with a max. of 6 on 2/8 (LL, GT). Singles were at SL on 1/9 and 2/27, and MCSP hosted one 2/7.

Loons were few; the lone **Red-throated Loon** report came from MCSP 1/17 and stayed for that day only (LL, m.ob.). Not much more common, **Common Loon** observations were both of single birds. One from SL on 12/1 (LL), remained for a second day. One other report came from MCSP 12/31 (KF). From the family Strigidae, **Long-eared Owl** was at Waterloo Mills Preserve 12/1 (KF), and **Short-eared Owl** from Bryn Coed Preserve 12/26 (IR).

The Beaver Dam Rd's **Red-headed Woodpecker** continued from the summer with reports through 2/26 (m.ob.); another bird at Chandler Mill Nature Preserve 1/23 (JH) and Marshall Mill House Preserve 12/18-1/22 (GT) may be the same bird that was reported from the Avondale area last fall. On 1/2 an adult showed itself for the WCC CBC (JS), and a single was reported from Crow's Nest Preserve 12/12, then again 2/21 (JK, AD). It was expected to find one **Merlin** at Coatesville Res., but 3 on 2/14 (RR) were noteworthy. **Peregrine Falcons** was reported throughout the period from the area of its nesting location near the Schuylkill R. Trail. Not unusual, several hardy **Eastern Phoebe**s stayed the winter; more unusual was a **White-eyed Vireo** was at Bryn Coed Preserve 12/5 (RG), likely the same bird reported 11/21 from the same location.

Of the potentially irruptive species to our area, **Black-capped Chickadee** was reported only one time, that of a single bird coming to a feeder near Coatesville 1/29 (PP). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** reports were widespread. **Purple Finch** was more widely represented with a max. of 8 at CLP 1/3 (BS). Two reports of **Pine Siskin**, one each, were received from CL 1/2 (AB) and Unionville Village 2/18 (CR). Disappointedly, there were no reports of longspurs, crossbills, grosbeaks, redpolls, or buntings.

House Wren was at Hibernia C.P. during the WCC CBC 1/2 (RR) and 1/19 (RR), and from Oxford Walmart Wetlands on 12/24 (JS). A long-staying bird visited Bucktoe Cr. Preserve for the entire month of Dec. CLP provided the only **Marsh Wren** report of the period 12/24 (RC). **Gray Catbirds** seemed in good supply, and **Brown Thrasher** sightings were not far behind. **American Pipit** sightings seemed normal, with a max. of 125 at the WCC CBC area on 1/2 (LL). **American Tree Sparrow** numbers seemed low with many reports limited to several birds. **Eastern Towhee** was not hard to find.

While **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported from numerous areas, there were no reports of big flocks; a high of 17 was at CL 1/4 (AC), with the majority of reports being several birds. At Great Marsh, a known wintering location, a modest max. of 6 birds was noted 2/13 (MC).

A flash of color amid the browns and grays of winter is bound to capture a birder's attention. Warblers were represented by one **Orange-crowned Warbler** at SL 12/13 (LL); **Common Yellowthroat** was at Oxford Walmart Wetlands where one was observed 12/24 (JS). **Palm Warbler** sightings were 2 birds on 12/1 and one 12/17 at East Coventry Nature Preserve (SS), and another at Schuylkill River Trail 2/6 (JF, RC). Often a suet feeder visitor, **Pine Warbler** did just that, with 2 coming to a home near West Grove for "about a week", reported 2/3 (MD). Up to 3 wintered near SL 12/5-2/27 (LL), and singles visited the Oxford area 12/2 (PM), and Charlestown Township Park 12/26 (RK, KC, KK). Another feeder visitor spent much of Jan dining on suet at a home near Kennett Square. Reports indicate that **Yellow-rumped Warbler** numbers decreased considerably by the end of Dec.

A male **Painted Bunting** was photographed 2/16 (TB) near West Grove at a non-accessible private residence. The bird was seen one morning only! There have been few records of Painted Bunting in *Chester*. According to limited PORC data, a bird was found near West Chester in 1993. In 2016, there were two separate reports. A likely adult female came to feeder, also near West Chester, first observed in Dec 2015 and stayed until 4/5/2016. A male was photographed and videotaped at a personal residence near Chester Springs; this bird was present 3/13/2016 through 4/4/2016. Most recently, again near West Chester, a male was photographed coming to a feeder 3/21/2018 until 3/25/2018. Reporting of those sightings was delayed, with best intentions and concern for the well-being of the bird and/or the homeowner. Certainly every situation is different, but it seems worth noting that in recent history, a male Painted Bunting had been coming to a personal location in *Lancaster*. Efforts of a local birder, in consultation with the homeowner, resulted in a very organized, controlled scenario in which birders were granted permission to visit the site.

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Clarion County

Locations: Armstrong Trail (AT), Callensburg (CA), Clarion (CL), Curllsville (CV), Kahle Lake (KL), Mount Airy (MA), Mount Zion/Piney Tract/State Game Lands 330 (MZ), New Bethlehem (NB), Redbank Valley Trail (RVT).

Redbank Creek through NB has become a well-birded location that shows an increasing variety of waterfowl using this area through migration and winter. This year 3 **Gadwalls** were reported there 2/25 (RS), and an **American Wigeon** was noted 2/20 (J&AK). A male **Northern Pintail** was noted regularly through the season 12/28-2/27 (J&AK, ES), and **Green-winged Teal** continued to winter here in single digits, with several reported regularly 12/28 through the end of the season (J&AK, BR, ES). Another Northern Pintail was found near CV 12/12 and one at KL 12/24 (ES).

On the *Clarion* CBC, just 2 **Ruffed Grouse** were found 12/18, and the only other sighting was one seen near Fisher 2/24 (DK). A **Wilson's Snipe** was reported near Leatherwood at a farm field seep 2/8, presumably an overwintering bird (DD, CW). An unusual find for Jan, a single **Ring-billed Gull** was found on Redbank Cr. at NB 1/1 (J&AK).

Still an unusual species for the county, a **Golden Eagle** was seen being mobbed by crows near Knox 2/27 (ES). **Northern Harriers** were reported in higher numbers this season, with 1 to 2 birds noted from at least 13 different locations including the Leeper area, CV, MA, MZ and KL (MH, JH, DS, ES, SS, et al.). Sightings were from 12/7 through the end of the season and included 13 individuals found during the CBC 12/18. **Rough-legged Hawks** were noted in five areas in the south, a light bird at MZ 1/22 (MC), and near Knox 1/24 (ML, GE, NK, JW). One was seen near CV 2/8-9 (CW), and one in CL 2/19 (CW). A dark phase was found near CA 1/30 (DB, GE, ML). In the north, a light bird was near Lickingville 12/24 and 2 on 1/22 (PC, GE, ML, ES), as well as one near Leeper 2/26 (BB). Near Snyderburg, a light bird was seen 1/2 and 2/28, and a dark phase on four occasions 12/31-2/28 (ES).

Short-eared Owl reports came from five locations. Three owls were seen on strip mine fields near CA and 2 at MA 12/7 (MH). Three were found

in areas around CV strips 12/11 (MH). During the CBC, just one was found near CA 12/18 (MH, LT). One bird was at MZ 1/15 (ES), and 2 were near CV 12/12 (DD, CW) and one 1/8 (DD, CW). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard and seen multiple times near Gravel Lick, calling regularly from 2/20 through the end of the season (RS, DD, CW). With excellent habitat at this location, it could be a possible breeding site. Another was heard calling outside Strattanville 2/17-18 (MH), but not heard after that.

Two woodpeckers remained unusual during the winter, and both were recorded this year at various locations. The first is **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, which has been a regular breeder in the north but generally has stayed further south during the winter. One was found along the RVT outside NB 12/17 (J&AK), and one was also present near Leeper 12/27-2/26 (SK). **Northern Flicker** has occasionally been present but still worth noting that one was found at a suet feeder in CL 1/9-16 (JHo). Another was found near Limestone 1/22 (CW), along the AT 2/12 (CW) and near NB 2/27 (ES).

American Kestrel numbers have varied during winter, sometimes due to weather and snow cover. This year, when the weather was still very mild, an excellent total of 7 were found during the CBC 12/18. **Peregrine Falcon** remains a species very sporadically reported, so one seen during a WRS near extensive farm fields outside Mayport was a welcome find 1/22 (CW). Unfortunately, Northern Shrike made the report this season by their absence, the first in many years. *Clarion* has extensive habitat for this species and, though in low numbers, it has been a regular winter resident. Hopefully its absence has been due to lack of birder effort and not other more concerning causes.

Vireos rarely make the winter narrative, but this year, most likely due to very mild conditions, a **Blue-headed Vireo** lingered into Dec, and was heard singing along the RVT outside Rimersburg 12/13 (CW). **Horned Larks** continued to show concerning downward trends, with none found during the CBC 12/18, and just one other report of 70 seen in farm fields near Tylersburg 1/22 (ES). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were present again this winter with scattered reports throughout the county, but not in large numbers, and just 4 were reported during the CBC 12/18.

Along with some other half-hardy species, **Hermit Thrushes** were reported in higher numbers and more areas. One was in CL 12/31 (TS), and also near CA 1/8 (MH). At SGL 63, 4 were found 12/12, with 2 remaining 12/19, one 2/13 (TS), and one in another area there 1/1 (MS). Another great bird for this same location was a lingering **Gray Catbird** found 1/8 (TS). **Northern Mockingbirds** remain generally present during winter but only sporadically, so 3 found during the CBC was a good number 12/18 (DF, PCn).

American Tree Sparrows continued to be present during winter, but in declining numbers. There were reports scattered throughout the county, more often in scrubby habitat than at feeders and usually only in single digits, with a max flock number of 18 (m.ob.). **Swamp Sparrows** were found lingering along the RVT outside Rimersburg, with 2 seen 12/13 and 12/19 (CW). During the CBC, a total of 5 were located 12/18 (MH, RM, ES, LT, CW). Another was still present at Beaver Cr. NA 12/24, and one at a pond near CV 2/27 (ES). **Eastern Towhees** was another species found in increased numbers. A female was along the AT near East Brady 1/4 (CW), and one was at St. Petersburg 1/8 (JM). A male was seen near Limestone 1/22 (CW), and another at Leeper 2/25 (SK). The last species of note was an **Eastern Meadowlark** found at CV strips during the CBC 12/18 (ES), and another bird at MZ 1/22 (MC).

Observers: **Carole Winslow**, cjwinslow94@gmail.com, Brendyn Baptiste, Michele Carlson, Paulette Colantonio, Pat Conway (PCn), Don DeWolf, Gary Edwards, Deb Freed, Jeffrey Hall, Mal Hays, Janice Horn (JHo), Danette Karls, S Kaye, John and Avis Keener, Nick Kolodick, Mike Leahy, Tyler McClain, Jane McCurdy, Ron Montgomery, Bill Reddinger, Eric Schill, Tabassam Shah, Ron Smith, Daniel Snyder, Scott Stoleson, Mark Strittmatter, Larry Towse, Jim Wilson.

Clearfield County

Personal communication was supplemented by information from the PABirds listserv and eBird for this report. A **Ruffed Grouse** was heard drumming near Mahaffey 12/12 (CD). A **Golden Eagle** was seen along

Route 1012 on 12/31 (JS). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard near La Jose Road 12/30 (CD). One **Red-headed Woodpecker** was tallied during the DuBois CBC 12/18 (MA, JSm). Unusual for the season, **Gray Catbirds** were seen in Curwensville 1/1 and near Clearfield 1/26 (JS). Three **Hermit Thrushes** were also tallied during the DuBois CBC (MA, JSm).

Two **Red Crossbills** were heard along McGeorge Road in the Moshannon SF 1/2 (MS, SS). Small flocks of **Pine Siskins** were seen near DuBois 1/14 (MA), near Glen Ritchey 2/19 (JA, RG, LS), and in the Temple Heights neighborhood in Curwensville 2/22 (JH). **Eastern Towhees** were seen at three locations: near Clear Run 12/31 (DR), south of Beccaria 1/22 (JC), and near Mahaffey 1/22 (KS, NV). Early migrant **Red-winged Blackbirds** were first seen 2/19 with multiple birds seen in multiple locations (m.ob.). One **Rusty Blackbird** was seen along the Beaver Meadow Walkway in DuBois 12/1 (BM).

Observers: **Diane K. Bierly**, 143 W. Lytle Ave., State College, PA 16801, (814) 238-8183, dkb246@usa.net, Marianne Akinson, Jason Arnold, Mary Ann Belin, Laura Bergman, John Carter, Clayton Delancey, Rachel Garodz, Jason Hoehn, Coby Kephart, Sue-Ann Krupa, Mary Kay Long, Bill Mendat, Max Muller, Dan Richards, Lisa Saylor, Matthew Schenck, Susan Schenck, Jerod Skebo, Kira Smith, Jocelynn Smrekar (JSm), Nick Voris.

Clinton County

Locations: Avis (AV), South Avis (SA).

A flock of **Tundra Swans** was found at SA 2/21 (DR). Two **Greater White-fronted Geese** along with one **Snow Goose** were reported at the same location 2/26-27 (C&CH, TS, EZ, WL). A **Rough-legged Hawk** was reported at Beech Creek 1/21 (TS) and one or more near Lamar 1/23-31 (C&CH, BS, TS, EZ).

Apparently a good winter for them, there were frequent sightings of **Northern Harriers** at Mill Hall, Swissdale, and east of Lock Haven (C&CH, WL, TS, MS, SS). One **Turkey Vulture** was recorded near Loganton during the local CBC 12/18 (JD). On the same day, 8 were tallied near Rauchtown as well as a record high count of 43 **Black Vultures** there (DK, DRr).

On 12/18 during the CBC, a **Hermit Thrush** was seen near AV (VS, EZ). Also that day at AV were 6 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** (VS, EZ). Flocks of **Horned Larks** frequented manure spreads at SA throughout the period. Several **American Pipits** were at SA 1/28 and 1/31 (WL). A **Lapland Longspur** was found at SA 1/18 and again 1/23 (C&CH, BS). A few **Snow Buntings** were spotted at the same SA manure spreads 1/20-2/4 (C&CH, WL, DR, BS, MS, SS). A **Vesper Sparrow** was at SA 1/29 (SL).

Observers: **Wayne Laubscher**, 749 E. Croak Hollow Road, Lock Haven, PA 17745, 570-748-7511, wlaubscher@comcast.net, Charles and Carol Hildebrand, Dave Krempasky, Sarah Lindgren, Dave Rockey, Dave Rothrock, Vesta Schach, Brian Schmoke, Matthew Schenck, Susan Schenck, Tom Shervinski, Elizabeth Zbeger.

Columbia County

The winter season started warm, but January turned much colder. Temperatures returned to seasonal levels in February. The warm start to the season appeared to hold over some birds that would normally have moved south. Large numbers of **American Robins** persisted as did a few **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**. There was very little snow during the season so field birds were hard to find.

It was a good season for raptors. The only **Golden Eagle** was observed at KP 2/26 (EK). **Rough-legged Hawks** were present in good numbers. A light male was observed around Jerseytown 1/25 (EH) and 1/26 (JD). **Peregrine Falcons** are now year-round residents in low numbers, with sightings limited to just two. One was seen along Interstate 80 near Lime Ridge 1/10 (RK, WK), and one was perched in a dead snag along Fort McClure Boulevard 12/15 (AK).

Ruby-crowned Kinglets are seldom reported here during winter, but this year was an exception. One was at Rupert Covered Bridge in Kocher

Park 12/17 and 2 at the same location 12/31 (TJ); and up to 2 were in Catawissa 2/18-2/19 (m.ob.) Although probably present in low numbers during every winter season, this year's lone **Hermit Thrush** report was of a single along Brote Hollow Road (EH).

Observers: **Andy Keister, 110 Hawk Ridge Road, Bloomsburg, 17815, (570) 337-3802, akeister110@gmail.com**, Jonathan DeBalko, Evan Houston, Tonia Jordan, Erin Kibelstis, Rick Koval, Wendy Koval, Karol Pasquinelli.

Crawford County

Locations: Conneaut Lake (CL), Linesville (LV), Pymatuning State Park-Miller's Ponds (MP).

There were a higher-than-average number and frequency of **Snow Goose** observations this winter (m.ob.). A high count of 22 was made at Candahota L. 2/18 (JM). Four **Cackling Geese** were at Pymatuning SP-Spillway 2/1 (CA, KA, NA). The 2518 **Canada Goose** observed during the LV CBC 12/19 (m.ob.) represented a low count for the CBC. Notable observations of **Trumpeter Swans** occurred at SGL 69, including 4 birds 12/2 (AL), 3 on 12/6 (AL), and 3 on 12/16 (AL). A high of 110 **Tundra Swans** was at Pymatuning SP- South Lake Road 1/10 (SSo).

The **Wood Duck** observations were of one at Pymatuning SP- South Lake Road 12/17 (SSo) and 4 during the LV CBC at Pymatuning SP- Area J on 12/19 (RH, AL, BM, TN, KP). Notable waterfowl counts included 418 **Gadwall** during the LV CBC 12/19 (m.ob.) and a great count of 275 **American Black Ducks** at Pymatuning SP- Nature Center 1/9 (EH). A high of 106 **Redheads** was at CL 2/28 (JM). **Greater Scaups** were in their expected numbers and locations (m.ob.). A single **Long-tailed Duck** was the only observation during the LV CBC 12/19 (m.ob.). A high count of 265 **Buffleheads** were observed during the LV CBC 12/19 (m.ob.), with excellent high counts of 1175 **Hooded Merganser** and 2305 **Common Merganser** there also (m.ob.).

Observations of **Ruffed Grouse** included singles at SGL 146 on 12/23 (BM), 12/31 (KA), and 2/24 (BM). Perhaps due to the milder winter, **American Coot** reports were lower than expected (m.ob.). **Sandhill Cranes**, in their expected numbers and location, had high counts of 137 during the LV CBC 12/19 (m.ob.) and 110 in the Fairfield Twp. area 1/25 (SG). A single **Killdeer** was at MP 2/11 (IF), 2/12 (KW), and 2/15 (BM), slightly early dates for this species.

A high of 500 **Bonaparte's Gulls** was at Pymatuning SP- Dam 12/7 (CG). A good count of 4328 **Ring-billed Gull** were seen during the LV CBC 12/19 (m.ob.). A single **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, notable during winter, was seen during the LV CBC 12/19 (m.ob.). **Great Black-backed Gull** is a scarce bird in *Crawford*, but there was a one at Pymatuning SP- Causeway 2/26 (BM). A notable high count of 15 **Double-crested Cormorants** was observed during the LV CBC 12/19 (m.ob.).

Four **Turkey Vultures** were at CL 2/11 (TN), an early date. A count of 48 **Bald Eagles** occurred during the LV CBC 12/19 (m.ob.). **Rough-legged Hawk**, perhaps due to a milder winter, were observed with less frequency and abundance than past winters (m.ob.). Notably, no Rough-Legged Hawks were in the Winter Raptor Survey in southeastern *Crawford* 1/16 for only the second year of the count (ML). Observations of **Snowy Owl** included one observed along Irish Road in North Central *Crawford* 12/29 (LG) and one in the Cambridge Springs area 2/5 (JF). **Short-eared Owl** included a single continuing bird at MP 12/2 (KW), and 4 at the same location 1/3 (SSc) is especially notable.

Red-headed Woodpeckers and **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were in their expected locations and numbers (m.ob.), as were **American Kestrels**. Observations of **Merlin**, expected but scarce during the winter, included a single in the Meadville area 1/1 (GL) and 1/30 (BM), one at MP 1/28 (EH), one in the Cambridge Springs area 1/29 (KZ), and one at CL 2/26 (TN, KP). Observations of **Peregrine Falcon** included one at CL's Marina 1/26 (MW).

Northern Shrikes were observed in two locations: a single individual at SGL 146 on 12/10 (BM), 12/12 (TP), 12/23 (BM), 12/30 (TN), and 1/13 (BM); and a single individual at Erie N.W.R.- Seneca Division 1/8 and 1/15 (RS). **Common Ravens** were primarily on the eastern half of *Crawford*

(m.ob.). **Horned Larks** included a high of 110 at a feed corn pile in the Rundletown area 2/19 (BM).

Red-breasted Nuthatches were observed in their expected numbers and locations (m.ob.), as were **Winter Wrens** (m.ob.). Observations of **Gray Catbird**, rare for the season, included singles at CL during the LV CBC 12/19 (CN) and at Erie N.W.R.- Pool 9 on 12/24 (RE). Reports of **Northern Mockingbirds** included one in the Cambridge Springs area 1/8 (RS) and one north of Titusville 1/13 (EN, KN). A notable count of 75 **Cedar Waxwings** was at SGL 277 on 1/2 (RH, BM).

Purple Finches were as expected (m.ob.). Observations of **Common Redpoll** included one at a feeder at a private location in Meadville 2/5- 2/9 (CG, DG) and 2 at MP 2/12 (KW). The only report of **Pine Siskin** was of 2 at a private location in the Townville area 12/17 (AL). **Snow Buntings** were notable with a large number at a seed corn pile at a private location in the Rundletown area 2/18-2/26 (m.ob.), with a high count of 55 on 2/18 (AT). At least 3 **Lapland Longspurs** were at the same spot 2/18-2/20 (m.ob.).

Perhaps due to the milder winter, there were more **Eastern Towhees** (m.ob.). **Chipping Sparrows** reports included one coming to a feeder in the Fairfield Twp. area 2/3-2/8 (SG) and one at a feeder in LV 2/5 (KW). Two **Field Sparrows** were at Hemlock Hill Field Station 12/4 (RM). **Fox Sparrows** included one seen during the LV CBC 12/19 (RH, AL, BM, TN, KP) and one in the Springboro area 1/23-31 (CN). There was higher-than-average number and frequency of **White-crowned Sparrows** (m.ob.).

A good count of 8 **Eastern Meadowlarks** was at a seed-corn pile at a private location in the Rundletown area 1/25 (KZ). Five **Red-winged Blackbirds** were at Conneaut Marsh- Geneva 12/5 (EH), and one was seen during the LV CBC 12/19 (m.ob.), significant for their mid-winter date. A single **Rusty Blackbird** was at Conneaut Marsh- Geneva 12/5 (EH). There were a higher-than-expected frequency and number of **Yellow-rumped Warblers** this season (m.ob.).

Observers: **Rob Hodgson, 709 Alden Street, Meadville, PA 16335, (515) 708-0603, robhodgson888@gmail.com**, Casey Andersen, KM Andersen, Nancy Andersen, Rich Eakin, Jennifer Ferrick, Isaac Field, Chuck Gehringer, Deborah Gehringer, S Gormley, Luke Gosnell, Eric Hall, Greg Lawrence, Michael Leahy, Alejandra Lewandowski, Jim McConnor, Brian Miller, Jeffrey Mitcham (JM), Robert Morton, Elizabeth Nicholson, Ken Nicholson, Claire Nicolls, Tomas Nonnenmacher, Ken Pinnow, Tom Pinter, Sarah Sargent, Kathy Saunders, Steve Schmit (SSc), Robert Scribner, Ron Smith (RSm), Shawn Sowers (SSo), Adam Troyer, Katie Wickert, Michael Williams, Kendall Zook.

Cumberland County

Locations: Big Spring (BS), Kuhn Lake (KL), Mud Level Road (ML), Silver Spring Quarry (SSQ).

Unless otherwise stated, occurrences and the number of prior occurrences of the species listed in this report are according to eBird records and "Annotated List of Cumberland County Birds" (*Pennsylvania Birds* 30:138-147, V. Gauthier, 2016). There may be current and historical sightings for *Cumberland* listed on eBird from the Susquehanna River that may be possible to list on this report, but without clear documentation, they are considered to have occurred in *Dauphin* since the county line is the west shoreline of the river.

There were 23 waterfowl species reported this season, typical for the last several winters. Three **Snow Geese** were seen at SGL 169 on 1/2 for the only report of the season (JM). One **Cackling Goose** was at BS 1/15 (VG); and another at Brackbill Pond 1/5-6 and 2/25 (SK, IG, BM), with perhaps the same bird was found nearby at SSQ 1/30-2/6 (IG et al.). The resident **Trumpeter Swan** family returned to the Newville area with 2 adults and 2 young arriving at BS 2/11 (VG) before moving on to the breeding site at Creekview Road and adjacent KL 2/12-20 (CP, RP, JM, VG), then finally ending the season at SGL 169 on 2/28 (CP). Three young fledged from KL in 2021, so it appears that one of last year's brood was lost.

A very early **Blue-winged Teal** was at West Fairview Park 2/27 (JMc). **Common Goldeneye** was present much of the season; all sightings were clustered in a small area in Silver Spring Twp. One was photographed in a

retention pond at Winding Creek Elementary School 12/18 (BR, MR), up to 7 were at Vincent DiFilippo Nature Preserve 1/22-2/11 (JG, BB, VG), and a max of 9 were at SSQ 1/31-2/4 (CP, RP, NT, DH). A **Ruddy Duck** was found at the pond adjacent to Camp Hill State Correctional Institution 1/3 (BB).

For the first time in several winters, **Rough-legged Hawks** were recorded consistently in *Cumberland*. A dark-morph adult male was found along Linda Drive outside Mechanicsburg during a winter raptor survey 1/29 (KJ, TJ, CP, RP) and continued through 1/31 (DG). A light-morph adult male was reliable around Ponderosa Road 1/30-2/11 (RF, m.ob.). Another was along Pine Road 2/26 (RM). A **Short-eared Owl** was found along Grahams Wood Road 1/21 (RF). One **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was at SGL 230 on 12/30 (DB, SB) and a roosting individual was photographed at Messiah University 1/11 (JMc, NM).

Northern Rough-winged Swallows made a surprising visit at New Cumberland Borough Park with up to 21 present 12/18-23 (RK). This marked just the second winter record for *Cumberland*. **American Robins** made a massive southbound push at dusk 1/30 with an estimated 30,000 observed in flight near Newville (CP, RP). One to 2 **Lapland Longspurs** were found in and around ML 1/9-28 (VG, BK, CP, AM).

