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Cover: **Tundra Bean Goose** was a species not highly rated on anyone's radar as the next new species for Pennsylvania, but there it was, in *Media, Delaware* 16-20 (here 16) December, and in *Philadelphia* in January. Given its rarity in North America, it is quite possible that reports of this species in Ottawa in November 2020 and Albany, New York in March 2021 may have been of this same individual. (*Barry Blust*)

PSO fall meeting will be virtual

In case you missed it - As announced in the most recent *Pileated* newsletter, the Board of Directors of PSO decided against having an in-person meeting again this fall, thanks to still lingering uncertainties of the COVID pandemic. However, the Board did decide to have a virtual meeting, at a time yet to be determined in September. This will include at least one featured speaker and a business meeting. Details are still being worked-out and should be available in the next *Pileated*.

I imagine many PSO members have by now participated in virtual online meetings. My own local organizations, State College Bird Club and Juniata Valley Audubon Society, have held "Zoom" meetings throughout the past year. I was a bit skeptical at first of well these would be received, but in fact they have worked well. The State College Bird Club meetings have been at least as well "attended" as were the traditional in-person meetings of recent years. Interesting, and encouraging, was that there many people joining our Zoom meetings who we seldom or never saw at "real" meetings previously. And there were a few from well outside of central Pennsylvania. I have also attended ZOOM meetings for the PSO Board of Directors, PORC, Hawk Mt., and two-three post-CBC meetings" gatherings". When life does return to normal, and in-person meetings are again deemed safe, I suspect some organizations may choose to run hybrid meetings - in-person but also in real time on-line.

New species in Pennsylvania

In the last issue of *Pennsylvania Birds*, we ran an article which revealed results of a poll of 32 Pennsylvania birders who each predicted the **next ten new species** to be found in the state. Since the call for submissions closed last fall, two new species have been found, one already accepted already by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (PORC) vote and the other pending but essentially certain to be accepted when voted on by PORC. Interestingly, the two species represent the two extreme outcomes in our polling of the next ten new species.

One of the new species is **Neotropical Cormorant**, seen by many in April this year in *Lycoming* and well-documented, though

not officially voted on yet by PORC. This species was number one in the vote tally of the predicted next ten new species poll. In fact, the bird was found well after completion of the article, but before the issue of *Pennsylvania Birds* had been mailed to members. On the other hand, the species on the cover of this issue, already accepted by PORC, received ZERO votes – the **Tundra Bean Goose** in December in *Delaware* and *Philadelphia*.

In addition, two more new species have been added recently. A **Pacific Golden Plover**, found last July in *Dauphin*, went through two rounds of voting and was accepted on the second vote after submission of additional documentation to PORC. A **Brewer's Sparrow** (on the cover of the fall issue) was found shortly after our polling started. These two species were precluded from the voting.

What will be next? Second place in the voting was Bell's Vireo, a species that breeds in neighboring Ohio, and almost certainly occasionally wanders into western Pennsylvania, going unnoticed. One poll participant predicted a Bell's Vireo will first be found in the state in the mist nest at Powdermill's banding station.

Information on the activities of PORC, including recent voting results, a list of 33 species added to the state list since 2004, links to recent submissions, and more, is available at <http://pabirds.org/records/> at the PSO website. The current state list stands at 438 accepted species, with the Neotropic Cormorant yet to be added, plus nine additional Provisional species (accepted by sight record only).

Compiler news

One compiler retirement is effective after this issue of *Pennsylvania Birds*. **Dave Gobert** will step down as *Cambria* compiler, to be succeeded by **Tina Alianiello**. We thank Dave for his long service to the journal; he began writing season summaries in 2003.

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

County compilers: **Phil Keener** (Adams, York), **Mike Fialkovich** (Allegheny, Fayette), **Marjorie Van Tassel** (Armstrong), **Geoff Malosh** (Beaver, Lawrence, Washington), **Laura and Mike Jackson** (Bedford), **Rudy**

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Correction: In the previous issue, the photo on page 205 of a Boat-tailed Grackle by Barry Blust was taken in Ocean City, New Jersey (not in Md.).

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Can Nest Boxes be used to Effectively Manage Northern Saw-whet Owls in the Allegheny National Forest?

Joseph M. Elias and Scott H. Stoleson

Abstract. – Most Pennsylvanians have seen the older version of the state’s conservation license plate that features the Northern Saw-whet Owl (or NSWO). However, far fewer have seen them in the wild, and the little owl remains one of the most mysterious of Pennsylvania’s birds. To better understand NSWO breeding biology, John Fedak, a science teacher in the Warren County school district and a Saw-whet bander, installed owl boxes throughout the Allegheny National Forest (ANF). After 9 years (2011-2020), our boxes revealed seemingly no use by any owls. To understand why the boxes remained unused, we sought to answer two questions: were there Saw-whets in the area surrounding our boxes, and if there were, why did they seem to be neglecting human-made cavities? We used standardized playback surveys to determine if owls were present around our boxes and tree cavity surveys within a 50 m radius of each box to quantify suitable nesting opportunities. Our surveys revealed that suitable cavities are abundant in the ANF near nest box locations and that cavities were predominantly in beech trees, likely due to recent top killing of this species by beech bark disease complex, which created ample resources for excavating woodpeckers. We suggest that management projects involving hole-nesting species should always include assessing cavity abundance as an essential first step before implementing nest boxes.

Introduction

Northern Saw-whet Owls

Aegolius acadicus, better known as the Northern Saw-whet Owl, is a small predatory bird in the Strigidae family. Saw-whet Owls have an average length of 45-53 inches and a wingspan ranging from 42-48 inches (Sibley 2000). Adult Saw-whets are brown with soft streaks on their underparts and have a characteristic lack of ear tufts (Peterson, 2002). The song of the Northern Saw-whet is described as a soft toot sound often repeated: *toot-toot-toot-toot*. Close relatives of the Saw-whet include the Eastern Screech Owl (*Megascops asio*). Saw-whets favor extensive coniferous forests in the United States but are not limited to these forests. While once thought to be an obligate coniferous species, our increasing knowledge of the species revealed Saw-whets to be present in hardwood habitats as well (McCormick 2014).

Saw-whet Owl’s nest between March and July, with the bulk occurring in April to late June; Saw-whets will remain vocal well into August (McWilliams and Brauning, 2000). The Northern Saw-whet Owl is a hole-nesting species and may build nests in old woodpecker holes and other cavities not of woodpecker origin (Harrison 1975). Additionally, Saw-whets are known to accept nest boxes for nesting (Rasmussen et al. 2020).

Pennsylvania Distribution

Northern Saw-whet Owls are exceptionally elusive, and their distribution has been historically misunderstood in Pennsylvania. Once thought to be only a rare or accidental breeder in the state, the volunteer-based “toot route” project developed by Doug Gross revealed Saw-whets to be much more common and widespread than expected (Gross 2000). The “toot route” protocol was incorporated into the special nocturnal surveys for all owl species for the second Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA) project, and showed Saw-whets to be concentrated in more northern and higher elevation areas of Pennsylvania (McWilliams and Brauning 2000, Weidensaul 2012).

We now know that Northern Saw-whet Owls commonly occur in northern Pennsylvania from a combination of efforts of the BBA surveys and efforts of numerous banders associated with Project OwlNet. At the time of our study, we did not know where

specifically Saw-whets live or their needs in Pennsylvania’s forest.

Allegheny National Forest Description

Established in 1923 by the U.S Forest Service, the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) lies in the Allegheny High Plateau in northwestern Pennsylvania. Habitat in the ANF is dominated by black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), eastern hemlocks (*Tsuga canadensis*), red and sugar maple (*Acer rubrum*, *A. saccharum*), and American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*). Scattered in our field sites are lesser amounts of cucumbertree (*Magnolia acuminata*), black and yellow birch (*Betula lenta*, *B. alleghaniensis*), tuliptree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), and bigtooth aspen (*Populus grandidentata*).

Beech bark disease complex has significantly impacted Pennsylvania beech populations in past years, which will change the ANF composition in the future. Beech bark disease complex is caused by an exotic scale insect (*Cryptococcus fagisuga*) and native fungal pathogens *Nectria ochroleuca* and *N. galligena*, as well as the non-native *N. coccinea* (Witter et al. 2004). During the 1990s and early 2000s, the killing front of beech bark complex swept through Pennsylvania, leaving mature beech trees top-killed or dying (Fajvan, Hillem, and Turcotte 2016). This event altered the ANF’s forest floor into dense thickets of root suckers (“beech brush”: Cale et al. 2013) brought on as a response to dying mature beeches. The remaining areas without beech brush tend to be open understories dominated by ferns.

Methods

Nest Box Project

In 2011, John Fedak and a Warren School District shop teacher received a grant for nest box supplies that followed specifications for Northern Saw-whet Owls (Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, 2019). A total of 16 boxes were attached 4 - 5 m above ground on mature trees (90-110 yr) along four transects on the ANF. Boxes were placed within 50 m of a stream and spaced a half-mile or more apart (>800 m). Through the nest box project, Fedak hoped to better understand Saw-whets’ breeding biology by providing access to nests.

In 2012 the nest boxes showed no use, and due to logistical issues, remained unchecked for eight more years. In 2020, we relocated 11 of the 16 next boxes and checked for signs of use. We considered indications of owl use to be the presence of feathers, feces, pellets, prey remains, or general wear-and-tear of the box opening caused by frequent use. We defined small mammal use as presence of globe-shaped nests made of leaves (squirrel) or grass (mice). Of the 11 boxes, we found no indications of Saw-whet use; three of the 11 boxes did show use by small mammals, likely mice (*Peromyscus sp.*) and Southern Flying Squirrel (*Glaucomys volans L.*) based on nest size.

We found the absence of nest box use to be surprising. Due to extensive work by Pennsylvania’s owl banders and surveyors, we know these nocturnal animals are breeding across the northern part state, but this raises the question: why were the nest boxes unused? We hypothesized that natural cavities could be in such an abundance that there was no need for Saw-whets to use human-made boxes. Alternatively, because Saw-whets are known to exhibit low site fidelity and that breeding populations vary with prey abundance (Rasmussen et al. 2020), their presence during the Breeding Bird Atlas does not necessarily indicate current presence.



Figure 1 Northern Saw-whet owl nest box.

Cavity Surveys

To test our hypotheses, we assessed natural cavity occurrence in a 50 m radius around each of the 11 nest boxes. We recorded cavities as naturally produced or created by woodpeckers. If woodpecker-produced, large cavities were attributed to either Northern Flicker and Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*, *Colaptes auratus*) and smaller cavities to Yellow-bellied Sapsucker or Hairy and Downy woodpeckers (*Sphyrapicus varius*, *Dryobates villosus*, *D. pubescens*). We acknowledge that these smaller cavities are too small for Saw-whets as they require large holes such as those created by Northern Flickers and Pileated Woodpeckers. Also, some natural cavities may have been too shallow to accommodate nesting owls, and we may have missed some cavities hidden in the foliage-covered canopy. For each cavity we recorded the tree species, whether it was dead or alive, and broken or intact. We also estimated the tree's diameter and height.

NSWO Playback Surveys

We conducted playback surveys to determine whether Northern Saw-whet Owls were present in the areas surrounding our nest boxes. Our playback surveys followed a protocol developed for the second BBA and consisted of Saw-whet calls as well as advertising whines and meows (Lanzone and Mulvihill 2006). We conducted surveys in a repeated listening sequence of two minutes and playback two minutes for three times at each point. Responses were recorded as well as any visual sightings that occurred. We began our surveys well after local sunset (21:35-22:57); surveys occurred once at each nest box location, beginning in early July and ending in early August.

Results

Cavity Results

Within 50m of our nest boxes, we counted a cumulative total of 159 cavities. Slightly over half of our cavities (53%) were classified as large, potentially suitable holes for Saw-whets. In each box location, we located an average of 13 cavities; Table 1 shows individual nest boxes averaged 7.7 large (range = 4-15) and 6.7 small cavities (range = 4-13) within 50 m. Woodpeckers were responsible for 44% of large cavities (Flickers and Pileated) and 76% of small cavities (see Table 1, DOM N/WP)

In areas where we received Saw-whet responses, American beech was the most common cavity tree species with one outlying point where red maple dominated. Table 2 shows that at points where we received no response, we observed the opposite; red maples were the most dominant surveyed tree with cavities, except for one point that was a tie between red maple and American beech.

Playback Results

Of the 11 nest box points, we detected Saw-whets in six points by vocalization; two of these six also had visual sightings where the owl flew in to approach the caller. Also, we had visual confirmation of owls at two of the 11 boxes where there were no vocalizations.

Discussion

In a span of nine years (2011-2020), our nest boxes saw no use other than three boxes that showed signs of rodents. Our boxes provided no evidence of use by Northern Saw-whet Owls or Eastern Screech Owls. Intensive nocturnal surveys for the Second BBA revealed Saw-whets to be common and widespread breeders in this region, so why did our nest boxes remain unused? One: there were no Saw-whets in the areas where boxes were installed, or two: there were individuals present, but they were not using the nest boxes.

Owl Abundance

Northern Saw-whet Owls responded to playbacks in over half of our nest box locations. We found a total of eight Saw-whets during playback calling; six responded by vocalizing, and two were visually identified while silently flying into the calls. Where playback calling received no response, Saw-whets still might have been present if they were out of earshot of the caller. Our surveys mirror findings of the Pennsylvania BBA, which revealed Saw-whets to be widespread in the state's northern half (Weidensaul 2012).

Cavity Abundance

All sites had a significant number of natural snags available within the 50 m radius surrounding each box. Our surveys indicate that sites averaged seven large cavities that are suitable for Saw-whet nesting, suggesting that local Saw-whets have a large number of nesting opportunities within their home ranges. A low estimate of Saw-whet territory size for the Appalachian region is 1.5 km² (Rasmussen 2020), which is 192 times larger than our sampling radius. Assuming sample sites represent the average density over a whole territory, then based on our cavity surveys, Saw-whets' average territory on the ANF should be about 1470 cavities. It is unlikely that cavities are a limiting resource for Saw-whets in the ANF.

We found most cavities to be Flicker/Pileated sized holes. While nesting selection in Saw-whets is poorly known, Edworthy (2017) also found that one-two year-old cavities were used most by raptors and that cavities excavated by Flickers maintained high occupancy in the system. However, in that study, aspen trees (*Populus spp.*) provided the bulk of cavities in the ecosystem, whereas beech trees contained the majority of woodpecker cavities in our system.

Tree Species

Our cavity surveys indicated beech trees to be the dominant cavity substrate among those trees in which we found cavities. A possible explanation of why Saw-whets were located mostly in beech-dominated areas could be due to beech bark disease complex, which creates diseased and dying trees prone to decay and woodpecker excavation, thereby producing cavities suited for hole-nesting species. A nearby study in New York also revealed cavity density in mature hardwood forests to primarily occur in American beech, which mirrors our findings (Kenefic and Nyland 2007).

Adult Saw-whets are known to prefer areas with dense thickets and foliage to provide cover during the day (Rasmussen et al. 2020), which could be why our surveys found individuals in stands where beech brush is common. Beech brush, caused by beech bark disease, provides dense thickets in which Saw-whets are known to roost, while red maple-dominated areas tend to have more open and ferny understories.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Nest boxes located throughout the ANF in northwestern Pennsylvania showed no use by Saw-whets from 2011-2020, even

though breeding surveys have found this species to be quite common locally. Our survey results support the hypothesis that Saw-whets are not occupying nest boxes probably due to the availability of natural cavities in the area. We found an abundance of cavities occurring around nest boxes, and playback surveys revealed Saw-whets occurred at over half of these points. Where we received a playback response by Saw-whets, cavities occurred mostly in beech trees, which is likely due to beech bark disease complex that left most beech trees dead or dying, and more prone to cavities being created by decay or woodpeckers. Also, beech brush may be drawing Saw-whets to beech-dominated forest areas with dense thickets for roosting. We recommend any programs designed to study or manage hole-nesting species assess cavity abundance before investing time and resources into nest boxes. Many cases will likely be similar to ours, where populations are not limited by cavity availability.

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Table 1: Averages from cavity surveys compared to playback calls. Averages between areas with a response and no response indicate no significant differences between the range of cavities, size, height, or diameter. Between response and no response, woodpeckers created most of our cavities which were predominantly large.

	Avg. Cavities	Range	# Large Cavities	# Small Cavities	Avg. Height (m)	DOM N/WP
Response	13	9-20	42	38	4.88	WP
No Response	16	8-21	47	31	5.05	WP

Table 2. Dominant tree species in areas where we recorded playback responses. We counted American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) in most areas where we received Saw-whet playback response.

Territories with NSWO	Dominant Tree Sp.
K-4	American Beech
T-2	American Beech
T-4	Red Maple
DL-2	American Beech
DL-3	American Beech
DL-4	American Beech

The 2020-2021 Christmas Bird Count in Pennsylvania

Nick Bolgiano

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was held for the 121st time during December 14, 2020 to January 5, 2021. (When I refer below to a single year, it is the one in which Christmas occurred.)

Seventy-seven sites reported and effort was at a high level. The 6102 party-hours was the second-highest total historically, the 1530 feeder-watch hours was also a high total, and 284 nocturnal hours were reported. The Southeastern Bradford County, Southern Lancaster County, and Washington counts were not conducted during the covid pandemic. The Lewistown site name changed to Juniata County-Lewistown.

Winter weather particularly affected counts held on the first weekend, Dec 19-20 (40 counts), as up to 30 inches of snow fell on Dec 16-17, with 10-20 inches being common in the eastern two-thirds of the state. However, several inches of rain fell on Dec 23, melting much of the snow. Temperatures trended slightly warmer than normal.

A statewide total of 166 count-day species were reported, which is several above average and three more than last year. It was a good irruption year for **Red-breasted Nuthatch** and several winter fitches. Most species affected by West Nile Virus (WNV) showed upticks in their counts for the second year in a row. **Tundra Bean-Goose** and **Tennessee Warbler** were new species for the Pennsylvania CBC, both being observed at Delaware County. Thirteen species set new statewide high tallies for the Pennsylvania CBC: **Black Scoter**, **Cooper's Hawk**, **Red-shouldered Hawk**, **Hairy Woodpecker**, **Pileated Woodpecker**, **Merlin**, **Common Raven**, **Hermit Thrush**, **Chipping Sparrow**, **White-throated Sparrow**, **Savannah Sparrow**, **Ovenbird**, and **Northern Cardinal**. For several species, the heavy snowfall early in the count period contributed toward higher counts by making hungry birds more visible.

Top 10 Sites for Species Number

1. Southern Bucks County	102
2. Lititz	97
3. Delaware County	96
T4. Pennypack Valley	95
T4. Upper Bucks County	95
6. Harrisburg	91
T7. Elverson	90
T7. Western Chester County	90
T9. Bethlehem-Easton	85
T9. Hamburg	85
T9. Newville	85

Species Numbers. Southern Bucks County was the top site for species number

for the second consecutive year, with 102 species. Lititz was second with 97 and Delaware County was third with 96. Noteworthy was the Pennypack Valley total of 95 species, as the previous high there was 85 species. The table below left shows the top 10 list and Figure 1 shows a map of site species totals.

Hits and Misses. A "hit" is an unlikely species found in 2020, 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 fourteen hits (average) and just one miss (low).

Hits

Tundra Bean-Goose
Eurasian Collared-Dove
Allens's Hummingbird
Snowy Owl
Townsend's Solitaire
Wood Thrush
Hoary Redpoll
Clay-colored Sparrow
Ovenbird
Tennessee Warbler
Cape May Warbler
Northern Parula
Black-throated Gray Warbler
Blue Grosbeak

Misses

Black-crowned Night-Heron

Species Details.

Tundra Bean-Goose at Delaware County was the first of the species reported in the Pennsylvania CBC, three days after being the first on record for Pennsylvania. The high **Snow Goose** wintering densities continued in the southeast, especially at the forks of the Delaware, the juncture of the Delaware and Lehigh Rivers. The 242,000 **Snow Geese** was second historically to the 253,000 tallied the previous year and included 227,000 at Bethlehem-Easton. **Ross's Goose** was at Bethlehem-Easton and **Greater White-fronted Goose** was at Lehigh Valley and Southern Bucks County. **Trumpeter Swan** was missed for only the second time in the last six years. The 1372 **Tundra Swans** was the highest tally in five years and included 344 at Pittsburgh, 217 at Indiana, and 192 at Lake Raystown.

The steady decline in **Mallards** continued, although it remains by far the most common duck species; the 15,683 Mallards was 5000 fewer than five years earlier. The four duck species that have shown the healthiest trends in recent decades have been **Gadwall**, **Bufflehead**, **Hooded Merganser**, and **Common Merganser**.