While this winter was quiet for finches, sparrows provided several notable sightings. A **Lark Sparrow** was found along ML 1/7-19 for the first *Cumberland* record since 2015 (VG, m.ob.). An adult **Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow** was photographed near Plainfield 1/15 and continued through winter (TJ, KJ). This bird, which had pale lores typical of this western subspecies, also had an intermediate-colored bill which may be a result of intergradation between the Gambel's and eastern subspecies. A **Nelson's Sparrow**, rare for *Cumberland* and normally only found during fall migration, was photographed at Winding Hills Nature Trail 12/25 (BM). This sighting appears to represent Pennsylvania's first ever winter record for this species. A large group of **Savannah Sparrows** was frequently found with the Lark Sparrow at ML, with a high count of 36 made 1/9 (AD). A **Palm Warbler** was at Huntsdale 2/9 (TJ).

Observers: **Tim Johnson, 334 Greason Road, Carlisle, PA 17015, (717) 409-4805, tj359@sbcglobal.net**, Benjamin Boone, Doris Brookens, Steve Brookens, Andrew Dapkins, Ron Freed, Ian Gardner, Vern Gauthier, Jonathan Gere, Dave Grove, Daniel Hinnebusch, Karena Johnson, Stefan Karkuff, Bob Koontz, Ramsay Koury, Rodney Martinez, Brett Matlock, Andrew Markel, Josh McCoy (JMc), Nicholas Minnich, Jennifer Moore (JM), Chris Payne, Rebecca Payne, Brian Rollfinke, Max Rollfinke, Nathan Tiday.

Dauphin County

Locations: Harrisburg (HBG), Susquehanna River West Fairview (SRWF), Wildwood Lake (WL).

Twenty-four species of geese, ducks, and mergansers were seen during the period on the Susquehanna R. (m.ob.) The first reported **Redhead** and **Long-tailed Duck** were at SRWF 1/27 (SS) and 12/23 (SBr), respectively. Recorded during the HBG CBC were a **Cackling Goose**, **Common Goldeneye**, and **Pied-billed Grebe** on the Susquehanna R. 12/18 (m.ob.); total count was 88 species. The Curtin CBC in northern *Dauphin* produced 68 species with an **American Bittern** spotted 12/28 (SB, StB). A **Red-necked Grebe** was photographed at SRWF 2/19 (BM).

A pair of **Bald Eagles** was seen just south of Blue Mt. in HBG with nest building observed 2/14 (SL, GL). A **Rough-legged Hawk** was spotted on Milton Hershey Lands 2/9 (CW), and a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was seen among hemlocks on SGL 211 on 2/11 (NF). A **Snowy Owl** was photographed near L. Tobias Wildlife Park by an employee 12/6 but was not relocated. A **Great Horned Owl** was seen during the day at WL 12/28 (EC).

The resident pair of **Peregrine Falcons** on the Clark's Ferry Bridge was seen regularly (SL, GL, SB, StB). The wintering pair on the Hershey Cocoa Silos returned in late Dec and had been seen and photographed through Feb (BH). They have been spotted regularly at this location, but only in the winter since 2017. In HBG, the Rachel Carson State Office Building's Peregrine Falcons were present this winter (DEPFW).

There were a few reports of northern species in *Dauphin*. Many **Horned Larks** and a half dozen **Purple Finches** were sighted. An **American Pipit**

was seen in northern *Dauphin* 1/8 (SB, StB), and a lone **Pine Siskin** was at a feeder in southern *Dauphin* 2/10 (BK). An **Evening Grosbeak** was seen on SGL 211 on 2/1 (NM).

There were 3 reports of **Brown Thrashers** south of HBG - 1/28, 2/19, and 2/22 (BM, JR, BCT). Along with numerous **Yellow-rumped Warbler** observations, a **Black-and-white Warbler** was photographed at a home in HBG 12/1 (EB) and a **Common Yellowthroat** was at WL 12/18 (DH).

Observers: **Sandy Lockerman, 3830 Lexington Street, Harrisburg, PA 17109, (717) 329-8040, sandylockerman@yahoo.com**, Ed Bernot, Scott Bills, Stephanie Bills (StB), Scott Brookin (SBr), Brienne Campbell-Thompson, Ed Chubb, DEP Falcon Watch, Nate Felty, Bob Hench, Deuane Hoffman, Bill Kametz, Gary Lockerman, Barb Mastrococco, Barb Matthews (BMw), Nicholas Minnich, Jody Ross, Steve Schmit, Cathleen Wetzel.

Delaware County

Locations: Brinton Lake (BL), Commodore Barry Bridge/Riverfront (CB), Crum Creek Reservoir (CCR), Darlington Tract (DT), Delaware River/Hog Island Road (DRHIR), John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge (JHNWR), Louis Scott Memorial Park (LSMP), Marcus Hook (MH), Smedley Tract (ST), Springton Reservoir (SR), Tyler Arboretum (TY)

Snowfall this winter in *Delaware* was highly variable but generally insignificant and below normal for the season. A storm that brought many inches to the shore at the end of Jan only dropped 4-6 inches here. On 23 Feb, the first 70°F mark of the year was reached, but that was followed a day later by an ice storm with temperatures hovering around freezing.

Snow Geese were reported every month of the season with movements noted in the latter half of Dec and again toward the end of Feb (m.ob.). A **Greater White-fronted Goose**, that had been mixed in a flock of Canada Geese in the Westtown School area, wandered across the county line into *Delaware* and was discovered near dusk 12/13 (RG, BQ, SGT) by a group searching for the "Westtown School" Barnacle Goose. That **Barnacle Goose** was likely the same bird photographed at BL 12/16 (BQ) and 12/17 (BB). Nearly a month later, a Barnacle Goose was found at SR 1/14 (AB, DB) and seen by many again 1/16, on which date it was also well photographed foraging at Springton Middle School (m.ob.). Unfortunately, it was not relocated after that date. **Cackling Goose** was reported from more than a half-dozen locations on multiple dates (m.ob.), including BL, ST, CCR and Springton Middle School. **Tundra Swans** were regular along the Delaware R. throughout the period (m.ob.) and viewed from MH, CB and Governor Printz Park.

In the unusual duck department, a **Canvasback** was at MH 12/22 (DO), a **Black Scoter** was seen from DRHIR 1/15 (AG), a **Long-tailed Duck** was on SR 1/4 (AB, m.ob.), and **Common Goldeneye** were noted from SR on seven dates as well as from the Chester Riverfront, CCR, and JHNWR each on a single date (m.ob.). A single **Pied-billed Grebe** spent 12/9-1/22 at SR (m.ob.), and one was at JHNWR 1/21 (DO). At dusk on Christmas Eve, a calling **Wild Turkey** was heard at Ridley Creek SP (JM).

Although some **Killdeer** spent the winter at JHNWR (m.ob.), others started appearing at locations across the county in the second week of Feb. Two or 3 **American Woodcocks** began displaying at the 4th Ave location in Lester 2/17 (JM) and were observed through 2/26 (m.ob.). This cannot be the only reliable spot in the county for early woodcock, but it seems to be the one where everyone knows to go.

Four **Bonaparte's Gulls** were reported from DRHIR 1/26 (AG). An **Iceland Gull** was photographed as it flew off from SR 12/19 (AB, DB). There were just 2 **Lesser Black-backed Gull** reports: from DRHIR 1/20 (AG) and CB 2/19 (KS). **Great Cormorant** was reported from MH 1/23 (DB, AG) as well as DRHIR that same day (DB) and 12/5 (JHu) and from CB 1/25 (RF, JZ, DH), 1/30 (JM, DH), 2/13 when there were 3 (DB), and 2/21 (DB, DO). A **Great Egret** was at JHNWR 1/9 (DH, JM) and 2/6 (KE).

A **Golden Eagle** was a late-morning flyover at Garnet Valley High School 2/9 (SJ). In addition to the usual multiple reports from JHNWR and DRHIR throughout the season, **Northern Harrier** fared well for the second winter in a row with reports from six other locations. **Eastern Screech-Owl** and **Great Horned Owl** reports were numerous across the county; reports

of **Barred Owls** from 10 locations were also more than usual. Two **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were detected on the CBC 12/18, one in Middletown (AG) and one in Haverford (SJ, KJ). The latter bird likely remained in the area and was detected again 2/23 (SJ). Another individual was heard in Cheyney 12/28 (JH).

An **Eastern Phoebe** was at Barrett's Meadow 12/17 (SB, JHo), and another was at JHNWR 1/9 (JM, DH). There were at least a dozen locations noting **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, though TY (m.ob.) won hands-down in terms of reliability for finding this species. Locations reporting overwintering **Gray Catbirds** numbered more than a dozen, with about a half-dozen for overwintering **Brown Thrashers** (m.ob.). **Hermit Thrush** numbers were once again too numerous to count. **American Pipit** was reported from JHNWR 1/4 (AG) and 1/7-8 (m.ob.) with a flock of about 10 on 1/8 (JZ, DO).

Purple Finch was widely reported, but the only **Pine Siskins** were noted from TY 12/4-5 (WL, SBN), ST 12/10 (JM), and Drexel Hill 1/16 (JHu). **Chipping Sparrows** persisted at ST through Dec (m.ob.) and "moved" to Hildacy Preserve in Jan (m.ob.) with a high count of 41 on 1/3 (AG). Other individuals were noted at CCR 12/4 (JZ) and 2/1 (Bob Suter,) at TY 1/6 (JM) and 1/22 (JZ), and First State National Historic Park 2/17 (BB). **American Tree Sparrow** reports came from a few locations but mostly DT 1/23-27 (m.ob.). **Savannah Sparrows** were not numerous but found at JHNWR 12/5 (DB), in Newtown Square 12/18 (WS) and at DRHIR 2/6 (KS) and 2/13 (AG, DB). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was described from Pennock Woods Park 1/21 (SG).

Eastern Meadowlark was noted DRHIR 1/8 (AG), 1/12 (RZ), and 2/21 (DO). **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported throughout the period from their usual stronghold JHNWR (m.ob.), and one was also at LSMP 2/10 (DH).

An **Orange-crowned Warbler** remained at CB 12/29-1/17 (DO et al.); there was also one at JHNWR 12/18 (RM) and 1/22 (JM, DH), and at DT 1/23 (AG.) A **Common Yellowthroat** was at JHNWR 12/20 (SH). **Pine Warblers** were seen in Aston 12/20 (TP, EGC), in LSMP1/27 (RF), and visiting feeders in Chadds Ford 2/6 (AS, LF) and Garnet Valley 2/18 (TK). **Yellow-rumped warblers** were exceptionally numerous and found at many locations throughout the period (m.ob.). A **Dickcissel** that showed up at a Lansdowne feeder near Pennock Woods Park 12/4 (SG, WR) remained sporadic through 2/5 (SG) and was enjoyed by many. Of course, it was not seen on CBC day!

The 102nd Glenolden CBC was held 12/18 and tallied an about-normal 92 species on count day, adding 11 count-week species. A record-breaking high count of 14,775 **Common Grackles** smashed the previous record of 9377 set in 1994. **Red-winged Blackbirds**, at 1364, were also more than double the 10-year average of 530, while **European Starlings** came in at 4862, more than double the average of 2250. By contrast, there was but a single site that reported 3 **Brown-headed Cowbirds**. At the other end of the color spectrum, 2305 **White-throated Sparrows** were well above the 10-year average of 1500. Other high counts included: 31 **Cooper's Hawks**, 258 **Red-bellied Woodpeckers**, 47 **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, and 291 **Fish Crows**. Species represented on count day by only a single individual included **American Kestrel**, **Merlin**, **Orange-crowned Warbler**, **American Tree Sparrow**, **White-crowned Sparrow**, and **Savannah Sparrow**. Thanks to the compiler (DE) for the summary.

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Elk County

Locations: Benezette Township (BZ), East Branch Lake Vicinity (EBL), Rasselas Marsh (RM).

Of the 65 species seen this Winter, eBird reports included a **Common Goldeneye** near Sigel 1/23 (CB). Up to 2 **Common Loons** were seen and heard at EBL 12/10-14 (BB). A **Golden Eagle** was seen in RM 12/12 (BG), "flying overhead" in the Quehanna Wild Area 1/2 (BH), in BZ 1/14 (CB), and at EBL 1/18 (BB). A **Northern Goshawk** was "hanging around feeders" at EBL 1/24, 2/10 and 2/17 (BB). An **Eastern Screech-Owl** was near Weedville 1/2 (MS, SS) and at EBL 2/21 (BB).

The two sightings of an **American Kestrel** were at Johnsonburg 12/31 (BB) and near Weedville 1/14 (CB). A **Northern Shrike** was photographed at RM 2/9 (BB), as were 2 in Elk SF 2/7 (AS).

There were four reports of **Horned Larks**: one at EBL 12/3 and at RM 12/14 (BB), one near Wilcox 2/13 (CB), and 2 photographed at EBL 2/22 (AS). A **Swainson's Thrush** was seen feeding on holly berries on Rasselas Road and audiorecorded 1/3 (BB). An **Eastern Towhee** showed up each month during this period: in BZ 12/19 (BH), at EBL 1/22 (SL), and near St. Mary's 2/27 (MM). Two **Eastern Meadowlarks** were near Kersey 12/10, and one was in RM 1/15 (CB).

Observers: **Carol Light, PO Box 6, Benezette, PA 15821, 717-964-2324, lightpc2@gmail.com**, Brendyn Baptiste, Chelsea Beck, Barbara Gee, Bill Hendrickson, Sarah Lindgren, Melinda Marconi, Matthew Schneck, Susan Schneck, Andrew Sidelinger.

Erie County

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

Two major snowstorms dumped up to 20" or more of snow along the lakeshore in January and Presque Isle Bay froze completely over on January 11. Lake Erie began to freeze over on January 21. Despite the heavy snow fall and ice cover an amazing number of **Ring-necked Ducks** and **Redheads** wintered around the few open areas of PISP. Just a few **Snowy Owls** showed up in the region, but no individual stayed more than a week or so. The only **Northern Shrike** reported was one that wintered at SGL 109. There was no northern finch invasion this season with only three reports of **Common Redpolls**. The first winter record of **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was established for the county with an adult male showing up at a feeding station mid-January and remaining for at least a week. See details below.

As many as 21 **Snow Geese** of both dark and white morphs were in a field at Picnicana Park in Summit Twp. 2/17 (JCo). On 2/21 up to 18 of both color morphs were seen in Lake City, which were likely the same birds photographed at Picnicana Park (AM). This was quite early for Snow Geese this far north. A **Cackling Goose** was on Edinboro L. 1/5 (DS). An exceptionally high-count of 1689 **Ring-necked Ducks** were estimated on Niagara Pond 12/9 (JB). At least 400 **Ring-necked Ducks** spent the winter in open patches of water at the east end of PISP. (JM).

Mostly single **Sandhill Cranes** were reported periodically through the winter (m.ob.). A **Purple Sandpiper** was spotted on breakwater #48 on the CBC 12/18 (KZ). Two or 3 **Iceland Gulls** were seen on occasion late in the season of both **Thayer's** and **Kumlien** types (JM). At least a couple **Glaucous Gulls** were reported periodically over the winter around PISP (JM). An apparent adult **Great Black-backed Gull x Herring Gull** was at Dobbin's Landing 12/15 (JM). An **American Bittern** spotted in the Tom Ridge Environmental Center parking lot was a most unexpected location and on a rather late date of 12/8 (BG).

A rare sighting in winter, a **Black Vulture** passed overhead at the intersection of West 12th Street and Peninsula Drive 2/27 (DM). In the past decade it hasn't been unexpected to see **Turkey Vultures** in winter in Erie. One was reported in Summit Twp. 1/8 (JCo) and another at Hillside Park in Erie 1/22 (JC). Perhaps as many as 7 different **Snowy Owls** were reported in the county through the season, mostly at PISP or along the lakeshore (m.ob.) with only one reported away from L. Erie on the *Erie/Crawford* line (JF). A **Long-eared Owl** was along Dead Pond Trail 2/17 (RD). A **Short-eared Owl** was seen at Gull Point on 12/24 (RD). One or 2 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** may have wintered on PISP with single birds found periodically through the season (RD). Until recently, **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were rarely recorded in the county in winter, but this season there were at least 2

or 3 reported with one on the CBC (JL). A **Northern Shrike** spent the winter at SGL 109 in Waterford Twp. (RS).

Common Ravens have become permanent residents in the county in recent years but are still noteworthy at PISP, where one was seen flying overhead at Leo's 2/23 (NH). A **House Wren** at Leo's 12/4 was quite late (FL). Twelve **Common Redpolls** were observed at the Lake Shore Country Club in Fairview Twp. 12/3 (DS). A flock of about 21 fed in European White Birches near B-trail 1/10 (RD). A flock of about 50 Common Redpolls was seen flying around the birches over Fry's landing 1/19 (JM). A **Lapland Longspur** flew past Sunset Point during the waterbird count 12/11 (RD, JM). Most unexpected was an adult male **Black-throated Blue Warbler** that appeared at a resident's feeder 1/14 and remained there until 1/25 for a first winter record for the county (KA).

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Fayette County

Locations: Confluence (CON), Deer Lake (DL), Duck Pond Road (DPR), Greenlick Run Lake (GRL), Hutchison Park (HP), Jacob's Creek Wetlands (JCW), Nemacolin Woodlands Resort (NEM), Point Marion (PM), Uniontown (UN).

This season featured various geese that are rare here. Water froze for a few weeks during a cold snap in early February but quickly thawed as unseasonably warm weather moved in.

Three **Trumpeter Swans** were discovered on Filbert L. 2/1 (JM *vide* MJ) providing a second county record. **Tundra Swans** continued moving through in early Dec with 6 at GRL 12/6 (KB). A flock of 35 were in DPR 1/9 (MD), and 11 were at GRL 2/21 (AB). Seven **Ross's Geese** were a great find at DPR 2/19 (MJ) with only one remaining through 2/25 (m.ob.). The small unassuming farm pond on this road has attracted quite a variety of rarities the past few years. A **Snow Goose** was at PM 12/21 (TD, m.ob.), and one was at HP 1/6 (ER) and again 1/18 (MD). Two were in that same area 1/30-2/8 (AW, MD, RM, JC). A **Cackling Goose** was on DPR 2/20 (AB), one was at DL that day (DBr), and yet another was on the pond at NEM that day (MDo).

An **American Wigeon** was at HP 1/4 (ER), and a pair were at Duck Pond Road 2/20-21 (m.ob.). A **Northern Shoveler** was at DL 2/26 (DBr). **Northern Pintail** reports included 2 at NEM 12/26 (DBr), one at DPR 1/14 (MD), 12 at DL 2/26, and 2 at JCW 2/26 (ER). Two **Redheads** were at GRL 1/12 (LF) and one on 2/18 (KB). Three were at Dunlap Cr. Park 2/19 (MJ). A **White-winged Scoter** was at PM 2/2 (MD).

The only **Ruffed Grouse** were singles at Hopwood 12/30 (ER) and Ohiopyle SP 1/2 (MA). **Black Vulture** has become a regular species. One was in UN 12/13 (eBird), one was at Chalkhill 1/15 (DBr), 4 were just west of Lowber 1/24 (EH), and 2 were in Spring Valley 2/11 (DB). There were two **Merlin** reports; one photographed in UN 12/30 (eBird) and one was at GRL 1/11 (KB). An **Eastern Phoebe** at JCW 2/26 (KB) was likely an early migrant.

Single **Hermit Thrushes** were at Ohiopyle SP 12/31 (ON) and at CON 1/22 (MDo). A flock of 60 **American Goldfinches** was seen near CON 2/20 (eBird). A few species that are rare here in winter were reported. A **Field Sparrow** was at SGL 51 on 2/14 (KB). A **Fox Sparrow** was in the Farmington area 12/4-2/20 (CT, DBr). **White-crowned Sparrows** reports were of 2 at GRL 12/31 (MF), 5 just west of Acme 2/19 (eBird), and 3 just south of the Fayette County Fairgrounds 2/3 (KB).

An **American White Pelican** was spotted flying high over GRL 2/26 (KB). It was photographed before it flew out of sight. The observer was fortunate to arrive at the lake just as the bird was either departing or flying over. This provided the second county record, and amazingly the first was at this lake in November 1999. A photograph of that bird is in *Pennsylvania Birds*, Volume 13, No.4. Seems an odd time of year for a wayward pelican to appear in the state.

Observers: **Mike Fialkovich, mpfial@verizon.net**, Mark Alt, Kerry Bell, Dwight Blough, David Burleson (DBr), Alex Busato, Jane Clark, Michael David, Todd Deininger, Mathew Domer (MDo), John Flannigan, Larry Frauen, Eric Hall, Matthew Juskowich, Steve Manns, Ryan Mathis, John Moriarty, Oscar Nigam, EJ Regula, Carl Thompson, Adam Webster.

Forest County

Locations: Allegheny National Forest – Beaver Meadows Recreation Area (BEA).

Forest birders and many others were saddened to learn of the passing of Florence McGuire in mid-March, who long kept records of birds visiting her yard near Tionesta and the surrounding area.

Among the 58 species seen this period were 2 **Tundra Swans** photographed in Tionesta 2/5 (CS). A **Wood Duck** first appeared in Cook Forest SP 2/26 (SK, AK). Six **Red-breasted Mergansers** were in the BEA 2/20 (AL).

A **Golden Eagle** was photographed as it made several passes over Beaver Meadow L. 2/7 (MS, JT). One **Cooper's Hawk** was reported this winter in BEA 1/1 (KN). A light-morph **Rough-legged Hawk** was below Sheffield 2/9 (BM), and 2 **Barred Owls** were in BEA 1/13 (DY). A **Winter Wren** was outside Marienville 1/12 (TS), and an early **Fox Sparrow** was photographed north of West Hickory 2/12 (KS).

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Franklin County

Locations: Antietam Meadow Park (AMP), Antrim Commons Ponds (ACP), Fort Loudon Fort Historical Site (FLFHS), Mountain Brook Road Pond (MBRP), Salem Church Road (SCR).

The opening paragraph of this winter report is dedicated to long-time *Franklin* birder Carl Garner who passed on December 26, 2021, at the age of 83. Carl was one of two remaining birders who met in early 1961 to establish the local Conococheague Naturalists, now Conococheague Audubon. I got to know Carl a little in the 1980s in my early birding years and became more involved with him the past 20-plus years. Carl was a dedicated birder since his early adult years and kept copious records by hand of his sightings to the very last day he birded. I realized the extent of his records when I called Carl after I found a Little Blue Heron here on August 7, 2016. Carl went to see the bird and called me afterward to tell me that he last saw the species in *Franklin* 54 years prior, and stated the date and location. Carl was not interested in using today's technology, but recently became interested in eBird when local birder Dave Ebbitt suggested to him that some of his more exceptional records should be entered into eBird. With Dave's help, many of Carl's historical highlight species (and ones seen by other birders of that time) are now recorded in eBird. Over the years, birders have benefited from Carl making almost daily rounds of local ponds from Greencastle to Chambersburg and reporting to other birders of shorebird or waterfowl rarities. Perhaps the best of his rarities was the Ruff at Greencastle Res. September 25, 2015, which drew birders from many parts of Pennsylvania as well as surrounding states.

In the text thread to some local birders that informed us of Carl's death, many responses were of how much Carl will be missed. Joan Bowen, original founding member of Conococheague Naturalists, contributed this regarding Carl's role in the start of the Tuscarora Mountain hawk watch which ran from 1973 to 2016: "Carl discovered a look-out for hawk migration now known as 'The Pulpit' on the summit of Tuscarora Mountain at the *Franklin/Fulton* line. From then on, he spent countless days and hours observing and keeping records which were first reported in 1973 to the newly formed Hawk Migration Association of

North America.” Dale Gearhart, Carl’s long-time birding friend, said it well: “Carl was one of the best birders I ever knew. He kept the best records possible and could give you information about birds seen ever since he started birding. His life was centered around birding, and he did it every day. He was always a source of information if you needed help about birds and birding. He will be missed.”

Although waterfowl numbers were weaker than some winters, there was a good variety of species. A **Snow Goose** wintered at ACP 12/18-1/18 (KR, DE), one was at GERE 12/30 (KR), and 7 at Mill Race at Conocodell 1/6 (DD). **Ross’s Goose** has shown infrequently and normally for short stays. This winter a single bird used MBRP, and the gaggle of **Canada Geese** there, as its home base 1/22-2/24 (CB, Bkt, KR, CP, RP, m.ob.). There have been only a small number of eBird reports of this species, but this is the third report from this location with the other reports being 1/2017 and 12/2017. Additional reports were from Little Dipper Pond 1/2017, likely same bird as at MBRP, and 2/2018, and from Greencastle Res. 3/2011 of 16 birds (CG, MC, BC, BO) and 12/2017.

Not quite as infrequent, but still a species that is not regular here, is **Greater White-fronted Goose**. Whether or not the same bird, there were two sightings with Canada Geese in separate parts of the county. A bird was found and stayed for part of a second day at MBRP 2/17-18 (BO, KR, Bkt, m.ob.), and one was photographed flying over with Canada Geese near Upper Strasburg 2/21 (GA, BO). There was an abnormally low number of **Tundra Swans** reported, especially in Feb when many migrate through. The only reports in eBird during the entire winter period were night migrants over Michaux SF-Ridge Road 12/7 (Bkt), 8 birds in a field along Duffield Road 1/29 (JD, SD), and a 13-bird flyover at Keefer Road Farm Pond 2/22 (BO). Notable ducks in the period were a male **Canvasback** at ACP 2/13 (GA, KR, BO, Bkt, DC), up to 9 **Redheads** at ACP from 2/5 to the end of the reporting period (CP, RP, KR, BO, m.ob.), a male **Long-tailed Duck** at GERE 2/4-20 (KR, Bkt, BK, m.ob.) a female **Common Goldeneye** near Upper Strasburg 2/21 and 2/26 (BO, GA, Bkt), and a female **Red-breasted Merganser** at Letterkenny Res. 12/15 (BO).