Surf Scoter was at Erie and Pittsburgh South Hills. Erie was also the locale for 17 of the 19 **White-winged Scoters** and 18 of the 21 **Black Scoters**. White-winged was also at Southern Bucks County and Upper Bucks County, while three Black Scoters were at Pittsburgh. The 21 Black Scoters was slightly higher than the previous Pennsylvania CBC high total of 19 in 1997 and 2012. Surf and Black Scoters are about equally uncommon; over the CBC history, 170 Surf Scoters and 177 Black Scoters have been reported in Pennsylvania, as well as 503 White-winged Scoters.

The 22 **Ruffed Grouse** was another modern era low and continued their steep decline due to WNV and loss of early successional habitat, although the mid-December snowfall cut off some back-country excursions. While **Wild Turkey** numbers have been at high levels since 1998, this was the second consecutive year of somewhat lower counts. The Pennsylvania Game Commission has changed some hunting rules with a goal of increasing the state's Wild Turkey population.

Two **Red-necked Grebes** were at Erie, where they are more commonly reported. Three **Eurasian Collared-Dove** were reported from Chambersburg, for a sixth Pennsylvania CBC report. **Rufous Hummingbird** was at Chambersburg, **Allen's Hummingbird** was at Delaware County, and a **Selasphorus** hummingbird was at Upper Bucks County.

Two **Virginia Rails** were at West Chester and singles were at Mansfield-Wellsboro and Upper Bucks County. The 323 **Sandhill Cranes** was the second highest tally in the Pennsylvania CBC, the fifth year in a row with elevated counts, and included 177 at Linesville, 102 at Grove City, and 41 at Butler County. The 66 **Killdeers** was another low count for this species. The only **American Woodcock** was at Hamburg.

The high wintering densities of **Lesser Black-backed Gull** continued in the lower Delaware Valley. The 609 Lesser Black-backed Gulls was the fourth highest statewide CBC tally and included 273 at Southern Bucks County, 241 at Upper Bucks County, and 92 at Central Bucks County, but just three elsewhere (two at Bernville, one at Bethlehem-Easton).

Southern Bucks County reported 31,000 **Herring Gulls**, again the highest continent-wide report, 214 of the state's 298 **Great Black-backed Gulls**, all 13 Iceland Gulls, and 2 of the 3 **Glaucous Gulls**. Glaucous Gull was also at Erie. Great Black-backed Gull tallies in the Pennsylvania CBC have been declining over the last decade and this season's tally was the lowest since 1984.

Red-throated Loon was at Erie. **Great Cormorant** was at the usual sites, Southern Bucks County (16) and Pennypack Valley (6). **Great Egret** was at Lititz. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was missed for the seventh time in the last nine years.

Osprey was at Cowanesque Lake. The five **Golden Eagles** were fewer than in recent years; the heavy snowfall may have kept observers from the backcountry or pushed more birds farther south. The 111 **Northern Harriers** was at the low end of normal. The 576 **Cooper's Hawks** was a new statewide high, but about the same as 2016's total when adjusted for effort. **Northern Goshawk** was only at northern sites: Cowanesque Lake, Emporium, and Warren.

The 864 **Bald Eagles** was the second highest to 2018's 899 and here is where we missed Southern Lancaster County's contribution (its 5-year average=89). High counts were 108 at Southern Bucks County and 65 at Linesville. The 350 **Red-shouldered Hawks** far exceeded the previous Pennsylvania CBC high of 214 in 2019 and were widespread, being recorded from 79% of sites. High counts were 25 at Grove City, 24 at both Delaware County and Southern Bucks County, 23 at Gettysburg, and 22 at West Chester. The 3199 **Red-tailed Hawks** was the most in four years, but several hundred fewer than during the 2004-2010 peak period. The 23 **Rough-legged Hawks** continued the pattern of low counts and included five from Penns Creek and four from Mansfield-Wellsboro.

Upper Bucks County was the top owling site, followed by Central Bucks County and Juniata County-Lewistown. The top 10 list is below.

Top 10 Sites for Owls

	EScr	GH	Barr	LE	SE	NSW	Sum
1. Upper Bucks County	62	27	4	1	0	3	97
2. Central Bucks County	50	19	1	0	0	0	70
3. Juniata County-Lewistown	44	17	2	0	0	0	63
4. Hamburg	27	24	1	1	0	0	53
5. West Chester	18	18	5	0	0	1	42
6. New Bloomfield	19	13	3	2	0	4	41
7. Lititz	20	6	1	0	2	3	32
T8. Delaware County	21	6	0	0	0	0	27
T8. Lake Raystown	14	12	1	0	0	0	27
T10. Huntingdon	12	14	0	0	0	0	26
T10. Western Schuylkill Co.	11	9	0	0	0	6	26

The 384 **Great Horned Owls** was the most in six years and could indicate a moderation of WNV's effects. **Barn Owl** was at York. **Snowy Owl** was at Elverson and a count-week bird at Juniata County-Lewistown. The 14 **Long-eared Owls**, with a high of four at Audubon, and the 15 **Short-eared Owls**, with three each at Clarion and Grove City, were average in number.

The 791 **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** was an excellent count, second highest to the 850 in 2017; these two counts were also the highest after adjusting for effort. The 55 **Red-headed Woodpeckers** was an average count and included ten at York Springs and seven at Rector, the most ever reported from Rector. The 1817 **Hairy Woodpeckers** were the most reported in the Pennsylvania CBC and culminates a gradually increasing trend over the last two decades. The 1033 **Pileated Woodpeckers**, while a new state high, was slightly lower than 2017 and 2019 values when adjusted for effort.

American Kestrel numbers held steady at 640 birds (649 were tallied in 2019). **Merlins** continued their steep increase; the 73 Merlins exceeded the record 69 from 2018. Eight were counted at Lehigh Valley and five each were at Delaware County, Lebanon County, and Pittsburgh. Up until ten years ago, Merlins and **Peregrine Falcons** were increasing in tandem, but Peregrine numbers have leveled off, with 39 being counted during the recent CBC.

Just one **Northern Shrike** was reported, at Philipsburg, matching the low totals of 2014 and 2015. Northern Shrike was also a count-week species at Erie. **Common Ravens** continued to increase; the total of 734 eclipsed last year's then-record of 671.

American Crow, **Black-capped Chickadee**, **Carolina Chickadee**, and **Tufted Titmouse** all showed continued upticks from their low 2018 levels when WNV was most severe. All but three sites reported Black-capped Chickadee, indicating that Black-capped Chickadees were also moving south during the winter. The southern corners of Pennsylvania, particularly the southeast, are where Black-capped Chickadee irruptions can best be detected in the CBC (Bolgiano 2004).

The 7904 **Horned Larks** was an above-average total after two years with low numbers. Pennypack Valley tallied 100 **Northern Rough-winged Swallows**, the only site reporting them. The 781 **Golden-crowned Kinglets** was less than half of the 10-year average and showed a very patchy distribution. Golden-crowned Kinglets were recorded in decent numbers in the far west, Susquehanna Valley, and far

southeast, but very few in parts of the Ridge & Valley and at some southeastern locations where they are usually more common (Figure 2).

After a very good flight of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** the fall, 596 Red-breasted Nuthatches were tallied in the Pennsylvania CBC, recorded from 91% of sites. The highest densities were observed in the northeast, the western Ridge & Valley, and at several Allegheny Plateau sites (Figure 2). By CBC standards, this irruption was slightly bigger than the modest irruption of 2018, but only half as big as the large irruptions of 1997, 2005, and 2012 and a fourth as big as the extreme irruption of 1981.

The only **House Wren** reported was at Newville. After 2019's record tally of 7281 **Carolina Wrens**, 6328 were counted in 2020, which is still one of the higher Pennsylvania totals.

Northern Mockingbird and **Eastern Bluebird**, possibly affected by WNV, both showed continued upticks in numbers, in a similar fashion as other WNV-affected species. **Wood Thrush** at Bloomsburg and Harrisburg were the 10th and 11th Pennsylvania CBC reports. While the 436 **American Pipits** was an average number, it was more widespread than usual, found at 29% of sites.

Hermit Thrush densities have been tending to increase in the Pennsylvania CBC since the 1980s, as the winter climate has moderated and increasingly more berries have been available from invasive bushes and vines. Periodic spikes in Hermit Thrush numbers occurred in 2005 and 2014 and again in the most recent CBC. This time, Hermit Thrushes were concentrated at western Ridge & Valley and southeastern sites with sufficient valley forest and woodlots. Huntingdon recorded the highest count of 71 Hermit Thrushes, a new individual site record for the Pennsylvania CBC. On a Hermit Thrushes per unit effort scale, Huntingdon's tally more than doubled the next highest site value during this count period, and further, was higher than any historical Pennsylvania site value when party hours exceeded one. Other high counts were 45 at Upper Bucks County, 30 at New Bloomfield, 24 at State College, and 22 at Harrisburg (Figure 2). All of these counts except Harrisburg were conducted on Dec 19-20 and the recent snowfall may have concentrated the thrushes where observers could encounter them.

Sparse northern seed crops led to predictions of irruptions for some of the winter finches (Hoar 2020). Tyler Hoar's first winter finch forecast after succeeding long-time prognosticator Ron Pittaway proved to be generally accurate.

The 303 **Evening Grosbeaks** at 21 sites (27% of sites) was their largest irruption into Pennsylvania since 1997, the year of the final irruption of the huge Evening Grosbeak expansion fueled by the

1968-1986 spruce budworm infestation in the eastern boreal forest. The recent irruption also accompanied a spruce budworm infestation in Québec, although more modest in size than the earlier one. These Evening Grosbeak population expansions are fueled by the birds feeding spruce budworm caterpillars to their young (Bolgiano 2004). The highest CBC counts were at high-elevation sites in the northwestern Allegheny Plateau, with 62 at Pleasantville, 47 at Emporium, 41 at Benezette, and 40 at Clarion. Elsewhere, 36 were at Penns Creek (Figure 2). This irruption was small compared to those observed during 1945-1997; it will be interesting to see if more such irruptions occur in the next several years.

Purple Finch reproduction is also fueled by spruce budworm outbreaks and Purple Finches were also forecast to irrupt this season. The 542 Purple Finches recorded at 63 CBC sites (82% of sites) was the highest number recorded in the Pennsylvania CBC since 2008, which marked the end of population boom that accompanied the 1968-1986 spruce budworm infestation. However, despite being widespread, this irruption was rather thinly distributed (Figure 2).

The **Common Redpoll** forecast was for a moderate to good irruption if the Swamp Birch seed crop in the boreal forest was insufficiently large to stop their southward movement. The 666 Common Redpolls at 31 sites (40% of sites) qualifies as a moderate to good irruption, though less than half the size of the large 1993, 1997, 2007, and 2012 irruptions. The highest densities were at Erie and several northeastern sites, with high counts of 150 at Erie, 73 at Dallas Area, 57 at Scranton, 55 at Tamaqua, 50 at Lititz, and 47 at Juniata County-Lewistown (Figure 2). A single **Hoary Redpoll** was reported at Dingman's Ferry.

The forecast for **Red Crossbill** was for a southward movement if the heavy White Pine seed crop from central Ontario to the Maritimes was depleted, but that most **White-winged Crossbills** were expected to move west instead of south. While there was a good fall movement of Red Crossbills, the 22 counted at six CBC sites (8% of sites) constituted a small irruption and included nine at White Mills and five at Hamburg. Single White-winged Crossbills were at Hamburg and State College.

The **Pine Siskin** forecast was for most birds to move west and smaller numbers to move south. Nevertheless, following a good fall movement, 1752 Pine Siskins were tallied at 64 CBC sites (83% of sites). This was a moderate irruption and about as big as the one that occurred in 2014, though

considerably smaller than the large irruptions of 1977, 1987, and 2008. The distribution was patchy and dominated by high numbers at a few sites and a few at many sites. The highest counts were 269 at Juniata County-Lewistown, 244 at Lititz, 131 at Chambersburg, 85 at West Chester, and 83 at Lewisburg (Figure 2).

While high counts of **Lapland Longspur** in the 49-56 range were observed in the second half of the last century, the 19 longspurs tallied in the recent CBC was a very good count for this century, especially compared to the zero and two birds tallied the previous two years, respectively. Among uncommon sparrows, **Clay-colored Sparrow** was at Indiana; **Vesper Sparrow** was at Lehigh Valley; and **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at Lehigh Valley, Pennypack Valley, Southern Bucks County, and York Springs.

The 197 **Chipping Sparrows** was a new high for the Pennsylvania CBC, even when adjusted for effort. High counts were 59 at Pennypack Valley, the second-highest historical Pennsylvania site total, and 28 at Delaware County. For three other sparrows, statewide totals were either the highest or second highest on record, but when adjusted for effort, were similar to levels of several other years. This includes 63,461 Dark-eyed Juncos (second highest to 63,848 in 1998), 37,431 White-throated Sparrows (a new statewide high), and 282 Savannah Sparrows (a new statewide high). Many of the higher sparrow totals occurred Dec 19-20, days after the large mid-Dec snowfall, when many birds were hunger-stressed and observed along road and water edges.

In contrast to the abundant sparrows, **American Tree Sparrow** numbers have been in a long-term decline since 1970s. This decline accelerated the previous two years, although the total of 2989 Tree Sparrows in 2020 was higher than the 1782 in 2018 or the 1358 in 2019. To illustrate what densities used to be, Pennsylvania's high total was 15,483 in 1998 and effort-adjusted counts before 1970 were up to five times higher than the large 1998 count. This sparrow is featured in the last Figure 2 density map, as even diminished counts like this one will likely become fewer in frequency. The highest American Tree Sparrow counts were at high-elevation sites with sufficient open, brushy habitat (Figure 2).

The 55 **Eastern Meadowlarks** was slightly above average and included 14 at Gettysburg and 12 at Lititz. Eight **Baltimore Orioles** were tallied, plus a count-week bird at Bethlehem-Easton. Two were at Pennypack Valley and three others were observed at southeastern sites. Less expected were orioles at Bushy Run S.P.,

Lock Haven-Jersey Shore, and Pittsburgh. Previous high oriole counts were 8 in 2006, 11 in 1978, and 13 in 1968. For the second year in a row, **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Brown-headed Cowbirds**, and **Common Grackles** were comparatively scarce, summing only 10,550 birds, although this total would likely have been higher with Southern Lancaster County's usual contribution.

Among warblers, **Ovenbird** was at Harrisburg, Huntingdon, and State College, three being the most for the Pennsylvania CBC; **Tennessee Warbler** at Delaware County was a first for the Pennsylvania CBC; **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at Pennypack Valley; **Cape May Warbler** at Bloomsburg was the eighth in the Pennsylvania CBC; **Northern Parula** at Harrisburg was only the third in the Pennsylvania CBC and occurred for the second consecutive year; and **Black-throated Gray Warbler** at Lebanon County was also only the third Pennsylvania CBC report, the first two occurring in 2018.

Like White-throated and Savannah Sparrows, the 17,910 **Northern Cardinals** also set a new statewide high, but when adjusted for effort, the total was similar to that of several other years. **Blue Grosbeak** at Pennypack Valley was only the second Pennsylvania CBC report.

References

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- Hoar, T. 2020. Winter Finch Forecast 2020-2021. <http://www.finchnetwork.org/winter-finch-forecast-2020>.

Corrigendum

An error occurred in the 2019-2020 CBC report: the 17 Pileated Woodpeckers and 94 Northern Flickers at Upper Bucks County were erroneously flipped. Statewide totals were 1010 Pileated Woodpeckers and 2357 Northern Flickers, not 1087 and 2280. However, the Pileated Woodpecker total was still a new state record, as indicated. The high site for Pileated Woodpeckers was Lewistown with 52.

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Site Abbreviations

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

Figure 1. Pennsylvania CBC sites and species numbers. Background shows elevations (<1000, 1000-2000, >2000 ft) and main rivers and cities.

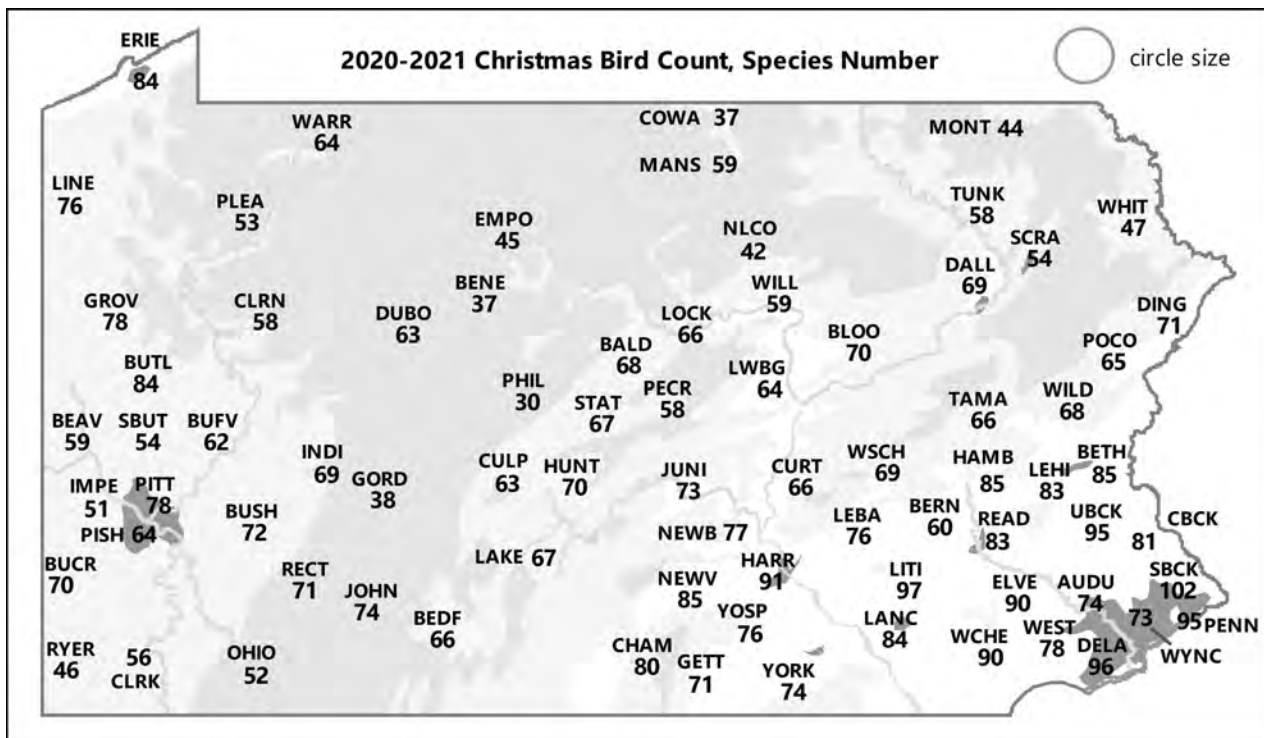
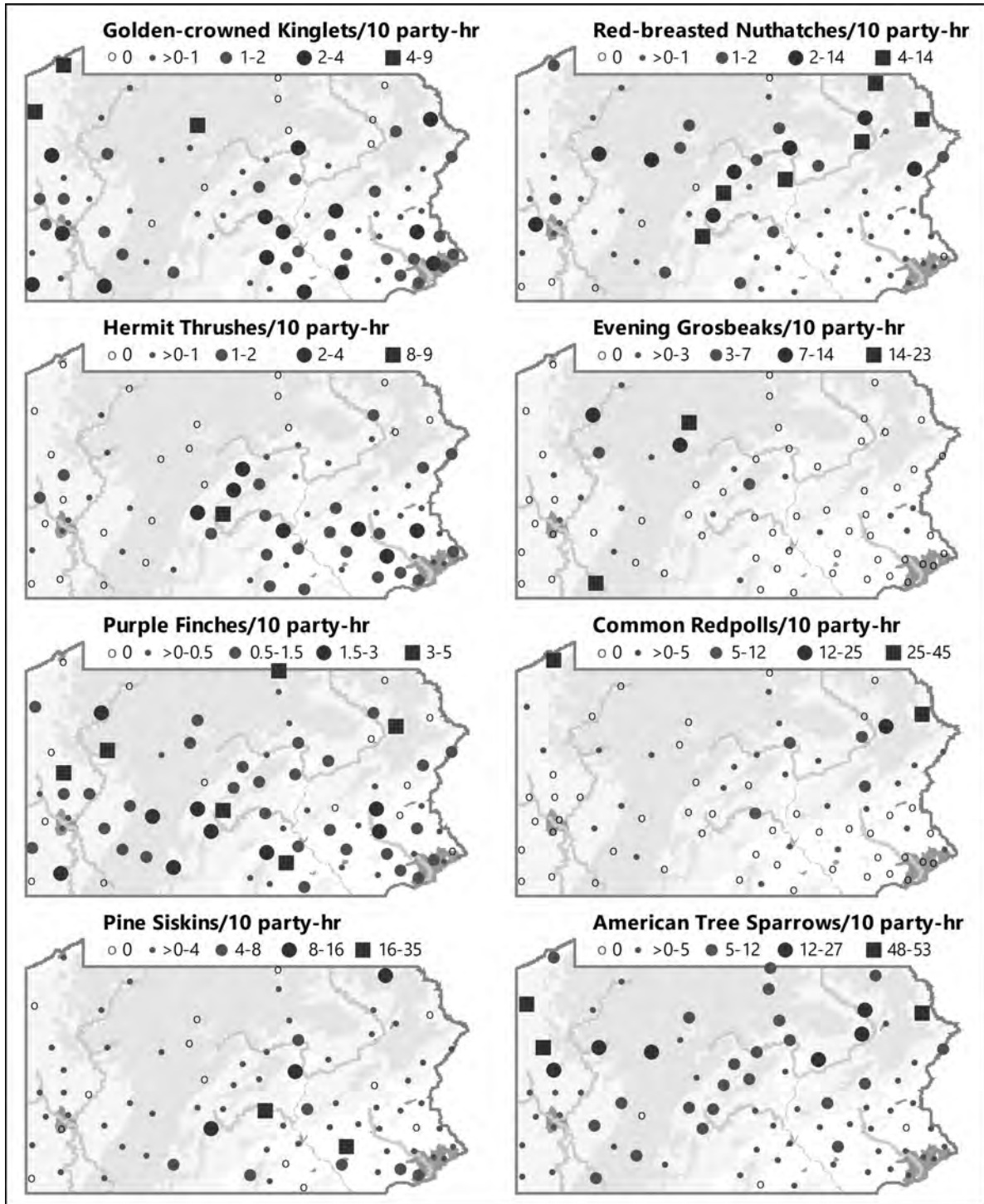


Figure 2. Distribution maps for eight species, with symbol sizes determined by the 2020 count/10 party hours.