Ruffed Grouse have not been easy to come across here with a small number of reports each year, and very few of them in winter; one was seen crossing Bear Valley Road 2/22 (Bkt). **Eurasian Collared-Dove** reports continued regularly from locations in the south-central part of *Franklin*, where there is an established population. The highest number of birds congregated in winter were 31 at GERE 12/1 (KR) and 47 at Gloss Road near Marion 12/2 (BO).

The first **American Woodcock** report occurred near Upper Strasburg 2/21 (GA, BO). Wintering **Wilson’s Snipes** were reported from Findlay Road 12/14 during CBC (DB, SB), at GERE 12/17 (KR), at Wenger Road 12/23 (BO), at Findlay Road again 2/8 (BO), at Rowe Run Road 2/15 (Bkt), and again at GERE 2/22 (KR). An unusual winter **Bonaparte’s Gull** was found at Mountain L. 12/18 (Bkt).

A **Golden Eagle** was photographed flying above the forest as viewed from Tower Road-Big Mountain Overlook in Buchanan SF 2/20 (GA). Up to 2 **Barn Owls** frequented a barn in the St Thomas-Edenville area; the location was not disclosed due to the sensitive status of the species. **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were found in Michaux SF at various locations 12/3 (BO, VB), 12/7 (Bkt), and 12/14 (GA).

Red-headed Woodpeckers have held over in some winters and not in others. They were near Roxbury 12/4-5 (EB) and on Sandy Mount Road near Upper Strasburg 12/23 (BO), but there were no reports on eBird for the remainder of the winter period. A hardy **Eastern Phoebe** was at ACP 12/8 (KR). An unusual-looking partially leucistic **Winter Wren** with an all-white head was photographed during the Chambersburg CBC 12/18 (VG, GA, BO).

Early wintering **Gray Catbirds** were at AMP 12/4 (LL), at FLFHS during CBC 12/14 (CP, KS, BO), and at Brindle Road during CBC 12/18 (DB, SB). Unlike last winter’s exciting irruption of northern finches to Pennsylvania and *Franklin*, there was very little activity this winter. The only reports of **Purple Finches** were at SCR feeders 12/10 (JS), FLFHS during CBC 12/14 (CP, KS, BO) and a male photographed at a feeder in Chambersburg 2/19 (DF). The only reports of **Pine Siskins** were in the Roxbury area 12/4 (EB) and at SCR feeders 12/10 (JS).

Birding for field birds after a good snowstorm yielded **Lapland Longspurs** along Zarger Road 1/18 and 1/21 (KR, GA), and **Snow Buntings** along SCR 1/17 (JS) and Zarger Road 1/18 (KR). Wintering **Chipping Sparrows** were reported at West Creek Road 12/16 (Bkt), along the Conococheague Cr, near Fayetteville during CBC 12/18 (VG, GA, BO), and one photographed on Boundary Road 2/11 (DC). **American Tree Sparrow**, a regular wintering species, has not been reported here as often in recent winters. The only reports for the period were at FLFHS during CBC 12/14, (CP, KS, BO), near Caledonia 1/18-19 (DP, HS), and 4 at SGL 235 at Bricker Road 2/17 (BO). Wintering **Eastern Towhees** were reported in Greencastle 12/13 (KR), at Creekside Nature Trail at Menno Haven during CBC 12/18 (VG, GA, BO), and at SCR 1/30 (JS).

Rusty Blackbirds were at AMP 12/4 (LL), at FLFHS during CBC 12/14 (CP, KS, BO), and again at AMP 2/16 (KR). A surprising **Palm Warbler** was photographed at ACP 2/13 (KR), the only eBird record of this species for *Franklin* during any winter period.

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Fulton County

Locations: Forbes Trail Road Ponds (FTRP), Haines-Seville Wetlands Restoration Area (HSW), McConnellsburg (MC), Meadow Grounds Lake (MGL), Union Church Road (UCR).

The first Buchanan Trail Christmas Bird Count was held on December 14. The CBC is located half in *Franklin* and half in *Fulton*. Hotspots included Buchanan SF’s Kerper Tract/Redbud Valley and Knobsville Tract, Buck Hollow Rd., Cowan’s Gap SP, HSW, and MGL. There were 60 species reported in the *Fulton* half with the following being the “better birds”: **Wood Duck, Bufflehead, Northern Harrier, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, Purple Finch, Field Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Rusty Blackbird, and Yellow-rumped Warbler.**

December was warmer and dryer than normal. January was cold with some snow, as was February. There was a total of 83 species reported during the period.

Even though open water was mostly frozen over during Jan and Feb, there were 11 species of waterfowl reported during the period. Species reported only once included a **Tundra Swan** seen among domestic ducks and geese at a farm south of MC 12/26 (AE). The bird had been present for a week or so according to family members. One **Wood Duck** was seen at MGL 12/14 (VG), as were 2 **American Black Ducks** 2/26 (VG) and 3 **Buffleheads** 12/4 (TM). Two **Green-winged Teals** were at Hidden Valley Farm off of Rte. 533 south of MC 2/21 (TM) and one **Greater Scaup** among a flock of Canada Geese at FTRP 2/19 (VG). Additionally, there were two reports of **Ring-necked Duck**, with one at FTRP on 2/24 (TM) and one at MGL 2/26 (VG).

Two **Sandhill Cranes** were photographed in an agricultural field off of Rte. 928 in southern *Fulton* 2/20 (AH). To my knowledge this was the first report for the species in the county as there are no prior eBird records nor any mention of the species being present in the *Fulton* reports of past issues of *Pennsylvania Birds*.

The only gulls reported were 2 **Ring-billed Gulls** at MGL 2/22 (TM). Raptors of most interest included a light-morph **Rough-legged Hawk** found in the area of UCR south of MC 1/29-2/13 (VG, TM, JF, DG, GG). Other *Fulton* eBird reports of this species are 2 in 2019 and one in 2018. There was also one **Merlin** reported around Narrows Rd. Knobsville 2/13 (DG, GG) and one **Peregrine Falcon** seen in the area of UCR and Cito

Rd. 1/1 (VG) and 2/21 (BJ).

Reports of **Purple Finches** were relatively few with 10 at MGL 2/12 providing the high count (VG). There were scattered eBird reports of **Chipping Sparrow**, **Field Sparrow**, **American Tree Sparrow**, and **Swamp Sparrow**. There were only two reports of Fox Sparrow: one at Boy Scout Rd. 12/28 (VG) and one at MGL 2/26 (VG). The report of 4 **Savannah Sparrows** near UCR 2/14-15 (TM) was outstanding and unique as it is the only winter eBird report for the species in *Fulton*. One **Eastern Towhee** was on Rock Hill Rd. 12/14 (VG).

Small numbers of **Eastern Meadowlarks** were reported around Wells Tannery in Jan and Feb with 8 being the most 2/20 (TM), and three reports of one or two birds in the area of Cito Rd. and UCR in Feb. One **Rusty Blackbird** was seen at HSW 12/14 (DG, GG).

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Greene County

Locations: Center Township (CT), Franklin Township (FT), Monongahela Township (MON), Morgan Township (MT), Perry Township (PT), Ryerson (RY), Sycamore (SY).

Snow Goose, **Canvasback**, **Redhead**, **Ring-necked Duck**, **Bufflehead**, **Common Goldeneye**, **White-winged Scoter** and **Pied-billed Grebe** were observed in MON 2/3 (MD). **Tundra Swans** were at same location 1/30 (AW). Other ducks included **Gadwalls** in FT 2/23 (JC, MH), **Northern Pintails** on the Monongahela R. 1/30 (AW), and **Greater Scaups** and **Lesser Scaups** at Greene R. Trail 2/3 (MD), **Hooded Mergansers** on RY CBC in Freeport Twp. 12/31 (MH, JP) and not reported again until 2/28 in CT (MiH). **Common Mergansers** were found in PT 1/11 (ML), and **Ruddy Ducks** in Wayne Twp. 1/14 (NR).

Herring Gulls were observed in MON (1/30 (AW)). **Common Loon** was found in PT 12/19 (ZWM). **Double-crested Cormorant** was in MON 12/18 (CT). A **Cattle Egret** was relocated in CT 12/10 (ST), and it was last reported 12/23 by the homeowner. A **Black Vulture** was observed feeding on a carcass in PT 1/20 and was joined by **Turkey Vultures** 1/21 (ML). A **Peregrine Falcon** was found in MT 2/8 (JF). A **Red-Shouldered Hawk** was observed in PT 1/5 (ML), and a **Northern Harrier** was found on RY CBC in CT 12/31 (TD).

A **Belted Kingfisher** was on suet in PT 12/17, and a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was there 12/18 (ML). **Eastern Phoebe** was found on RY CBC 12/31 (MGy, LH). **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was found in FT 12/25 (FS). Fourteen **Cedar Waxwings** were on RY CBC 12/31 (TD). **Brown Creeper** was found in PT 12/5 (ML). **Winter Wren** was found at SGL 179 on 1/26 (NR). **Brown Thrasher** was found on RY CBC 12/31 (LH).

Purple Finches visited a feeder in SY 1/17 (JC, AC). A **Fox Sparrow** was found at SY 12/22 (JC) and **American Tree Sparrow** was observed in Cumberland Twp. 1/24 (CB). **White-crowned Sparrow** was reported in SY 2/21 (JC). **Swamp Sparrow** (LH, MGy) and **Eastern Towhee** were found on RY CBC 12/31 (m.ob.). A **Bullock's Oriole** visited a suet feeder in PT 1/7 and remained throughout the period (ML).

Many **Red-winged Blackbirds** (m.ob.) and **Brown-headed Cowbirds** were found on RY CBC 12/31 (LH, MGy). Twenty **Rusty Blackbirds** were at a feeder in MT 1/20 (KK), and a **Brewer's Blackbird** visited a feeder in FT 2/26 (PR). **Common Grackles** were in SY 1/24 (JC), and a **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was there 2/14 (JC).

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Huntingdon County

Locations: Brumbaugh's Access at Raystown Lake (BA), Huntingdon (HU), Juniata River (JR), Old Crow wetland (OC), Pennsylvania Furnace Road (PF), Raystown Lake (RL), Stone Creek Ridge (SCR).

For the winter in *Huntingdon*, 106 species were entered into eBird. The season could be roughly divided into two parts: unseasonably warm in much of Dec and the first week of Jan, followed by a more-or-less normal period of winter weather through the remainder of the season. Precipitation was close to normal, with no big snow storms.

The 38th Huntingdon CBC was held 12/19. The species total of 69 was slightly above average. Five species established new high counts: **Common Raven**, **European Starling**, **Common Grackle**, **Red-winged Blackbird**, and **Yellow-rumped Warbler**. **Double-crested Cormorant** was new to the count (DG, et al.). The 29th Lake Raystown CBC was held 12/28. The species total of 63 was just below the average of 66. Record high counts were established for **Black Vulture**, **Hermit Thrush**, and **White-throated Sparrow** (JK, et al.).

Tundra Swans migration continued into Dec; high count was 200 at BA 12/19 (KT). Uncommon anytime, especially mid-winter, pairs of **Northern Shovelers**, perhaps the same, were at Aitch Access at RL 2/12 (DK, TK) and the Marklesburg waterfowl area in SGL 420 on 2/23 (KT). Seven reports of **American Black Duck** included no count of higher than 2. Three **Northern Pintails** were notable in mid-winter at BA 1/5 (KT). One **Canvasback** was seen 2/11, hanging out on the JR with a flock of 20 **Redheads** that was present most of Feb (TK, DK, m.ob.). Scattered **Common Goldeneyes** have been present most winters, however, a flock of 26 at the RL dam breast 1/27 was a good count (AG). Also uncommon in winter, single **Red-breasted Mergansers** were at Entriken Overlook at RL 1/21 (TK, DK) and at OC 2/12 (MK).

Ring-billed Gulls were widespread as usual, with several counts reaching into triple digits. Unusual in mid-winter, a **Red-throated Loon** was found in the JR near HU 1/17 (DO).

Two rarities highlighted the season. An **American White Pelican** was seen spiraling high about the visitor's center at RL 2/28 by Alicia Palmer, who photographed the white dot in the sky. Later it was found to have been seen and photographed on the water there a few days earlier. This is a first record for the county.

A **Bullock's Oriole** was photographed at a private residence near HU 1/2. It had been seen for a few days prior but was not reported again after the date of the photo. This is the second record for the county following a long-staying bird near Decorum in 2012.

Away from hawk watches, single **Golden Eagles** were recorded in the Dry Hollow section of Rothrock State Forest 1/17 (JK), on Harper Hill Rd. in SV 12/19 (SM, MM, LMn), and near HU 1/25-26 (KT, DK, TK). A **Rough-legged Hawk** was in Cassville 1/21 and 1/29 (KT), one was near Mooresville 1/30 (MN, GN), and up to 2 around Hesston 1/3-2/6 (KT, AG, TK, DK).

Red-headed Woodpecker reports included one at SGL 322 on 1/24, 2/8, and 2/23 (TK, DK) and one near Donation 1/30 (MN, GN). Single **Merlins** were at OC 1/5 (JO), SCR 1/14 (GG), PF 1/16 (KE), and near HU 2/7 (TK, DK). Eight reports of **Peregrine Falcon** included one on the Huntingdon CBC at Ennisville 12/19 (DW), 6 around HU (KT, DK, TK), and one near Cassville 1/29 (KT). An **Eastern Phoebe** was late at BA 1/5 (SM). Most **Horned Lark** reports came from PF, where counts through the season reached as high as 300 (m.ob.).

While fewer than last winter, there were still over a dozen reports of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** (m.ob.). Like last year, **Hermit Thrush** was well above normal, with dozens of reports, many of multiple birds; highest numbers were from Dec and CBC season, but reports persisted throughout the season. A half-dozen reports of lingering **Gray Catbirds** were all from Dec. **American Robins** were relatively scarce in Dec, but reports picked up considerably as the season progressed into Feb, with some counts topping 300 birds. **Cedar Waxwings** were present in modest numbers, with many counts in the range of 20 to 60 individuals.

Purple Finches were spread sparsely, mostly in SV and on SCR; most counts were low but a few well-stocked feeding stations saw persistent birds, with counts routinely reaching 50 or more at one location on SCR (GG, DG,

m.ob.). **American Goldfinches** were rather restricted in number, with occasional peaks of a couple dozen showing up at scattered feeders during stormy weather. A single **Snow Bunting** was at PF 1/25-30 (TK, DK, AG, SL).

A couple dozen reports of **American Tree Sparrow** seemed better than in recent winters, but most counts were of single digits, and the high was only 14 birds. Single early returning **Fox Sparrows** were at SCR 2/22 (GG) and Shaver's Creek Environmental Center 2/26 (AS). Four reports of **Eastern Towhee** were about normal; these included a report of 2 well into the season near Petersburg 2/12 (TK, DK).

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Indiana County

Locations: Indiana (IN), Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), Shelocla (SH), Yellow Creek State Park (YC).

Two reports of single **Snow Geese** were received this winter; an adult was sighted 12/10 (DL, MH, RH) southwest of IN while an immature was at YC 1/15 (TRh). Top **Tundra Swan** tallies included 102 at YC 1/11 (CH, MH, RH); 12 in a flooded field near Creekside 2/4 (MH, RH) were a surprise.

Two **Wood Ducks** were still present at White's Woods 1/12 (HR); 2 probable returnees appeared near Marion Center 2/23 (SN). Two **Northern Shovelers** were photographed at YC 12/14 (CH), the latest Dec date on record since 2001 when 2 were sighted 12/26/2001 (BF, TF) on the IN CBC. Limited open water at YC yielded a variety of ducks through 1/11 (CH, MH, RH): single **Canvasback**, **Redhead**, **Bufflehead**, and **Ruddy Duck** as well as 2 **Ring-necked Ducks** and a high count of 40 **Hooded Mergansers**. After 1/15, freeze-up occurred until 2/22 when a small patch of open water in Little Yellow Cove at YC yielded one Ring-necked Duck and 4 Hooded Mergansers (TR, SD).

A **Ruffed Grouse** near Cameron's Bottom 12/5 (DB) and one near Nolo 2/7 (EM) were the only two reports. Two **Pied-billed Grebes** were last noted 12/27 at Two Lick Res. (LC), while one was spotted the same day at YC (GL). Five **Horned Grebes** at YC 12/16 (HR) were last.

The high **American Coot** tally was 45 at YC on 12/14 (CH) while the last lingering singleton there was observed 1/11 (CH, MH, RH). A late **Killdeer** was sighted at YC 1/11 (CH, MH, RH); the first returnee was found near YC 2/10 (SD). Unusual was the appearance of a **Least Sandpiper** on the beach at YC 12/21 (SD, CH, MH, RH, DK), a first Dec record for this species. First 2 **American Woodcocks** were already displaying at Conemaugh Floodlands 2/20 (DL). The earliest 2 **Ring-billed Gulls** arrived at YC 2/10 (SD).

An early **Turkey Vulture** flew over a yard near Lewisville 2/9 (MC). A light-morph **Rough-legged Hawk**, found 2/18 (MH, RH) near West Lebanon, was still present the following day (MD). Single **Merlins** were noted at IUP 12/27 (MS, JT) and in IN 2/11 (JP). A **Peregrine Falcon** was a nice find east of Brush Valley 12/18 (CH). After a winter's absence, the first **Fish Crows** reappeared in IN 2/18 (DL).

A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** at IUP 2/19 (JT) was a nice find and our only winter record this year. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were noted at 9 locations this winter with the most consistent near SH (MH, RH). **Brown Creepers** were noted at 9 locations; 3 creepers repeatedly visited a feeder near Homer City through the winter (LC). A **Winter Wren** remained at the Waterworks Conservation Area from 12/5 (SD, CH) through 2/24 (SD).

Single **Hermit Thrushes** were spotted at YC on three dates – 1/4 (SD), 1/11 (CH, MH, RH), and 1/29 (ED, CH, MH, RH, TM). YC hosted 29 **American Pipits** 12/5 (MH, RH), the county's lone report.

A yard near SH yielded 3 **Chipping Sparrows** 1/24 (MH, RH); one to 2 were noted 1/28-2/8 (MH, RH). A **Fox Sparrow** visited a feeder area near SH 12/4-2/19 (MH, RH). A WRS yielded 10 **White-crowned Sparrows** south of SH and 7 north of Blacklick 1/21 (ED, MH, RH, GL). Last **Swamp**

Sparrows included 10 at YC (JP) and one near Homer City (CW, PW) 12/27. A **Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)** was in In Dec-Jan (JP). **Eastern Towhees** were unusually widespread this winter with at least nine reports (m.ob.).

A WRS yielded a flock of 4 **Eastern Meadowlarks** north of Marion Center 1/20 (ED, MH, RH, GL). First-arriving **Red-winged Blackbirds** included one near Lewisville 1/22 (MC) and 2 in IN 2/4 (MS). Two **Rusty Blackbirds** appeared at a feeder near SH 2/19 (MH, RH), but the next morning 3 were present (MH, RH). The first 6 **Common Grackles** arrived in IN 2/21 (JP).

A **Common Yellowthroat**, photographed at YC 12/28 (LC, CH, MH, RH, DK), was the first December record. Six was the top **Yellow-rumped Warbler** count 12/10 (MC) near Lewisville.

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Jefferson County

Locations: Cloe Lake (CL), Ringgold (RG), Whippoorwill Road (WR).

The winter season provides us with the usual hardy residents, but the occasional unexpected sighting makes the cold days more bearable. A local harbinger of spring was a wing-tagged **Trumpeter Swan** and its offspring returning to the same pond again in 2022 in Richardsville 2/20 (LC). An early-arriving **Wood Duck** was identified along Redbank Valley Trail (J&AK), and 21 **Common Mergansers** were discovered at CL 12/29 (NV).

Crusty snow made foraging difficult for some bird species. A hen **Wild Turkey** was photographed right next to the road perched in an autumn olive on WR 1/28 (DR). A **Double-crested Cormorant** was on CL 12/2 (J&AK) before the ice formed. A **Northern Harrier** was hunting over a field near WR 1/3 (EK). A **Red-shouldered Hawk** resorted to scavenging a roadkill due to the snow covering Airport Road 1/22 (DR). A **Short-eared Owl** was encountered after dark along Pleasant Hill Road 2/10 (NV), and a **Belted Kingfisher** was still present at CL 12/29 (NV).

Additional noteworthy sightings this winter included a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** and a pair of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** on the same date and location of RG 2/17 (J&AK). Four **Horned Larks** were observed along Strausser Road 2/16 (J&AK). A wintering **Hermit Thrush** was discovered along Ridge Road 1/29 (DR), and an impressive 5 different **Eastern Towhees** were tallied during Jan, including 3 along Galusha Road 1/23 (DK), one near Beechwood Road 1/23 (DR), and another at a feeder in RG 1/29 (J&AK). A **Fox Sparrow** was tallied along Ames Road 1/31 (J&AK). The most unusual sighting of the season was a detailed description of a basic plumage male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** visiting a feeder near Kyle L. 1/16 (PT). A **Brown-headed Cowbird** patronized a feeder in RG 1/16 (J&AK), and an early **Common Grackle** visited the same feeder on 2/7 (J&AK). A lone **Pine Siskin** was discovered along Martini Road 1/3 (EK).

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Juniata County

Locations: Arch Rock (AR), Cocolamus Dam (CD), Juniata River (JR), McAlisterville (MA), Mifflintown (MIF), Port Royal (PR).

For the season, 96 species were reported to eBird. The 35th Juniata County-Lewistown CBC, newly renamed and which includes a small portion of Perry, was held 12/18, hampered only slightly by light rain and drizzle in the morning. The species count of 77 was about average. New for the count was **Bonaparte's Gull**; found for the fourth time was **Brown Thrasher**.

Notable waterfowl included a **Northern Pintail** at Mifflintown River

Access 1/29 and 2/8 (CK, JP, MP) and one at a private pond 12/18-1/15 (CK, NK, TW). Three **Redheads** were on the JR at MIF 2/26-27 (MP, JP, JH). A somewhat-early **Red-breasted Merganser** was in Thompsonstown 2/26 (MP, JP), and a **Pied-billed Grebe** at MIF 2/26-27 (MP, JP).

The **Rufous Hummingbird** at Richfield continued from fall until mid-Jan, coinciding with the onset of cold weather (NrK). Up to 8 **Wilson's Snipes** were at the Fogelman farm 1/26-30 (JP, MP, CK, NK). Unusual in the county in winter, and an eBird winter first, a **Double-crested Cormorant** was at CD 12/11 (CK, NK).

A **Golden Eagle** was found on Metz Rd 1/29 (CK). Good to report, there were numerous **Northern Harrier** reports in the Oakland Mills area from late Jan into Mar (JP, MP). The only **Rough-legged Hawk** was near MA 2/17 (JP). A **Short-eared Owl** was at Jericho Rd. 2/24 (AB) and one also at Moore Rd (AyT, ST). Single **Merlins** were recorded at PR 1/28 (CK) and MA 2/12 (JP, MP). At least five reports of one to 2 **Peregrine Falcons** all came from points along the JR.

Lingering **Eastern Phoebes** included 2 in TCV 12/3-5 (DB) and one at Lewistown Narrows Canal Park 1/1 and 1/8 (MP, JP). Two chickadees near MIF 12/4 looked good for **Carolina Chickadee** (CK). *Juniata* is north of the hybrid zone, but not by much; almost certainly some chickadee hybrids occur in the county, and presumably reports will increase as the zone moves northward. A wintering **Gray Catbird** was noted near AR 1/19 (NB). A flock of **American Pipits** peaked at about 30 birds at MA in late Jan to early Feb (JP).

Highest tally of numerous reports of **American Tree Sparrow** was 14, a rather modest number compared to counts from a few years ago. Rare in winter were up to 3 **Savannah Sparrows** on Troyer Rd. 1/10-12 (JP, MP). The only report of **Rusty Blackbird** was of 12 at CD (CK, NK, MP, JP). A **Palm Warbler** at Casner's Crossing on the JR 12/24 was only the second winter record for *Juniata* in eBird (CK, NK). A **Yellow-throated Warbler** was at CD 1/16 (*fide* AT).

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Lackawanna County

Locations: Lackawanna State Park (LSP), Lake Scranton (LS).

The majority of Northeastern Pennsylvania's winter was cold with temperatures rarely rising above freezing. Brief warmups were not experienced until the later parts of the season into Mar. Significant ice coverage on the region's waterbodies formed during the first week of Jan and remained through early Mar. Such a prolonged period of ice cover has not occurred annually during recent Northeast winters and the existence of such made the location of wintering species a challenge. Snowfall amounts were lacking this winter and also made discovering anticipated winter species difficult. Bird activity throughout the season was minimal, and significant numbers of northern tundra and boreal species did not appear to make the journey south into the confines of Penn's Woods.

Noteworthy waterfowl discoveries consisted of 15 **Tundra Swans** on Chapman L. 1/2 (MM), a **Northern Shoveler** at McDade Park near Scranton 2/20 (NG), a **Lackawanna** high count of roughly 35 **American Black Ducks** at LSP 2/9 (RW), and a **White-winged Scoter** at LS 12/2 (CF). A **Horned Grebe** was found stranded on a roadway at LSP 2/7 by DCONR Maintenance Staff and was relocated to the nearby South Branch Tunkhannock Cr. where it continued through 2/13 (m.ob.).

Continued region-wide efforts to locate irregular gull species were successful when a **Great Black-backed Gull** was discovered at LS 12/2 (CF). Also of note was the impressive high count of 2000 **Ring-billed Gulls** at LS 12/3 (RK). A state-level sighting occurred with the report of a **Northern Goshawk** in flight above Clarks Summit 12/30 (BM), with hope this raptor is residing within one of the several state-owned forests available to it that are scattered throughout the region. The winter seasons are often the best time periods to hear owl vocalizations; all four of the regions regularly occurring

owls were discovered this period with the highlight being 2 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** at LSP 2/24 (TD).

Peregrine Falcons, although no longer confined to the Federal Endangered Species List, remain threatened and can only be found locally within the northeast region. Two individuals were seen this period with one at N. Washington Ave. in Scranton 12/31 (TD) and a second from along Falls Rd. 12/26 (SP). **Fish Crows** are doing well and appear to be increasing in population within the region; a **Lackawanna** high count of 34 was encountered in flight above Rt. 6 in Dickson City 12/30 (BM). **Gray Catbirds** are highly infrequent during the winter months; one was detected during the Scranton CBC 12/18 followed by a second sighting from Upper Maple Dr. east of Falls 2/20 (SP).

Members of the Turdidae family occurred in larger numbers this winter than in previous; two county-high counts were established consisting of 20 **Eastern Bluebirds** found foraging on sumac berries at Leggetts Cr. Greenway 2/27 (BC), and 750 **American Robins** in flight above Creamery Rd. in Greenfield Twp. 12/25 (DS). The lack of expansive stunted-growth grasslands, agricultural crop fields, and sand-covered lakeshores within the Pocono Mts. does not make Northeastern Pennsylvania favorable to **Snow Buntings**; one bird that vocalized from Lower Narrows Rd. 2/17 (CF) remained the only occurrence for the period.

It is a tradition that there is some mention of the Scranton CBC within *Lackawanna's* winter report. The 2021 count on 12/18 reported 52 species by eight observers. Although count results cannot be used to develop conclusions regarding bird populations within the county for the entire season, there are still sightings that deserve mention. The 2 **Purple Finches** tallied were low for a count-wide total. Also low was the count-wide tally of just 7 **American Tree Sparrows**. To end on a positive note, 3 **Savannah Sparrows** were tallied representing a species that rarely occurs in the northeast during the winter.

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Lancaster County

Locations: Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (MCW), Octoraro Reservoir (OR), Susquehanna River-Lake Clarke (SRLC).

Several high temperature records were set from Dec 11-18, continuing our abnormally warm fall. The entire month averaged 6°F above normal, with little snow. Finally in Jan the cold came, along with normal snowfall. Feb temps edged a bit above normal, but the snow once again dried up. In total we received 12 inches of snowfall, which is half the average. Weather information is derived from Harrisburg data from the National Weather Service, which dates back to 1888. The normal range is the prior 30 years. Species totaling 130 were recorded during the period, below the five-year average of 138.

Total waterfowl species recorded were 26. At MCW, **Snow Geese** peaked around 105,000, and **Tundra Swans** at 4500 in the last week of Feb.

A **Bewick's Tundra Swan** was discovered in Jan at MCW and remained for several weeks 1/23-2/18 (JK, m.ob.). This Eurasian subspecies is extremely rare on this continent and, if accepted by PORC, will become the first state record.

The rare waterfowl continued when the drake **Tufted Duck** from the *Lebanon* side of MCM moved to the main lake after ice formed on outlying ponds 2/27 (BM, m.ob.). If accepted by PORC, this bird will mark the first county record!

A flock of 50 **Canvasbacks** was on SRLC 2/23 (PF, JL), and at least 38 **Redheads** were there in late Jan (m.ob.). The only sea duck species was **Red-breasted Merganser**, with numerous reports on SRLC primarily in Feb. A **Red-necked Grebe** was photographed on SRLC 2/15 (AS), the only sighting.

The pair of **Sandhill Cranes** at OR continued for the entire winter, while **American Woodcocks** made their return after 2/19 (m.ob.). A group of 5

Bonaparte's Gulls appeared at MCW 1/25, possibly southbound after extensive cold temps in mid-Jan. By 2/16, the first northbound scouts were moving up the Susquehanna R., including a group of 18 on the Susquehanna R.'s Peach Bottom (BS) observed stealing fish from **Common Mergansers**. The only **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was at SRLC 1/2 (JHe). There were several **Common Loon** reports, notably one bird which stayed at Brenner Quarry 12/31-1/26 (DS, m.ob.), an unusual wintering location.

An adult **Golden Eagle** was photographed at MCW 2/28 (SS, P&RW), and a dark **Rough-legged Hawk** was there 2/1-2 (IB, KR, ME). A **Snowy Owl** in Leacock Twp. was a star of the season. First found 12/28, it ignored an enormous amount of attention until at least 2/18, and was seen by hundreds of birders, photographers and passers-by. One **Long-eared Owl** was found at MCW for the CBC 12/26 (CF, JHe, m.ob.), and a **Short-eared Owl** spent the season there.

Two **Eastern Phoebes** overwintered at OR (m.ob.), and several were seen elsewhere in the county, mostly in the vicinity of the Susquehanna R. **Black-capped Chickadees** were reported sporadically around southeastern Pennsylvania, and *Lancaster* received a few (m.ob.). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were the only irruptive species which showed a minor movement this season, with quite a few sightings. Several **Gray Catbirds** and **Brown Thrashers** spent the winter around the county, unsurprising for such a warm season. A few **Purple Finches** were reported throughout the period but were quite light after their epic movement the year before.

It was also a light season for **Lapland Longspurs** and **Snow Buntings**, with only a small handful of reports from farmland near Groffdale (m.ob.). Three **Chipping Sparrows** were seen throughout the winter at various locations (m.ob.). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was photographed nicely on the Lititz CBC at MCW 12/26 (CF, JHe), providing a rare winter record, and 2 **Vesper Sparrows** were also recorded that day.

An immature **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was seen briefly with a blackbird flock at Peach Bottom Fields 1/27 (EZ). Only three warbler species were recorded. A **Common Yellowthroat** was heard singing on a warm day near Christiana 12/26 (PM). Male **Pine Warblers** wintered at feeders near Millersville and New Providence (MB, JS), and one was at OR 2/28 (CG), per usual. **Yellow-rumped Warbler** abundance was typical, primarily along the Susquehanna R. and at MCW. A drab **Dickcissel** spent some time at Noel Dorwart Park 2/7-17 (DK, m.ob.).

The long-returning male **Painted Bunting** finally arrived to a Bowmansville home 1/21 (ZM *vide* homeowner). Unfortunately, its habits were different than in prior years, and it was only seen infrequently. This stunning bird has wintered as an adult at this location since 2016, making him at least seven years old in 2022! Surely, this has become one of the most amazing avian vagrancy stories in Pennsylvania's history.

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Lawrence County

Locations: New Wilmington area (NW), Shaner Road marsh (SR), Plain Grove Township (PGT), Volant Strip Mines (VSM).

Four **Snow Geese** were at SR 2/27 (DB, PS). Up to 7 **Gadwalls** were noted across four locations, but only in Jan, none in Feb. A nice count of 10 **American Wigeon** was made at Copper Road 12/5 (MV), and a handful were still there 12/24 (MV). Four others were also in PGT 12/24 (GK, MAK). Up to 6 **Northern Pintails** spent early winter at SR 12/12-1/22 (PS, LW, et al.). One was also in NW 1/30 (ST), and 9 were at the VSM 2/9 (MH, RH, LW). Seven **Green-winged Teal** on McConahy Road 1/16-21 (GK, MAK) was a nice count for Jan.

One each of **Canvasback** and **Redhead** were found on Heather Heights Road near NW 1/20 (ST); the Canvasback stayed until 2/1 and the

Redhead to 2/7. Eight more **Redheads** were at SR 1/12-13 (TP). Notable counts of **Ring-necked Duck** included 125 at the gravel pond on Larchwood Drive (formerly the Three Rivers gravel company site) 12/5 (MD), and 135 were at SR on 1/3 (KB), an odd date for such a total. A **Long-tailed Duck** was also at Larchwood Drive 12/5 (MV). Rare for *Lawrence* was a **Common Goldeneye** at DR 12/29 (AH).

Top counts of **Sandhill Crane** for the season were between 55 and 65, primarily in Feb (MH, RH, LW, et al.). A **Bonaparte's Gull** was a nice find at DR 12/26 (BB, MC). It was a very nice season for **Rough-legged Hawk** in the northern half of the county, with many sightings through the season. The NW was a particular hotspot. A **Short-eared Owl** was at the traditional area at VSM 12/29 (CH) but this was the only report there. Another was on Heather Heights Road, NW 2/1-4 (MH, RH, LW), a place they are not often reported. A **Red-headed Woodpecker** continued at SGL 151 through the season (MC, et al.). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** along the Beaver R. near Wampum 12/5 was one of six woodpecker species (all but Red-headed) counted in a matter of minutes 12/5 (MD). Four reports of **Merlin** included singles at NW 1/16 (SS), at SR 1/30 (MD), at PGT 1/30 (KSJ, DK), and again at NW 2/26 (CH).

A late **Eastern Phoebe** was at DR 12/26 (BB, MC). Up to 2 **Northern Shrikes** were noted at SR and nearby in PGT from 12/12 (PS, MC) through at least 2/13 (m.ob.). **Common Ravens** included 2 at Black Swamp 12/26 (BB, MC), one at NW 1/21 (MV), and 2 near Volant 2/19 (MC). Six reports of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** spanned four locations 12/24-1/17 (m.ob.). A **Brown Thrasher** was a surprise Feb bird at a New Castle feeder 2/7-9 (LW).

A group of 3 **Purple Finches** were at SR 12/26 (BB, MC). The only report of **Lapland Longspur** was one at NW 1/28 (JP). **Snow Buntings** were much more numerous, with the top count of 40 made at NW 2/10 (TP). Most records of the species were made around NW, but they were also elsewhere in the northeastern part of the county too. Three was the top count for **Rusty Blackbirds** at SR where the species was seen on a number of dates in Jan. The top bird of the season was a female **Brewer's Blackbird** photographed at a residence on SR (not at the marsh) 1/29 (SG). It was still there 1/30 but the homeowner was found to be adamantly opposed to visitors, so there were no reports thereafter. Two very late **Common Yellowthroats** were found at SR 12/26 (BB, MC).

Observers: **Geoff Malosh, 7762 Maumee Western Road, Maumee, OH 43537-9334, (412) 735-3128, pomarine@earthlink.net**, Brendyn Baptiste, Kimberly Berry, Dave Brooke, Martin Carlin, Michael David, Steve Gosser, Amy Henrici, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, Craig Holt, Deb Kalbfleisch, Mary Alice Koeneke, Glenn Koppel, Tom Pinter, Joe Postema, Steve Sanford, Pam Shaw, Kate St. John, Shannon Thompson, Mark Vass, Linda Wagner.

Lebanon County

Locations: Fort Indiantown Gap (FIG), Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority (GLRA), Memorial Lake State Park (MLSP), Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (MC), Snitz Creek Park (SCP), Swatara State Park (SSP).

The 42nd Lebanon CBC, sponsored by the Quittapahilla Audubon Society, was held 12/18. Thirty-eight participants observed 80 species. This included three species that were new for the count. The record number of species is 83, recorded in both 2007 and 2012.

A **Ross's Goose** was at MLSP 12/11 (JH, TB, RP). Six **Cackling Geese** provided a good count at Lion's Lake 12/6 (TK), with 2 there 12/19 (JH). Single Cackling Geese were at MLSP 1/3 (RSt) and at Newmanstown 1/4 (JS).

A male **Tufted Duck** was a spectacular find at MC 2/24 (RH, MH, LW). It continued to be viewed and photographed by many through the remainder of the winter period (JH, ML, ME, m.ob.). If accepted, it will provide a fourth state record for the species and a first *Lebanon* record.

Six Lesser **Black-backed Gulls** were at the GLRA 12/4 (JH). One was at MLSP 12/18 (JH). A **Golden Eagle** was seen at FIG 12/21 and 1/31 (JDr). A **Barred Owl** was found at SGL 211 from 12/23-1/1 (NF, JH). A **Long-eared**

Owl was at SSP 12/7-1/1 (EB, JH, RP, JD), and a Northern **Saw-whet Owl** was at SGL 211 on 1/1 (JH).

Red-headed Woodpeckers were found at FIG 12/18 (JDr, CT, SW) and along Obie Rd 1/24-2/19 (JF, RS, TB, KB). Six **Merlin** sightings included ones found at SCP 12/4 (JH), at Second Mountain Hawkwatch 12/8 (RSt), at FIG 12/18 (JDr, CT, SW), at Stover's Dam Park 1/1 (P&RW), at SGL 145 on 1/31 (DK), and at Yordy's Bridge Rd 2/6 (RSt). A **Peregrine** was seen near Myerstown 2/14 (NV).

Up to 3 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were at FIG 12/18-22 (JDr, CT, SW). Single Red-breasted Nuthatches were at H.M. Levitz Park 12/5 (ST), and at SSP 12/16 and 2/10 (TK). A **Marsh Wren** continued from 11/9, and provided a first Dec record at SCP 12/4 (JH). Sixty **American Pipits** provided a good count at GLRA 12/4 (RtS, JH). The only **Purple Finch** of the winter was seen at MC 12/5 (JH).

Three **Lapland Longspur** sightings included ones seen at Union Rd 12/11 (DG), at GLRA 12/18 (JH), and at Meadow Ln 1/7 (MD). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was fairly late at SSP 12/4 (JH). Three **Rusty Blackbirds** were at SGL 145 on 12/14 (JF). A **Black-throated Green Warbler** provided a first Dec record at SSP 12/16 (TK). A **Wilson's Warbler** was at Clear Springs Hollow 12/26 (BB, BrB, JF, NF).

Observers: **Timothy Becker**, tjbecker81@aol.com, Ed Barrell, Kathy Becker, Brandon Brown, Brian Brown (BrB), Mike Dale, Jonathan DeBalko, Jarrod Derr (JDr), Mike Epler, Justin Felty, Nate Felty, Jim Fiorentino, David Gersten, Jonathan Heller, Roger Higbee, Margaret Higbee, Ted Keen, Darlene Kershner, Merideth Lombard, Robert Peda, Rosemary Spreha, Rita Stima (RSt), Jerr Stine, Scott Thomas, Cassidy Titus, Nick Voris, Linda Wagner, Steve Walthius, Patricia & Richard Williams.

Lehigh County

No report submitted

Lycoming County

Locations: Mill Hill Road (MH), Robert Porter Allen Natural Area (RPA), Rose Valley Lake (RVL), Williamsport Dam (WD).

The early winter was relatively warm, which kept RVL unfrozen into January, and led to some additional activity there. The mild temperatures may also have contributed to some uncommon winter species remaining in higher-than-normal numbers. In total, 110 species were reported during the winter.

Two **Snow Geese** were seen at the Rte. 15 Overlook 12/26 (BB, DB), and 2 were also at RVL 12/31 (BB, DeB, BoB). A flock of 7 **Northern Shovelers** were at WD 12/24 (BB, DB, JD, MD), and one was at a pond in Hughesville 2/19 (BB, DeB, Bob). Three **Green-winged Teals** were on the river by Canfield Island 12/15 (BB), and 6 were at RPA 1/1 (BB, DeB).

Four **White-winged Scoters** were at WD 12/24 (BB, DB, JD, MD), and 2 were at RVL 1/3 (BB, RB). A **Long-tailed Duck** was at WD 12/8 (BB) and another 1/18-20 (BB, m.ob.), while 4 were at RVL 12/4 (BB) as well as one 1/3 (BB, RB). Likely the most interesting find of the winter season, a **hybrid Common Merganser x Hooded Merganser** was at WD 1/30-2/1 (BB, et al.), which is a rarely documented hybrid.

A **Killdeer** was at RVL 1/6 (BB, DeB). The species returned earlier than normal with 3 at Lime Bluff Recreation Center 2/12 (BB, DeB, BoB, MH), one at MH 2/15 (BM) and 2/16 (BB, DB, DeB, BoB), and 4 in Nisbet 2/26 (BB, DeB, BoB).

During the Williamsport CBC 12/18, 7 **Bonaparte's Gulls** were found at the Lycoming County Landfill (BB, DeB, BoB). An **Iceland Gull** dropped in at WD with a large group of gulls 2/28 and continued at the location the following night (BB, et al.), providing *Lycoming's* fourth record of that species.

Golden Eagle reports came from Wildwood Cemetery 12/4 (DF), the Rte. 15 Overlook 12/26 (BB, DB), east of Beaver L. 2/1 (EHO), and an early migrant was over Montoursville 2/27 (BB, DB, RB, DeB, BoB). After several winters of low numbers, **Northern Harriers** were relatively abundant during this winter, including at least 15 at MH 2/16 (BB, DB, et al.). Likewise, it was a strong winter for **Rough-legged Hawks**.

Three **Short-eared Owls** were seen in Jackson Twp. 1/15 (DF). The species also returned to MH in Feb after an absence of many years at the formerly reliable location. They were first seen 2/15 (BM), and were reported many times after that. The continuing **Northern Shrike** at RVL was seen all throughout Dec. One was also briefly seen in Jackson Twp. 1/15 (DF). Another one was at Lime Bluff Recreation Center for about a week during mid-Feb, with the initial report coming 2/8 (GM).

A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was at the Lycoming County Conservation Trail 12/23 (GM) and 1/6 (BB, DB), and one was at Muncy Heritage Park 2/9 (DBg). It was a good winter for **Hermit Thrush** numbers; there were reports from locations that don't typically have this species in winter. Three **American Pipits** were at RPA 12/9 (BB), 3 were at WD 1/18 (BB), and one was at Mill St. 2/13 (BB).

Five **Evening Grosbeaks** were reported from Tomb Flats Campground 12/4 (DBre). A **Common Redpoll** was photographed at RVL 1/4 (MA). **Red Crossbills** were reported from near Rte. 44 in extreme northwestern *Lycoming* 1/28 and 1/31 (MS, SS). **Pine Siskins** were scarce, with only a single report from Tomb Flats Campground 12/4 (DBre). No large flocks of **Snow Buntings** were found. One was mixed into a flock of **Horned Larks** near Pennsdale 1/29 (BB, DeB, BoB).

A **Chipping Sparrow** was reported at WD 2/13 (JD). A **Fox Sparrow** was at SGL 252 on 12/18 (BB), and 4 were reported at the Williamsport Water Authority 12/29 (JD, BBu). Three **Savannah Sparrows** were in Antes Fort 1/29 (BB, DeB, BoB). **Eastern Towhees** reports were a bit higher than a typical winter.

Up to 4 **Eastern Meadowlarks** were reported at MH beginning 1/18 and continuing into Feb (EH, m.ob.). A reasonably large flock of **Brown-headed Cowbirds** was in Jackson Twp. during Jan, with up to 150 reported (BB, DeB, BoB, et al.).

Observers: **Bobby Brown**, bobbybrown1011@gmail.com, Maria Ananea, Dan Brauning (DBg), Dan Brennan (DBre), Bob Brown (BoB), David Brown, Deb Brown (DeB), Rebecca Brown, Bruce Buckle (BBu), Jean Dalton, Maddi Dunlap, Dave Ferry, Eric Hartshaw, Melissa Holland, Evan Houston (EHO), Brett Matlock, Gary Metzger, Matthew Schenck, Susan Schenck.

Mercer County

Locations: Clark Area (CLR), District Road (DR), Grove City (GC), Limber Road (LI), Mercer (ME), New Wilmington (NW), Shenango Propagation Area (PR), Transfer (TF), Trout Island (TI)

Another fairly quiet winter. Cold weather with snow set in early and major bodies of water were frozen over throughout the period causing lower numbers of birds, especially waterfowl.

A nice find was 3 **Snow Geese** at Sharpsville 1/3 (JM), and another was of 3 **Cackling Geese** at GN 2/7 (MW). There were 22 **American Black Ducks** at TI 2/18 (KS); it is always good to see numbers like this for this species. **Redhead** came back in with 21 at TI 2/21 (BW). A nice count of 36 **Hooded Mergansers** were at L. Wilhelm 12/4 (KS). Also before freezing up, 200 **Common Mergansers** were at PR 12/23 (MW).

Ring-necked Pheasants have shown up occasionally during winter, and 2 were at ME 1/15 (MD). **Sandhill Cranes** have become regular in the county and found throughout. Two were at DR 12/4 (KS), and a nice count of 20 were found at SGL 284 on 12/26 (KB) as part of the Grove City CBC. **Wilson's Snipe** have almost always been found during winter, mostly around the New Wilmington area in small seeps. Highest count was 4 at Cannery Road 1/26 (MH, RH).

Gull numbers can be impressive around Shenango Res. when there is open water. This season had 80 **Bonaparte's Gull** at Golden Run 12/26 along with 550 **Ring-billed Gulls** (MW). The Shenango Res. Area has also always drawn large numbers of **Great Blue Herons** during winter. Counts started at 31 at PR 12/17 (KS) and peaked at 46 at TI 2/7 (BW).

This season was excellent for raptor enthusiasts. An early **Turkey Vulture** was at GC 2/16 (RS) and several others were observed during Feb. A single late **Osprey** was a good find at TF 12/3 (KS). **Northern Harriers** have been regular at LI the past several years, and 4 were found there 2/21

(KS). **Rough Legged Hawks** were easily found this season as 2 were also at LI 2/21 (KS).

Probably the most exciting find, albeit one that only one person saw, was a **Snowy Owl** at GC 2/1. It was photographed on fenced private property (MC *vide*). It was not re-found. **Northern Shrikes** are an often-looked-for bird. Two were found this season: one at DR 2/22 (KS) and another at GN 2/24 (JF). Considering this was not a finch-flight year, good numbers of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were seen. Highest count was 31 at Mahaney RA 12/30 (KS). One **Lapland Longspur** was found at NW 1/30 (KS). Along with the Longspur, **Snow Buntings** were found throughout the period with highest count of 8 at ME 2/16 (BW).

As last year, good numbers of **American Tree Sparrows** showed up. Several high counts were noted throughout the period with 100 at Carlisle Road 1/20 (KS). A very interesting find was 3 **Cassiars**, sub-species of **Dark-eyed Junco**, found in TF 1/7 (KS). Varying numbers continued throughout the period, several photos were obtained and added into e-bird checklists, and documentation was submitted to PSO.

A single **Savannah Sparrow** was at Donation Road 1/18 (KS). **Eastern Towhees** are considered half hardy, so finding them throughout the period in various locations and by many different observers was not unexpected. **Rusty Blackbirds** managed to weather the winter well this year with 4 at NW 1/30 (SS) and 4 there again 2/4 (KS, JS).

Observers: **Glenn Koppel 122 Linsdale Dr. Butler, PA. 16001, macatilly@gmail.com**, Kim Berry, Martin Carlin, Michael David, Jennifer Ferrick, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, Mary Alice Koeneke (MAK), Michael Kovach, Jim Mondok, Susan Sipe, Kim Springer, Randy Stringer, Michael Williams, Bill Winkler.

Mifflin County

Locations: Back Mountain Road (BMR), Victory Park (VP).

The winter 2021-22 period was rather quiet with regard to notable birds. One new county bird was found 12/31, when a single **Ross's Goose** was discovered at Bunker Hill Road (JK, JZ). Notable was a **Spotted Sandpiper** feeding along the river at VP 1/3 (RD). A **Cackling Goose** was found there 2/15 (RD). A single **Golden Eagle** was spotted soaring over BMR 1/15 (SK, NP).

A pair of **Short-eared Owls** were first found on BMR 2/2 (JP), and excellent vocal recordings were obtained. The pair was observed again 2/9 (JP) and once again 2/16 (CK, NK). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was found at VP 1/3 (RD).

Observers: **Rob Dickerson, 44 Oak Ridge Rd, Lewistown, PA 17044, radickerson@gmail.com**, Chad Kauffman, Jon Kauffman, Noah Kauffman, Stefan Karkuff, Neil Paprocki, Julia Plummer, Jay Zook.

Monroe County

Locations: Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge (CV), Skytop (ST).

The winter season continued a trend that was started about a decade ago: December and January being mild and dry, with winter-like weather picking up in February. Nothing out of the ordinary made a grand appearance, with the exception of 2 **Short-eared Owls** in the valley. Winter finches from up north were practically nonexistent.

All through Dec, one to 2 **Cackling Geese** were observed off and on in the West End area at different locations (PN, JM). A **Trumpeter Swan** continued in the Pocono Summit area, with most observations taking place at Pocono Summit L. (m.ob.). **Tundra Swans**, 107 to be exact, were observed at Gouldsboro L. 12/12 (JM), with 2 more at ST 1/4 (RK). A high of 9 **Northern Pintails** were found at CV 1/5, with a possible **Eurasian Wigeon** in the mix (SA). A lone **Long-tailed Duck** was well photographed on Birchwood L. 12/31 (JS). Saylor's L. hosted 150 **Common Mergansers** 1/5 (PN) and Weir L. had an incredible 125 **Hooded Mergansers** 2/15 (PN). A late **Killdeer** was located at Mt. Airy L. (BJ) and an early **American**

Woodcock was found at ST 2/23 (RK).

An early date of 2/3 had a **Bald Eagle** sprucing up an old nest site in the Stroudsburg area (NT), which was consequently used for the season. Lone **Golden Eagles** were observed 12/22 and 1/25 on the Delaware R. and CV, respectively (JM). The only **Rough-legged Hawk** was found at CV 1/15 (SA). The 2 **Short-eared Owls** were a fantastic find for the county at CV 1/11 (SA), and continued to be seen periodically. Single **Merlins** were photographed in CV (NT), at ST (RK), and in the West End (PN). Lone **Peregrine Falcons** were at Mt. Pocono Airport 1/3 (BJ) and Broadhead Cr. RA 12/30 (JS).

A grand total of 37 **Common Ravens** were found heading north at ST 2/9 (RK). Late records for **Horned Lark**, **Gray Catbird**, **Eastern Towhee**, and **Eastern Phoebe** were all recorded in Dec (JM). A lone **Pine Siskin** was at a feeder in East Stroudsburg 2/26 (NT). A nice flock of **Rusty Blackbirds** were in a cornfield in CV 1/2 (JM,RL), with a **Chipping Sparrow** found at the same location 1/29 (JM).

Observers: **Bruce Johnson, brucejohnson207@yahoo.com**, Scott Angus, Tim Grover, Diane Husic, Rick Koval, Renae Losey, Paul Nale, Jon Mularczyk, Mike Schall, June Smith, Brandon Swayser, Nancy Tully, Jeff Wilkins.

Montgomery County

Locations: Dixon Meadow Preserve (DMP), Green Lane Park (GLP), Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust (PERT), Valley Center Park (VCP), Valley Forge National Historical Park (VFNHP), Wissahickon Waterfowl Preserve (WWP).