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
Tundra Bean-Goose	1	0	1	1	DELA	Black Vulture	1997	2266	41	246	UBCK	House Sparrow	19227	18139	76	1137	CHAM
Snow Goose	242167	119193	26	227321	BETH	Turkey Vulture	3297	3619	45	349	UBCK	American Pipit	436	617	22	132	NEWV
Ross's Goose	1	4	1	1	BETH	Osprey	1	1	1	1	COWL	Evening Grosbeak	303	25	21	62	PLEA
Greater White-fronted Goose	2	7	2	1	LEHI,SBCK	Golden Eagle	5	8	5	1	5 sites with 1	House Finch	10101	9604	76	626	PITT
Cackling Goose	25	31	11	4	SBCK	Northern Harrier	111	146	43	9	GROV,LITI	Purple Finch	542	327	63	39	HUNT
Canada Goose	136444	173083	75	20483	SBCK	Sharp-shinned Hawk	243	250	65	11	CHAM,LANC,LEHI	Common Redpoll	666	177	31	150	ERIE
Mute Swan	129	184	26	40	SBCK	Cooper's Hawk	576	440	75	30	LEHI	Hoary Redpoll	1	0	1	1	DING
Tundra Swan	1372	1174	20	344	PITT	Northern Goshawk	3	4	3	1	COWL,EMPO,WARR	Red Crossbill	22	16	6	9	WHIT
Wood Duck	47	85	15	11	BETH	Bald Eagle	864	636	74	108	SBCK	White-winged Crossbill	2	76	2	1	HAMB,STAT
Northern Shoveler	257	231	10	125	DELA	Red-shouldered Hawk	350	157	61	25	GROV	Pine Siskin	1752	512	64	269	JUNI
Gadwall	418	614	26	87	DELA	Red-tailed Hawk	3199	3321	77	138	HAMB	American Goldfinch	9145	9617	77	624	BUTL
American Wigeon	48	120	10	18	YOSP	Rough-legged Hawk	23	23	13	5	PECR	Lapland Longspur	19	6	9	6	LEBA
Mallard	15683	20616	75	1405	LINE	Barn Owl	1	5	1	1	YORK	Snow Bunting	51	244	14	11	LINE
American Black Duck	1885	2282	54	457	LITI	Eastern Screech-Owl	560	783	57	62	UBCK	Chipping Sparrow	197	80	23	59	PENN
Northern Pintail	141	141	10	116	DELA	Great Horned Owl	384	339	68	27	UBCK	Clay-colored Sparrow	1	0.4	1	1	INDI
Green-winged Teal	176	197	16	50	SBCK	Snowy Owl	1	2	1	1	ELVE	Field Sparrow	644	507	57	76	LITI
Canvasback	6	115	4	2	BUTL,PENN	Barred Owl	67	61	36	5	CHAM,NEWV,WEST	American Tree Sparrow	2989	3878	74	267	GROV
Redhead	296	175	6	267	ERIE	Long-eared Owl	14	15	8	4	AUDU	Fox Sparrow	126	125	37	16	DELA
Ring-necked Duck	543	822	25	67	GROV	Short-eared Owl	15	11	8	3	CLRN,GROV	Slate-colored Junco	63461	43588	77	3473	LEHI
Greater Scaup	122	158	2	115	ERIE	Northern Saw-whet Owl	23	29	10	6	WSCH	White-crowned Sparrow	1415	1074	51	407	GETT
Lesser Scaup	327	497	12	200	ERIE	Belted Kingfisher	520	561	72	24	AUDU	White-throated Sparrow	37413	25465	75	2188	UBCK
Surf Scoter	2	7	2	1	ERIE,PISH	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	791	474	62	66	HARR	Vesper Sparrow	1	1	1	1	LEHI
White-winged Scoter	19	21	3	17	ERIE	Red-headed Woodpecker	55	53	17	10	YOSP	Savannah Sparrow	282	143	30	45	READ
Black Scoter	21	4	2	18	ERIE	Red-bellied Woodpecker	5238	4952	77	348	PITT	Song Sparrow	12246	9576	76	724	DELA
Long-tailed Duck	25	20	6	16	ERIE	Downy Woodpecker	6206	5626	77	293	PITT	Lincoln's Sparrow	4	2	4	1	4 sites with 1
Bufflehead	828	764	41	111	LINE	Hairy Woodpecker	1817	1380	77	72	PITT	Swamp Sparrow	439	437	54	42	UBCK
Common Goldeneye	352	309	19	195	ERIE	Pileated Woodpecker	1033	813	77	38	JUNI	Eastern Towhee	140	351	33	16	WCHE
Hooded Merganser	980	1238	45	105	BUTL	Yellow-shafted Flicker	1537	1954	67	124	UBCK	Eastern Meadowlark	55	41	13	14	GETT
Common Merganser	5708	6323	58	1374	LINE	American Kestrel	640	712	70	48	GETT	Baltimore Oriole	8	1	7	2	PENN
Red-breasted Merganser	699	3135	15	651	ERIE	Merlin	73	48	37	8	LEHI	Red-winged Blackbird	3136	159509	54	643	UBCK
Ruddy Duck	821	728	24	207	BUTL	Peregrine Falcon	39	34	23	5	ERIE	Brown-headed Cowbird	3476	34024	50	2027	BUTL
Ring-necked Pheasant	65	166	22	10	JOHN	Eastern Phoebe	17	18	12	3	WCHE,YOSP	Rusty Blackbird	137	220	20	65	MANS
Ruffed Grouse	22	75	14	4	PHIL	Northern Shrike	1	6	1	1	PHIL	Common Grackle	3803	164303	24	3112	WCHE
Wild Turkey	2897	3548	62	189	BUCR	Blue Jay	14601	13445	77	940	PITT	Ovenbird	3	0	3	1	HARR,HUNT,STAT
Pied-billed Grebe	69	110	21	14	SBCK	American Crow	58455	75303	77	26744	LANC	Tennessee Warbler	1	0	1	1	DELA
Homed Grebe	11	38	5	7	ERIE	Fish Crow	1914	3283	26	806	SBCK	Orange-crowned Warbler	1	1.6	1	1	PENN
Red-necked Grebe	2	1	1	2	ERIE	Common Raven	734	464	72	50	HUNT	Common Yellowthroat	6	5	6	16	sites
Rock Pigeon	23498	29035	73	1244	LEHI	Carolina Chickadee	3272	4703	33	292	BUCR	Cape May Warbler	1	0.1	1	1	BLOO
Eurasian Collared-Dove	3	1	1	3	CHAM	Black-capped Chickadee	9790	8521	74	482	DUBO	Northern Parula	1	0.1	1	1	HARR
Mourning Dove	27509	27743	77	1339	CHAM	chickadee sp.	2594	2815	32	656	PITT	Palm Warbler	9	4	3	5	PENN
Rufous Hummingbird	1	2	1	1	CHAM	Tufted Titmouse	8814	9387	77	614	PITT	Pine Warbler	4	4	1	4	BETH
Allen's Hummingbird	1	0.1	1	1	DELA	Homed Lark	7904	6325	50	966	CHAM	Mvrtle Warbler	221	493	32	49	NEWV
Virginia Rail	4	2	3	2	WEST	Northern Rough-winged S	100	96	1	100	PENN	Black-throated Gray War	1	0.2	1	1	LEBA
American Coot	596	1914	10	281	SBCK	Golden-crowned Kinglet	781	1745	69	35	AUDU	Northern Cardinal	17910	14349	77	1151	PITT
Sandhill Crane	323	134	5	177	LINE	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	203	175	44	15	AUDU,DELA	Blue Grosbeak	1	0	1	1	PENN
Killdeer	66	231	20	12	CHAM	Red-breasted Nuthatch	596	356	70	37	LWBG,POCO	Individuals	1024280	1411327		246490	BETH
American Woodcock	1	4	1	1	HAMB	White-breasted Nuthatch	6895	6434	77	269	PITT	Species	166	162		102	SBCK
Wilson's Snipe	58	56	15	9	DELA	Brown Creeper	636	595	73	29	SBCK	Party Hours	6102	5492		276	PITT
Bonaparte's Gull	11	2732	2	7	LINE	House Wren	1	4	1	1	NEWV						
Ring-billed Gull	33326	64435	50	12101	ERIE	Winter Wren	361	340	60	26	DELA						
Herring Gull	33923	55347	29	31470	SBCK	Carolina Wren	6328	4920	75	336	PITT						
Iceland Gull	13	19	1	13	SBCK	European Starling	119416	167138	77	8778	SBCK						
Lesser Black-backed Gull	609	550	5	273	SBCK	Gray Catbird	42	41	24	5	UBCK						
Glaucous Gull	3	6	2	2	SBCK	Brown Thrasher	5	13	5	1	5 sites with 1						
Great Black-backed Gull	298	2253	9	214	SBCK	Northern Mockingbird	1825	2094	64	93	HAMB						
Red-throated Loon	1	2	1	1	ERIE	Eastern Bluebird	6610	6861	75	357	WCHE						
Common Loon	24	78	11	9	ERIE	Townsend's Solitaire	1	0	1	1	CHAM						
Great Cormorant	22	26	2	16	SBCK	Hemitt Thrush	561	267	55	71	HUNT						
Double-crested Cormorant	142	165	11	50	DELA	Wood Thrush	2	0	2	1	BLOO,HARR						
Great Blue Heron	626	729	62	40	LITI	American Robin	11941	23364	68	1425	PITT						
Great Egret	1	2	1	1	LITI	Cedar Waxwing	3639	3800	64	421	PLEA						

The Occurrence of Glaucous Gull and Iceland Gull in Berks County

Rudy Keller

A highlight of winter birding in Berks County is scanning the gull flocks at Blue Marsh Lake for rarer species. Highly prized are two arctic visitors, Glaucous and Iceland Gulls. Finding one among the wheeling, shrieking masses of Ring-billed Gulls is sure to make the day for any birder. Both were virtually unknown here for most of the 20th century, suddenly becoming more familiar in the late 1980's and early 1990's, when heaps of stockpiled garbage at a pig farm in Strausstown attracted tens of thousands of gulls in winter. Before one was seen on the Reading Christmas Bird Count Dec 21, 1986, Glaucous Gull had been recorded only once, a second-winter bird at Lake Ontelaunee Mar 5-7, 1961. Berks County's first Iceland Gull, a first-winter bird, was recorded at Lake Ontelaunee Feb 19, 1989. Both species were regular winter visitors for the next few years while the pig farm operated, moving onto the life lists of many birders. After the Strausstown pig farm closed in 1995, landfills in Berks (especially the one in New Morgan) and Lebanon Counties took its place as reliable winter food sources for the gulls that loaf and roost in Berks County lakes. What has been the pattern of occurrence of Glaucous and Iceland Gulls since those early years? A review of 30 years of archived bird records provided answers.

Glaucous Gull has been the less common of the two species, appearing in 21 of the 34 years from 1986-2020. It has been recorded from Dec 9 (2000) till Mar 17 (2007). Birds have most often arrived in Dec or Jan and almost all have departed by the end of Feb. There are only three Mar records, indicating that this gull is truly a winter bird in Berks County. During most winters, only one Glaucous Gull has been seen among thousands of Ring-billed Gulls and Herring Gulls, enhancing our perception of its rarity. Two or more birds have been seen in just five of 21 winters, with a high count of four in 1992. Glaucous Gulls take four years to mature, cycling through four plumages on the way. Of the Berks County birds whose ages have been recorded, the great majority have been juvenile or first-winter birds. Five second-winter birds, one third-winter bird and four adults have been reported in 21 years. Some of these birds have been one-day wonders, but others have stayed for weeks, such as the first-winter bird reported at Blue Marsh Lake Jan 4 till Feb 17, 2020.

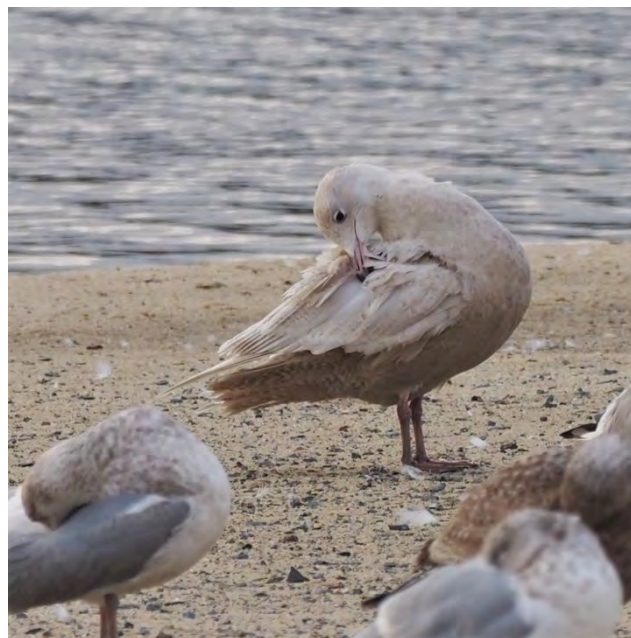
Iceland Gull has been more regular and numerous than Glaucous Gull, appearing in 27 of 31 years from 1989 till 2020, missing only 1990, 2009, 2017 and 2018. It may arrive a little earlier and leave a little later than Glaucous Gull and has been recorded from Nov 9 (2016) till Apr 19 (1995). Most birds have been seen in Dec, Jan and Feb, but there are at least six Mar and four Apr records. As with Glaucous Gull, single birds have most often been reported, but two or more Iceland Gulls have been recorded during about 12 of 27 winters. High counts have been five in 1992, five in 2005 and six in 2013. Iceland Gull also matures over four years through four plumages, but the juvenile or first-winter plumage can vary from very light to quite dark according to subspecies. As with Glaucous Gull, the great majority of Iceland Gulls whose ages have been recorded have been first-winter birds at the light end of the color range. A few dark first winter birds have been reported, including at least four Thayer's Gulls, recently considered to be a separate species, but now considered to be a subspecies of Iceland Gull. Second-winter birds have been reported five times, a third-winter bird once, and adults only three times in 27 years. Though the length of stay of individual birds can be hard to determine, many have been seen a single day while others have stayed for days or weeks, such as a first-winter bird seen at Glen Morgan L. Jan 1 till Mar 8, 1995.

Landfills have for decades provided the reliable, concentrated food sources needed by migrating and wintering gulls in Berks and nearby Chester, Bucks and Northampton Counties. While such landfills continue operating, it seems likely that Glaucous and Iceland Gulls will continue to be prized winter visitors among thousands of more common gulls. Berks County records prior to 1997 are referenced in Uhrich, William D., *A Century of Bird Life*

in Berks County, Pennsylvania. Reading Public Museum, 1997. Thank you to the birders who recorded and submitted their observations over the last 30 years. You made this report possible.



Iceland Gull at Blue Marsh, Berks 22 Jan, 2021 (Russell Hoffman)



Glaucous Gull at Blue Marsh, Berks 29 Jan, 2020 (Russell Hoffman)

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The 2021 Winter Raptor Survey in Pennsylvania

Greg Grove

Introduction. The 21st Pennsylvania Winter Raptor Survey (WRS) was conducted 9 January through 15 February 2021 with at least one route in 66 of 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 225 routes were run, comprising 889.5 hours and 13,490 miles of observation, both record highs. For the second consecutive year, *Clarion* was tops in coverage hours at 32.25 hours, with *Lancaster* right behind, and *Franklin* and *Huntingdon* tied for third (Table 2).

Weather during the first half of the survey period was mild and benign, much like during the 2020 survey. January temperatures were consistently above normal by several degrees and there was little snow fall and almost no snow cover. Conditions changed abruptly beginning 31 January with the first big snow fall since mid-December, a storm which continued into the first day of February. The remainder of the WRS period, through mid-February, reminded us of what winter really can be in Pennsylvania. Temperatures were below normal, there was more snow, and snow cover was significant for routes run after 31 January. In some places in eastern Pennsylvania, snow fall and ground cover were measured in feet, not inches.

Results

Summary. The big question going into WRS 2021 was the effect of COVID. How many routes would *not* be run, and what would be the effect of reduced observers in vehicles because of social distancing? As it turned out, very few routes were canceled.

I am happy to share with you the news that Pennsylvania WRS data is the basis for a paper in the ornithological journal *IBIS*. Data from 2001–2018 was used, from over 2000 individual route surveys, many repeated 10–15 or more years. The article is entitled “*Yearly Temperature Fluctuations and Survey Speed Influence Road Counts of Wintering Raptors*”, and focuses on data trends, relationships of results to annual weather conditions, and effects of average speed during runs (“slower is better”). The full reference is given below and includes co-authors Chris McClure, Brian Rolek, and Todd Katzner from the Peregrine Fund and USGS, based in Idaho.

IBIS is a well-known journal and I am sure we can all be pleased to see a Pennsylvania-based citizen science project like WRS used in such a forum. Many, many thanks to all who have been doing routes for so long - and we will look forward to many more years, and with new folks joining every year.

McClure, J.W., B.W. Rolek, G.W. Grove, and T.E. Katzner (2020). *Yearly Temperature Fluctuations and Survey Speed Influence Road Counts of Wintering Raptors*. *IBIS* 163:593–606.

Not related to Covid, a few long-time contributors retired and moved out of state, but in those cases someone stepped in to take over the route. With some new routes added, we actually set a new record for hours of observation. On the other hand, many routes (about one-third) had fewer observers in the vehicle. Fewer eyes certainly affect how many raptors are seen on an auto survey in the same way that the numbers of observers on a hawk watch likely affect the day’s count, especially when the difference is one vs. two or more observers.

Most species totals and hourly rates were, in fact, lower than last year and in recent years. Most notable were decreases in Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, and the two vultures. However, the decreases were not dramatic. While COVID likely played some role, the harsh weather of February could also have contributed, as well as normal variation. Not all species were lower. American Kestrel numbers were similar to last year and Cooper’s Hawk set a record high. Rough-legged Hawks were very low again as has been the trend for the last decade.

Results for individual counties are in the Appendix.

Red-tailed Hawk. The count of 2994 Red-tailed Hawks was the lowest since 2014 and the hourly rate of 3.4 was the third lowest ever. The average rate over the last decade is about 3.9, so even with COVID restrictions, the numbers of Red-tails, by far the most numerous raptor on the WRS (except Turkey Vulture), and the hourly rate were little more than 10% below the norm (Figure 1).

As usual, Red-tails were widely distributed, except for the usual low numbers in the north-central woodlands (Figure 2). *Westmoreland* led the way with 178 Red-tails, well ahead of second place *Lancaster* (144) and third place *Huntingdon* (111); these are the same three counties that topped the list in 2020 (Table 2). Among

counties with at least seven hours of coverage *Juniata*, *Mercer*, *Schuylkill*, and *Westmoreland* averaged over 5.5 Red-tails/hour.

American Kestrel. The count of American Kestrels was 626, three more than last year, resulting in a slightly lower hourly rate of 0.70, because of the increase in hours. The count was the fourth highest ever (record is 711 in 2017), possibly helped in part by the mild conditions in January (Figure 1). The factors that dictate winter population levels of kestrels are likely complex, but presumably during severe winters kestrels either withdraw further south or suffer higher mortality (Bolgiano et al. 2015).