A mild Dec led to an extended period of cold as winter really got going. While little snow fell this period, area ponds and even the water bodies at GLP were mostly iced over from mid-Jan through mid-Feb. Mid- to late Feb returned to mild temperatures, including several days in the 60s F.

At least 131 species of birds were recorded this season, roughly 10 more than the average for the last decade, which has run 117 to 128. This included a potential first state record of **Glaucous-winged Gull** as well as a **Pink-footed Goose**, the unexpected return of the fall's **Say's Phoebe**, a **Eurasian Wigeon**, a first definitively documented subspecies for the county, two new hybrid combos, and two first-winter sightings.

There were two heavier pulses of **Snow Geese** at GLP, one in late Jan with counts in the 8000 to 9000 range 1/28-1/31 (PH) and the other in mid-Feb with the flock estimated at 12,000 on 2/16 (RK). A flyover **Ross's Goose** was photographed at GLP 2/13 (AL, LD, DD). **Greater White-fronted Geese** were at four locations as singles 12/1-2/21, plus a pair were in a Royersford cornfield 1/31-2/1 (SS, m.ob.). A **Pink-footed Goose** was discovered at GLP 12/5-7 for the second winter in a row (SK, m.ob.).

Cackling Geese were at GLP for the entire period (m.ob.), occasionally in high numbers. Thirteen Cackling Geese were recorded 1/6 (PD), which represents a new county high count for this diminutive species. Away from GLP, Cacklers were spotted at three other locations 12/25-1/26 (m.ob.). A **Snow x Canada Goose hybrid** was at GLP 1/30-2/16 (PH, m.ob.). The lonesome **Tundra Swan** that arrived at WWP 11/21 remained there through the entire period (m.ob.). The only other confirmed Tundra Swan reports in Dec or Jan were a pair at GLP 12/8 (AG, KCa, WS), one at GLP 1/6 (DM, VM), and via nocturnal flight calls (NFC) in Douglass Twp. 12/19 (GG).

An unusually high winter concentration of **Wood Ducks**, as many as 13, persisted at WWP through the entire period (m.ob.). There was a strong presence of **Northern Shoveler** at GLP through 1/9, when the majority of the reservoir froze over, and many moved elsewhere. Prior to the freeze, on 12/28, as many as 90 shovelers were recorded (PH). Once the ice departed, the generously billed dabblers returned en force, leading to *Montgomery's* first records of more than 15 shovelers in Feb (m.ob.), and a new month-high count of 49 on 2/27 (AD, ED). In fact, we made it to double-digits in just one prior Feb, 2020. **Gadwall** were similarly plentiful at GLP through 1/9 (m.ob.), including high counts of 130 on 12/2 (AM), 119 on 12/31 (DB, et al.) and 110 on 12/30 (PH). Like Northern Shoveler, a new Feb high count for Gadwall was set this period as well: 64 at GLP 2/22 (KC).

American Wigeon numbers were also much higher than usual,

particularly in Feb. It required looking back to 2011 to find comparable wigeon volume. A new winter-period high count record of 115 was set at GLP 2/18 (LH). A male **Eurasian Wigeon** was a nice find at GLP 2/12-14 (PH, m.ob.), representing a fourth county record. Representing a *first* county record was a male **Eurasian x American Wigeon hybrid**, present at GLP 1/20-28 (PH, m.ob.). Ice concentrated a couple of other dabblers onto remaining open-water sites. One hundred eighty **Mallards** were tallied at both Four Mills Nature Reserve 2/6 (AM) and GLP 2/6 (PH), both of which sites also featured other high Mallard counts during the long Jan to early Feb freeze. Fifty-plus **American Black Ducks** were at GLP on 11 days 1/16-2/16 (m.ob.), including 122 on 2/7 (PH). One hundred forty **Northern Pintail** were counted at GLP 2/17 (RK), after the ice had melted.

A male **Canvasback** at GLP 2/4 (PH) was the only one reported. Three male **Redheads** were at GLP 12/16 (VM), while long-staying pairs of male Redheads were at GLP 1/26-2/21 (JC, m.ob.) and WWP 2/5 to the end of the period (JM, m.ob.). An estimated 170 **Ring-necked Ducks** were reported at GLP 2/18 (SGr), and 129 were also counted there 1/8 (AD, ED), both higher-than-typical counts for the dates. As many as 6 **Greater Scaup** were at Norristown Dam 1/30-2/3 (m.ob.). Single Greater Scaup were sporadically seen at GLP 1/5-2/20 (m.ob.). A male **Long-tailed Duck** was seen upriver of the Fayette St. Bridge in Conshohocken 1/30-2/3 (SGr, m.ob.). One or two Long-tails also turned up at GLP on six dates 12/18-2/18 (m.ob.).

Common Goldeneye, during winters that feature a long freeze, were seen at eight sites along the Schuylkill R. (m.ob.). While there were a few scattered reports earlier, most observations occurred on or after 1/9. As many as 23 Goldeneyes were at Norristown Dam 1/31 (SGr). Goldeneyes were also observed at GLP and at WWP, where a single female was for the entire period (m.ob.). Thirty-eight **Hooded Mergansers** were at Oaks 2/2 (JF). Seventeen **Ruddy Ducks** were at GLP 1/5-8 (LH, KR); not record-setting, but an uncommonly high number for Jan.

Beyond their stronghold at PERT, **Wild Turkeys** had just five single-bird reports, two of which were heard only (m.ob.). Three **American Woodcock**, generally scarce by late Dec into Jan, were reported at VFNHP 12/30-1/2 (JH, DS, JV). Groups of 5 and 10 **Wilson's Snipe** were at Congo Rd. Open Space in Douglass Twp. 12/11 and 1/2, respectively (ADe, m.ob.). Single snipe also turned up at DMP 12/3 (PD), at WWP 1/2 (SP) and at VCP 2/6 (MG).

A **Bonaparte's Gull** stopped by GLP 2/13 (PB, m.ob.). An immature **Iceland Gull**, presumably the more expected Kumlien's variety, was seen at GLP 1/2 (KC). An immature **Thayer's Gull** was photographed there 2/13 (m.ob.), representing a first documented record of this former-species-turned-Iceland subspecies. A new county high count was set for **Lesser Black-backed Gull** on 2/16, when 330 were at GLP (RK), besting the previous high count of 307 in mid-Jan 2020, recorded by the same observer. The 200 Lesser Black-back threshold was breached at GLP on 5 additional days 2/11-17 (m.ob.), including 237 on 2/17 (PH).

A probable immature **Glaucous-winged Gull** was an incredible find at GLP 2/12 (JH, ph., doc. submitted). If approved by PORC, it would represent a first record for the state, and one of just a few records for the east coast. After a brief appearance in *Montgomery*, the gull moved over to Nockamixon SP in *Bucks*, where it was seen by many. (See the *Bucks* summary for more details.) Though the Glaucous-wing did not stick around for more than one afternoon, people out hunting for it the following day stumbled onto another interesting gull. A **Herring x Glaucous Gull hybrid**, a.k.a. "Nelson's Gull," was well described at GLP 2/13 (ZM) for the first recorded instance of a Nelson's in *Montgomery*. The Thayer's Gull mentioned above was also the result of Glaucous-winged Gull-searching, and potentially would not have been documented otherwise. Unusual for the location, **Great Black-backed Gull** was at GLP 2/4-17 (m.ob.), including a high count of 4 on 2/16 (RK). They were also noted from four Schuylkill R. sites 1/30-2/27 (m.ob.), where they have been more expected.

A calling **Common Loon** flew from L. Delmont in the Unami Cr. Valley 12/19 (PB), the only loon sighting for the period. **Double-crested Cormorants**, scarce in winter, lingered at GLP to 12/19 (KC, JT) and in Conshohocken 12/18 (CH). An immature **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was an excellent find at the pond at Lakeview Shopping Center in Royersford 1/23-26 (TU, m.ob.) This represented the first winter-period night-heron record for the county.

High **Black Vulture** numbers continued by the rendering plant in

Souderton: 225 were recorded on 12/28, 201 on 12/31, and 175 on 2/15 (all CB). Six **Bald Eagles** at GLP 1/17 (PH) set a new winter high-count record. The leucistic **Red-tailed Hawk** in Hatfield was seen twice, 1/26 (AM) and 2/20 (RA). Surprisingly, a second, similar-looking, nearly white Red-tail was found near Graterford prison 1/27 (KR, ph.). The two sites are about 8 miles apart, far enough to be different birds. Another notable oddball hawk, our first documented **Red-shouldered x Red-tailed Hawk hybrid**, continued through the period at a retirement community in Worcester (DB, ph.).

While there was no **Snowy Owl** irruption this period, one turned up on an office building in King of Prussia 12/7-8 (anonymous *fide* LB, ph.). A **Short-eared Owl** at VFNHP, continuing since 11/21, remained until 1/30 (m.ob.). Up to 3 **Long-eared Owls** were present at a known site in northwestern *Montgomery* through 2/12 (anonymous *fide* PH). A group of 5 was photographed at an undisclosed site in the greater Valley Forge area 2/16, not VFNHP (anonymous). Another single Long-eared was at a site in central *Montgomery* 1/2 to the end of the period (anonymous).

Speaking of other problematic, sensitive roosting owls, a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** found in North Wales 2/1 became an object lesson on the hazard of owl information sharing. While most people behaved respectfully toward the owl, who had the poor judgment to sit in an easily found spot close to a path, others did not. Some of the photographers that came for photos were seen climbing the owl's roost tree and poking it with sticks to get it to open its eyes. Evidently, the harassment was not enough to drive the Saw-whet away, since it stuck around beyond the end of Feb (m.ob.). Saw-whets were actually fairly widespread this period, as evidenced by the efforts of PD and others, who recorded them calling at 14 sites 12/18-1/30. The North Wales owl was just easy to see in the daytime. Though most of the nocturnal observations made at those aforementioned 14 sites were of one to 2 individuals, 7 Northern Saw-whet Owls were recorded at Evansburg SP 1/16 (PD), a record high count for *Montgomery*, and 3 were at PERT 12/18 (PD).

An adult **Red-headed Woodpecker** made a quick visit to a feeder in Oaks 1/1 (BHo), the only record this winter. At least 8 **Eastern Phoebes** were at seven locations (m.ob.). What was almost certainly the same **Say's Phoebe** observed by many at DMP 11/11, and assumed to have been a one-day-wonder, was refound at the Preserve 12/2-5 (CBn, m.ob.). **Blue-headed Vireos** were remarkable finds at GLP 1/1 (AD, ED) and PERT 1/4 (GJ), representing first and second winter records for the county. There were a couple of **Black-capped Chickadee** sightings this period, despite there being no real irruption of the species: one each in Franconia Twp. 12/19 (SG, vr.) and Royersford 1/28 (JC, ph.).

The group of **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** at a wastewater treatment facility in Oaks continued 30-strong until at least 12/2 (PD). Numbers had dwindled to 6 by 1/8 (SGr), with no reports after that point. **Red-breasted Nuthatch** presence was nowhere near ubiquitous level, but evidence of their irruption was readily available from 28 locations, mostly concentrated in the southern end of the county, through the period (m.ob.).

A **Marsh Wren** at Gwynedd Wildlife Preserve 12/15-1/24 (AM) represented only the second winter record for *Montgomery*. A pair of Marsh Wrens were also at VCP 12/16 (PD, vr.), the same location where the first winter record Marsh Wren was sighted in 2020. At least one of these VCP wrens remained until at least 1/1 (PD, vt.), though a Mar report may indicate that they stuck it out through the entire period. These sightings represent first Jan records for the county.

It was a good winter for **Gray Catbirds** with at least 15 reported (m.ob.). **Brown Thrashers** were found at five sites (m.ob.). This season saw another eBird county high-count record broken, when 13,600 **American Robins** were counted coming to roost at GLP 1/12 (PH), nearly double a previous high count of 7500. Other high robin counts observed at GLP during this period included 5500 on 1/3 and 4300 on 1/11 (both PH).

Eight **American Pipits** were at VFNHP 1/8-9 (CM, AMe), the highest Jan pipit sighting in *Montgomery* since 2011. Nine **Purple Finches** were at a Franconia Twp. feeder 2/23 (SG), seen at 22 other locations in smaller numbers (m.ob.), primarily in ones or twos. No other irruptive finches were detected, not that any were really expected. A **Lapland Longspur** was found in a Franconia Twp. cornfield 1/8 with a flock of 27 **Horned Larks** (KR, m.ob.).

Chipping Sparrows were recorded at 17 locations, predominantly in

southern *Montgomery*. While the trend of increasing Chipping Sparrow volume in winter continues, this was almost half as many sites as the previous winter, but slightly higher than several winters preceding 2020-21. Notable Chipping Sparrow high counts included 50 at PERT throughout the period (MG, AMn, m.ob.), 40 at Twining Valley Park 1/6 (SB), and 16 at VFNHP 12/14 (PN, TN, et al.).

A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was an unexpected find in a flock of 10 to 15 Chipping Sparrows in Harleysville 2/11-13 (WBH, ph.). **American Tree Sparrows** were reasonably widespread in typical habitat in mostly low numbers. The high count of 12 was recorded at VFNHP 1/14 (AW) and at New Goshenhoppen United Church in East Greenville 2/6 (KC).

PERT hosted a heavy concentration of **Fox Sparrows** with as many as 18 recorded 12/18 (PD, m.ob.). A group of 10 was also found at GLP 12/27-1/1 (ED, PH). **White-crowned Sparrows** were in 11 locations (m.ob.), including a high of 5 at DMP 12/4-1/19 (m.ob.). One hundred twenty **White-throated Sparrows** were tallied at PERT 12/18 (PD), and a snow-related mob of 119 assaulted a Salford Twp. feeding station 2/14 (WBH). Twenty **Savannah Sparrows** were at PERT 1/30 (PD). In other high-sparrow-concentration news, a dense **Eastern Towhee** population was present at PERT, including 15 counted there 12/18 (PD, m.ob.).

A male **Baltimore Oriole** was noted at a Montgomeryville feeder from early Jan to 2/20 (SC). **Rusty Blackbirds** were seen at nine locations (m.ob.), with a high of 8 recorded at Bethayres Swamp 12/4-5 (MG, JC).

Single **Common Yellowthroats** were reported at VCP 12/4-1/9 (MG, m.ob., vr.) and Heuser Park 12/26-29 (SGr), representing the first winter records of this skulking species since 2013. A **Palm Warbler** was described at GLP 12/7 (KS, RR), and a **Yellow Palm Warbler** was photographed at Oaks 2/6 (RC, JF). This winter saw a high number of **Pine Warbler** reports, possibly the highest ever in the eBird era. They were seen at 13 locations (m.ob.) and included a group of 4 at Worcester 2/19-21 (JB) and a pair in Hatfield 1/3 to the end of the period (RA).

Observers: **W. Brian Henderson, Salford Twp., PA, wbhenderson@gmail.com**, Risa Alfieri, Douglas Baird (DBa), Joseph Baldino, Lyn Barr, Dave Belford, Carol Bean (CBn), Carrie Bell, Paul Bernhardt, Sara Busch, Kayann Cassidy (KCa), Susan Chernuka, Josh Cooper, Robin Cooper, Kevin Crilley, Dave DeReamus, Angela Detweiler (ADe), Lauren diBiccari, Andrew Dolan, Edward Dolan, Paul Driver, Jason Fehon, Greg George, Scott Godshall, Mike Grubb, Steve Grunwald (SGr), Al Guarente, Jason Hall, Cliff Hence, Paul Heveran, Len Hillegass, Barbara Hostetler (BHo), Gail Johnson, Rudy Keller, Stephen Kerr, Alex Lamoreaux, Vicky Mahmoud, Jack McBrearty, Adrian Melck (AMe), Zach Millen, Anna Mindel (AMn), August Mirabella, Dennis Miranda, Christopher Mortensen, Pat Nastase, Tony Nastase, Samuel Perloff, Kenneth Rieker, Rick Robinson, Daniel Sloan, Kiehl Smith, Sam Stuart, Wendy Sykora, Jaime Thomas, Todd Underwood, Jeff Vinosky, Anne Wilhelm.

Montour County

Locations: Montour Preserve (MP).

This season's highlight was a **Cape May Warbler** at the MP 12/4 (DY). This species is rare in winter statewide, and even more so outside of southeast Pennsylvania.

Central Pennsylvania had a very mild December, which likely contributed to some "half-hardy" birds staying late or in increased numbers. One example was a **Brown Thrasher** at the MP 12/18 (KP). As another example, the Dec weekly high count of **American Robins** on eBird was 173, meaning the maximum total robins reported during a one-week period. This is more than 15 times the average Dec weekly high count of 10.7 from the 2011 to 2020 period.

A **Greater White-fronted Goose** was at the MP 1/8 (MH). A grassland-raptor bonanza on Laidacker Rd. 1/3 in the traditional raptor-friendly northern part of the county included a county high count of 19 **Northern Harriers**, along with 2 **Short-eared Owls** (AK). Reports nearby of **Rough-legged Hawks** from late Jan to Feb may have pertained to 3 or more birds (m.ob.).

A **Northern Shrike** was at the MP 12/14 (KP). This may be the same bird as the one that Stamm Rd., a few miles away, has hosted for the fifth

year in a row. A **Spotted Towhee** was seen in the north part of the county 2/19 (AS).

Observers: **Evan Houston, evanhouston@gmail.com**, Matthew Heintzelman, Andy Keister, Karol Pasquinelli, Alfred Stola, Deb Young.

Northampton County

Location: Martins Creek Environmental Preserve (MC).

There were 116 species reported on eBird. **Ross's Goose** was found during each month of the period. **Greater White-fronted Goose** was seen at Greinar Rd. retention pond 12/13 (DM) and 12/15 at Silver Crest Rd. pond (DD). Two **Canvasbacks** were at Nazareth Quarry 12/18 (MS). An early **American Woodcock** was found at Cigar Rd. in Moore Twp. 2/26 (BE). **Iceland Gull** high counts of 5 were at Nazareth Quarry 12/1 (DD, AM) and at the Bethlehem Landfill 2/28 (DD).

Golden Eagle was reported from Little Gap Hawk Watch 12/2 (MS) and Grand Central Landfill 1/21 (SA). A **Rough-legged Hawk** was seen at farmlands along the Martins Cr. - Belvidere Hwy. 1/8 (AMo) and along Deer Run Rd. 2/13 (SA). A **Long-eared Owl** was found on a CBC at MC 12/26 (MS, CCS). The wintering **Northern Shrike** at Ballas Park found in Nov was last seen 2/17 (HB).

A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was found in Jan at the Koch Property and stayed the period (AK). During a CBC, **Orange-crowned Warblers** were located by the Riverton Ball Fields and at the MC 12/26 (MS, CCS).

Observers; **Michael Schall, 610-737-5275, mdtjschall@yahoo.com**, Scott Angus, Henry Buser, Dave DeReamus, Bill Etter, Arlene Koch, Adam Miller, Dennis Miller, Aleshanne Mooney (AMo), Corinne Campbell Schall.

Northumberland County

Locations: Amish Pond (AP), McEwensville (MCE), Plotts Road (PR), Schuyler Road (SR).

The winter season started rather mild before turning much colder in January, then returning to seasonable temperatures in February. Lack of snow cover made it hard to find field birds. The early start to the season seemed to hold over birds that would have normally moved farther south, like American Robins, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Gray Catbirds.

It was a good season for shorebirds. **Killdeer** either returned a little early or else overwintered, which happens on occasion. A pair was observed along PR 2/6 (EH, CK, JG) during a WRS. A total of 3 was seen along SR 2/11 (EH), and 2 more likely new arrivals were seen at the AP 2/26 (AK). **Wilson's Snipes** were reported along PR 2/12-27 (m.ob.). The high count during this time period was 8 birds.

It was a good season for raptors. A single **Golden Eagle** was reported during a WRS near MCE 2/6 (EH, CK, JG). **Rough-legged Hawks** weren't hard to find in suitable habitat. The high count was 5 birds in the MCE area observed during a WRS (EH, CK, JG). A **Snowy Owl** was probably the highlight of the season, especially when it was perched on top of St. Luke's Church in downtown Sunbury. This one-day wonder was only observed 1/27 (BP, KP).

Ruby-crowned Kinglets overwintered well in the region. The county's only observation was 2 birds along the Water Plant Foot Path 2/24 (BP). Since I began reporting for the county in 2017, this is the first year that a **Gray Catbird** overwintered. It was observed multiple times at SGL 165 on Irish Valley Road 12/16-2/13 (KP, CD).

Lapland Longspurs were only seen a few times. Two were observed feeding in a horse pasture along CLR 2/2 (AK), and one was seen near SR 2/11 (EH). **Snow Buntings** were few and far between most likely due to a lack of snow cover. The largest group included an estimated 30 birds along CLR 2/2 (AK). Earlier in the year, a single bird was observed with **Horned Larks** along Fort Rice Road 1/31 (AK).

Normally, **Savannah Sparrows** overwinter in some of the fields in the northern parts of the county, but reports were scarce this year. One was

observed at SGL 84 at Dornsife 12/12 (KP), which most likely was an overwintering bird. A high count of 3 birds was seen at the AP 2/26 (AK). These could be new arrivals or overwintering birds.

Observers: **Andy Keister, 110 Hawk Ridge Road, Bloomsburg, 17815, (570) 337-3802, akeister110@gmail.com**, Conrad Decker, Joe Gyekis, Evan Houston, Chad Kauffman, Karol Pasquinelli, Bryce Perles.

Philadelphia County

Locations: Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), Delaware River (DR), Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park (FDR), John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge (JHNWR), Lardner's Point Park (LPP), Navy Yard (NVY), Pennypack on the Delaware (POD), Schuylkill River (SR), Southwest Water Treatment Plant (SWWTP), Wissahickon Valley Park (WVP).

Highly anticipated for a long time, a **Greater White-fronted Goose** was discovered with a small gang of **Canada Geese** on the ballfields of the Germantown Friends School in Northwest *Philadelphia* 2/2 (ED). The bird stuck around for two more days before being refound at the edge of WVP 2/6 (DE) and in other parts of the area for the next three days (m.ob.). While many people thought this to be the first record for the county, it actually was not. According to the county report in the first issue of "Pennsylvania Birds," Volume 3, an individual was spotted on the SR along the West River Drive on 3/31/1989 by Michael Drake.

Cackling Geese were few and far between with one bird each at Bartram's Garden 12/23 (BF) and in the Byberry neighborhood in Northeast *Philadelphia* 1/16 (PM) while one flew over the Germantown neighborhood 12/3 (LH). **Northern Shovelers** were unusually numerous at JHN and SWWTP with a max of 375 at SWWTP 1/19 (DB), a number not seen in 10 years. A **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** was at FDR 2/17-20 (HF, m.ob.) and at JHNWR 2/18-19 (RZ). One **White-winged Scoter** was on the SR 12/1 (LH et al.) and up to 3 were at NVY 12/7-10 (BF et al.). A **Black Scoter** was enjoyed by many at the Reed Street section of the DR 1/1-4 (BF et al.).

Hooded Mergansers were numerous again at SWWTP especially in Dec with up to 106 birds across several ponds 12/10-17 (AB, DB, HP). Can anybody think of why they prefer the habitat there over the nearby JHNWR? A steady southbound movement of **Common Mergansers** was noticed 1/23 with a county high of 530 at LPP (GA) that was also noticeable over Center City (BH). Later in the day, 410 individuals including a flock of 380 flew over POD (GA). The only **Red-necked Grebe** was at LPP 2/26 (PM).

Iceland Gulls were seen at four locations along the DR 1/2-2/20 (m.ob.). Another individual along the SR was only the second record in eBird for this river (MD). One lucky observer was at the right time and place to see a **Glaucous Gull** floating on the ice-packed DR at POD 1/23 (MG). Up to 7 **Laughing Gulls** were at POD during Dec. **Great Blue Herons** were back at the JHNWR rookery established last year as early as 2/10 (VS). Wintering numbers of **Great Egrets** not seen since 2015 were at SWWTP and its close vicinity with up to 13 birds there 12/10-29 (AB, DB, HP). Records in Jan and Feb between JHNWR and SWWTP were the first in 15 years (m.ob.). Raptors and owls did not generate a buzz this season. A faint call of the only **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was recorded at Pennypack Park 1/26 (PD).

Blue-headed Vireos at POD 12/4 (MP) and WVP 12/18 (KR) completed the handful of winter observations logged in eBird, all since 2018. An unusually large flock of 26 **Horned Larks** hunkered down at the former Island Green GC 1/8 (HP), which is nothing more than an abandoned construction site now providing ample habitat for birds favoring open spaces. The first wintering **Barn Swallow** since 2015 was at the Northeast Water Treatment Plant 12/1-2/8 (CH et al.) and is only the fourth bird based on eBird records attempting to overwinter in *Philadelphia*. All stayed there with the resident winter flock of **Northern Rough-winged Swallows**. **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** survived at least for a little while at LPP 12/4-1/8 (PM et al.) and Laurel Hill Cemetery 1/8 (BK). A **House Wren** was at FDR 12/27 (HF).

A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was at ACE 12/5, a first winter record in 10 years (DB, PH, HP). Braving the cold was a lone **Lincoln's Sparrow** at POD 12/7-1/30 (WB et al.), and another was a one-day wonder at a backyard in the Mt. Airy neighborhood 1/29 (KB). Being only the second winter record in eBird, a **Yellow-breasted Chat** drew a large crowd chasing it at JHNWR

1/10-24 (AD et al.). A **Baltimore Oriole** was at POD 12/4-8 (PM, TB) and, unless this individual traveled north along Pennypack Cr. for six miles, another bird was in the Bustleton neighborhood 1/7-8 (DM). An astonishing 14,000 **Common Grackles** were counted during this year's Philadelphia Mid-Winter Bird Census at WVP 1/8 (DE). Typically, less than a tenth of that is the expected max, but this flock apparently grew steadily in the area through Dec.

Ten warbler species were recorded. Among them an **Ovenbird**, apparently the only one left in Pennsylvania, was in the University City neighborhood 12/13 (JS), a **Black-and-white Warbler** was along the SR 12/5 (DS) and at SWWTP 12/29 (HP), and a **Nashville Warbler** was at FDR 1/6 and at ACE 1/15 (m.ob.). A bright male **Black-throated Blue Warbler** at Temple University 12/5 (MP) was one of the last in Pennsylvania to head south, and a **Black-throated Green Warbler** along the SR 12/25-26 (JR, MD) was only the second winter record after one in 2020. **Orange-Crowned Warblers** were discovered at an incredible 17 locations throughout the city continuing the trend of increasing records in recent years. Four individuals alone were seen in the vast expanse of urban meadows at FDR 12/27 continuing there through Feb (m.ob.). A couple were also seen in backyards in the East Falls neighborhood 1/11 (PD) and 1/22-25 (LH).

Observers: **Holger Pflücke, Philadelphia, PA 19148, pflucke.holger@gmail.com**, George Armistead, Debbie Beer, Kevin Berkoff, Adrian Binns, Tanya Burnett, William Buzzard, Angelo DelloMargio, Martin Dellwo, Peter DeStefano, Paul Driver (PDr), Elliot Dzedzic, Dan Efrogmson, Ben Filreis, Mark Greenberry, Peter Hamner, Brian Hart, Liam Hart, Laura Herschel (LHe), Christopher Hinkle, Bernice Koplín, Patrick McGill, Denis Mora, Maria Pacheco, Joel Rurik, Keith Russell, Jennifer Sheffield, Victoria Sindlinger, Daniel Singer, Rich Zeigler.

Pike County

Locations: Lake Wallenpaupack (LW).

There was no significant snow accumulation during the period. Lakes and ponds froze up by mid-January. There were some waterfowl observations worth reporting before freeze-up. A **Trumpeter Swan** was found at the Hatton Rd. Marsh in Hawley 12/10 (PS). A drake **Redhead** was at LW 12/20 (RJ, CF). **Greater Scaups** were seen at Promised Land SP 12/29 (RJ, BW) and at LW 12/29 (BW). Birders found one to 2 **Long-tailed Ducks** at LW 12/24 to 1/4 (RJ, CF, BW). A **Great Black-backed Gull** was seen at LW 12/20 and 1/4 (RJ, CF, BW). On 12/5-7, there was a **Red-throated Loon** at LW (BW, AW).

An immature **Golden Eagle** was seen at the Zane Grey Boat Launch 1/22-23 (AN, RK). On 2/15, a **Red-headed Woodpecker** was reported from Towpath Rd. along the Lackawaxen R. (RK). There was a **Gray Catbird** found at Camp Hidden Falls 1/20 (BW). A **Snow Bunting** was hanging out on the shoreline at LW 12/4-26 (CF). A bit unusual was a **Lincoln's Sparrow** seen at Sunny Hill L. 12/23 (PS).

Observers: **Michael Schall, 610-737-5275, mdtjschall@yahoo.com**, Chris Fischer, Ryan Johnson, Rick Koval, Alexis Neenan, Patti Shreiner, Annie White, Bradley White.

Potter County

Locations: Coudersport (COU), Galeton (GAL), Galeton Lake (GLA), Hebron (HEB), Joerg Road (JR), North Fork Dam (NFD), Ole Bull State Park (OB), Sinnemahoning State Park-Potter (SISP).

Reports were taken from eBird for the winter season, totaling 51 species for the county. Reports and observers were low in number, perhaps due to the Covid-19 pandemic's resurgence and winter ice storms. Data for notable sightings were obtained from 13 locations, submitted by 16 observers. **Canada Geese** were primarily from GLA 12/4-2/26 with high counts of 153 on 12/17 and 140 on 12/26 (TDB, BG) with a report from COU of 10 on 1/23 (WB). A single **Tundra Swan** was seen at Shinglehouse 2/23 (KRe).

Mallards were primarily from GLA over the winter with a high of 48 on 1/4 (TDB) and of 37 at COU 1/23 (WB). Two **American Black Ducks** were observed at GLA 12/10 (TDB). **Hooded Mergansers** were reported 16 times from GLA and several locations along the West Branch of Pine Cr. at GAL in numbers of 2-7 birds 12/4-2/28, with a high of 10 on 2/28 (SL, TDB). There were 15 reports of **Common Merganser** from GLA and several locations along the West Branch of Pine Cr. at GAL with one to 6 individuals 12/16-2/28 (SL, TDB). Two **Wild Turkeys** were from GLA 2/11 (KR), and a single **Ruffed Grouse** was seen at OB 2/18 (SL).

Turkey Vultures and Black Vultures were not reported. Thirty **Ring-billed Gulls** were seen at GLA on 2/21 (SL). Single **Golden Eagles** were at SISP 12/15 (MS, SS) and a residence on JR 2/19 (SL). **Three Northern Harriers** were observed at NFD 9/2 (WH), and single birds were at West Branch Road in GAL 1/13-14 (TDB). Single **Cooper's Hawks** were seen at HEB 2/20 (UN) and JR 12/25 (SL). **Bald Eagles** with 1 to 2 per sighting were reported from the four locations of COU, GAL, OB and JR 12/3-2/19 (WB, TDB, D&KP, SL). Sightings of one to 2 **Red-tailed Hawks** were from COU, NFD, and GAL (TDB, WH, D&KP).

One Great Horned Owl was reported from OB 2/2 (SL). Single **Belted Kingfishers** were seen along Pine Cr. at GAL 12/6 (BG) and Ole Bull SP's Beaver Swamp 2/23 (SL). Twelve **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** observations, all singles, were made at a residence on JR 1/28-2/20 (SL). American Kestrel and Merlin were not reported.

Red-breasted Nuthatches were only seen at OB with one 12/29, two 1/6 and one again 2/18 (SL). Single **Brown Creepers** were from OB 12/16 and JR 1/1 (SL). One to 6 **Purple Finches** were reported 9 times from 5 locations with the high count of 9 from a residence on Sweden Hill Road 2/18 (LK, AB, CB). The only report of **Pine Siskins** was for 2 birds seen at OB 2/4 (SL).

One Field Sparrow was on West Branch Road in GAL on 12/28 (TDB). Sightings of one to 2 **American Tree Sparrows** were from only one location: a residence on JR 12/1-2/19 (SL). A high of 35 **Dark-eyed Juncos** was reported from a residence on Yahn Road in GAL 2/20 (MH), with two observations there of 5 **White-crowned Sparrows** 2/19-20 (TDB). **White-throated Sparrows** were reported 19 times as one to 2 birds from three locations: GAL, Kettle Creek Road at Route 144, and JR (TDB, MS, SS, SL), with a high count of 13 from Austin 1/23 (WB). One **Song Sparrow** was seen in HEB 12/1, and 75 **Red-winged Blackbirds** were at HEB 2/20 (UN). A single **Brown-headed Cowbird** was at a residence on JR on 1/21 (SL).

Observers: **Robert Snyder, P.O. Box 603, Howard, PA 16841, (814) 753-2629, birdphotoginpa@gmail.com**, Anonymous Birder, Tabitha D. Bezael, Cornelius Brown, William Burkert, Barbara Gee, Maxine Harrison, Will Harrod, Linda Klee, Undefined Name, Sarah Lindgren, Dale & Karen Plumley, Ken Reichman (KRe), Kathryn Riley, Matthew Schenck, Susan Schenck.

Schuylkill County

Locations: Air Products Wildlife Sanctuary (APWS), Deer Lake (DL), Landingville Marsh and Dam (LVD), Municipal Road Pond (MRP), Lebanon Reservoir (LR), Swatara State Park (SSP), Sweet Arrow Lake (SAL), Tumbling Run Reservoir (TR), Tuscarora State Park (TSP), West Schuylkill Christmas Bird Count (WSCBC).

Some data for this narrative were gleaned from two Christmas Bird Count's that took place in the county: the WSCBC 12/19 and the Tamaqua CBC12/30, with thanks to Dave Krueel and Jonathan DeBalko, respectively, for heading those efforts. In addition to species sightings provided directly to me and posted to PABIRDS, a lot of good data were also on eBird.

With the exception of **Mallards**, **Mute Swans**, **Canada Geese**, and **Common Mergansers** in recent years, waterfowl species' diversity and numbers are always low for the county. As typical in most years, sightings tended to be in Dec for ducks moving south and in February for birds moving north as soon as open water has been available.

A **Cackling Goose** was spotted at DL 12/24 (MC). A good place for **Gadwall** in recent years has been DL where small numbers were found in Dec and Feb (RR, TJ, TB, DK, KH, DR); in addition, a single was found at

nearby MRP 2/25 (DR). The most dependable spot in the county to find **American Black Ducks** has been APWS, which was true again this winter, as they were found throughout the season (JD, JaD, TS, CF), with a high of 29 on 12/30. Small numbers were also observed at various times at SAL (BR, TB, BB, JF, NF), at LR 12/15 (TB), at LVD 1/1-2/9 (JD, DH, YL, ME, TN), and with 25 at Owl Cr. 12/5 (DK).

A single **Northern Pintail** was at APWS 12/30 (JaD, JD, TS), on 1/5 (JD) and in late Feb (JD, CF). It was a good year for spotting **Ring-necked Ducks**, which have been considered rare here in the winter. Six were at L. Wynonah 1/19 (RR), with smaller numbers at LVD 2/5-2/20 (KH, ME, TN, TJ, TB, DK, DR). In addition, 8 were spotted at MRP 2/25 (DR). Two **Hooded Mergansers** were reported at LR 12/15 (TB). They were also found in small numbers at SSP in late Feb (BR, TB), at LVD in mid-Feb (TJ, KH, TB, DR, RR), at DL 2/23 and 2/25 (RR, KH), at APWS 2/18 and 2/23 (JD), and on the WSCBC 12/19 (DB). Rounding out our water birds, 2 **Pied-billed Grebes** were at TR 12/23 (BD).

Very unusual in the winter, a **Bonaparte's Gull** was found at LVD 1/29 (TB). A sizable flock of 120 **Ringed-billed Gulls** was seen at SAL 12/9 (BR). Similarly sized flocks were also spotted in the area along I-81 on 2/27 (AK) and near Newtown 2/28 (TB). Smaller numbers were found at LVD 1/1 (TB), 2/12 (DR), and 2/13 (TB, KH). **Herring Gulls** also showed up this winter. Around New Year, they were found in Frackville (TB) and at LLSP (TJ, TB). In mid-Feb, they were spotted at SAL (DR), along I-81 (AK) and at LVD (KH).

A number of **Northern Harriers** were found, which is atypical. With the exception of one at SGL 227 on 1/16 (TB), they were all seen in the southern part of the county. Along SR 443 west of SR 183, harriers were found 1/22 (DK), 2/5 (RR, IG), and 2/21 (AL). Moving east of SR 183, one was spotted in Summit Station 1/18 (RR), at LVD 1/29-30 (KH, DK, DH, YL), and along Summer Valley Road 1/18 (LG). Notable due to the dates, **Gray Catbirds** were found 12/19 in Pine Grove (KH) and at SSP 1/13 (TB).

Northern Saw-whet Owl reports posted to eBird over the last three winters showed an interesting geographic spread along a single ridge running from LR in the west to TSP to the east. Credit goes primarily to Dave Krueel for spearheading this effort to locate NSW territories in the county. This season individual birds were reported on the WSCBC (BC, DK). In addition, other single birds were heard at TR 12/3 (DK), Coal Run 12/9 (DK), and at TSP on several dates (TJ, DK, JaD, JD, RR).

Observers: **Dave Rieger, 401 Stony Mountain Road, Auburn, PA 17922, d.m.rieger@gmail.com**. Dan Brennan, Brian Brown, Thomas Buehl Jr, Bruce Carl, Milton Collins, John DeBalko, Jonathan DeBalko (JaD), Bill Derbes, Denise Donmoyer, Mike Epler, Caroline Fegley, Justin Felty, Nate Felty, Ian Gardner, Laurie Goodrich, Karen Hardy, Tonia Jordan, Andy Keister, Dave Krueel, Yesenia Leon, Ann Liebner, Ted Nichols, Rich Rieger, Barb Ritzheimer, Ty Sharrow, James Trusky.

Somerset County

Locations: Berlin Area (BA), Buffalo Creek (BC), Flight 93 National Memorial (F93), Hidden Valley (HV), Indian Lake (IL), Johnstown Christmas Bird Count (JCBC), Payne Property on Allegheny Mountain (PP), Quemahoning Reservoir (QR), Somerset Lake (SL), Stoneycreek Lake (SCL).

The season started very mild through mid-January when a month of colder temperatures froze lakes and gave a modest amount of snow. Winter finches were sparse, and no buntings or longspurs were found. Waterfowl were interesting early and late in season. Wintering **Gray Catbird** and **Merlin** were noteworthy. F93 provided a **Northern Shrike** for the fifth year running – possibly a returning bird? A few more hardy species seemed to be wintering or extending their season.

A group of 58 **Tundra Swans** rested on QR 12/12 (LG). Rather late were a single **Wood Duck** at QR 12/18 and a pair at SCL 12/19 (MM, CP, JP, RP); the earliest returning was noted at BC 2/16 (CP, JP, RP). **Northern Shovelers** usually leave early, so 3 at SL 12/28 (CP, JP, RP) and one at QR 1/1 (JP) were noteworthy. **Gadwall** and **American Wigeon** were reported in small numbers through this period. **American Black Ducks** were regularly seen with **Mallards** in groups up to 8. **Northern Pintails** frequented the

partially filled SL with up to 12 on 2/26 (AS). Two mid-winter **Green-winged Teal** were at BC 2/16 (JP).

No Canvasbacks were reported, but **Redheads** were noted 4 times at IL and QR. **Ring-necked Ducks** and **Lesser Scaup**, with a high of 40 at Sevens Springs 2/25 (AS), were scattered through the season. Somewhat unexpected were 2 **White-winged Scoters** at QR 12/28 (CP, JP, RP) with one present 1/23 (LG). The only **Long-tailed Duck** report was of 7 at IL 12/18 (CP, JP, RP). **Buffleheads** were widely reported with a nice count of 46 at Deer Valley L. 1/6 (EH). Small numbers of **Common Goldeneye** were scattered through the season. **Hooded Mergansers** and **Common Mergansers** were widely reported. **Red-breasted Mergansers** were only represented by 2 at IL 12/18 (CP, JP, RP) and a single at QR 12/24 (LG). **Ruddy Ducks** garnered many reports.

Only one **Ruffed Grouse** was reported, near Boswell (LK). **Wild Turkeys** continued to do well with many reports of winter flocks up to 26 birds. **Pied-billed Grebes** were noted often with 11 at QR 12/12 (LG). One **Horned Grebe** at IL 12/18 was the only report (CP, JP, RP). Notable was complete lack of American Coot reports. Five **Killdeer** in BA 2/18 braved the cold spell (KH).

Ring-billed Gulls in small flocks were reported throughout the season, but the one **Herring Gull** at QR 12/28 (PhL) was unique. A latish **Common Loon** was at IL 12/18 (CP, JP, RP) but unusual was a one at QR 12/23-1/24 (LG, m.ob.). As open water was diminishing, the bird did not leave and was being carefully watched by Bald Eagles. Its fate was not observed, but the eagles seemed content.

Somewhat unusual for the county was a midwinter **Turkey Vulture** at Kimberly Run NA 1/22 (DG). **Northern Harriers** seemed a bit more common through winter than usual. **Sharp-shinned Hawks** and **Cooper's Hawks** as well as **Bald Eagles** were found throughout in small numbers. Five winter **Red-shouldered Hawk** reports were above normal. **Rough-legged Hawks** were reported six times and probably represented 4 birds: one at BA 1/27 (JP), one near F93 on 2/1 (T&JK), and 2 south of Berlin 2/6 (DP). Both **Great Horned Owls** and **Barred Owls** were reported from three locations, but no other owls were found.

Nice county finds for winter were a possible wintering **Merlin** at F93 on 12/19 (MM, CP, JP, RP) and 2/16 (CP, RP) and one in Somerset Borough 12/11 (DG). For the fifth year in a row, a **Northern Shrike** was found at F93, first on 1/1 (JP) and refound at least 4 times until 1/31.

Red-breasted Nuthatches wintered, and kudos to the birder who found 7 at Deer Valley 1/6 (EH). A late report for **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was during Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society's JCBC 12/19. **Hermit Thrush** apparently wintered at QR with 2 found 1/13 and one 2/22 (EH). Very unusual for the county was a wintering **Gray Catbird**, photographed often at a suet feeder at IL (*vide* SB). Only 2 **Northern Mockingbirds** were found: one near Bakersville 1/24 (JP) and one at feeder near Friedens through this period (DJ).

Notable were large flocks of **Cedar Waxwings** with 180 at QR 12/28 (CP, JP, RP), 225 at QR 1/13 (EH), and 200 at SCL 2/16 (CP, RP). Four **Purple Finches** were at Mt. Davis 1/6 (EH) and one at PP 2/16 (CP, RP). Two **Red Crossbills** were on the *Somerset* side of Black Spruce bog on Laurel Mtn. 12/31 (LC), being more regularly reported in *Westmoreland*. Remarkably the only **Pine Siskin** was a single near Bakersville 2/5 (SC).

Winter **Chipping Sparrow** reports included one near Shanksville 12/19 (CP) for JCBC and an injured bird visiting a feeder at HV 12/7-1/5 (AS). A few **Field Sparrows** stayed in the thick weeds at SL lake bottom. There were many reports of **American Tree Sparrows**, but the highest counts were a meager 3. Somewhat early were 2 **Fox Sparrows** at PP 2/25 (JP). The only reported **White-crowned Sparrows** were 2 at SL 12/28 (CP, JP, RP). **White-throated Sparrows** were present in small numbers while **Song Sparrow** and **Swamp Sparrow** numbers were more robust. **Eastern Towhees** were at HV 12/2, 12/9 and 2/24 (AS), and one was at Kooser SP 2/3 (ST).

Red-winged Blackbirds wintered in good numbers at F93 and at Mallard's Rest near Boswell (EH). The blackbird flocks had a few **Brown-headed Cowbirds** and **Common Grackles** mixed in. The only seasonal reports of **Rusty Blackbirds** were one at Mallard's Rest 1/13 and one in the swamp near Shanksville 2/15 (CP, JP, RP). Up to four **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were in one of several reports throughout this season at QR.

Observers: **Jeff Payne, 9755 Glades Pike, Berlin, PA 15530, 814-267-5718, paynemt@gmail.com**, Scott Bastian, Bill Cline, Sandy Cline, Linda Croskey, Michael David, Davis Gerston, Linda Greble, Eric Hall, Kathleen Hoffman, Pam Hornick, Dan Jenkins, Linda Kim, Tom & Janet Kuehl, Paul Lehman, Phil Lehman (PhL), Karen Lucas, Sally Miller, Meg Moses, Becky Ohler, Chris Payne, Rebecca Payne, Dave Poder, E.J. Regula, Andrew Smith, Shannon Thompson.

Sullivan County

Locations: Dushore (DU), Dutch Mountain (DM), Edkin Hill Road (EH), Kinsley's Corners (KC), Molyneux Hill Rd (MHR), Muncy Valley (MV).

The winter season in *Sullivan* was typical. Snow cover in February was two to four inches with deeper cover in shaded and drifted areas. Open water was frozen as usual. There were a limited number of reports in eBird. The author made only one trip to the county during the period. Observations not attributed directly were made by the author.

There was still some open water early in Dec for 26 **American Black Duck** to be counted in MV 12/13 (AM), a very good number for the species. No other waterfowl reports were made.

Two WRSs were conducted 2/12. The two routes yielded 3 **Bald Eagles** at DM, one **Sharp-shinned Hawk** at MHR, 8 **Red-tailed Hawks**, one light-phase **Rough-legged Hawk** at KC, and 4 **American Kestrels**. Additional raptor observations included a **Northern Harrier** and one **Red-shouldered Hawk** on Briskey Mtn. 2/28 (RH).

One **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** along with 2 **Pileated Woodpeckers** were seen in MV 12/13 (AM). A flock of 15 **Horned Larks** was observed during one of the raptor surveys on MHR 2/12. A **Tufted Titmouse** was at a feeder near DU 2/19 (HL). Two **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were found in a stand of spruce on DM 2/13. A **Brown Creeper** was near DU 2/19 (HL). Good finds for the time of year were one **Winter Wren** in MV and a **Carolina Wren** on EH 12/13 (AM).

A male and female **Red Crossbill** were found in a spruce stand on DM 2/13. The birds flew into a dead ash tree and sat for a lengthy time allowing close observation. Both birds were relatively dull in coloration with all-black wings. The crossed bills were well seen. Two **Pine Siskins** were found in the same stand at the same time along with the previously mentioned nuthatches.

There were a few good sparrow sightings early in the period. **Field Sparrow** was observed in MV 12/13 (AM). **American Tree Sparrow** and a late **Chipping Sparrow** were found on EH 12/13 (AM). Two **Red-winged Blackbird** near KC seemed a bit early 2/12.

Observers: **Rob Megraw, 131 Butternut Dr., Pottstown, PA 19454, 610-858-6361, robert.r.megraw@gmail.com**, Rich Hanlon, Heather Lentz, Alan MacEachren.

Susquehanna County

Location: East Great Bend Swamp (EGBS).

With a handful of exceptions, waterfowl migration seemed to fly over the county this season. A small flock of 25 **Snow Geese** dropped out of migration for a quick visit and photo opportunity on L. Montrose 12/10 (TN). A **Mute Swan** starred in a month-long show at EGBS 12/1-29 (m.ob.). Many folks in the local community, birders and non-birders alike, came to see and photograph the bird. It presented any number of opportunities to enlighten folks of the effects of introduced species on native populations.

A lone **American Wigeon** was on EGBS 12/16 (BS), the only sighting of the species during the period. Similarly, a **Northern Pintail** was at the same location two days later 12/18 (BS, GS). A **Green-winged Teal** cruised around Hollister's Pond 12/13 (KH, BM) and 12/14 (JS). The only **Ruddy Ducks** reported were 6 on Quaker L. 12/8 (BS, NV).

First **Killdeer** of the spring or last autumn-plover-standing honors go to one photographed near Clifford on a very wintery date 2/23 (MM). Three **American Woodcocks** danced their way onto the county scene at SGL

236N 2/23 (CF). A forlorn-looking **Herring Gull** spent much of Dec on exposed flats at Laurel L. 12/2-14 (EM, BS, NV). A **Red-throated Loon** showed his attitude with an upturned bill on Comfort L. 12/5 (CF, TN, BS).

Rough-legged Hawks were found on two WRS routes 1/19 and 2/8 (DA, EM), and another was photographed near South Auburn 1/23 (TB). Our traditional *Susquehanna* **Short-eared Owl** playground did not disappoint: 3 individuals were photographed cavorting at Glemboski Road 1/8 (MMo). Spotting **Merlins** in the winter months is always a surprise. One was seen near Great Bend 12/21 (BS, GS) and another near South Montrose 2/22, 23 (JS).

A flock of 23 **Horned Larks** was discovered in corn stubble outside of Montrose 12/13 (TN), and a single was heard near Dimock 1/24 (NB). Three **Winter Wrens** were in SGL 175 on 12/14 (TD). A wintering **Gray Catbird** was observed in EGBS over several Dec weeks on 12/3, 12/17 and 12/19 (BS, GS). Two **Northern Mockingbirds** scoffed at the Dec weather and remained in the county: one on Hawley Road 12/14 (JS) and another in Silver Lake Twp 12/31 (EM). A single **Snow Bunting** was present near Fiddle Lake first seen 12/24 (CL) and confirmed 12/27 (CF).

Observers: **Evan Mann, 8313 Laurel Lake Road, Montrose, PA 18801, (570) 663-2621, 7evanmann@gmail.com**, Dave Andre, Nick Bolgiano, Tom Boyle, Tony DeSantis, Chris Fischer, Kurtis Himmler, Chris Langman, M Mack, Bruce McNaught, Michele Morningstar (MMo), Tom Norville, Barb Stone, Gary Stone, Joyce Stone, Nancy VanCott.

Tioga County

Locations: Asaph (ASA), Cowlanesque Lake (COW), Hills Creek Lake Road (HCL), Hills Creek State Park (HCSP), Mansfield (MAN), Marsh Creek Road-Webster to Rte. 287 (MCWR), Marsh Creek - IBA/The Muck (MCM), Middlebury Center (MBCE), Nessmuk Lake (NELA), Pennsylvania Welcome Center on Route 15 (PWC), Pine Creek Rail Trail-Straight Run (PCRT-STR), Ridge Road ponds (RRDP), Stony Fork (STFO), Tioga-Hammond Lakes (THLA), Tioga-Hammond Lakes - Ives Run Recreation Area (IRRA), Wellsboro (WEL).

A total of 95 species were reported on eBird during the winter. Species data, from eBird, was obtained from 38 locations, submitted by 40 observers. Single **Wood Ducks** were at MCWR 1/1 and ASA area 12/12 (JC). Two **Gadwalls** were observed from Marsh Creek Road in WEL 12/4 (DR). Three **American Wigeons** were at HCSP 12/6, and 2 at the Channel Overlook, THLA 2/10 (LD). **Mallards** were reported from many locations including Marsh Creek Road, NELA, HCSP and THLA, with high counts of 64 from the Overlook Channel, THLA 1/12 (LD) and 40 at HCSP 12/21 (GT). **American Black Ducks** were reported at 12 locations from Marsh Creek Road, WEL to Tioga 12/4-2/20 by several observers; the high count was 26 Pine Creek Rail Trail-Webster Rd. 12/7 (LD). Fourteen **Northern Pintails** were reported from MCWR on 1/01 (JC). One **Green-winged Teal** was at COW 12/18 (JC).