As usual, most Kestrels were in the central and lower Susquehanna and Juniata River valleys, with good numbers also in the southwest (Figure 2). Once again, *Franklin* was way out in front with a total of 48, followed by *Lancaster* at 37 and *Huntingdon* at 35 (Table 2). In counties with at least seven hours of effort, *Adams*, *Dauphin*, *Franklin*, *Greene*, *Juniata*, *Mifflin*, and *Union* had rates of at least 1.5/hr. Numbers in the relatively warm southeast stayed at the same low rate where they have been for many years, well below that of the south-central agricultural counties.

Of 511 Kestrels sexed, 326 (64%) were males, consistent with previous years (range: 59–66%).

Rough-legged Hawk. The count of 41 Rough-legged Hawks was the third lowest ever, but did top the meager 30 recorded in 2020. The lowest total ever was 21 in 2002, when coverage hours were one-third of the level in 2020 and 2021. The 2020 rate of 0.035/hour was the lowest ever; this year the rate was 0.046/hr, the second lowest ever (Figure 1). Even given COVID considerations, the trend of Rough-legs on WRS has been a slow, steady decline, as has been the case for the Pennsylvania CBC (see CBC article elsewhere in this issue).

Rough-legs were found in 21 counties, compared to just 17 last year. As usual, most Rough-legs were in northern counties; southmost were one each in *Huntingdon* and *Somerset* (Figure 2). *Crawford* led with six, but no other county had more than three.

Of 40 Rough-legs identified by color morph, 24 (60%) were light (2001–20 range = 60–78%).

Northern Harrier. Factors determining the numbers of wintering Northern Harriers are complex, and include their prey base, 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)). Given all these factors it is not surprising that Pennsylvania WRS harrier numbers have tended to fluctuate more widely than Red-tails and American Kestrels (Figure 1).

In 2019, the WRS total of 59 Harriers was the lowest ever, excepting the first three years (2001-2003) of low coverage. But with the mild conditions of 2020 the Harrier count jumped to 104. This year the count was back down, with a total of 78 - presumably due to a combination of COVID-restricted coverage and substantial snow cover in February. The 2021 rate of 0.088/hr was the fourth lowest ever (Figure 1).

As usual, Harriers were widely scattered, with some indication as usual of more in the Susquehanna River Valley (Figure 2). *Lawrence* led with seven, followed by *Columbia* with six (Table 2).

Vultures. After record-breaking totals in 2020, both vulture species were lower in 2021. Turkey Vultures were down 14%, from 3634 to 3109, which is within the range of recent years. Black Vultures were down 36% from last year's record 1689 to 1084 this year, the lowest number since 2014 (Figure 1). The big decrease of Black Vultures may result from reduced observers in vehicles, the cold weather of February, or just the variations for a species with dynamic movement and large assemblages that by chance may or may not be detected in any given year. Considering that Turkey Vultures were not down so dramatically, it might seem that the third of those three factors is the most likely explanation for the big drop in Black Vultures.

As always, most vultures were in the southeast (Figure 2). And, as usual, *Lancaster* led easily with 893 Turkey Vultures. However, for the first time in many years, another county took honors for Black Vultures, with *Montgomery's* 165 edging *Lancaster* by one (Table 2). *Lancaster* and *Chester* accounted for 37% of all vultures recorded.

Turkey and Black Vultures were found in 31 and 30 counties, respectively. For Turkey Vultures that is about average over the last five years, though well short of the record total of 39 from 2020. For Black Vultures, despite the significantly lower state-wide total compared to recent years, the count of 30 counties was a new high, although 11 of these 30 counties totaled just 1-3 birds. Among outliers, where not often found in winter, Turkey Vultures were recorded in *Bedford*, *Blair*, and *Bradford*; and Black Vultures in *Blair*, *Luzerne*, *Lycoming*, *Monroe*, and *Pike*. *Westmoreland* registered both vultures, and should now be considered within the normal winter range of both, albeit still uncommon in winter.

Bald Eagle. As seen in Figure 1 and as everyone knows, the Bald Eagle population has grown explosively in the last decade.

The Pennsylvania WRS count peaked at 600 in 2019, and has been lower the last two years, with 453 counted in 2021. Nevertheless, the upward trend remains strong. Perhaps the eagles are entering somewhat of a plateau stage. However, the lower numbers of 2020 and 2021 compared to 2019 are just as likely the result of normal variation from one year to the next: for example, the total state-wide count is influenced by winter congregations on the Susquehanna River in *Lancaster* that vary yearly and which may or may not be detected when the one or two key routes are run. Further, there is the question of what was missed in 2021, with fewer observers in some vehicles. It will be interesting to watch the direction of the trend for Bald Eagles - presumably their population expansion will level off at some point.

Bald Eagles were recorded in 52 of 66 reporting counties (Figure 2), compared to 56 last year. The highest counts, as usual, were in the Susquehanna and Delaware River drainages, and in the northwest. Top counties were *Lancaster*, *Bucks*, and *Northumberland*, with 76, 48, and 27 eagles, respectively. Twelve counties reached double digits.

Of the 453 total eagles, 36% (163) were listed as immature, similar to recent years.

Other Raptors After several years of steady increases in number and hourly rate, Red-shouldered Hawks dropped this year, from the record of 188 in 2020 to 144 in 2021, which tied for third highest total ever (Figure 1). As usual, they were concentrated in southeastern and south-central counties and in the northwest (Figure 2). The top county, again, was *Adams*, which had 24 Red-shoulders, well ahead of the 10 in second place *Lawrence*; *Crawford*, *Mercer*, and *Westmoreland* had 9 each (Table 2).

Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Merlin, and Peregrine Falcon were similar to recent years, although the Cooper's Hawk total of 140 did slightly surpass the previous record of 133 in 2019 (Table 1). Six Golden Eagles were found, about average, led by three in *Potter*. A Northern Goshawk was in *Franklin*. Single Northern Shrikes were found in *Clarion* and *Mercer*, about average (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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PSO website: <http://www.pabirds.org/>

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Bald Eagle at Shenango River Dam, Sharpsville, *Mercer* 31 January. (Darren Pierce)

Table 1. Pennsylvania WRS Species Counts for 2020 and High Counts.

Species	2021 total	High Count
Bald Eagle	453	600 (2019)
Northern Harrier	78	133 (2008)
Sharp-Shinned Hawk	35	62 (2017)
Cooper's Hawk	140	140 (2021)
Northern Goshawk	1	5 (2004)
Red-shouldered Hawk	144	188 (2020)
Red-tailed Hawk	2994	3584 (2016)
Rough-legged Hawk	41	341 (2004)
Golden Eagle	6	10 (2015)
American Kestrel	626	711 (2017)
Merlin	19	20 (2019)
Peregrine Falcon	9	19 (2017,19)
Black Vulture	1084	1689 (2020)
Turkey Vulture	3109	3634 (2020)
Northern Shrike	2	10 (2012)
Hours	889.5	889.5 (2021)
Miles	13,490	13,490 (2021)

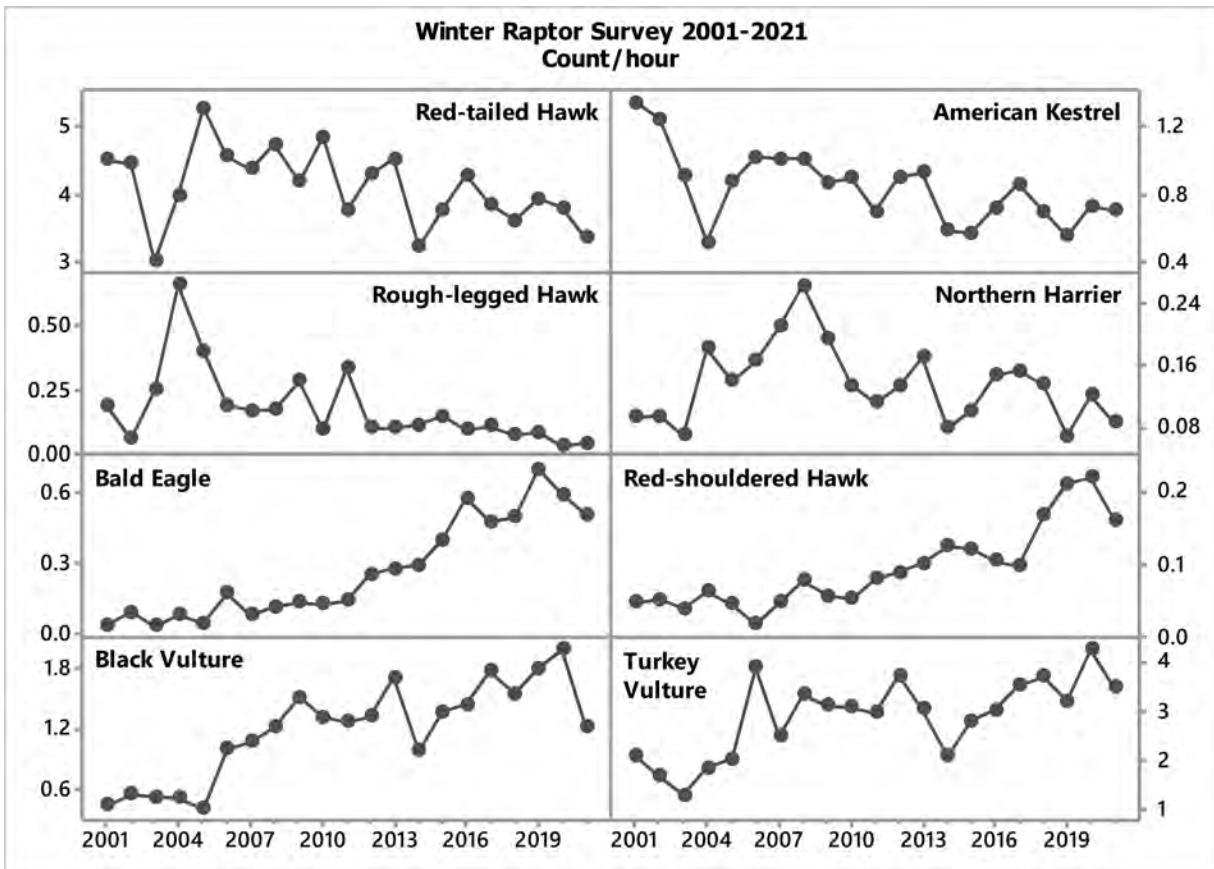


Figure 1. Pennsylvania WRS trends, 2001–2021. Data from all counties was combined and expressed as birds/hour.

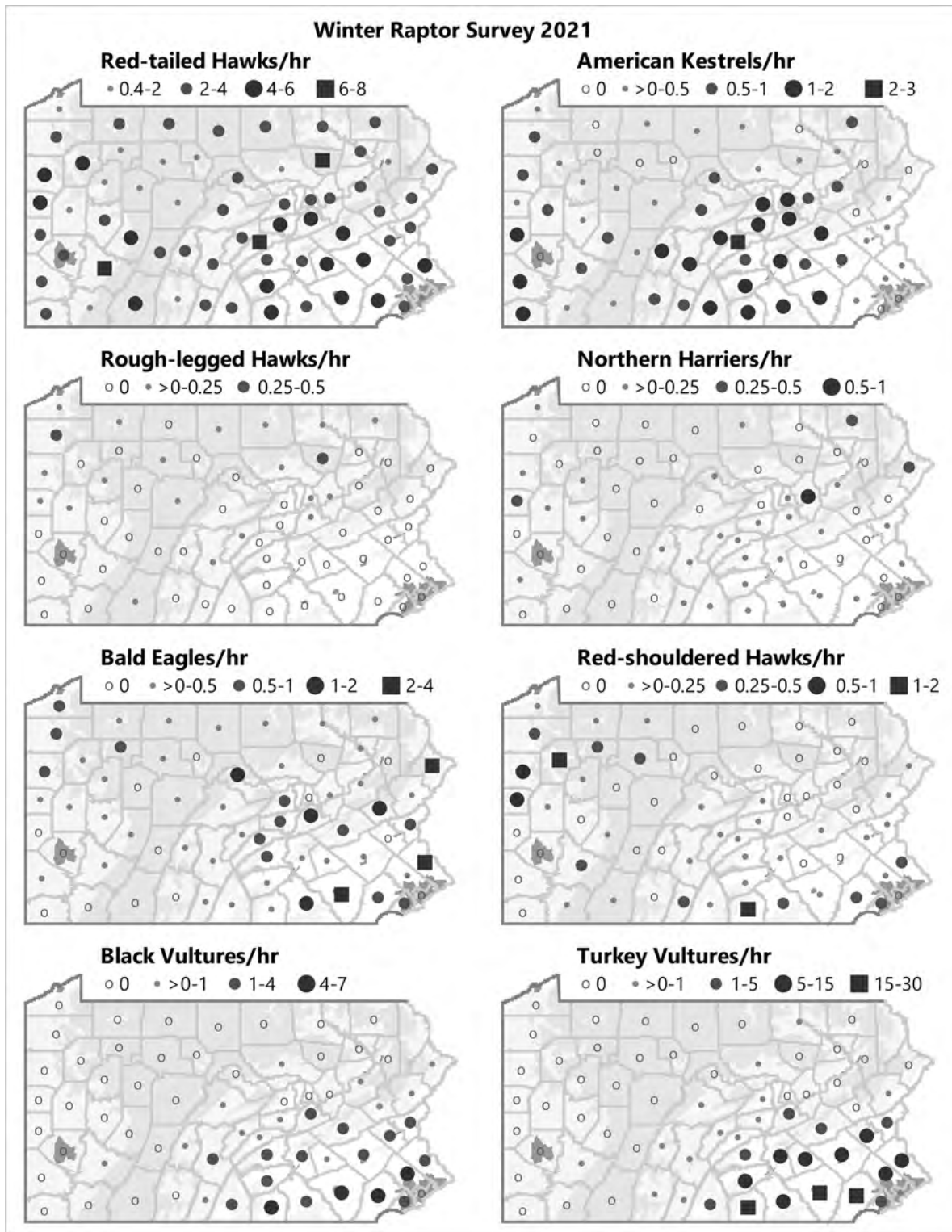


Figure 2. Pennsylvania 2021 WRS results by county. Count and effort data from all routes in a given county were combined and results expressed as birds/hour.

Appendix: 2021 Winter Raptor Survey Results

County	Hours	Miles	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	TV	BV	NShr
Adams	15	252	2	2	2	2		24	74			28			290	80	
Allegheny	2.25	56							5								
Armstrong	16.75	231	6	2		1			44			8					
Beaver	2.5	25							9			3		1			
Bedford	7	189							12			7			2		
Berks	21	293	6		1	3			102			14			213	77	
Blair	9.75	152	2	2	1	2			32			12			2	2	
Bradford	5	100	2			1			12	1					1		
Bucks	18.75	177	48	4		3		6	80			6		1	175	46	
Butler	10.5	176	4	2	1	1		2	16	1		6					
Cambria	9.75	164				1			26			2	1				
Cameron	2.25	62							1								
Carbon	5.75	100	6		1	2			15							1	
Centre	21.5	353	1		1	6		1	64			14			18	1	
Chester	21.75	342	15	1	2	3		7	88			3	1	1	406	87	
Clarion	32.25	490	6	4		4		4	55	3		7					1
Clearfield	9.5	189	2						11	2		1					
Clinton	6	100	7	1		2			14			5					
Columbia	10	117	1	6	1				20	1		8					
Crawford	20	274	14		1	4		9	76	6		12					
Cumberland	20.25	328	9	4		4		1	83			30	1		209	77	
Dauphin	12.5	229	6	1		3		1	44			19		1	101	41	
Delaware	11	153	6		1	1		3	25				1		47	26	
Elk	5.75	110	2					2	11	1	1						
Erie	13.25	258	7	1				3	25	2		1	3				
Fayette	22.5	325				1		5	36			8					
Forest	7.5	99	6					2	5								
Franklin	29.75	453	8	2	1	4	1	2	99			48	1		52	38	
Fulton	9.75	132	3	1		1		4	25			9			8	2	
Greene	13.75	240				1			36			25					
Huntingdon	29.75	427	12	5	1	4		5	111	1	1	35			8	39	
Indiana	19.75	254	3			1		1	107			19					
Jefferson	14	200			1				19			1					
Juniata	11.25	208	8	1		3		1	84			27			3	2	
Lackawana	6	100							6								
Lancaster	32	448	76	3	1	6		1	144			37		1	893	164	
Lawrence	19.25	206	6	7		10		10	103	1		9	2				
Lebanon	7.75	156	1			2			33			6			77	1	
Lehigh	8	148				1		1	31			4			49	16	
Luzerne	10.75	142	2	1	1	2			34			7				2	
Lycoming	20.25	308	5		1	1			34	3		7			1	1	
McKean	6	124	2		1	1		1	16			1					
Mercer	15.75	189	9	3	1	5		9	94	3		14					1
Mifflin	12.75	197	5	1	2	2		1	45	2		20		1	2	3	
Monroe	8.25	126	4			1		1	21			1			7	3	
Montgomery	27.25	303	4		3	5		3	74			6	1	2	168	165	
Montour	5.25	100		1					13	1		10					
Northampton	18.25	307	10	2	4	1		1	49			5			83	49	
Northumberland	14.25	202	27	2		2			74	2		19	1		22	16	
Perry	21	268	17	1				4	47		1	12			61	40	
Philadelphia	7.25	75							9				1		5		
Pike	6.5	21	22	3				1	23				1	1		6	
Potter	15.75	243	6						37	3	3	3					
Schuylkill	13.75	232	10	3	1	7		1	81			17	1		36	48	
Snyder	11.25	184	7	1	1	2		1	51			15			2	3	
Somerset	12	219			1	9		2	54	1		2					
Sullivan	3	60							18	1		1					
Susquehanna	9.5	91	4	4		1			27	2		6					
Tioga	27.5	265	10	5	1	2			62	3		2					
Union	7.5	158	4					1	25			14			1		
Venango	7	146	1			1		7	29			1					
Warren	10.5	175	3			5		2	33	1			1				
Washington	12.75	226	2	1	1	1			38			17	2				
Wayne																	
Westmoreland	28.25	490	8			15		9	178			19			20	9	
Wyoming	5.5	100	2						11			2					
York	10.75	223	14	1	1			5	34			11	1		147	39	
TOTAL	878.8	13267	439	77	34	140	1	139	2960	41	6	615	18	9	2962	1045	2

The Killer Frog! Dave DeReamus

Because I have a suburban backyard, I added a little pond with a waterfall to hopefully attract more birds than just those seen at my feeders. I placed it right outside my window so I could easily view it along with the feeders. Over the years, warblers and others have visited the pond along with many mammals.

This past summer, I noticed that a large bullfrog took up residence. Bullfrogs and the smaller Green Frogs had done this before without incident, but this one became the exception. One day, I looked out and saw it with a House Sparrow in its mouth! It was trying to swallow it whole, head-first. Only the back half of the bird and its legs were sticking out. After about a half-hour, it backed out of it and left the carcass lying there on the edge of the pond. My guess is that either the frog had bit off more than it could chew, or it was scared off by something and retreated into the pond. Over the next week, I saw it take at least five birds. They all appeared to be young, inexperienced House Finches. The birds would come down to bathe on the one rock that I have slightly submerged for them and the frog would nail them, drag them into the pond to drown them, and then slowly work on swallowing them. Even more infuriating was that it would come to my 'outdoor dining' area without wearing a mask! The day I actually saw it jump a foot into the air and catch a bird in mid-flight over the pond was the day I knew I had to find a way to catch and remove it.

I tried to catch it with an old fishing net, but as soon as I got anywhere near it, it would drop into the pond and hide. So, I got a little more inventive. I used my sister's fishing lure, which was a rubber mouse, put it on one of my old fishing poles, and casted out from my window. Within seconds of the lure hitting the lily pads, it lunged at it and I hooked it. I carefully removed the hook, put it in a bucket, and took it down to the Lehigh River where it was set free to create havoc out of my sight.

Interestingly, way back in the 70's, I helped Seth Benz remove several bullfrogs from the water feature behind Hawk Mountain's headquarters building because they were catching Goldfinches and

other small birds. I wonder how many birders actually know that they are bird predators? It turns out that they'll attack and eat just about anything they can handle. Now when I hear one, I wonder if it's really calling or if it's burping after a huge meal.



25 Years Ago in Pennsylvania Birds



Volume 9, No. 1.

The first list of Breeding Birds of Special Concern for Pennsylvania was published. Listed as Endangered were Osprey, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, King Rail, Black Tern, Short-eared Owl, and Loggerhead Shrike.

There was a Personality Profile of long-time Lancaster County birders Jan and Eric Witmer.

In Pennsylvania Birdlists, Barb Haas had the top Pennsylvania Life List with 349 species (in 2019, Devich Farbotnik lead with 396!).