Two **Redheads** were seen at RRDP 12/7 and one at COW 1/12 (LD). **Ring-necked Ducks** were reported from HCSP with 2 on 12/6 and one 1/1 (LD, GT), and 2 at NELA 1/7 (D&KP). Single **Lesser Scaups** were reported from RRDP 12/7 and HCSP 12/21 (LD, GT). **Buffleheads** were reported from five locations: 2 HCSP 12/5, 1 RRDP 12/7 (LD), 1 COW 12/12 (TL), 4 Pine Camp Rd. MAN 12/31 and a high count of 10 IRRA 12/19 (D&KP). One **Common Goldeneye** was at IRRA 12/18 (JC). One to 12 **Hooded Mergansers** were reported 27 times with the high of 33 from the channel overlook at THLA 2/20 (LD, m.ob.). **Common Mergansers** were well reported, primarily from IRRA with highs of 200 on 12/18 and 250 on 12/19 (JC, D&KP, m.ob.). **Ruddy Ducks** were observed at HCSP with 12 on 12/5 and 5 on 12/6 (LD).

Wild Turkeys were reported 11 times, with a high of 30 from Welsh Rd in WEL 1/1 (RS, SM, m.ob.). Single **Ruffed Grouse** observations were reported from Stephenhouse Run Road 12/1 and 1/1 (LD), a residence near ASA 1/30 (JC) and MAN 2/11 (JT). A lone **Horned Grebe** was on NELA 12/9 (D&KP). There were many reports of **Ring-billed Gulls** in large numbers during Dec, primarily from the COW/THLA area, with high counts of 250 at IRRA 12/19 (D&KP), 123 at Tioga R. 12/18 (KR) and 45 at COW 12/18 (JC). **Herring Gull** was reported 19 times, mainly from THLA with a

high count of 20 observed from the PWC 12/30 (AM, m.ob.). One **Double-crested Cormorant** was observed at COW 12/18 (JC). One to 3 **Black Vultures** were reported from six locations with high counts of 8 WEL 12/4 (DR), and 6 at Hills Creek Road 2/18 (EM, SM, SuM, D&KP, LD).

Two **Golden Eagles** were in Tioga 2/27 (KR) and one at PWC 2/27 (MW). **Northern Harrier** was reported 13 times, mostly as single birds, with highs of 3 on Catlin Hollow Road in WEL 1/1 and 4 at Bottom Hill Road 12/18 (KB, m.ob.).

Sharp-shinned and **Cooper's Hawk** were reported 13 and 23 times, respectively. One to 11 **Bald Eagles** were reported 38 times with a high count at the Channel overlook/dam, 24 THLA 1/5 (LD, m.ob.). A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was photographed from Pine Creek Road in WEL 2/10 (SM). **Rough-legged Hawks** were observed as single birds from 13 locations that were clustered around these three areas 12/18-2/18: between COW and THLAs, around WEL, and Liberty (JE, LD, RM, SM, RH, KW, DG, CK, NK, NP).

Single **Eastern Screech-Owls** were at Woodland Park, WEL 2/8 and 2/10 (SM) and PCRT-STR 2/22 (JC). **Great Horned Owls** were reported with one at HCL 12/4, 2 MCWR 1/1, PCRT-STR 2/22, one ASA area 1/30, 2/6 and 2/14, and Randall Road, Roaring Branch had 2 on 12/5, 2 on 12/7, 2 on 12/21, 2 on 1/5 and one 1/11 (LD, JC, MS). Two **Barred Owls** were reported from Tioga SF's Barbour Rock Trail 12/21 (LD). Single **Long-eared Owls** were at MCWR 1/1 (JC) and HCL 1/1 (LD). Single **Short-eared Owls** were observed at Catlin Hollow Road, WEL 1/1 (KB) and from Burfield and Lowe Roads, Elkland 1/8 (JC). Note that there was only one historical account of Short-eared Owls (winter) in the county found in eBird: Jobs Corners, Elkland 2/13/2015 (LB). A report of one **Northern Saw-whet Owl** came from MCWR 1/1 (JC), but there are four historical records of single-bird sightings from eBird: COW 1/16/2010 (DW), Fallbrook 12/8/16 and 1/9/2016 (KC, GD), and WEL 2/27/2019 (LH). One to 2 **American Kestrels** were reported 19 times from 15 locations (m.ob.). Two **Merlins** were observed at IRRA (LD). Historically, across all years during Dec through Feb, between 12/16/2016 to 1/12/2019, only 6 single-bird sightings of Merlins were reported to eBird (LD, RH).

Two **Peregrine Falcons** were observed at Pine Creek Gorge's upper end 2/22 (DB, MG, personal communications). Historically, considering all years for Dec through Feb, there was only one other sighting of a single Peregrine Falcon, at COW 12/23/2016 (JC, RH, GT). There was no historical mention of Peregrine Falcon, breeding or over-wintering, in *Tioga: Birds of Western Pennsylvania, 1940*, Todd, but interestingly a note was made of a Peregrine Falcon that had been shot by "a gunner" in Howard, *Centre*, 11/20/1921.

A **Northern Shrike** was observed at Milk Plant Road and Route Road 1/15 (DF). Between 12/15/2007 and 12/25/2020 from Dec through Feb according to eBird, only 12 single-bird reports of Northern Shrike have been made for the county (DW, KC, JC, LD, BM, GT, PZ, SM, RH). One **Fish Crow** was reported from WEL 1/1 (MM).

Horned Lark was reported 10 times: 2 Corwin Road, MBCE 1/11 (LD), 50 Pheasant Hill Road, WEL 1/30 (RM, SM), 25 Perry Road, WEL 1/31, and 75 Rte. 660, WEL 1/31 (D&KP), 32 Lawton Road, STFO 2/6, 14 Burg Road, STFO 12/28, 8 Kendrick Road, STFO 2/6 (LD) and 5 Kendrick Road, STFO 2/20 (DG, CK). **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were observed at three locations: one at Dean Hill Road at Rte. 287 on 12/5 (D&KP), one at Pine Camp Road, MAN 12/19 (RM, SM), and 2 at MCWR 1/1 (JC). **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were reported mostly as singles, with a high count of 15 from MCWR 1/1 (JC, m.ob.).

Red-breasted Nuthatches, mostly singles, were reported from COW, THLA, HCP and the WEL areas. **Winter Wrens**, also mostly as singles, were reported from MCM 12/4 (LS), THLA's Rte. 287 Osprey Wetlands 12/10 (LD), Haverly Hill Rd., WEL 1/1 (RS, SM), the north end of The Muck 1/1 (LD), IRRA 1/7 (D&KP), with a high count of 6 MCWR 1/1 (JC). One **Gray Catbird** was observed at MCM 2/22 (LD). Single **Hermit Thrushes** were observed at HCL 1/26 and Clymer Auto Repair's wetland 2/25 (LD). Two **American Pipits** were seen from Kendrick Road, STFO 2/6 (LD).

Purple Finches were reported from 17 locations as one to 5 individuals, with a high count of 6 from Snyder Point Rd, WEL 2/21 (SM, m.ob.). Four **Red Crossbills** were reported from MCM 1/1 (LD), and

another was observed at Snyder Point Rd, WEWL 2/21 (SM). One **Pine Siskin** was observed at Roseville 12/6 (BS), and another 3 at Knapp 2/4 (D&KP). A **Lapland Longspur** was observed at Kendrick Road, STFO 2/6 (LD). **Snow Buntings** were reported from six locations: one Welsh Mountain Road in Blossburg 12/10 (DWI), 50 at Kendrick Road STFO 2/6 and Ferris Corner Road, 10 at Little Marsh 2/13 (LD), 50 at Pheasant Hill Road in WEL 1/30 (RS, SM), and 50 at Perry Road at WEL 1/31 (D&KP).

American Tree Sparrows were reported 85 times from 39 locations, mainly in low numbers of one to 8 each (m.ob.) with three high counts of 12 at MCM 2/22 (LD), 20 at a residence north of ASA 1/17 (JC), and 20 at Thornbottom Road, MBCE 1/31 (RM, SM). A single **Fox Sparrow** was seen at WEL 2/19 (JS). **White-crowned Sparrows** were seen with 6 at MCWR 1/1 (JC), 21 at Knapp 1/19 (D&KP), and at Jenkins Road in MAN 2 2/5 (PH). **White-throated Sparrows** were well reported from many locations over the county (m.ob.).

Eastern Towhees were reported as single birds from four locations: Roseville 2/23 (BS), Randall Road, 1/31 (MS), Stephenhouse Run Road 1/1, and Goodwin Road in MBCE 12/26 (LD). Two reports of single **Eastern Meadowlarks** were from HCL 12/26 and Scouten Hill Road in Whitneyville 1/25 (LD). **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported 13 times from 3 locations with 10 reports of one to 9 birds from a Marsh Cr. residence north of ASA 1/15-2/23 (JC), 2 at Knapp 2/24 (D&KP), and 2 from WEL 1/30 (RM, SM).

Observers: **Robert Snyder, P.O. Box 603, [158 Black Street], Howard, PA 16841, (814) 753-2629, birdphotoginpa@gmail.com**, Kiley Birgensmith, Dan Brauning, Lawrence Brown, Sr., Ken Cooper, John Corcoran, Gordon Dimmig, Lisa Doud, Joshua Emm, Dave Ferry, Mario Giazzon, Deborah Grove, Rich Hanlon, Patrick Heck, Linda Helt, Chad Kauffman, Noah Kauffman, Tim Lenz, Bret Martin, Edward Miles, Anne Miller, Robin Minnick, Sean Minnick, Susan Minnick (SuM), Mike Mitchell, Neal Paprocki, Dale and Karen Plumley, Kathy Riley, Debra Rittlemann, Marcie Shinn, Barbara Silverstein, Judith Somberger, Laura Steele, Joyce Tice, Gary Tyson, Drew Weber, Devin Welch (DWI), Matthew West, Karter Witmer, Pamela Zuchowski.

Union County

Locations: Buffalo Creek (BC), Dales Ridge Trail (DRT).

A flock of **Snow Geese** was near Mifflinburg 2/19 (AH). Ducks for the season included **Wood Duck, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon**, and **Green-winged Teal** on BC 2/27 (AH). The first **Hooded Mergansers** were at SGL 317 2/24 (TR). A **Ruffed Grouse** was flushed twice near Bear Run Rd 1/23 (DR).

Northern Harriers were reported numerous times with a high of 10 at SGL 317 on 2/8 (AH, TR). Three **Rough-legged Hawks** were around SGL 317, including 2 light morphs and 1 dark morph. They were first seen 1/30 and continued through 2/10. A highlight for the county was 2 **Peregrine Falcons**: one on powerlines off Hill School Rd on 12/23 (HH), and the other near Mifflinburg 2/13 (AH).

An **Eastern Phoebe** was braving the winter weather near SGL 317 on 1/26 (AH). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were seen a few times near BC. A single **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** near Lewisburg was also of note for this winter 2/19 (SK). The only warbler report for these months was a **Yellow-rumped Warbler** near Penn's Creek 2/18 (TR). Unusual for this time of year was a **Gray Catbird** at DRT 2/2. An early **Eastern Towhee** was near Lewisburg 2/27 (HH).

Sparrows of note for the season included 5 **White-crowned Sparrows** that wintered near Mifflinburg (AH). Not frequent for this time of year, a **Field Sparrow** was seen SGL 317 on 1/26 and 2/20 (AH), **American Tree Sparrows** were frequently observed in SGL 317.

Observers: **Andrew Hurst, andrewnerika@daystar.io, cell 717-580-3642**, Henry Heintzelman, Sabrina Kirby, Debra Rittelmann, Travis Rohrer.

Venango County

Locations: Allegheny River (AR), Allegheny River at Franklin (ARF),

Buttermilk Hill Nature Sanctuary (BHNS), Franklin area (FA), Kahle Lake (KL), Oil City area (OCA), Oil Creek State Park (OCSP), Two Mile Run Park (TMRP), Wyattville Pond (WP).

The season started off with a relatively mild December, and then winter hit. January & February were cold & snowy. The winter season had basically no winter invaders, and waterfowl that normally use the Allegheny River for the season were just not here.

Tundra Swans were seen through 12/31 (JS), and then 2/11 to the end of the season. Ducks were reported in small numbers, and even species normally fairly common with numbers well over 100 individuals, such as **Common Merganser** and **Common Goldeneye**, had only 10 or 15 individuals on a good day. Numbers listed are the high for the season. All ducks were seen on ARF unless otherwise noted: **Gadwall** until 12/10 and then from 2/12 (RS), one **American Wigeon** 2/10-11 (JS, JH), **American Black Duck** 12/18 and from 2/10 (JS), **Northern Pintails** with 4 at KL to 12/29 (JS) and AR from 2/7 (JS) with 8 at WP (JS), one **Canvasback** 2/10-13 (JS), 9 **Redheads** on 2/10 and seen until 2/13 (JS, JH, RS), **Ring-necked Duck** at KL to 12/18 (JS) and at ARF from 1/25 (m.ob.), 3 **Greater Scaup** from 1/25 (JH, RS), 7 **Lesser Scaup** (RS, JH), one **White-winged Scoter** 2/10-16 (JS, JH, RS), **Bufflehead** on 2/21 (JS), and **Common Goldeneye** from 1/25 with 16 on 2/10 (JH).

Wild Turkey are normally common but had only a few reports: 1/21, 2/22 and 2/27. Ruffed Grouse remain scarce with no reports for the season. **Killdeer** had only one sighting at KL 2/23 (JS). **Ring-billed Gulls** were observed at WP 12/10-12 (JS) and at KL 12/18 (RS). **Common Loons** were at KL to 12/4 and at BHNS with 26 fly-bys 12/12 (JS, KG). The only **Great Blue Heron** sighting was at AR 1/27 (RS, GE).

Turkey Vultures returned to OCA 2/20 (RS). A **Northern Harrier** was reported from KL 12/31 (JS). **Bald Eagles** continued to increase with reports all season. **Red-shouldered Hawks** were easily found from 1/27 to the end of the season. A **Short-eared Owl** was sighted on 12/10 (JS).

Belted Kingfishers were observed from 1/1 though the rest of the season (m.ob.). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was recorded at FA from 1/27 through the season (NB). A **Northern Flicker** was sighted at BHNS on 12/13-14 (KG, JS) and at OCSP 1/2 (KG, NB). **American Kestrels** were reported at KL from 12/15 (RS) through the season with 4 individuals on 12/29 (JS). A **Northern Shrike** was found at Barkeyville Fields 1/12 (RSt) and relocated 12/13-14 (JS, JH). It was re-found on 12/30 (RS), but just over the county line in *Butler*. **Common Ravens** have continued to increase with many records through the season.

The only **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was at OCSP 1/2 (NB, KG). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was seen near President 1/2 (JS, RS). **Brown Creeper** records have never been numerous; there were three this season, at BHNS 12/3 and 12/19 (JS, KG) and at FA 2/10 (NB). The only wren species observed was **Carolina Wren**, seen sporadically throughout the season.

Eastern Bluebirds were at TMRP 12/14 (RS), and then at FA most of the month of Jan (NB) and not at all in Feb. **Hermit Thrush** observations were at OCSP 1/2 (KG, NB, JS, RS) and at BHNS 1/21 (KG, JS). **American Robin** was sighted all season. **Cedar Waxwing** was also around all season with 100 at WR 12/28 (JS). **Purple Finch** was recorded at FA for all Jan and Feb (NB). **American Goldfinch** was reported at FA for Dec and Jan (NB), then at OCA but not until 2/28 (RS).

A single **Field Sparrow** was sighted at BHNS 1/1 (KG, JS). **American Tree Sparrow** was first seen for the season at TMRP 12/14 (RS) with only one other Dec report on 12/19, then multiple reports from 1/2 to the end of the season. **White-throated Sparrows** were observed all season with a high number of 13 at BHNS 1/29 (JS, KG). **Song Sparrows** had only two reports in Dec, on 12/9 and 12/13, but were seen all Jan and Feb in low numbers. **Red-winged Blackbird** returned from the south to FA 2/18 (NB). One **Brown-headed Cowbird** sighting was at FA 1/20 (NB).

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Warren County

Locations: Big 4 Road (B4), City of Warren (CW), Garland (GA), River Road in Starbrick (RR), Tidioute Trail (TT).

After a bizarrely warm December, this past winter returned to a *Warren* normal in terms of cold and plenty of snow. For the second year in a row, abundant cone crops attracted certain species of winter finches.

It was a poor winter for waterfowl in *Warren*: birds arrived later than the norm due to warm rainy weather, then the rapid freeze-up left little open water. The sole report of **Tundra Swans** was of 5 seen at GA 1/8 (TS). Three early **Wood Ducks** were seen at TT 2/27 (CW). **American Black Ducks** were sparse, with high counts of 6 seen at RR 1/22 (MS, SSc) and at TT 1/24 (KN). **Buffleheads** tend to be widespread where open water occurs, albeit in small numbers; the biggest group was 13 on the Allegheny R. in CW 12/18 (SG). A high of 12 **Hooded Mergansers** were spotted on RR 2/24 (TS). **Common Mergansers** are indeed common in *Warren*, although rarely as numerous as the 42 reported at RR 1/21 (EN, KN). Two **Red-breasted Mergansers** were spotted during the *Warren* CBC in CW (RL).

Wild Turkeys have been thriving in *Warren*, despite predation pressure from abundant fishers; the largest flock reported was 80 feeding on a manured field in GA 2/7 (DW, SHS). Four **Ruffed Grouse** feeding on road grit on Eccles Road 2/6 was noteworthy (SHS). While abundant throughout *Warren*, a total of 32 **Mourning Doves** at one backyard feeder in Sugar Grove 1/15 was unusual (SHS). Now a regular part of the local avifauna, 3 **Sandhill Cranes** flew over Hillside Acres 1/19 (EN).

Two immature-plumaged **Golden Eagles** were seen: one at TT 2/27 (CW), the other at Swede Hill 12/21 (WR). It is possible these were the same wintering bird, although game cameras on deer carcasses have revealed them to have become fairly common winter residents here. **Red-tailed Hawks** are by far the most frequently seen raptors in winter here, typically as singles or in pairs; 6 seen at RR 2/20 was unusual (SGz). After several years of no or few **Rough-legged Hawks** reported from *Warren*, this winter numerous birds were seen, with a max of 2 seen on North Street in Sugar Grove 2/7 (DW, SHS).

Rare in winter here, 2 **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were seen on B4 on 1/23 (TS). One of the highlights of the CBC this winter was 2 **Northern Flickers** spotted on B4 on 12/18 (AL). A **Merlin** was spotted in CW 12/1; once a strictly migratory species, Merlins have increasingly overwintered on their breeding grounds as they have adapted to human settlements with their abundant commensal House Sparrows and European Starlings.

A total of 7 **Golden-crowned Kinglets** foraged along the TT 12/5 (CW). Rare in *Warren* at any time, this winter 2 **Northern Mockingbirds** were found: one along B4 on the CBC (TS, AL, SHS), and the other foraging on multiflora rose in a farm field on Ridge Rd in Spring Creek Twp. 2/7 (DW, SHS). **Cedar Waxwings** also have remained over winter when sufficient fruit is available; of the various flocks seen, the largest was of 50 birds in Selkirk 1/3 (EN, KN).

Probably the most exciting find of the winter was 2 **Red Crossbills** at Hearts Content NA 1/27 (TS, DW); unfortunately, they did not appear to stay to nest as they did in neighboring *Forest* to the south or *Chautauqua* NY to the north. The most common wintering sparrow in *Warren* is the **American Tree Sparrow**; the high count this season was 23 on Ludwick Rd 1/22 (TS). Sheer determination -- and some judicious pishing -- pulled up both a **Swamp Sparrow** and a single **Rusty Blackbird** for the CBC at B4 on 12/18 (AL, TS, SHS).

Observers: **Scott H. Stoleson, 114 Sanders Rd, Sugar Grove, PA 16350, (814) 489-3734, stoleson@aol.com**, Sherry Griffiths, Silvia Grisez (SGz), Alejandra Lewandowski, Ruth Lundin, Elizabeth Nicholson, Ken Nicholson, Wendy Robbins, Matthew Schenck, Susan Schenck (SSc), Travis Suckow, Don Watts, Carole Winslow.

Washington County

Locations: AMD pond on Hahn Road (AMD), Cross Creek County Park (CC), Ginger Hill Ponds (GHP), Washington Reservoir #4 (R4).

Two major rarities, both potential county firsts if accepted by PORC, took the spotlight this season, a season which saw a few other lower-level rarities and notables as well. A **Snow Goose** was photographed at Ten Mile Creek CP 2/26 (JL). Also notable were 4 **Greater White-fronted Geese** on Parkview Road 1/23 (MJ), which represented the seventh record for the county and first since 2016. They were reported there again 2/3 (KI). Twenty **Tundra Swans** at the GHP 12/19 (JP, MJ, JF) were the only ones reported.

A spell of cold weather in late Jan brought a smattering of ducks (and birders) to AMD, a site that has not been birded much in the past few years. (The water at this site does not freeze even during the coldest of cold spells, and thus birding tends to get good when most other water in the area is locked up.) Among the reports from AMD generally from 1/17 to 2/20 were up to 5 **Gadwalls**, 2 **American Wigeons**, 2 **Green-winged Teals**, one **Canvasback**, 3 **Redheads**, 2 **Ring-necked Ducks**, and one **Lesser Scaup** (JF, MV, FK, et al.). Away from AMD, a few other highlights included 3 **American Black Ducks** at CC 1/10 (RI), 3 **Northern Pintail** at R4 on 12/14 (KS) and 3 at GHP 2/27 (JF, LF).

Additional duck highlight were 2 **Canvasbacks** at GHP 2/25 (JF, LF, JL), counts of 24 and 26 **Ring-necked Ducks** at GCP 12/19 and near Bentleyville, respectively, a great total of 180 **Ring-necked Ducks** at GCP 2/27 (JF, LF), **Greater Scaup** at Peters Lake 12/28 (JF), Millsboro 1/19 (JF), Fredericktown 2/8 (JF), and 14 at GHP 2/27 (JF, LF), a **Common Goldeneye** at Ten Mile Creek CP 2/67 (JL), and 49 **Hooded Mergansers** and 58 **Common Mergansers** near Bentleyville 12/19 (JP, MJ, JF). Another nice count of 36 **Common Mergansers** was made at Canonsburg L. 2/18 (GG), and a **Red-breasted Merganser** was at GHP 2/27 (JF, LF).

But all of these pedestrian duck highlights were completely overshadowed by a potential county first. A well-described female **Barrow's Goldeneye** was reported at R4 on 1/13 (SG) in the company of a **Common Goldeneye**. The bird was seen again 1/15 (SG) and distantly photographed—photos which show a bird with a bill almost entirely orange. As difficult as female goldeneyes can be, even ones with nearly completely orange bills, with the other field notes made on both days, the case for Barrow's was quite strong. The record was submitted for review by PORC.

Two **Wilson's Snipe** were found on Agape Rd. 1/30 (RT). A **Common Loon** was found at Fredericktown 2/27 (JL). Continuing a trend of increasing sightings west of the Laurel Highlands, 3 **Black Vultures** were seen soaring over California 2/14 (AT). One **Rough-legged Hawk** was noted near Muse on Ciaffoni Road 1/22 (MJ), and another was seen at Parkview Road 1/23 (MJ) and 1/29.

Many birders enjoyed as many as 4 **Short-eared Owls** through much of the winter on the Panhandle Trail near Midway, which now seems to be one of the more reliable spots for the species in the southwest corner of the state. **Merlin** was hard to find at the Washington Cemetery, but two reports were made nevertheless: 12/10 (ST) and 2/25 (RI). One was seen elsewhere in the city of Washington 1/8 and 2/28 (both LC). A **Peregrine Falcon** was seen again at the Speers rail bridge 2/12-24 (FK, AN). **Common Ravens** were common, which is about all that is left to say about the species in *Washington* anymore.

A few **Red-breasted Nuthatches** held on in five or six locations through much of the winter. Interesting were reports of **Hermit Thrush** at Peterswood Park 12/9 (GG, DG) and there again 1/7 (JF), and another near AMD seen a few times 1/4-1/30 (JF, RT, et al.). A **Gray Catbird** was also at Peterswood Park 2/20 (JF).

Rare for *Washington*, a **Lapland Longspur** was at Parkview Road 1/30 (RT). Interesting was an aggregation of 12 **Eastern Meadowlarks** at Ciaffoni Road 1/22 (MJ). The only report of **Rusty Blackbird** was at Parkview Road 2/5 (JF), but a week earlier there, the other major rarity of the season was reported: a male **Brewer's Blackbird** 1/30 (RT). The bird was again well-described, and PORC will review the record. Last but not least, a **Tennessee Warbler** was photographed in a suburban area of North Strabane Twp. 1/29 (JO), the first winter record in *Washington's* history.

Observers: **Geoff Malosh, 7762 Maumee Western Road, Maumee, OH 43537-9334, (412) 735-3128, pomarine@earthlink.net**, Lauren Conkle, Leslie Ferree, John Flannigan, Gigi Gerben, Sayre Greenfield, Deborah

Grove, Greg Grove, Kalan Ickes, Roy Ickes, Matthew Juskowich, Fred Kachmarik, Jeffrey Levers, Alyssa Nees, James Offhaus, Joe Papp, Kim Springer, Amy Taracido, Shannon Thompson, Ryan Tomazin, Mark Vass.

Wayne County

Waterfowl highlights included 2 **Lesser Scaup** at L. Ariel 1/3 (RJ) and at least 2 **Long-tailed Ducks** at L. Wallenpaupack 1/3-7 (CF, RK). A **Merlin** was reported near Beech Grove 12/4 (JH). Four **Snow Buntings** were observed near Hamlin 1/31 (RJ), and one was seen along Gills Hill Rd 2/12 (CF).

Observers: **Josh Jones**, unclechu76@gmail.com, Chris Fischer, John Harvey, Ryan Johnson, Rick Koval.

Westmoreland County

Locations: Bushy Run (BRN), Conemaugh River Lake/West Penn Trail Livermore (CRL), Crabtree Farm Area (CFA), Donegal Lake (DL), Kuehl Property-Murrysville (KP), Latrobe Reservoir, also known as Trout Run Reservoir (LR), Laughlin Farm Road (LFR), Ligonier (LIG), Ligonier Valley (LV), Loyalhanna Watershed Association property (LWA), Mannitto Golf Course (MGC), Rector (REC), St. Vincent Lake (SVL), Spruce Flats Bog (SFB), Westmoreland Heritage Trail: through MAWC property (WHT-BR), from Delmont to Trees Mill (WHT-D).