Rare birds reported included American White Pelican, Ross's Goose, Barnacle Goose, and Green-tailed Towhee.

This issue can be read at pabirds.org.

Pennsylvania 2020 Bird Lists Report

Compiled by Andy Keister

At the conclusion of 2020, the number of birders who have reported PA Life Lists of 300 species or greater grew from 93 to 99. The number of birders with PA Life Lists of 350 species or greater also grew from 27 to 29. As last reported in 2018, Devich Farbotnik has recorded 396 species. It should be noted that Jason Horn shows 409 species reported via eBird but has not directly reported updated numbers to the PSO in recent years. The total number of birders with unassisted Life Lists of 300 species or greater increased to 13. For 2020, the year's high Annual List was reported by Zach Millen with 285 species followed by Richard Williams with 284 species and Ted Nichols, II at 271 species. Similar to the life lists, several individuals recorded more species through eBird in 2020 but did not report those numbers to me for inclusion within this report.

County life-listers who have recorded the most species in their respective counties and have report new species for 2020 include Geoff Malosh who has recorded 283 species for Allegheny County, Margaret Higbee has recorded 245 species in Armstrong County, Joe Verica who has recorded 279 species in Centre County, Andy Keister who has recorded 219 species in Columbia County, Ian Gardner who recorded 266 species in Dauphin County, Al Guarente who recorded 303 species in Delaware County, Brendyn Baptiste who recorded 266 species in Elk County, Jerry McWilliams who recorded 331 species in Erie County, E.J. Regula who recorded 190 species in Fayette County, Carl Garner who recorded 278 species in Franklin County, David Kyler who has recorded 278 species in Huntingdon County, Margaret Higbee who recorded 286 species in Indiana County, Eric Witmer who recorded 340 species in Lancaster County, Margaret Higbee who recorded 211 species in Lawrence County, Bobby Brown who has recorded 268 species in Lycoming County, Andy Keister who has recorded 241 species in Montour County, Arlene Koch who recorded 301 species in Northampton County, Andy Keister who recorded 246 species in Northumberland County, Michael Schall who recorded 228 species in Pike County, Roy Ickes who recorded 241 species in Washington County, Chris Fisher who recorded 224 species in Washington County and Dick Cleary who recorded 265 species in York County.

In annual county birding, Joe Verica set the new high record for Centre County at 248 species, Brendyn Baptiste set a new high record for Elk County at 178 species, E.J. Regula set a new high record for Fayette County at 184 species, Bill Oyler set a new high record for Franklin County at 233 species, Margaret Higbee set a new high record for Indiana County at 216 species, Chad Kauffman set a new high record in Juniata County at 202 species, Michael Schall set the new high record for Pike County at 210 species, and Chris Fischer set the new high record for Wayne County at 213 species. That's a significant increase over the previous year when only one new county record was set.

A total of 49 individuals submitted list information, comments on their year of birding or Bird of the Year votes for 2020. This is a substantial increase from 2019 when only 34 people submitted their numbers and votes. I attribute the increase to a combination of factors including a higher overall interest in birding due to COVID 19 restrictions and added effort to collect data from individuals who had not made submissions in recent years.

The Bird of the Year 2020

A total of 37 birders voted for 37 different species for Bird of the Year in 2020. It was an exceptional year for rarities in Pennsylvania. Species like Yellow Rail, Mew Gull, South Polar Skua, Northern Wheatear, Wilson's Plover, Calliope Hummingbird, White-faced Ibis and Pacific Golden Plover that might win on any other year, couldn't even crack the top 3 in 2020. The winner was determined by awarding three points for a first-place vote, two points for a second-place vote and one point for a third-place vote. The overwhelming winner was **Tundra Bean-Goose** (63 points) with **Evening Grosbeak** (23 points) and **Brewer's Sparrow** (18 points) coming in second and third respectively. The remaining votes included Townsend's Solitaire (14), Pacific Golden-Plover (11), Pink-footed Goose (8), Painted Bunting (8), Pine Siskin (7), Swainson's Warbler (7), Red Crossbill (6), Swallow-tailed Kite (6), Allen's Hummingbird (4), Common Redpoll (4), Lark Sparrow (4), Northern Wheatear (4), Northern Goshawk (3), Eastern Whip-poor-will (3), Sandhill Crane (3), Gyrfalcon (3), Mew Gull (2), Vesper Sparrow (2), South Polar Skua (2), Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (2), Harlequin Duck (2), Calliope Hummingbird (1), Rufous Hummingbird (1), Black-legged Kittiwake (1), Black-throated Gray Warbler (1), Clay-colored Sparrow (1), Connecticut Warbler (1), Red-breasted Nuthatch (1), Red-necked Grebe (1), Sedge Wren (1), Varied Thrush (1), Western Tanager (1), White-faced Ibis (1), and Wilson's Plover (1).

PA Life Lists

1	396	Devich Farbotnik	2018	11	374	Geoff Malosh	2020	20	361	Michael Schall	2020
2	393	Barbara Haas	2018	12	371	Jason Horn	2002	23	360	Bernard Morris	2011
2	393	Franklin Haas	2020	12	371	Arlene Koch	2020	23	360	Chuck Chalfant	2016
4	391	Dave DeReamus	2020	12	371	Jonathan Heller	2020	25	358	Steve Farbotnik	2006
5	389	Peter Robinson	2020	15	370	Rick Wiltraut	2006	26	354	John Fedak	2006
6	385	Eric Witmer	2020	16	369	Randy C. Miller	2016	26	354	Jeff Hopkins	2020
7	383	Tom Garner	2020	17	365	Michael David	2020	28	353	Mike Fialkovich	2018
8	380	Al Guarente	2020	18	363	Bruce Carl	2020	28	353	Bill Etter	2020
9	376	Ken Lebo	2018	19	362	Nick Pulcinella	2013	30	349	Fritz Brock	2019
10	375	Ronald Leberman	2018	20	361	Robert Schutsky	2011	30	349	Richard Williams	2020
				20	361	Harold Lebo	2012	32	348	Andy Keister	2020

33	346	Jerry Book	2000	84	309	Richard Rehrig	2016	134	274	Sarah Gerrish	2009
33	346	Joyce Hoffmann	2004	85	308	Robyn Henise	2000	134	274	Neil Troyer	2013
33	346	Shannon Thompson	2015	85	308	Mike Weible	2007	137	273	Katrina Knight	1999
36	342	David Kyler	2020	85	308	Roger Higbee	2008	138	272	Scott Kinzey	1999
36	342	Jerry McWilliams	2020	88	307	Ernest Schiefer	2000	138	272	Bob Machesney	2005
38	341	Margaret Higbee	2020	89	306	David Yeany II	2016	138	272	Pamela Fisher	2009
38	341	Mark Vass	2020	90	305	Gene Wilhelm	1992	138	272	Nathan Fronk	2012
40	340	Richard Timm	2011	91	304	David Hauk	2019	142	271	James Flynn	1997
40	340	Chad Kauffman	2020	92	303	Brian Byrnes	2020	143	270	Barry Reed	2010
40	340	Ian Gardner	2020	93	302	Sam Stull	1985	143	270	Carol Hildebrand	2019
40	340	Wayne Laubscher	2020	93	302	Edward Pederson	1998	145	268	Sam Sinderson	2005
44	339	Dick Cleary	2020	93	302	Rick Koval	2004	146	267	Harry Henderson	1991
44	339	Ted Nichols II	2020	96	301	Mark McConaughy	2015	146	267	Brian Quindlen	2015
46	338	Jan Witmer	1997	96	301	Richard Nugent	2020	148	266	Joe Meloney	1994
46	338	Richard Colyer	2000	98	300	Larry Lewis	1988	148	266	Lewis Grove	2010
48	337	John Miller	1997	98	300	Dave Rieger	2012	150	265	Marjorie Howard	2008
48	337	Mike Epler	2018	100	299	Keith Richards	1982	150	265	John Carter	2017
50	336	William Stocku	1997	101	298	George Malosh	2003	152	263	Tim Johnson	2020
51	335	Matt Wlasniewski	2012	101	298	Allen Schweinsberg	2014	153	262	Theodore Drozdowski	2005
51	335	Chuck Berthoud	2019	103	297	Allan Keith	1998	153	262	Jeff Payne	2008
51	335	Zachary Millen	2020	103	297	Jim Dunn	2014	155	260	Dennis Miller	1999
54	332	William Murphy	2000	103	297	Dan Richards	2017	155	260	Retta Payne	2008
55	331	Greg Grove	2020	106	296	Ed Kwater	1996	155	260	Martin Page	2014
56	330	Billy Weber	2011	106	296	Bill Keim	2013	158	259	Linda McWilliams	1992
57	329	Paul Schwalbe	1998	108	295	Frank Windfelder	1998	158	259	Eugene Zielinski	2000
57	329	Trudy Kyler	2020	108	295	J. Kenneth Gabler	2002	158	259	Jeffrey Hall	2018
59	327	Glenna Schwalbe	1998	110	294	James Baxter	1986	161	258	Steve Graff	2000
59	327	Steve Santner	1999	110	294	Terence Schiefer	1999	161	258	Jeffrey Wentz	2002
59	327	Bill Oyler	2020	110	294	William Reid	2001	163	257	Russell Ryan	1993
62	326	Russ States	2015	110	294	Gary Edwards	2014	163	257	Bruce Johnson	2019
63	324	Harry Franzen	1996	114	293	John Peplinski	1994	163	257	Roy Ickes	2020
63	324	Aden Troyer	2013	115	291	Thomas Reeves	2017	166	256	Ted Grisez	1996
63	324	Timothy Becker	2017	116	290	David Abbott	1998	167	255	Nick Kerlin	2010
66	322	Tom Clauser	2012	116	290	Chuck Tague	1999	167	255	Flo McGuire	2014
66	322	Deborah Grove	2020	118	289	Kevin Crilley	1998	167	255	Sandy Lockerman	2014
66	322	Eric Hartshaw	2020	119	288	Ross Gallardy	2006	170	254	Dean Newhouse	2019
69	319	John Ginaven	1998	120	287	Dustin Welch	2011	170	254	Brendyn Baptiste	2020
70	318	Phillips Street	1999	121	285	Armas Hill	1996	172	253	Scott Bastian	1999
71	317	Matthew Spence	2013	121	285	Neal Thorpe	1997	172	253	Thomas Ford-Hutch.	2006
72	316	Alex Lamoreaux	2014	123	284	James Gray	1983	172	253	Kevin Fryberger	2010
73	315	Evelyn Kopf	1995	124	283	Kerry Grim	1998	172	253	Chris Ficher	2020
73	315	Drew Weber	2011	124	283	Scott Bills	2018	176	252	Evan Houston	2017
75	314	Walter Shaffer	1999	126	282	John Billings	1998	176	252	Ryan Tomazin	2019
76	313	Harold Morrin	1996	126	282	Dick Byers	2002	176	252	Noah Kauffman	2020
76	313	David McNaughton	2013	126	282	Bobby Brown	2020	179	251	Karol Pasquinelli	2020
78	312	John Salvetti	2011	129	278	James Baird	1981	180	250	Stanley Glowacki	2002
78	312	Skip Conant	2013	129	278	Merrill Wood	1991	181	249	Paul Mauss	2020
80	311	Dana Shaffer	1999	129	278	Gerry Boltz	2018	182	247	Andy Wilson	2014
80	311	Don Henise	2000	132	277	Bonnie Baird	1981	183	245	Bill Reddinger	1999
80	311	Carl Garner	2020	133	276	Randi Gerrish	2009	183	245	Robert Frantz	2000
83	310	Joseph Verica	2020	134	274	Gloria Lamar	1992	185	244	Harvey Troyer	1999

Comments About 2020 Birding in PA

(New PA Life List Species and other comments)

Justin Berkheimer

New PA Life List Species: Iceland Gull, Long-eared Owl, Sandhill Crane, Prairie Warbler, Black Tern, Vesper Sparrow, Golden-winged Warbler, Black-billed Cuckoo, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck.

Bobby Brown

New PA Life List Species: Pacific Loon, Wilson's Phalarope, Long-eared Owl, Prothonotary Warbler, Red Phalarope, Least Bittern.

Michael David

New PA Life List Species: Painted Bunting, Swainson's Warbler, South Polar Skua, Brewer's Sparrow, Black-legged Kittiwake, Tundra Bean-Goose.

Dave DeReamus

New PA Life List Species: Tundra Bean-Goose

Barbara Griffith

New PA Life List Species: Lark Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak, Long-billed Dowitcher, Red Knot.

Eric Hartshaw

New PA Life List Species: Glaucous Gull, Painted Bunting, Pink-footed Goose, Wilson's Phalarope, Marbled Godwit, Swainson's Warbler, White Ibis, Hudsonian Godwit, Calliope Hummingbird, Franklin's Gull, Northern Wheatear, Black-legged Kittiwake, Hoary Redpoll.

Jeff Hopkins

New PA Life List Species: White-winged Dove, Townsend's Solitaire, Northern Wheatear, Tundra Bean-Goose.

Comments: I definitely spent more time in the state than usual. I usually travel internationally a lot and this is the first year since 1986 that I haven't left the US. In fact, I've only been to 8 states this year and 3 were pre-Covid.

Ryan Johnson

New PA Life List Species: Common Redpoll, Red Crossbill, Connecticut Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Philadelphia Vireo, Grasshopper Sparrow, White-winged Scoter, Surf Scoter, Red-necked Grebe, Peregrine Falcon, American Coot.

Comments: Just when I thought 2019 couldn't be beaten, 2020 pulled through! This was especially rewarding considering the pandemic challenges. I missed my all-time annual PA Species high count by two, but had my best year species wise for both Wayne and Lackawanna Counties. I had several incredible birding adventures in Wayne, a highly rural and under-birded County this year. It was nice representing this County better in eBird in 2020 along with my good birding friend Chris Fischer. I am sad to see the memories made this past year filed away, but welcome all of those to come in 2021!

Tim Johnson

New PA Life List Species: Eurasian Collard-dove, Least Bittern, Golden-winged Warbler, Alder Flycatcher, Clay-colored Sparrow, Swallow-tailed Kite, Connecticut Warbler, Evening Grosbeak, Townsend's Solitaire, Red Crossbill and Long-eared Owl.

Michelle Kienholz

Comments: On her votes for Tundra Bean-Goose, Mew Gull and Pacific Golden-Plover – "These are all remarkable visitors who would not immediately scream flashy different bird and would take some skill to pick out as a reportable rare vagrant (especially gull and plover). The Northern Wheatear and South Polar Skua would be up there too."

Geoff Malosh

New PA Life List Species: Tundra Bean-Goose.

Paul Mauss

Comments: Very limited birding this past year due to Covid-19 travel and closure restrictions (Also just turned 80!). Hopefully this year will be much better.

Zach Millen

New PA Life List Species: Too many to list, but my favorite was South Polar Skua.

Bill Oyler

New PA Life List Species: Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Pink-footed Goose, Swallow-tailed Kite, Townsend's Solitaire, Swainson's Warbler.

Joe Papp

New PA Life List Species: Painted Bunting, Caspian Tern, Prothonotary Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, Sanderling, Northern Waterthrush, Summer Tanager, Black-crowned Night-Heron, White-rumped Sandpiper, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Common Gallinule, Alder Flycatcher, Wilson's Phalarope, Swainson's Warbler, Blue Grosbeak, Baird's Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope, Long-billed Dowitcher, Brewer's Sparrow, Connecticut Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Wilson's Warbler, Evening Grosbeak, White-winged Scoter, Lapland Longspur, Black Vulture.

Comments: 2020 was my best year of birding in Pennsylvania yet, mostly because I connected with an amazing mentor, John Flannigan, who encouraged me to find/chase/see as many new birds as I could.

E.J. Regula

Comments: Got back into birding this year. Really only bird Fayette County. Went with Matt Justowich and Kerry Bell a lot. Feel like Fayette County is a lost gem. But not enough birders live/bird her to cover all of the spots. Highlights include finding Fayette's first ever Sandhill Crane. Also 1,000+ ducks/swans on Greenlick Reservoir. Joined this organization this year and am very impressed with the quality of the magazine.

Peter Robinson

New PA Life List Species: Brewer's Sparrow, Black-legged Kittiwake, Tundra Bean-Goose.

Kurt Schwarz

New PA Life List Species: Lark Sparrow, Pink-footed Goose, Painted Bunting.

Richard Williams

New PA Life List Species: Pink-footed Goose, Painted Bunting, Barrow's Goldeneye, Western Tanager, Red Phalarope, American White-Pelican, Pacific Golden-Plover, Brewer's Sparrow, Black-legged Kittiwake, Tundra Bean-Goose.

Summary of the Season: Winter 2020-21

Nick Bolgiano

Highlights of the winter of 2020-21 include a first state record of **Tundra Bean-Goose**, one of the best winter finch irruptions of this century, and one of the better winters for hummingbirds, thrushes, warblers, and Cardinalidae. Regional differences were accentuated, with many cold-hardy birds tending to be found in the northern half of the state and many less-hardy birds concentrated in the Delaware Valley. A mid-December snowstorm greatly affected observations during the first weekend of the CBC, while a late January-early February snowstorm inaugurated harsher conditions that lasted through February.

The winter of 2020-21 was forecast to be a La Niña winter, when below normal temperatures in the eastern Pacific Ocean tend to cause the easternmost U.S. to be warmer than average and much of the northern U.S. to be cooler and wetter than average. It turned out to be an up-and-down winter in terms of both temperature and precipitation.

Compared to the long-term averages, Pennsylvania was 3.2 °F warmer in December, 4.1°F warmer in January, and 1.4 °F colder in February. The La Niña effect weakened because there was a split in polar vortex, allowing cold air to sink south in February, and because the North Atlantic Oscillation was in a negative phase in parts of December thru first half of February (Weather World, Penn State Meteorology).

There were two major snowstorms. The first occurred December 16-17, with up to 30 in. of snow, with the highest levels in the northeast and the least in the west. Several inches of rain subsequently fell on December 23, melting much of the snow. The second snowstorm occurred January 31-February 2, again with up to 30 in. of snow, with the highest levels in the east and the least in the west. Freezing rain for most occurred on February 15-16. In many places, snow and ice tended to linger through February. For the winter, precipitation was above average in the eastern half of Pennsylvania and below average in the west. The weather played a major role regarding when and where birds were encountered this winter.

Many **Snow Geese** continued to winter in the southeast and concentrate in the Lehigh Valley. The CBC tally was the second highest historically to the previous year's tally and included a remarkable 227,000 Snow Geese at Bethlehem-Easton. Snow Goose was reported from 36 counties, one fewer than in the previous two winters. Snow and ice limited the big spring movement northward until March, with limited February staging at Middle Creek WMA and none in the upper Susquehanna Valley.

Ross's Goose was found in only four counties: *Lancaster, Chester, Lebanon, and Northampton*, compared to eight counties the previous winter and five the winter before. **Greater White-fronted Goose** was reported from just six counties: *Armstrong, Bucks, Delaware, Lawrence, Montgomery, and Northampton*, compared to 14-15 counties the previous two winters.

The first state record of **Tundra Bean-Goose**, in *Delaware* and *Philadelphia* December 16 to end of January, was one of the season's highlights. Because its usual winter range is western Europe and relatively few have been observed in North America, many birders traveled to witness this rarity.

Pink-footed Goose was in *Bucks, Montgomery, and Northampton*, a first county record for the latter. The *Bucks* and *Montgomery* birds were thought to be the same bird. Further, as the dates of observation did not overlap in the three counties, it is conceivable that the same bird was seen in all three counties, similar to the speculated Pink-footed Goose perambulations in the same area a year earlier.

Brant remained along the Atlantic coast, with none reported in Pennsylvania. **Cackling Goose** was reported from 25 counties, mostly in the southeast and widely scattered elsewhere, compared to 22 and 26 counties the previous two winters.

Trumpeter Swan was in six counties: *Armstrong, Blair, Cambria, Cumberland, Jefferson, and Monroe*. The *Cambria* bird continued from spring 2020 until freeze-up and a *Monroe* swan was seen for the second consecutive winter. A good December movement of **Tundra Swans** was observed, and the CBC total was the highest in five years.

Blue-winged Teal was in *Centre, Dauphin, Lancaster, and Philadelphia*; **Eurasian Wigeon** was in *Chester, Dauphin, and Montgomery*; and **Green-winged Teal (Eurasian race)** was in *Delaware* and *Philadelphia* in late December. The steady decline of **Mallards** in the CBC continued, though it remains by far the most common duck species.

King Eider was notable in *Berks*, where a first county record, and in *Dauphin*, the first since 1920. **Eider sp.** was observed in *Erie* on the first day of the season. A female **Barrow's Goldeneye** was on the Delaware R. for the third consecutive winter, in *Northampton* this time, compared to being one county to the north, in *Monroe*, the previous two winters.

Scoters were well-distributed. **Surf Scoter** was in seven counties: *Allegheny, Clearfield, Crawford, Erie, Lancaster, Washington, and Warren*; **White-winged Scoter** in nine counties: *Allegheny*

Armstrong, Beaver, Bucks, Carbon, Delaware, Erie, Westmoreland, and York; and **Black Scoter** also in nine counties: *Allegheny, Cambria, Carbon, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Erie, Philadelphia, and Venango*, an excellent showing for what is often the least common scoter.

During the February cold spell, above-normal numbers of **Redheads** were observed on the Allegheny and other western rivers in *Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Fayette, and Warren* and on the Susquehanna's West Branch in *Lycoming*.

While most West Nile Virus-affected species have paused in their declines during the last two winters, **Ruffed Grouse** apparently has not. The 22 grouse on the CBC was a modern-era low, although snow may have restricted access to some locations.

Red-necked Grebe was reported in *Allegheny, Erie, Lackawanna* (where a first county record), *Luzerne, Pike, and Susquehanna*. Notable was that four of these counties are in the northeast, not a typical location for Red-necked Grebe. **Eared Grebe** was in *Erie*, where more expected.

After years of slow growth, the small colonies of **Eurasian Collared-Doves** in *Berks* and *Franklin* have expanded during the last several years, with high counts of 41 in *Franklin* and 11 in *Berks*. A Eurasian Collared-Dove was also seen in *Lycoming*.

There was an excellent showing of hummingbirds this winter, with eight **Rufous Hummingbirds** in five counties: three in *Berks*, two in *Lancaster*, and one each in *Clearfield, Franklin, and York*. An **Allen's Hummingbird** was tracked from *Delaware* to *Philadelphia* and a **Calliope Hummingbird** was in *York*.

Virginia Rail was in *Bucks, Chester, Lancaster* (2 birds), and *Tioga*. **Common Gallinule**, rare in winter, was at John Heinz NWR and the NE Water Treatment Plan in *Philadelphia*.

Sandhill Crane was found in 10 counties compared to 16 the previous year and 8 in 2018-19. Its stronghold remains *Crawford, Lawrence, and Mercer*, where high numbers were again observed. The CBC total of 323, with all but three birds from three northwestern sites, was the second highest historically.

Uncommon sandpipers included **Black-bellied Plover** at *Erie* on December 3 for a new fall late date, **Dunlin** at *Mercer* January 24, **Purple Sandpiper** at *Erie* December 1 and December 6, **Least Sandpiper** at Codorus SP in *York* until January 7, **Spotted Sandpiper** in *Philadelphia* on January 8, and **Greater Yellowlegs** in *Centre* December 2 and *Philadelphia* December 1.

Rare for PA, **Black-legged Kittiwake** was especially unexpected inland in *Centre* December 13-14 and slightly more expected at *Erie* (where one was seen on December 2 and one was eaten by a Peregrine Falcon the next day). A 2005 sighting from *Erie* is the only other PA wintering report in eBird in this century, although the Great Lakes are among the more expected locations. **Black-headed Gull** was at *Erie* January 22. Five **Laughing Gulls** were in *Bucks* December 7 and one was in *Lancaster* February 8-11. The remains of a **Franklin's Gull** were found in *Erie* December 29. A probable California Gull was in *Delaware* December 31.

Bucks continued as one of the East coast's core wintering areas for **Lesser Black-backed Gull** and **Herring Gull**. The 609 Lesser Black-backed Gulls was the fourth highest statewide CBC tally, with all but three birds tallied from the three *Bucks* CBC sites. The 31,000 Herring Gulls counted on the Southern Bucks County CBC again led all North American CBC counts.

Iceland Gull was in six southeastern counties, plus *Allegheny*, *Butler* (where a probable third county record), and *Erie*. **Glaucous Gull** was in *Bucks* and *Philadelphia* in the southeast and *Allegheny*, *Butler* (where a probable second county record), and *Erie* in the west. In the southeast, Glaucous Gull was more restricted in distribution this winter, found in only two counties compared to six the previous winter.

Red-throated Loon was infrequently reported, except at *Erie* where more common. Elsewhere, it was at *Berks*, *Butler*, *Clinton*, *Schuylkill*, and *Philadelphia*; most seen during December, as expected. **Great Cormorant** was found at the usual spots on the Delaware R. in *Bucks*, *Delaware*, and *Philadelphia*, with numbers in *Bucks* thought to have increased after two winters of lower numbers.

The two most likely herons besides the more common **Great Blue Heron** were recorded. **Great Egret** was at *Bucks*, *Cumberland*, *Lancaster*, and *Philadelphia*, in line with expectation. **Black-crowned Night-Heron**, which has become increasingly scarce during winter, was in *Allegheny* for a third county winter record.

Lingering **Ospreys** were reported in *Bucks* (2 birds), *Chester*, *Lancaster*, and *Tioga*. **Golden Eagle** was detected in 26 counties, an uptick over the 19 of the previous year and 22 the year before. Most of the reports were at or near ridges used in migration, but a cluster of observations in *Cameron*, *Clearfield*, *Clinton*, and *Elk* are from a wintering area in the forested northwest plateau, while reports from *Bucks*, *Chester*, *Delaware*, *Montgomery*, and *Philadelphia* were mostly young birds probably moving to or from wintering areas around the Chesapeake Bay.

Northern Harrier numbers were on the low side in both CBC and WRS. The **Sharp-shinned Hawk** decline in the CBC continued in contrast to **Cooper's Hawk** numbers, which set a new CBC high. **Northern Goshawk** was reported from only six counties: *Bucks*, *Cameron*, *Franklin*, *Luzerne*, *Schuylkill*, and *Warren*, compared to nine counties the previous year and 11 in 2018-19. Three were reported in the CBC. Goshawks are displaying a sharp decline in encounters.

Bald Eagle numbers in the CBC were consistent with a continued increase. **Red-shouldered Hawk** tallies in the CBC far exceeded the previous statewide high, while WRS counts were similar to those of the previous several years. **Red-tailed Hawks** numbers in the CBC were the highest in four years, but lower than during the 2004-2010 peak period, while they were low in the WRS. This suggests that many Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks seen in December had moved south by the WRS period in January and February.

Rough-legged Hawk was reported from 42 counties, compared to 27 the previous winter and 48 the winter before. None were reported in the southwest and few in the Susquehanna Valley and southeast. CBC and WRS counts of Rough-legged Hawk were low. Rough-legs often appeared where they have been historically recorded, but generally in low numbers.

Barn Owl was reported in five central and southeastern counties, about average: *Berks*, *Centre*, *Cumberland*, *Franklin*, and *Mifflin*. The 384 **Great Horned Owls** tallied in the CBC was the most in six years, possibly reflecting a moderation from West Nile Virus. There was a decent showing of **Snowy Owls**, reported from 16 counties, though missing from the north central, northeast, and southwest regions.

Long-eared Owl was found in 11 counties, including eight southeastern counties, plus *Blair*, *Mercer*, and *Wyoming*, compared to 10 counties the previous year and 9 in 2018-19. **Short-eared Owl** was found in 36 counties, compared to 20 the previous two years and 34 in 2017-18. It was thought to be an excellent winter for Short-eared Owls in *Mercer*, a judgment supported by the many counties where found. **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was thought to be comparatively abundant in *Bucks*, *Lancaster*, and *Montgomery*, reflecting a good flight year.

Red-headed Woodpecker was found in 28 counties, compared to 33 and 25 the previous two winters. The CBC total of 55 was about average, though missing from *Bucks* and *Franklin* where usually found. Good numbers of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, **Hairy Woodpeckers**, and **Pileated Woodpeckers** were reported in the CBC. Other than **Eastern Phoebe**, flycatchers were notable by their absence.

American Kestrel counts in both the CBC and WRS were similar to the previous

year's moderate-level tallies. The **Merlin** total in the CBC set a new high, as the wintering population continues to increase. **Peregrine Falcon** numbers in the CBC appear to be stable.

White-eyed Vireo was a surprise for *Monroe*. **Blue-headed Vireo** was reported in *Chester*, more typical for a Pennsylvania winter compared to last winter's five county reports. **Northern Shrike** was found in 14 counties, consistent with other recent winters, and once again concentrated in the northern half of the state, *Somerset* being the only southern county where reported. **Common Ravens** continued to increase; their CBC tally again set a new high.

The **Black-capped Chickadee** irruption noted in the fall into the usual range of only **Carolina Chickadees** in the southeast continued (Malosh 2021) - see the *Berks*, *Bucks*, *Franklin*, *Lancaster*, and *Montgomery* reports. The irruption into *Berks* was thought to be the largest since the winter of 2010-11. All southeastern CBC sites reported both chickadee species; southeast Pennsylvania is one of the best regions in eastern North America for detecting irrupting Black-caps during the CBC period (Bolgiano 2004a). All three parids, the two chickadees and **Tufted Titmouse**, continued to show upticks in their CBC numbers following low points in 2018 due to West Nile Virus.

Horned Lark was abundant in farmlands of the northwest, central valleys, and southeast after the two large snowstorms. The CBC total was above average after two years with low numbers.

The wintering flock of **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** was once again present at the NE Treatment Plant, *Philadelphia*, through the period, with a high count of 150. They were also observed at five other *Philadelphia* locations, at two in *Montgomery* along the Schuylkill R., and at the Penn-Warner Tract in *Bucks*, across the Delaware R. from the Trenton, NJ, sewage ponds, where they also overwinter. As expected, **Tree Swallows** appeared in the far southeast during late February. Unexpected was the **Barn Swallow** at the Washington Boro Water Treatment plant, *Lancaster*, until December 20.

Golden-crowned Kinglet displayed an unusual patchy distribution, with relatively few in the western Ridge & Valley and nearby Allegheny Plateau sites (see CBC Figure 2). The CBC total was less than half of normal. The impressive fall irruption of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** had apparently dropped off by the winter season, despite an excellent white pine seed crop. CBC data ranks this irruption as moderate, suggesting many nuthatches had moved on by December. Red-breasted Nuthatches tended to be more commonly found at higher elevations (see CBC Figure 2).

The only **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was in *Philadelphia* December 6-13; **House**

Wren was in five southeastern counties: *Cumberland*, *Lebanon*, *Lehigh*, *Montgomery*, and *Philadelphia*; and **Marsh Wren** in *Allegheny*, *Chester*, *Delaware*, and *Philadelphia* (2 birds).

Eight species of thrushes was an excellent showing for a Pennsylvania winter. The increased incidence of multiple thrush species with similar ecologies is very interesting. Especially impressive were the high **Hermit Thrush** densities during the CBC, following the December 16-17 snowstorm. The CBC report's Figure 2 shows that Hermit Thrushes concentrated in the central valleys and parts of the southeast. The count of 71 Hermit Thrushes on the Huntingdon CBC was particularly noteworthy.

Wood Thrush and **Veery** were both reported, although Wood Thrush has only three previous eBird winter reports and Veery none at all for PA. Wood Thrush was in *Union* and on the Bloomsburg and Harrisburg CBCs. The Veery reported on the Tunkhannock CBC, *Wyoming*, was one of only three reported in eBird for North America for the period. (This bird was omitted from Audubon's database and thus not included in the CBC report.)

Other uncommon thrushes included **Townsend's Solitaire** in *Franklin*, continuing from the fall; **Varied Thrush** in *Lawrence*; and **Swainson's Thrush** in *Allegheny* and *Franklin*. **Northern Wheatear** in *Berks* December 10-15 was a second county record and the first winter eBird report for PA. The previous seven Pennsylvania eBird reports are from the fall period.

American Pipits were common in southeastern farmlands, after two winters with comparatively few.

Evening Grosbeak was the most numerous in Pennsylvania since the winter of 1997-98, when the last irruption associated with the great 1968-1986 spruce budworm infestation occurred (Bolgiano 2004b). It was found in at least 38 counties, down from the 62 in the fall (Malosh 2021). The highest concentration was in the forested northwestern plateau, particularly in *Elk*, *Forest*, *Warren*, *McKean*, and *Clearfield*. At Elk Branch Lake, *Elk*, February counts of 300-500 grosbeaks were common, with a high count of 525. Elsewhere, most were in the Appalachians, with relatively few in the northeast, southeast, or southwest.

It is no accident that Evening Grosbeaks have appeared here during the last few winters. A spruce budworm infestation that began in 2006 along the northern shore of the St. Lawrence R. in Québec subsequently expanded, with 13.5 million hectares experiencing moderate to severe defoliation in 2020 (slightly bigger than the size of Pennsylvania). Evening Grosbeaks feed budworm larvae to their chicks, and large budworm infestations fuel grosbeak population expansions.

While the **Purple Finch** irruption was modest by historical standards, the CBC recorded the most Purple Finches since 2008. They were well-distributed across the state (see CBC Figure 2).

Common Redpoll irrupted in moderate to good numbers, which peaked during the winter period. It was reported from 62 of 67 counties (all except *Adams*, *Beaver*, *Fayette*, *Fulton*, and *Green*), with the highest concentrations in the northern half of the state, particularly in the northwest and northeast. Redpolls were usually observed in small flocks, some in flocks of 50-100, and a few flocks of as many as 200. The sparseness of the birch seed crop in much of the Appalachians likely limited flock sizes and kept many redpolls on the move.

Larger, darker redpolls of the *rostrata* race, rarely documented in Pennsylvania, were observed in *Butler*, *Clinton*, and *Warren*. **Hoary Redpoll** was observed in a remarkable 10 counties: *Butler*, *Centre*, *Crawford*, *Elk*, *Lackawanna*, *Luzerne*, *Lycoming*, *Mercer*, *Monroe*, and *Warren*, all in the northern half of state.

While there was a decent showing of **Red Crossbill** in November, most had moved on by December, presumably to the southern Appalachians or to the coastal plain. Red Crossbill was found in 22 counties, compared to 34 in the fall (Malosh 2021), mostly in small groups, and most reliably in the northeast.

Despite expectation that eastern boreal **White-winged Crossbills** would move westward in fall 2020 (Hoar 2020), this crossbill was reported from eight counties: *Centre*, *Clinton*, *Lackawanna*, *Lancaster*, *Luzerne*, *Schuylkill*, *Susquehanna*, and *Warren*, albeit in small numbers. All except the *Lancaster* and *Schuylkill* birds were from the northern half of state.

Pine Siskin was found in moderate to good numbers, according to the CBC. It was widely distributed, reported from all counties except *Sullivan*, but with a sparse birch and hemlock seed crop, it concentrated where there was available food. Like several other finches, many siskins appeared to have moved on by the winter period. A **European Goldfinch** of unknown provenance was in *Philadelphia*.

The two big snowstorms sent **Lapland Longspurs** and **Snow Buntings** south in very good numbers and many birders enjoyed seeing longspurs and buntings in numbers not seen for several years. Lapland Longspur was in 36 counties, compared to 12 the previous winter and 20 in 2018-19, and Snow Bunting was in 43 counties, compared to 22 the previous winter and 27 in 2018-19. High counts included 50 Lapland Longspurs in *Westmoreland* and 150 Snow Buntings in *Northumberland*.

High counts of **Chipping Sparrows**, **Dark-eyed Juncos**, **White-throated Sparrows**, and **Savannah Sparrows** were observed during the CBC, especially the

first weekend, as many concentrated along roads and water edges after the mid-December snowstorm. **American Tree Sparrow** showed a small rebound from low counts of the last two winters, but numbers remained much lower than in the last century.

Uncommon sparrows included **Grasshopper Sparrow** at *Philadelphia*; **Clay-colored Sparrow** in *Indiana* continuing from fall and remaining through the period; **Oregon Junco** at *Allegheny*, *Clearfield*, *Delaware*, and *York*; **Harris's Sparrow** in *Lancaster* that stayed for a month; **Vesper Sparrow** in *Berks* and *Montour*, the latter a first winter eBird record, and a **Savannah Sparrow (Ipswich race)** in *Northampton*, a possible second state record. There was a nice representation of **Lincoln's Sparrow**, from six counties: *Bucks*, *Chester* (2 birds), *Cumberland*, *Lycoming*, *Montgomery*, and *Philadelphia* (2).

The most remarkable aspect about the Icteridae this winter was the number of **Baltimore Orioles**, with most being observed in the southeast. It was reported from 11 counties: *Allegheny*, *Bucks* (at least 17 birds, including 8 in one yard), *Chester* (7 birds), *Clinton*, *Delaware* (2), *Lancaster* (2), *McKean*, *Montgomery* (at least 11 birds visiting 9 yards), *Northampton*, *Philadelphia* (at least 4), and *Westmoreland*. Eight Baltimore Orioles were reported on the CBC.

Eastern Meadowlark was in 28 counties, a good showing compared to 17 last year and 18 the year before. The 55 Meadowlarks on the CBC was also slightly above average. Uncommon blackbirds included several **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** and a **Brewer's Blackbird** embedded in large blackbird flocks in southern *Lancaster* and **Bullock's Oriole** in *Bucks*.

Sixteen **Parulidae** species, plus a **Setophaga sp.**, were reported, which must be one of their best winter showings here, including several seldom seen during winter. Three **Ovenbirds** were reported, in *Centre*, *Huntingdon*, and *Philadelphia*, and four **Black-and-white Warblers**, in *Chester*, *Mifflin*, *Monroe*, and *Philadelphia*. While these frequencies were on the high end of normal, these two warblers rank after **Orange-crowned**, **Common Yellowthroat**, **Pine**, **Palm**, and **Yellow-rumped** in being expected in winter.

Very unexpected historically were **Tennessee Warbler** at *Allegheny*, *Bucks*, *Chester*, and *Delaware*, and **Cape May Warbler** at *Cambria*, *Columbia*, *Cumberland*, and *Philadelphia*. The *Delaware* Tennessee Warbler was a first for the Pennsylvania CBC. These spruce budworm warblers were seen in good numbers in the fall (Malosh 2021) and as with Evening Grosbeak, the current spruce budworm infestation in eastern Canada likely played a role in their presence here.

All three **Nashville Warblers** reported were in *Philadelphia*; **Northern Parula** was in *Dauphin*; and **Magnolia Warbler** in *Berks* and *Philadelphia*. Up to two **Yellow Warblers**, rare in PA during winter, were at the NE Water Treatment Plant in *Philadelphia*. A **Bay-breasted/Blackpoll Warbler** was in *Chester* on the first day of the winter season and a **Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's race)** was in *Erie* in mid-December.

Continuing a remarkable string of observations, a western **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was observed in the state for the third consecutive winter, in *Lebanon*, and the second winter at the location where found the previous year. **Black-throated Green Warbler** was in *Philadelphia* and **Wilson's Warbler** was in *Franklin* and *Monroe*.

Orange-crowned Warbler was reported from *Butler, Indiana*, and six southeastern counties, including at 12 locations in *Philadelphia*. In *Bucks*, 32 **Pine Warblers** were known from 18 locations, including 10 in one yard. **Prairie Warbler** was missed for the warbler extravaganza.

The eight **Cardinalidae** species was also an excellent showing. **Scarlet Tanager** in *Allegheny* during January may have been the rarest for the winter season. **Western Tanager** was in *Montgomery*; **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was in *Cumberland*; **Blue Grosbeak** in *Philadelphia* was a first winter county record; **Indigo Bunting** was in *Bucks* for a first county record and in *Cumberland*; and a **Painted Bunting** again overwintered near *Bowmansville, Lancaster*. Up to two **Dickcissels** were at one *Philadelphia* location and one was in *Washington*.

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Evening Grosbeak at Marienville, *Forest* 15 January; one of many outfitted with nanotag radio transmitters for movement research - note the antenna. (*David Yeany II*)

Birds of Note – December 2020 through February 2021

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.

Tundra Bean-Goose* – *Delaware*: at Springton Reservoir and nearby locations 12/16-20 (Jason Horn, Rob Fergus), a new state record (*doc submitted*); *Philadelphia*: presumably the same bird near the Schuylkill R. 1/9-31 (Linda Goschke).

Pink-footed Goose* – *Bucks*: one at Peace Valley Park 1/10-11 (Harris Brown, August Mirabella), thought to be the same bird as in *Montgomery*; *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 12/31-1/6 (Kevin Crilley) (*doc submitted*); *Northampton*: one at Seiple's Farm Pond and Silver Crest Rd Pond 1e/20-30 (Michael Schall, Brandon Brogle), a first county record (*doc submitted*).

Blue-winged Teal – *Centre*: one at Talleyrand Park 2/21-25 (Julia Plummer); *Dauphin*: one at Wildwood Lake Park 12/4-10 (Rick and Peggy Price); *Lancaster*: one at Octoraro Res. 12/28 (Nina Wolf, Warren Wolf); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz NWR 2/5 (Graham Gorgas).

Eurasian Wigeon – *Chester*: one at Marsh Creek SP 2/26 (Larry Lewis); *Dauphin*: one at Millersburg Ferry Wall 2/26 (Scott and Stephanie Bills); *Montgomery*: one at Green Lane Park 2/5 (Paul Heveran).