Two Christmas Bird Counts were conducted during the season: Bushy Run on 1/1 compiled by Steve Manns, and Rector on 12/18 compiled by Annie Lindsay. This effort provided for several reports of rare species. Eight Winter Raptor Survey routes were run during the season: six by Tom and Janet Kuehl, one by Sharon Gewecke, and one by Georgia Shalek and Mike Smith. A sighting that was certainly not in appropriate habitat by a non-birder provided for one of the six owl species reported for the season.

The only report of **Snow Goose** was of one in the Kiskiminetas R. near Leechburg 1/22 (MVT). Photographs taken at a small pond on Pizza Barn Road near Blairsville included a report of one **Ross's Goose** 2/21 (RC) with a "Confirmed by Merlin Photo App" notification. Two **Greater White-Fronted Geese** were first at MGC 1/1 (MH, RHi), and 2 were at a lakeside home 1/14 (TL). Two **Trumpeter Swans** were first reported at Mammoth Park 2/23-28 (SW, RB). **Tundra Swans** were reported during Jan: five at DL on 1/6 (JP, AB) and 4 on 1/16 (AM), 2 at WHT-BR 1/7 (KB) and 26 at CRL 1/8 (JLK, TK, MM). The only report of **Northern Shovelers** was of 3 at SVL 1/19 (RC). **Gadwall** was reported at many locations in modest numbers, with SVL being most productive beginning with one on 2/8 (RC) and continuing to the end of the season with 3 on 2/28 (RB, AS). With a few reports for the season, high count was of 6 **American Wigeon** at LR 1/15 (AM).

The most productive locations for **American Black Duck** were LR, where the season high count was of 24 on 12/12 (AL), and at SVL, never more than 10; however, reports were submitted from 12/9 (JK) to 2/28 when 6 were reported (RB, AS). The high count of modest reporting for **Northern Pintail** was of 8 at MGC 1/1 (RH, SM). **Green-winged Teal** had the earliest report of one SVL 2/1 (JK), and the latest reports were both on 2/26 with 2 at SVL (AH) and 2 at DL (EH). Most **Redhead** reports were at SVL, the earliest of one 2/16 (JK) and on many days with 2 to 2/28 (RB).

Four **Redheads** were at LR on 1/10 (PF). **Redheads** were reported at WHT-BR by KB with 3 on 2/25 and 6 on 2/27. For **Ring-necked Ducks**, reports were not extensive and no higher counts than 22 at MGC 1/8 (PF). The high count was of 16 **Lesser Scaup** at ESL 2/19 (JK). Found in the early morning as part of the REC CBC was one **Surf Scoter** at DL 12/18 (EH, MB, LS, DW). A return visit to DL in the afternoon provided for one of only two reports of the season for one **Common Goldeneye** (EH, AL), which apparently continued to 12/20 (MH, RHi). The other **Common Goldeneye** was of one at MGC 1/1 (RH, SM). As expected, **Hooded Merganser** and **Common Merganser** were widely reported; of significance were 150 **Common Mergansers** at WHT-BR 12/16 (KB). The

only **Red-breasted Merganser** was one at DL for the 12/18 REC CBC (EH et al). The season high count for **Ruddy Duck** was of 29 at LR 12/12 (AL).

Some crazy-large flocks of **Wild Turkey** seen in *Westmoreland* included 47 on Quarry Road in the CFA 12/29 (JLK, TK) that included 5 displaying toms; another large gathering was of 115 on Loyalhanna Dam Road 1/15 (JLK, TK, MM). Yeah! A **Ruffed Grouse** was in the Laurel Summit area for the 12/18 REC CBC (AB, JK). There was modest reporting of the normally common **Pied-billed Grebe** and just two reports for **Horned Grebe** with one at DL near REC on the 12/18 CBC (EH, MB, LS, DW) and one at ESL 1/15 (AM).

The **American Coot** reports with the best location was ESL with a high count of 5 on 1/10 (PF). Staying out on the West Penn Trail into the early evening on 2/21 was productive as it provided a look at 4 displaying **American Woodcocks** (DL). **Wilson's Snipe** were only reported in *Westmoreland* at the reliable Helen Road seep in the CFA, with the high count of 7 on 1/8 (JLK, TK, MM). High counts of 60 **Ring-billed Gulls** and 25 **Herring Gulls** were at Allegheny R. Lock & Dam #4 at Natrona 1/15 (RB). There was only one report of one **Common Loon** at Tubmill Res. 1/13 (AM).

Many reports of **Black Vultures** in the LV this season included 18 on Two Mile Run Road 12/18 (LD). There was more reporting of **Turkey Vultures**; it was interesting to see a visible pattern on the eBird map that showed a concentration of reports in the LV, and also just west of Chestnut Ridge from the *Indiana* line near Blairsville in the north to Kecksburg to the south. There were 24 **Turkey Vultures** tallied on the running of the LV WRS route on 2/1 (JLK, TK). **Northern Harrier** was widely reported. Productive locations were the CFA and LFR area, and 6 were tallied on the WRS routes. As expected, fewer **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were seen than **Cooper's Hawks**, however many scattered reports for these accipiter species included a report of one of each near Duff Park made for a walk of the WHT through Murrysville 12/10 (JLK, TK). This Observer is not going to grow tired of having many and well-scattered reports for **Bald Eagles**, with a relatively subdued concentration at LD this winter, although nice that the peak day of 18 Bald Eagles at the Dam, along the Creek and at the top of the hill was well timed for a running of a WRS Route 1/14 (JLK, TK, MM). Away from a waterway, several deer carcasses dumped along Kemp Road in the CFA provided for a gathering of 7 Bald Eagles 1/29 (JLK, TK).

A corridor from Delmont, through Export, and north to Mamont is particularly productive for **Red-shouldered Hawks**, documented this season with numerous reports at the KP and with a pair first seen at Brinker's Farm 12/23 that provided for a new location in this area this season. The abundance of **Red-tailed Hawks** is well documented by the results of the WRS Routes: a total of 150 tallied that calculated out to 0.35 per mile. **Rough-legged Hawks** were found primarily on or near LFR, with one light morph that was first reported 2/6 (JLK, TK) and then reports of 2 made 2/16 (JK) and 2/20 (RC). In the same general area, one was reported on Pizza Barn Road 2/13 (SM).

Eastern Screech-Owl was reported on the Westmoreland Heritage Trail from Sarah Steel Trailhead to Saltsburg 12/26 and 1/16 (KB). One **Great Horned Owl** was on the WHT-D 12/15 (KB), and at a reliable location for this species 2 were on a nocturnal eBird Checklist for the Morosini Reserve 1/21 (AB, DB). **Barred Owl** was reported just at NMP 12/23 (MVT) and at Love Hollow-LIG location 1/21 and 1/24 (AM). The 12/18 REC CBC had a productive morning (AL et al): an incredible 17 Eastern Screech-owls, 3 **Barred Owls**, 3 **Great Horned Owls** and one **Saw-whet Owl**. The only **Short-eared-Owl** for the season was found on Pizza Barn Road 2/13 (SM).

I received this remarkable report from County eBird Reviewer Mike Fialkovich on 1/30: "Hi Tom, Just for your records, I received a photo on Friday (1/29) from a retired co-worker. I was astonished to see it was a **Long-eared Owl!** Even more astonishing, it was photographed sitting on a storage container at the Irwin Walmart, next to the Auto Service Center. The container is up against the building and the bird was perched on one corner of it. My co-worker said she photographed it last Thursday (1/27). I searched for it Friday on the way home from work and again this morning, but it wasn't there. I didn't see any buildup of droppings so it must have only been there for a short time. It certainly wasn't a suitable roost site. I didn't make it public due to disturbance, but I don't think it's there anymore anyway. I will periodically check. Mike"

There were many reports of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** at both higher and lower elevations this season. Reliable at the Penguin Court location near LIG, 5 of the resident **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were tallied for the REC CBC 12/18 (AM). One **Merlin** was seen at a home in Delmont on 12/9 (KB). **Merlin** was also tallied for the 12/18 REC CBC with one on the LV Trail at Friendship Park in LIG (MM, CN). The only report of **Peregrine Falcon** was of one that provided a long and close look at the corner of Kemp and Shady Roads in the CFA 1/30 (MJS).

There were many well-scattered reports of **Common Raven** in *Westmoreland*. A coincidence? On 12/4, just one day before the Pittsburgh Steelers and Baltimore Ravens football game, a Common Raven was heard calling in the early morning at the KP, and then a pair was seen in the afternoon soaring with a Red-shouldered Hawk in downtown Export. The CFA was productive for **Horned Lark** as estimated counts of 100 or more were on Bardine's/Stevens Road 1/30 (MM, MJS).

As expected, one **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was at the LV Trail 12/18 (MM, CN), and **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were well scattered. Although not an irruption year, it was good to see many reports for **Red-breasted Nuthatch**; of note are 5 in the Laurel Summit area 12/18 (AB et al), 3 at home feeders in Delmont 12/23 and 1/26 (KB), and many reports by observers birding SFB. There were many reports of **Brown Creeper**. Birding on bike trails provided reporting of **Winter Wren**, including one on the WHT-D 12/1 (KB, PF) and one at CRL 2/21 (DL).

Late Jan provided for a modest rush of reports of **Hermit Thrush**: one visited the feeders at Bushy Run SP on 1/27 and 1/30 (MJS), one visited the Winterberry Holly and Choke Cherry bushes at the KP 1/29 (JLK, TK), 2 were near a seep on the WHT-BR 1/30 (KB, TK), and one was a daily feeder-visitor at a home near Scottdale 1/31 (MA). A good fruit year provided for substantial reports for **American Robin**, such as the 30 feasting on grapes on LFR 1/22 (JLK, TK, MM). Seeps were also productive for American Robin this winter – as an example an estimated 30 were at one on the WHT-BR on 1/20 (TK). Given the abundance of winter fruits and berries, CBC effort provided for several **Gray Catbirds**; for the 1/1 BRN CBC there were 2 in the CFA (MM) and one at Keystone SP (AL), and for the 12/18 REC CBC one just north of Stahlstown (LD).

Cedar Waxwing, another berry/fruit-eater, was tallied on both CBCs and several larger flocks included a substantial 73 on Piper Road just northeast of LIG 12/16 (AM). On McKelvey Road, there were 2 **Purple Finches** (AM). **Red Crossbills** were first found on the 12/18 REC CBC (AB et al) with 7 in the Laurel Summit Area. That would be the high as roughly a dozen other reports in the area, on REC-Edie Road and at SFB, topped out at 5, with a final report of 4 on REC-Edie Road 1/3 (RB).

The BRN CBC found one **Chipping Sparrow** for the Tally Board at Walker Road 1/1 (TM et al). **Field Sparrow** also made the 1/1 BRN CBC at 3 locations (RH, SM, ph.): one on White Thorn Road, 2 on MGC, and 4 on Bush Road. **Field Sparrows** had 21 tallied for the 12/18 REC CBC and a report of 5 at CRL 2/21 (DL). Although reporting was quite modest for the season, **American Tree Sparrow** was tallied on both CBCs. **Fox Sparrow** was rare this season; of the several reports was one on White Thorn Road 1/1 (RH, SM) and 2 on WHT-D 2/4 (KB). The CFA provided several reports of **White-crowned Sparrow** and, at the LFR farm/grassland area, there were 7 on 1/22 (JLK, TK, MM).

Unusual for the season, one **Vesper Sparrow** was seen on the LV Trail 1/6 (EM); a detailed description of the bird was provided to Annie Lindsay, the Powdermill Nature Reserve Banding Program Manager. Perhaps from an abundance of winter fruit, many reports of **Eastern Towhee** included one at the CFA for the 1/1 BRN CBC (MM) and one on Bush Road (RH, SM). For the REC CBC, there were 6 at the grounds of the LWA in LIG 12/18 (MM, CN).

Eastern Meadowlark was surprisingly reported at several locations. The first was one at the LV Trail 12/31 (AL). Found during a WRS Route, 3 were near Willowbrook Country Club 1/19. The CFA provided for several late Jan reports, including 13 Eastern Meadowlarks in a field adjacent to Bardine's Country Smokehouse 1/21 (ME). A report for **Brown-headed Cowbirds** included 4 on Helen Road in the Crabtree area 1/1 (MH, RHi). That species was part of quite a showing of black birds at DL including an estimated 600 **Red-winged Blackbirds**, 5 **Brown-headed Cowbirds**, 2 **Rusty Blackbirds** and 6 **Common Grackles** 2/26 (EH). It was good to have other reports for **Rusty Blackbirds** with one at the LV Trail 12/18

(MM, CN), one on Horner Road near Scottdale 1/17 (AB, DB), and 3 on the WHT-BR 1/28 (KB).

It was exciting to have a warbler other than Yellow-rumped Warbler for a Western Pennsylvania CBC, as was the case for the REC CBC, as described for the LWA in LIG of one **Palm Warbler** "Western" 12/18 (MM, CN): drab body with light supercilium, bright yellow undertail coverts and rusty cap. Tail wagging as it foraged along fencerow with myrtle warblers." For good measure there were 12 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** on that Checklist. The BRN CBC followed suit with one **Pine Warbler** at Keystone SP 1/1 (AL).

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Wyoming County

Locations: Brown's Farm (BF), Lake Carey (LC), Lake Winola (LW), Oxbow Lake (OL), Sordini's Farm (SF), Tunkhannock (TUN).

Birders reported 84 species in *Wyoming* this winter season, the highest number in the last 15 years of eBird. I believe this to be the result of the growing use of eBird reporting for the county. The Christmas Bird Count produced the highest species count, 72, since 2016. By at least these measures this winter was a good one for those who bird *Wyoming*.

The 12/19 CBC produced a report of 60 **Snow Geese** flying over LW (JH, BT). Other Snow Goose reports included 42 birds over the river at Mehoopany 12/19 (RK and SG), and a single bird near Factoryville 2/12 (SB). One rare report is that of a single **Cackling Goose**, a species found during the CBC on OL 12/19 (RK, SG). This is the first record of this species that I'm aware of, since May of 2001. That same team identified 3 of **Graylag Goose x Canada Goose** (hybrid) on LC during that count (RK, SG). A tip of the hat to those two birders for their work, as many of us have simply ignored the gaggle of mixed-heritage geese that have populated the flow pond of LC.

Ring-necked Duck has been a common visitor to *Wyoming* during migration, and there were several reports of their presence: 14 at OL 12/2 (JD), 5 at OL 12/5 (RK), 5 at OL 12/7 (MC), 6 at OL 6/19 (RK, SG), and 23 at Scavazzo's Pond 12/19 (RK). Two **Lesser Scaup**, an uncommon record, were discovered at OL during the 12/19 CBC (RK, SG). Another common visitor has been **Bufflehead**, usually in small numbers. Birders presented a number of records during this winter season: 2 at LW 12/4 (SP), a single at LC 12/12 (MC), 2 during the CBC at Creamery Pond at Aldovin 12/19 (RK, SG), 2 at LC 12/30 (JD), and 4 at LW 2/4 (SP). Finally, among ducks, a single **Common Goldeneye** was recorded at LC during the CBC (RK, SG).

Pied-billed Grebe was identified during the BBA as a possible breeder in *Wyoming*, and I know of no further information to upgrade, or even confirm that classification. I do know it as a through-migrator usually reported in small numbers. Single birds were at SF, reported 12/2 (RK) and 12/12 (DL, DT).

Among non-resident hawks and eagles, several were recorded during the period. There were two records of a single **Golden Eagle**, (which I suspect have been around in winter and migration more than has been reported), one in the air just south of TUN 12/19 (RK, SG), and one over the TUN airport 1/22 (AL). Single **Rough-legged Hawks** were recorded at BF 1/30 (JB), at BF 2/6 (MC) and over Lazybrook Park 2/19 (JE).

Herring Gull is not a usual report for *Wyoming*, but 64 were recorded at LW 12/31 (SB), possibly having wandered to *Wyoming* from landfills in adjacent counties. A single **Short-eared Owl** made an appearance just north of LC 12/19 (RK and SG) and again nearby 12/29 (RK, WK). This is a species rarely recorded in *Wyoming*, and most of us have gone to a winter hangout in an adjacent county for good looks these.

A few of us got great looks at another species rarely reported from Wyoming: **Red-headed Woodpecker**. A single bird was in the woods on the north end of LC calling and foraging 1/19-1/22 (MC, RK, WK, SP, JD). Two records of **Merlin** were reported: a single bird over downtown TUN 12/3 (TB) and another at KW 2/27 (BG, B&KH).

Several birders reported **Horned Lark** during this winter, a species usually seen this time of year: 2 birds at SF 12/2 and 3 birds there 12/9 (RK); 3 at BF 12/16 (RK), 8 along Maynard Hill Road in Mehoopany 12/19 (RK, SG), 6 at BF 12/29 (RK, WK), and a flock of 45 at BF 2/5 (MC).

Ruby-crowned Kinglets, regular winter visitors, were reported at three locations: one showed up just south of TUN 1/15 (BM), another was on the CBC at LC 12/19 (RK, SG), and 3 were found along Poppy Road near Falls (SP). A single **American Pipit** was recorded at the airport in TUN 1/23 (JDB). A flock of 43 **Pine Siskins** visited a bird feeder during a snow squall in Noxen 2/19 (Anon.), an only record. Finally, 4 **Fox Sparrows** appeared near Lovelton on 2/20 (RV), and a single Fox Sparrow was found in Mehoopany during the CBC 12/19 (RK, SG).

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York County

Locations: Codorus State Park (CSP), Gifford Pinchot State Park (GPSP), Hopewell Twp Park (HTP), Long Arm Reservoir (LAR), Sheppard-Myers Res (SMR), Southern Lancaster County Christmas Bird Count (SLCBC), York Christmas Bird Count (YCBC), York Springs Christmas Bird Count (YSCBC).

The reporting of 123 species is a new winter-period high for the county. The 12/18 YCBC produced a lower-than-normal 72 species while the 12/29 YSCBC's 63 species in the York portion was on the high side. The county's small portion of the 12/19 SLCBC had limited variety but had one of the period's highlights of **Broad-winged Hawk**. Other notable species included **Trumpeter Swan**, **Least Sandpiper**, **Iceland Gull**, **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, **Marsh Wren**, **Lincoln's Sparrow**, and **Orange-crowned Warbler**.

A **Cackling Goose** was noted in a flyover at HTP 1/2 (BR). **Mute Swan** was absent at the traditional Spring Grove site, but up to 3 were at four other sites 12/31 (DA) and 2/1-11 (CB, EB, BPo, BR, AS). A pair of **Trumpeter Swans** at GPSP 2/26-28 (m.ob.) proved a challenging identification call. **Northern Shoveler** sightings were limited to a trio at Long Level 2/17 (BR) and a single at CSP 2/21 (JP). Best of the five sites reporting **American Wigeon** was GPSP 2/19-28 (m.ob.) with up to 36 birds. Eight sites reporting **American Black Duck** were led by a 14 count at LAR 2/7 (AS). A nice 20 count of **Northern Pintail** came from CSP 2/21 (JP).

An impressive flock count of 44 **Redheads** were at CSP 2/1 (W&NW). **Greater Scaup** high count was 16 at CSP 2/26 (EV), while GPSP held up to 12 **Lesser Scaup** 1/4-2/27 (m.ob.). Four sites reporting **Common Goldeneye** 1/8-2/28 (m.ob.) was on the high side as was the high count of eight at CSP 2/1 (W&NW). A **Red-breasted Merganser** at LAR 2/8 (CB) produced the only report. Unlike neighboring *Adams* which had no grebe species reports, York had reporting throughout the period from four sites each for **Pied-billed Grebe** and **Horned Grebe** (m.ob.).

A **Ring-necked Pheasant** was along Trinity Rd 12/22 (BR), and the YSCBC tallied six birds. High count of 15 sites reporting **Wild Turkey** was a consistent 40 count along Bethel's Church Rd 2/9-27 (BH). Remarkably, after the county's first ever Jan report for **Least Sandpiper** last winter, it was repeated this year with a photographed pair at SMR 1/4 (BR). An **American Woodcock** was at CSP 12/26 (EV). The more expected timeframe of late Feb produced a pair at GPSP 2/21 (DC) and a trio in Dover Twp 2/27 (DC). A **Wilson's Snipe** was at SMR 1/23 (EV) and up to

3 were at HTP 2/21-25 (DF, BR). Four **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at CSP 12/1 (BR) followed by a later single 1/29 (DA).

The Riddle Rd landfill is the spot for those with the patience and abilities to sort out the various gull species that visit. As an example, a 1/5 visit produced an estimated 5000 **Ring-billed Gulls**, up to 500 **Herring Gulls**, a county-rarity **Iceland Gull**, an uncommon-for-the-county **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, and 20 **Great Black-backed Gulls** (SS). Herrings were also found at three other off-river sites: CSP, GPSP, Lakes Redman/Williams 1/31-2/27 (m.ob.). **Double-crested Cormorants** were found in all months.

The adult **Broad-winged Hawk** was soaring with three **Black Vulture** during the SLCBC (RP, SW, et al) and to this compiler's knowledge is a first-ever winter report for the county. It is appropriate that this notable event would be witnessed and reported by Randy Phillips, a long time Broad-winged Hawk fan and counter at Rocky Ridge Hawk Watch. A **Rough-legged Hawk** was flying over GPSP 2/22 (KA). **Short-eared Owl** reporting was limited to a max of 2 birds at HTP 12/12-2/27 (m.ob.), while its frequent but not always cordial companion **Northern Harrier** had a high count of 4 at HTP 1/25 (CM).

Ten sites reporting **Red-headed Woodpeckers** reflected a decent level of overwintering with HTP holding up to 4 birds all period (m.ob.). Nine sites reporting **Merlins** were a record reporting frequency (m.ob.), while four sites reporting **Peregrine Falcons** were within normal range (DA, BR, SS). Unusual was **Eastern Phoebe** being found in all months while being seen at four sites. Ten sites reporting **Horned Larks** were led by a 250 count in the Collinsville area 1/8 (DA).

Red-breasted Nuthatch reporting came from 12 sites (m.ob.). Cattails at Nixon C.P. held at least one **Marsh Wren** 2/20 (NH). Six reports of **Gray Catbirds** (m.ob.) covered the period. **Brown Thrasher** reports came from Red Lion 12/11 (KL), Nixon C.P. 1/12 (SH), and York 1/28 (AP). **American Pipits** enjoyed strong reporting with 10 sites holding birds, and Pinchtown Rd produced a 100 count 12/27 (CB).

Purple Finch reporting came from 14 sites with a pedestrian high count of 3. **Pine Siskin** reports were limited to a pair at CSP 1/3 (CE), one at Airville 2/18 (CT), and 2 at Jacobus 2/19 (JS). Always a winter period hopeful for birders, a single **Lapland Longspur** was in the Collinsville area 1/8 (DA).

Chipping Sparrows were Dec finds at HTP 12/15 (BR) and 4 were on the YCBC. Five sites reported **Savannah Sparrows** with the YSCBC producing the high count of 6. A great find, a **Lincoln's Sparrow**, was in the Sunnyside Rd area during the YCBC (DWi, et al). **Swamp Sparrow** was well reported with SGL 242 producing a 12/26 (RK) high count of 8 birds.

Up to 4 **Eastern Meadowlarks** were at LAR 12/14-2/12 (DA, EV), while HTP held them all period with a 34 count 1/22 (W&NW). **Red-winged Blackbird**, **Brown-headed Cowbird**, and **Common Grackle** were found all period. Six sites reported **Rusty Blackbird** and a strong 35 count came from Pinchtown Rd 1/7 (DA). LR held a single **Pine Warbler** 2/16 (CK). Exceedingly rare in the county, even in migration, an **Orange-crowned Warbler** was nicely photographed 12/11 (DH) just north of Rt 30 in a brushy area along the Codorus Cr. This appears to be the first winter-period report for the county.

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Northern Shoveler at Trout Pond Park, Lycoming 22 February.
(Mike Anderson)



White-winged Scoter at Franklin, Venango 12 February,
(Jeffrey Hall)

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

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

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For articles, the Microsoft Office suite (any version) is preferred; however we will accept any popularly used format, or plain text. Please email written materials in an attached document in its original source format (i.e., no PDF files, please).

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IN FOCUS – Winter 2022 – Uncommon Waterfowl



A rare hybrid **Hooded x Common Merganser** spent a few days (here 30 January) on the Susquehanna River at Williamsport, *Lycoming*. (Bobby Brown)



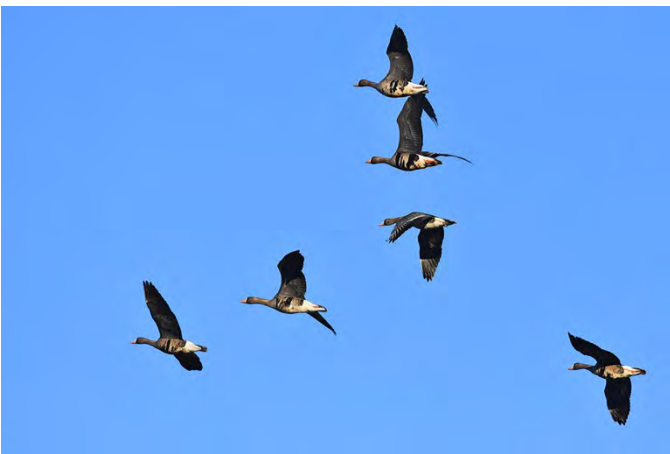
Snow x Canada Goose hybrid at East Allen Twp., *Northampton* 23 December. (Dave DeReamus)



Ross's Goose at Bunker Hill Pond in Big Valley, *Mifflin* 31 December; first county record. (Jay Zook)



Blue morph **Snow Goose** at Gettysburg College, *Adams* 19 January. (Andy Wilson)



Six **Greater White-fronted Geese** at Centre Furnace Pond near State College, *Centre* 20-21 (here 20) February. (Kazumi Ohira)



This **Barnacle Goose** was a big attraction at Westtown Lake, *Chester* 11-15 (here 14) December. (Al Guarente)