Green-winged Teal (*Eurasian race*)* – *Delaware*: at Delaware River/Hog Island Rd 12/28 (Rob Fergus, Al Guarente, Damon Orsetti) (*doc submitted*); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz NWR 12/29-1/28 (Rich Ziegler) (*doc submitted*).

King Eider* – *Berks*: immature male at Lake Ontelaunee 1/2 (Barton Smith), a county first (*doc submitted*); *Dauphin*: one at Susquehanna R., Rockville Bridge 12/18 (Scott Brookin), first county record since 1920 (*doc submitted*).

Eider sp.* – *Erie*: one at Sunset Point 12/1 (Jerry McWilliams) (*doc submitted*).

Barrow's Goldeneye* – *Northampton*: female on Delaware R. between Easton and Portland 12/26-2/26 (Michael Schall) (*doc submitted*).

Eared Grebe* – *Erie*: one on Edinboro Lake 12/6-11 (Jamie Hill) (*doc submitted*).

Eurasian Collared-Dove – *Berks*: up to 11 at Shartlesville; *Franklin*: up to 9 near Marion, one of four locations where found; *Lycoming*: one at Lime Bluff Recreation Center 12/15-16 (Gary Metzger).

Rufous Hummingbird – *Berks*: 3 continued from fall, immature male in Exeter Twp to 12/13 (Lois Vedock), adult male near Boyertown to 1/7 (Cathy Moyer, Mike Moyer), and adult female near Boyertown that stayed through the period (Ron Wagner, Karen Wagner); *Clearfield*: one in Dubois continued from fall to 12/10 (Don Nixon, Mary Kay Long); *Franklin*: female near Scotland continued from fall through the period (Kathy Lauver); *Lancaster*: 2 continued from fall, with male to 12/10 and juvenile

female to 12/26 (*fide* Sandy Lockerman); *York*: hatch-year male at Seven Valleys continued from fall to 12/9 (Janice Thoman).

Allen's Hummingbird* – *Delaware*: one at Springfield 12/9-19 (Debbie Beer, Adrian Binns); sixth state record (*doc submitted*); *Philadelphia*: band indicated same bird as in *Delaware*, in East Falls 1/6-22.

Calliope Hummingbird* – *York*: hatch-year male at Fairview Twp continued from fall to 12/19 (Jady Conroy) (*doc submitted*).

Virginia Rail – *Bucks*: one at Quakertown 12/20 (Bob McGarry); *Chester*: one at ChesLen Preserve 1/1 (Larry Lewis); *Lancaster*: 2 overwintered at Wood's Edge Park; *Tioga*: one at Marsh Creek 1/2 (Bob Ross).

Common Gallinule* – *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz NWR 12/1-3 (Rich Ziegler), one at NE Water Treatment Plant 1/11 (Mike Grubb).

Black-bellied Plover – *Erie*: one at Gull Point 12/3 (Connor Vara), new fall late date for county.

Dunlin – *Mercer*: one at Shenango Reservoir 1/24 (Michael Williams).

Purple Sandpiper – *Erie*: one at Sunset Point 12/1 (Jerry McWilliams), one at Gull Point 12/6 (Justin Berkheimer) (*doc submitted*).

Least Sandpiper – *York*: up to 5 at Codorus SP until 12/15 (m.ob.) and one there 1/7 (Bob Reiter).

Spotted Sandpiper – *Philadelphia*: one along Schuylkill R. 1/8 (Dan Efrogymson).

Greater Yellowlegs – *Centre*: one along S. Nixon Rd 12/2 (Susan Braun); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz NWR 12/1 (Rick Ziegler).

Black-legged Kittiwake* – *Centre*: juvenile at Bald Eagle SP 12/13-14 (Jordon Hillsley) (*doc submitted*); *Erie*: immature at Sunset Point 12/2 (Jerry McWilliams) and one was being eaten by Peregrine Falcon next day (Connor Vara) (*doc submitted*).

Black-headed Gull* – *Erie*: adult off west pier 1/22 (Jerry McWilliams, Jennifer Ferrick) (*doc submitted*).

Laughing Gull – *Bucks*: 5 at Van Sciver Lake 12/7 (Andrew Harrington); *Lancaster*: juvenile at Wissler Run Park 2/8-11 (Tom Amico).

Franklin's Gull* – *Erie*: remains found at Gull Point 12/29 (Connor Vara).

California Gull* – *Delaware*: one thought likely to be this species at Delaware River/ Hog Island Rd 12/31 (Rob Fergus).

Great Egret – *Bucks*: one at Penn-Warner Tract 12/7 (Andrew Harrington) and at Silver Lake Park 12/10-11 (Ryan Neuman); *Cumberland*: one along Pine Rd 12/4 (Rodney Martinez); *Lancaster*: one at Octoraro Res 12/4 (Carlton Groff); *Philadelphia*: one at John Heinz NWR 12/13 and 12/27 (Nicole Cesare, Gerald Cachon)

- Black-crowned Night-Heron** – *Allegheny*: immature at Duck Hollow 12/13-14 (Chuck Jones), third county winter record.
- Osprey** – *Bucks*: one at Silver Lake Park 12/11 (Ryan Neuman) and one at Lake Towhee County Park 12/28 (Everett & Oren); *Chester*: one along Homestead Rd 12/17 (Laura Wagner); *Lancaster*: one at Riverfront Park 2/25 (Bill Libhart); *Tioga*: one on Cowanesque Lake CBC 12/19.
- White-eyed Vireo** – *Monroe*: one at Cherry Valley NWR 12/5-12 (Jon Malarczyk, Diane Husic).
- Blue-headed Vireo** – *Chester*: one at Warwick County Park 1/1 (Timothy Swartz).
- Barn Swallow** – *Lancaster*: one continued at Washington Boro water treatment plant until 12/20 (Jerry Book).
- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** – *Philadelphia*: one at Pennypack on the Delaware 12/6-13 (Patrick McGill, Victoria Sindlinger).
- House Wren** – *Cumberland*: one on Newville CBC 1/2; *Lebanon*: one at Fort Indiantown Gap 12/3 (Scott Thomas); *Lehigh*: one at Allentown 1/21 (Matthew Baker); *Montgomery*: one at Evansburg SP 12/27-1/6 (Ken Rieker); *Philadelphia*: one at Upper Roxborough Res. 12/23 (Liam Hart).
- Marsh Wren** – *Allegheny*: one at Wingfield Pines 2/25 (Ryan Tomazin); *Chester*: one at Legacy Marsh Fields 12/19 (Joe Sebastiani); *Delaware*: one at John Heinz NWR 1/13 (Micah Muldowney); *Montgomery*: one at Valley Center Park 12/12 (Paul Driver); *Philadelphia*: one at FDR Park 12/10 (Holger Pflücke) and one at John Heinz NWR 12/30 (Joshua Angell).
- Townsend's Solitaire*** – *Franklin*: one at Caledonia SP continued from fall until 1/14 (Bob Koontz) (*doc submitted*).
- Varied Thrush*** – *Lawrence*: one at New Bedford 2/13 to end of period (Bobbie Rochow).
- Veery** – *Wyoming*: one on Tunkhannock CBC at Jayne's Bend 12/20 (Joe DeMarco, Christopher DeMarco), first winter eBird report for PA.
- Swainson's Thrush** – *Allegheny*: one in Squirrel Hill backyard 12/2 (Jack Chaillet); *Franklin*: one at Caledonia SP 12/2 (John Greer).
- Wood Thrush** – *Columbia/Montour*: one on Bloomsburg CBC 12/20; *Cumberland/Dauphin/York*: one on Harrisburg CBC 12/19; *Union*: one in Allenwood 12/31 (Lauren Shaffer).
- Northern Wheatear*** – *Berks*: one at Hamburg Commerce Park 12/10-15 (Jo Spilde), second county report (*doc submitted*).
- Common Redpoll (Greater/Greenland rostrata race)*** – *Butler*: one at SGL 95 on 1/9 (Dave Brooke); *Clinton*: one at Swissdale 1/24-29 (Wayne Lausch); *Warren*: several at Hatch Patch fields in Feb (Travis Schuber).
- European Goldfinch** – *Philadelphia*: one visited feeder in Torresdale 12/17-2/27 (Frank Windfelder).
- Grasshopper Sparrow** – *Philadelphia*: one at Benjamin Rush SP 12/17 (Linda Widdop).
- Clay-colored Sparrow** – *Indiana*: one near Indiana through period (Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee).
- Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon race)*** – *Allegheny*: one in Indiana Twp 1/1 through Feb (David Yeany II); *Clearfield*: one near Curwensville 12/31 through period (Jerod Skebo); *Delaware*: one near Concordville 2/15 (Hudson Moore); *York*: one at Dillsburg 2/1 (Jon Dale).
- Harris's Sparrow*** – *Lancaster*: immature at New Holland 1/22-2/24 (Cynthia Beyer) (*doc submitted*).
- Vesper Sparrow** – *Berks*: one at Rodale Experimental Farm 12/19 (Todd Watkins) and one near Clayton 2/6 (John Becker); *Montour*: one on High Rd 2/3 (Karol Pasquinelli), first county eBird winter record.
- Savannah Sparrow (Ipswich race)*** – *Northampton*: one along Miller Rd 2/20 (Michael Schall), possible second state record.
- Yellow-headed Blackbird*** – *Lancaster*: several with large blackbird flocks in southern part of county 1/14-24 (Sara Busch).
- Bullock's Oriole*** – *Bucks*: male at Northampton Twp. feeder late Dec-Feb 14, second county record.
- Brewer's Blackbird*** – *Lancaster*: female near Peach Bottom 1/15 (Matt Sabatine).
- Ovenbird** – *Centre*: one in State College 12/19-20 (Carl Engstrom, Kurt Engstrom); *Huntingdon*: one on Huntingdon CBC 12/20; *Philadelphia*: one at Kaskey Park 12/10-1/27 (Neha Nataraj).
- Black-and-white Warbler** – *Chester*: 12/30-1/21 (Kayann Cassidy); *Mifflin*: female at Victory Park 1/4-16 and 2/17 (Chad Kauffman, Rob Dickerson); *Monroe*: one at Silver Valley Natural Area 12/04 (Paul Nale); *Philadelphia*: at NE Water Treatment Plant 12/26-1/13 (m.ob.).
- Tennessee Warbler** – *Allegheny*: one in Morningside 2/4 to end of period (Samuel Vassallo, John Vassallo); *Bucks*: one in Tinicum Twp. 12/1 (Diane Allison); *Chester*: one in Longview 2/16 (Joe Sebastiani); *Delaware*: one at Commodore Barry Bridge 12/19-1/12 (Al Guarente).
- Nashville Warbler** – *Philadelphia*: near Delaware R. 12/11 (Ed Edge, George Armistead) and near Schuylkill R. 12/18 (Stephanie Egger) and 1/6 (Laura Herschel).
- Cape May Warbler** – *Cambria*: one at Prince Gallitzin SP 12/3 (Tina Alianiello); *Columbia*: one in Bloomsburg 12/18-1/9 (Katie Yelinek); *Cumberland*: one in Mechanicsburg 1/4-6 (Ali Bowling); *Philadelphia*: one at Art Museum Waterworks 12/30-1/1 (Peter DeStefano).
- Northern Parula** – *Dauphin*: one on Capitol Area Greenbelt 12/19 (Zach Richard, Steve Schmit).
- Magnolia Warbler** – *Berks*: one in Boyertown 12/2 (Bob Sprague); *Philadelphia*: one in Germantown 12/9-10 (Ben Dzedzic, Elliot Dzedzic).
- Yellow Warbler** – *Philadelphia*: up to 2 at NE Water Treatment Plant 12/18-2/13 (m.ob.).
- Bay-breasted/Blackpoll Warbler** – *Chester*: one at Marsh Creek SP 12/1 (Barry Blust).
- Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's race)*** – *Erie*: one at Gull Point 12/13-15 (Steve Schmit, Connor Vara) (*doc submitted*).
- Black-throated Gray Warbler*** – *Lebanon*: one continued from fall along Clear Springs Rd, the second winter for one at the same location, seen 1/7-2/14 (*doc submitted*).
- Black-throated Green Warbler** – *Philadelphia*: one at Science Education and Research Center 12/7 (Maria Pacheco).
- Wilson's Warbler** – *Franklin*: one in Chambersburg 12/27 (Bill Oyler); *Monroe*: one at Silver Valley Natural Area throughout Dec (Jon Mularczyk).
- Scarlet Tanager** – *Allegheny*: one at Pittsburgh feeder 1/25-26 (Carol McCullough).
- Western Tanager*** – *Montgomery*: male at a Trappe feeder 2/26-27 (Lenore Tichnell).
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak** – *Cumberland*: one at SGL 169 on 2/3 (Bob Koontz).
- Blue Grosbeak** – *Philadelphia*: one at Lardner's Point Park 12/19 (Patrick McGill), first winter county record.
- Indigo Bunting** – *Bucks*: one at Bucks County Audubon Center 2/13-17 (August Mirabella), first county winter record; *Cumberland*: one in Carlisle 12/2 (Ethan Delp).
- Painted Bunting*** – *Lancaster*: an adult male again overwintered near Bowmansville throughout period, 4th year in last 5 winters (m.ob.).
- Dickcissel** – *Philadelphia*: 2 at Army Corps of Engineers 12/12 (George Armistead, Patrick McGill, Brian Quindlen); *Washington*: one at feeder in Amity 12/8 (Anon.).

Photographic Highlights



Snow Goose at Beaver Run 380 Overlook, Westmoreland 19 December. (Mark McConaughy)



Greater White-fronted Goose was reported in six counties; this goose was at Marcus Hook, Delaware 30 December. (Al Guarente)



Female **Northern Pintail** at South Park, Allegheny 19 February. (John Flannigan)

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(More photos inside back cover)



This **Pink-footed Goose** in East Allen Twp., Northampton 20-30 (here 30) January was the first for the county; reports in Bucks and Montgomery may have been of the same bird. (Dave DeReamus)



Long-tailed Duck at Easton, Northampton 21 February. (Dave DeReamus)



Ruffed Grouse at Seneca, Venango 21 January. (Meg Kolodick)



Pennsylvania's sixth **Allen's Hummingbird** was in Springfield, Delaware 9-19 (here 18) December; seen by over 330 birders from 13 states, this same bird was found in Philadelphia 6-13 January. (William Culp)



America Coot at New Brighton Boat Launch on Beaver River, Beaver 26 February. (Mark Vass)



Butler's second **Glaucous Gull** was at Moraine SP 16-23 (here 19) January; these big gulls were also reported in Allegheny, Bucks, Erie, and Philadelphia. (Dave Brooke)



Juvenile **Cooper's Hawk** at Wyoming, Luzerne 20 January. (Sarah Minor)



Northern Goshawk at Peace Valley Park, Bucks 4 January; ninth report at that heavily birded location, but first since 1997. (William Culp)



A regular but uncommon winter resident, **Golden Eagles** tend to stay in large tracks of forest where not often found by birders; this eagle was at West Lebanon, *Armstrong* 20 January. (*Anthony Bruno*)



Bald Eagle at Lincoln University, *Chester* 17 December. (*Danielle Tatum*)



One of a pair of **Red-shouldered Hawks** that made regular checks of feeders at the Kuehl residence in *Westmoreland*, seen here 6 December. (*Tom Kuehl*)



Male **Rough-legged Hawk**, apparently an intermediate morph (between light and dark), at Spring Mills, *Centre* 27 January; thought perhaps to be same individual seen there the previous winter. (*Debra Rittlemann*)



Merlin at Blue Marsh Lake, *Berks* 28 January. (*Russ Hoffman*)



Snowy Owl was reported from about 16 counties, more than average for recent years; one of the most accessible was this bird at Trindle Rd, *Cumberland* from early January (here 17 January) through at least 26 February. (*Dave Kerr*)



At least two **Short-eared Owls** were present around Worthington, *Armstrong* 18 December through 14 February (here 10 January). (*Dave Brooke*)



Up to six **Short-eared Owls** spent the season in Hopewell Twp., *York*, including this bird captured beautifully in flight 7 February. (*Bob Reiter*)



This **Red-headed Woodpecker**, not quite in full adult plumage, was one of about eight that wintered at Gifford Pinchot SP, *York*, seen here 14 February. (*Dean Newhouse*)



Bald Eagle SP, *Centre* is a fairly reliable location annually for **Northern Shrike**; this shrike was photographed 27 January. (*Bob Snyder*)



Tufted Titmouse on a snowy day in *Lehigh* 1 February. (*Lee Levin-Friend*)



Persistent and deep snow cover made good conditions for finding field birds, such as this **Horned Lark** at Harlansburg, *Lawrence* 12 February. (*Jeffrey Hall*)



Like winter finches, there was a good flight of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** into Pennsylvania last fall, some of which must have moved on as numbers moderated through winter; this nuthatch was near Indiana, *Indiana* 30 January. (*Pam Illig*)



Gray Catbirds seem to be an increasing winter presence in central Pennsylvania; this catbird at Marjorie Mae Park, *Centre* 19 January was one of six reported in the county during the winter. (*Ron Crandall*)



This striking **Eastern Bluebird** attended the photographer's feeders at Glen Mills, *Delaware* 4-31 (here 4) January. (*Brian Byrnes*)



Hermit Thrush at SGL 35, *Susquehanna* 4 December. (*Barb Stone*)



Evening Grosbeak at Portage, *Cambria* 25 January; highest numbers of the big finches were in forested northwestern counties. (*Bruce Walkovich*)



Pine Siskins were numerous, with some feeder flocks reaching triple digits; this siskin was at Cornwall, *Lebanon* 15 December. (*Patricia Williams*)



These **Common Redpolls** were part of a flock of hundreds of redpolls that spent weeks foraging in a weedy field beside Conewango Creek, Warren, seen here 14 February. (*Alejandra Lewandowski*)



Within that same flock of redpolls at Conewango Creek, Warren were a few **Hoary Redpolls**; this bird was photographed 14 February. (*Alejandra Lewandowski*)



Greater/Greenland Common Redpoll at Swissdale, Clinton 24-29 (here 25), January; differs from "Southern" Common Redpoll by larger size, heavier bill, darker and more extensive streaking, and more extensive black bib. (*Wayne Laubscher*)



This handsome **Lapland Longspur** was at Trindle Road, Cumberland 20 February; numbers were above average this year perhaps thanks to widespread snow cover that made detection of field birds easier. (*Dave Kerr*)



Snow Buntings occasionally provide an elevated view, such as this flock, part of a larger flock of over 80 birds, perched above fresh manure in a field at Mertz Road, Berks 17 February. (*Liz Brensinger*)



Snow Bunting at Crabtree, Westmoreland 17 February. (*Dave Brooke*)



One of two in the county during the season, this **Clay-colored Sparrow** stayed at the Higbee feeding station in *Indiana* 30 November through 15 March (here 25 December). (Roger Higbee)



This **Fox Sparrow** was a regular at the Kuehl's feeders in *Westmoreland*, seen here 12 February. (Tom Kuehl)



Oregon Dark-eyed Junco in *Indiana Twp., Allegheny* 1 January through 6 March (here 13 February). (David Yeany II)



White-crowned Sparrow seen roadside at *Davidsburg, York* 19 December, following the big snow storm a couple days earlier. (Dean Newhouse)

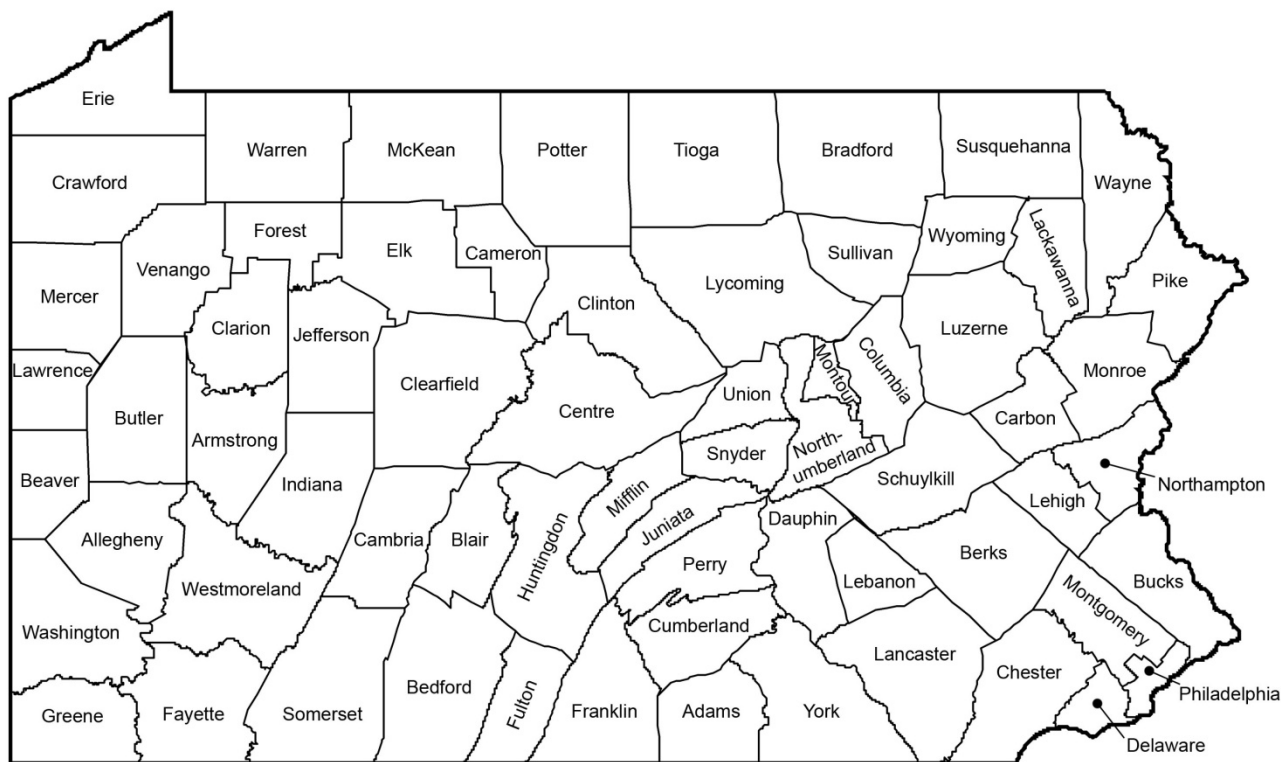


One of four reported during the season in Pennsylvania, this **Black-and-White Warbler** was at *Victory Park, Mifflin* 4-16 January and then made a one-day re-appearance, recorded here 17 February. (Rob Dickerson)



Another view of Pennsylvania's first **Tundra Bean Goose**, present at *Media, Delaware* 16-20 (here 16) December, and in *Philadelphia* in January. (Barry Blust)

Local Notes – December 2020 through February 2021



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).	juvenile [plumage]; juvenile(s)	R.	River	WMA	Wildlife Management Area
L.	Lake	RA	Recreational Area	WRS	Winter Raptor Survey

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

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

Adams County

Locations: Bigham Road (BIG), Gettysburg Christmas Bird Count (GCBC), Gettysburg College (GC), York Springs Christmas Bird Count (YSCBC).

This winter period saw average temperatures 3F above average in southcentral PA. Likewise, rainfall and snowfall exceeded the average by 2 inches and 12 inches, respectively. The more significant weather conditions during the period were extended stretches of ice-covered waters and Feb 1-26 snow cover in the majority of the county. It would be nice to report widespread birding highlights that offset the winter and pandemic doldrums, but that will not be the case. It was a fairly quiet winter on the Adams birding front. Species count at 106 was a bit below average. The 12/19 GCBC produced 73 species (at the average) while the 12/30 YSCBC's 64 species in the Adams portion was on the low side.

Although total waterfowl species count was decent at 27, many individual species produced only one or two reports, and none reflected larger flocks. Better finds were a single **Greater White-fronted Goose** during the GCBC, a **Greater Scaup** at L. Kay 2/13-25 (BM, AW), a **Lesser Scaup** at GC 1/23-25 (CM, AW) and a pair at L. Kay 2/15-23 (CM, AW), a pair of **Long-tailed Ducks** at the Rt. 94 quarry 2/15 (SK), and a single **Common Goldeneye** at Long Pine Run Res. 1/2-3 (CM, JeS).

An **American Woodcock** was at Gettysburg 2/25 (CM). Uncommon in Jan, a **Double-crested Cormorant** was at the Rt. 94 quarry 1/9 (SK). BIG held **Short-eared Owl** 1/9-2/15 (m.ob.) with a high count of 9 on 1/25 (BLi). Only six sites reporting **Red-headed Woodpecker** suggested this year had a lower overwintering rate than typical. Each CBC produced the high count of 6 birds. **American Kestrel** reporting was widespread with 25 sites producing observations. A **Merlin** was at GC 1/16 (CM) and a **Peregrine Falcon** was at Michaux SF 1/2 (R&TG-S).

A nice Christmas present was an **Eastern Phoebe** at a Pine Grove Rd backyard 12/25 (JO) while the YSCBC produced 3 birds. Ten sites reporting **Horned Lark** were paced by a 20-count along Crooked Creek

Rd 12/19 (MB, DT). Reliable **Black-capped Chickadee** reports were confined to Dec: 2 at B&F Rd 12/1 (DS), 3 at Orrtanna 12/4 (MS), and 2 on the YSCBC. **Red-breasted Nuthatch** sightings (m.ob.) were widespread with a high count of 10 at Michaux SF 1/6 (R&TG-S). Single **Winter Wrens** were found at Gettysburg National Military Park at various times (CM), at B&F Rd 12/12 (DS), and at Fairfield 1/16 (CJ). Latest of the six reports for **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was at Ridge Rd in Cumberland Twp. 1/24 (CM). **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was at Black Horse Tavern Rd 12/6 (SW), a pair at B&F Rd 12/18 (DS), and one at York Springs 2/13 (HD). The four reports of **Hermit Thrush**, including YSCBC, spanned the period (CM, R&DS).

Good Feb finds were a **Gray Catbird** at Carroll Valley 2/12 (DM) and a **Brown Thrasher** at Goldenville Rd 2/14-15 (LR). High count of **American Pipit** for four reports (PK, CM, RP, DS) was 24 along BIG 1/9 (CM). A Shippensburg Rd homeowner enjoyed a single **Evening Grosbeak** 12/4, up to 8 on 1/4, and 18 birds 1/20 (MB). The only other site producing a grosbeak report was about one mile away with 14 birds visiting 1/3 (KT). The five reports of **Purple Finch** were led by a 19-count at East Berlin 2/19 (PK). This backyard held this species all period closely duplicating the timetable, relative numbers and sex breakdown from two winters ago. Cornell's *Birds of the World* notes a possible lifespan of up to and exceeding 10 years for this species. This compiler is of the opinion that at least a core number in this flock returned from a prior winter's visit.

Twelve reports of **Pine Siskin** were led by 20 at Cashtown 2/13 (JHe). A **Chipping Sparrow** at Mountain Rd 12/2 (R&DS) was the only report. Up to 5 **American Tree Sparrows** were at Mountain Rd 2/20 (R&DS). A single **Savannah Sparrow** was at B&F Rd 12/18 (DS), a pair were along Possum Hollow Rd 2/6 (PK, RP), and a single was at East Berlin 2/7 (PK). The four **Swamp Sparrow** reports spanned 12/12-1/23 for both CBCs (CM, JO) with a high of 4 on the YSCBC. Six sites held **Eastern Meadowlark** with a nice count of 19 coming from BIG 1/25 (GA). **Red-winged Blackbird**, **Brown-headed Cowbird**, and **Common Grackle** were found in all months (m.ob.). The sole **Rusty Blackbird** report was a single bird at Turkey Pit Rd (LM).

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Allegheny County

Locations: DH (Duck Hollow), Highland Park Bridge (HPB), IMP (IMP), SQH (Squirrel Hill).

Winter weather arrived in late December with snow and frigid temperatures. Snow fell throughout Christmas day creating wintry conditions for the Pittsburgh Christmas Bird Count the following day that included frigid temperatures. February brought more snow and cold with a brief freeze of the rivers. As the Great Lakes and other bodies of water to the north began to freeze, we had a good variety of waterfowl and a few rare gulls on the rivers for about two weeks. A number of out-of-season species were notable this season.

Some late **Tundra Swans** were reported in Dec. A flock was heard flying over Beechwood Farms 12/2 (BS). During the Pittsburgh CBC 12/26, flocks were noted over several locations. A flock of 44 were counted over Sheraden Park in the West End of Pittsburgh (OM, JG), 38 were over McKees Rocks (OM, JG), and 95 over Hampton Twp. (BPO) rounded out the Dec reports. In Jan an immature bird was found in a field in Findlay Twp. 1/8 (MV) where it continued to 1/15 (m.ob.). Flocks were

heard flying over Indiana Twp. (DY), SQH (MK), and Bellevue (BP) 2/26. A blue morph **Snow Goose** was at Tarentum 1/17-23 (ABW, m.ob.).

A **Gadwall** was at IMP 12/19-1/24 (MV, m.ob.). An **American Wigeon** was at IMP 12/19-1/24 (MV, m.ob.) and one was at the HPB 2/27 (JVs, SV, OL). Five **Northern Shovelers** were at IMP 12/3-18 (RB, m.ob.); a single remained to 1/24 (m.ob.). One was at Wingfield Pines 2/11-23 (DBe, m.ob.). A small retention pond at IMP served as an oasis for several species of ducks during the winter including the above as well as **American Black Ducks**, a **Green-winged Teal** and a **Redhead**. A male **Northern Pintail** was at North Park 12/22-1/26 (eBird, m.ob.) and one was at Brontos Island 1/26 (AP). **Canvasback** was present in Feb with double-figure totals, good counts for here. **Redheads** are never common in *Allegheny*, so their presence this winter was welcomed. A small group spent nearly two weeks just off The Point in Pittsburgh. A group of 80 on the Allegheny R. at Harmar Twp. 2/25 (DB, LC) was the high count for the season and one of the highest counts in recent years.

All three scoters were here during the winter and all three species were present on the same day, a rare event. A **Surf Scoter** and 2 **Black Scoters** on the Ohio R, at Leetsdale continued from Nov and were last reported 12/4 (m.ob.). A female or immature **Surf Scoter** was at The Point 12/9 (ABi). Females were also found at Tarentum 12/14 (ABW) and Sewickley 12/22 (MV). An adult male and 2 female **White-winged Scoters** were at The Point 12/14 (ROR, ABi). An immature male was at Aspinwall 12/25 (AP), a female was at The Point 2/13-27 (JVs, m.ob.), an adult male was at the Fox Chapel Marina 2/15 (AP), a female was at Tarentum 2/20 (DB) and perhaps the same bird was upriver at Natrona Heights 2/27 (eBird with photo). Three female plumaged **Black Scoters** were at Blawnox 12/26-12/30 with 2 remaining 12/31 (AP, m.ob.). A female plumaged bird was just downriver at the HPB 1/28-30 (ON, MD, m.ob.) and 3 were again found upriver at Oakmont 2/8 (AH, PM).

There were numerous **Long-tailed Duck** reports. Birds reported on the Allegheny R. included one at Oakmont 1/13 (RB), 2 at Verona 2/9 (MD), 3 at Chapel Harbor 2/13 (RT), 2 there 2/19 (MS), 3 at the HPB 2/14 (RB), 5 at Blawnox 2/16 and 3 continuing there 2/19-21 (DBe, m.ob.), and one at Lawrenceville 2/17 (LFH) and 2/20 (AB, CB). Four were at The Point 1/25 (ABi, m.ob.), 2 on the Ohio R. at Brunots Island 2/15 (JF, et al.), and one on the Monongahela R. at DH 2/24 (RB). **Common Goldeneye** was widely reported in Feb. The high count was 46 at Blawnox 2/22 (MD). **Ruddy Duck** is another migrant found here in small numbers. One was at The Point 12/26 (AP), 2 in Lawrenceville 1/30 (LN, RM), 3 at Wingfield Pines 2/11 (DBe), 8 at Brontos Island 2/12 (AP), one was there 2/17 (RB) and 6 at McKees Rocks 2/15 (JF). Other ducks reported include **American Black Duck**, **Green-winged Teal**, **Ring-necked Duck**, **Greater** and **Lesser Scaup**, **Bufflehead** and all three mergansers.

A **Red-necked Grebe** was at Verona 2/23 (AH, PM). **Killdeer** lingered into Dec with one at IMP 12/3 (RB) and 3 at DH 12/11 (CJ). A flock was at South Park 12/7-1/5 with a high count of 26 on 12/7 (JF, m.ob.). A **Wilson's Snipe** spent nearly the entire season at IMP (MV, m.ob.).

A **Bonaparte's Gull** was at The Point 2/5 (BC), a rare sight here in winter. A first-winter **Iceland Gull** was there 2/5 (BC). A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was there 1/26-2/21, 2 on 1/29 (BC), and a first-winter **Glaucous Gull** 2/11-21 (BC, m.ob.). The Glaucous was also seen at the Highland Park Dam 2/20 (OL). A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at the Emsworth Dam 1/27-29 (which was likely one of the birds seen just upriver at Pittsburgh) was nearly full adult but showed pink legs, which resulted in a discussion regarding its identity. Other than the leg color, the bird appeared to be a Lesser Black-backed Gull. The conclusion was a bird with odd-colored legs, which a small percentage of individuals show.

A **Common Loon** was at Brunots Island 12/26 (OM, JG), a nice addition to the CBC list. An immature **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was photographed at DH 12/13 (CJ). This is only the third winter record in the county. One was reported on the Pittsburgh CBC in Dec 1990 (age not specified), and an immature was at McKees Rocks in Jan 2002.

Black Vulture sightings continued from the fall in Franklin Park with a single bird up to 1/2 (m.ob.). Three were at Beechwood Farms 1/20 (LFH), 2 were there 1/21 (eBird) and one 2/3 (DN). One was in Jefferson

Borough at Peter's Cr. 1/26 (JF), 2 were in Bethel Park 1/26 (JP), and one was in Mt. Lebanon 2/11 (ST). Two were found perched on a water tower with Turkey Vultures in Fox Chapel 1/30 (AH). One had a red wing tag with the number H73, which was the same bird that was photographed in that general area the previous spring. **Turkey Vultures** were reported in small numbers regularly through the season.

Activities at one of the local **Bald Eagle** nests were visible due to a camera located near the nest. An interesting event made the local news: In late Feb after dark, a Great Horned Owl knocked one of the eagles off its roost; a few minutes afterwards the eagle returned to its roost. Two attempted raccoon raids were also captured on camera, both thwarted by the eagles. There are now four or five nests in the county.

The **Barred Owl** reported in Frick Park last fall was seen again in Feb. Up to 2 **Short-eared Owls** were at IMP 12/31-1/2 (m.ob.). A **Merlin** was at Dashields Dam 12/4 (MV). Up to 2 continued at Schenley Park from last season (m.ob.). One was in Allegheny Cemetery in Lawrenceville 12/23 (CB, AB), one was in Verona in Jan (SK) and possibly the same bird was in nearby Oakmont 12/6 (RB) and 12/29 (eBird with photo). One was in Homewood Cemetery Jan-Feb (m.ob.).

A high count of 30 **Fish Crows** came from SQH 1/7 (MKu). The **Marsh Wren** at Wingfield Pines last season was reported 2/25 (RT). A late **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was at Hartwood Acres 12/11 (DY), and one visited a suet feeder in Franklin Park 2/6 (OM). One was at DH 12/31-2/14 (LK, TR, DBe, AP). Ruby-crowned Kinglets do not winter in the area and are notable for the season.

An extremely late (or possibly overwintering) **Swainson's Thrush** was photographed in a backyard in SQH 12/2 (JC). A number of **Hermit Thrush** reports are in eBird for the season. A **Gray Catbird** visited a feeder in SQH 2/1-24 (ON). An **American Pipit** was at Janoski's Farm in Findlay Twp. 12/1 (LF, JP, TV).

Evening Grosbeak reports continued from Nov. The most reliable site was North Park where they were regularly observed feeding on the seeds of box elder and at a nearby bird feeder. The max count was 17. One was in Marshall Twp. 12/1 (JHz), a female was in West Deer Twp. 12/17 (LC), and 4 were at Harrison Hills Park 12/19 (PH). Two **Common Redpolls** were at IMP 12/1 (AP), and one was nearby in Findlay Twp. that same day (AP). Three were at North Park feeding in a field of goldenrod 12/12 (OL, JVs, SV). Twelve were found in Bethel Park 1/9-11 (MJ, m.ob.). **Pine Siskins** were reported in small numbers from various locations during the season; too many to report here.

A **Lapland Longspur** was found at a regular location in Findlay Twp. 12/1 and again 2/5 (AP). From 2/5-8 several observers searched the site and the counts ranged from 10 to 40 birds (m.ob.), all high counts for the county. This species was unusually numerous in surrounding counties this winter as well.

A late **Chipping Sparrow** visited a feeder in Pine Twp. 12/28 (PL, SL). **Field Sparrows** have been local in winter. There were several reports including 5 at West Mifflin 12/10 and one there 1/5 (JF), one at Harrison Hills Park 12/19 (OL, MF, JV), 2 there 1/26 (ON), 2 at Hartwood Acres 12/11 (DY), 2 at North Park 12/12 (LN, RM) and 1/29 (ON), one at Boyce Park in Plum 1/10 (EH) and one in Monroeville 2/19 (SM). **Fox Sparrow** have been rare here after fall migration. Interestingly 2 were found in two locations on 12/25: one in Indiana Twp. (DY) and one in Upper St. Clair (JM). The bird in Upper St. Clair was seen again 2/9 and 2/16. An out-of-season **Lincoln's Sparrow** visited a feeder in Pine Twp. 1/23 (PL, SL). **White-crowned Sparrows** have been rare in winter but there were several reports: single birds were at Indiana Twp. (DY) and Allegheny Cemetery (NL) 12/26, providing nice additions to the Pittsburgh CBC list. One was at IMP 1/3 (TR), 6 were photographed there 1/10 (DBe) and 8 on 2/6 (MKu). One was at DH 2/27 (JC). Local in winter, a **Swamp Sparrow** was observed by many during Evening Grosbeak searches in Dec and Jan in a small patch of cattails at North Park. A **Dark-eyed "Oregon" Junco** visited a feeder in Indiana Twp. intermittently from 1/1 through Feb (DY). A **Baltimore Oriole** was spotted at a feeder in Oakland 12/19 where it remained through the season (FI). The bird was offered a variety of fruits and jellies during its stay.

Blackbirds are uncommon to rare here in winter. Three **Red-winged Blackbirds** were at Chatham College in SQH 12/26 (MKu). A

flock of 20 to 30 visited a feeder regularly in Pleasant Hills in Jan (MH). Eight **Brown-headed Cowbirds** were at Beechwood Farms 12/18 (BS), one was in Plum 12/18 (AH, PM), 4 visited a feeder in Harmar Twp. 12/24 (JV), and 3 visited a feeder in Pine Twp. 12/28 (PL, SL). There were 2 **Rusty Blackbird** reports, a rare species here in winter. One was in a backyard in Upper St. Clair 12/1 (JM) and another was in Pine Twp. 12/16 (PL, SL). **Common Grackle** reports include one in Harmar Twp. 12/11 (JV), several at Chatham College in SQH 12/18-2/26 with a high count of five 1/6 (MKu) and 10 in Natrona Heights 12/31 (PH).

A **Tennessee Warbler** visited a feeder surprising the homeowners in Morningside 2/4 through the end of the season (SV, JVs). The bird was carefully photographed, eliminating the more expected Orange-crowned Warbler. It fed on suet. A female **Scarlet Tanager** was another surprise out-of-season visitor to a feeder in the West End area of Pittsburgh 1/25-26 (CM). It was photographed and only seen for two days.

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Armstrong County

Locations: Armstrong Trail at Dam 8 (AT8), Crooked Creek Lake (CCL), Freeport Lock & Dam 5 (FP5), Karns City (KC), Keystone Lake (KL), Kittanning Lock & Dam 7 (KT7), Mahoning Creek Lake (MCL), Manorville (MV), Parks Bend Farm (PBF), Rosston (RT), Stone House Road (SHR), Templeton (TT), Worthington (WT).

The season started out with a waterfowl "fallout" at RT 12/2 (TR) with the following: 12 **Tundra Swans** flying upriver, 6 **Gadwall**, 2 **American Black Ducks**, one **Canvasback**, 4 **Redheads**, 4 **Ring-necked Ducks**, 100 **Lesser Scaup**, 80 **Buffleheads**, 5 **Hooded Mergansers**, 4 **Red-breasted Mergansers** plus a single **Ring-billed Gull** (TR).

A **Snow Goose** was observed at KT7 2/3 (TR) and 2/18 (AB, SG), and one was at FP5 2/21 (MH, RH). A **Greater White-fronted Goose** was at KL 2/28 (MD, MH, RH, SM), and 2 **Trumpeter Swans** were a nice find at MV 2/17 (MH, RH, ph.), again on 2/19 (AB, SG); they then seemed to moved south to RT 2/21-22 (JK, TK, MM, MVT) and continued back to MV 2/27 (TR). **Tundra Swans** put in a nice appearance - from a single at the AT8 12/29 and 1/2 (SG, SM) and all along the Allegheny R. southward as far as FP5 where 180 were seen flying low over water 2/26 (TR). At RT on 2/14, 9 were reported (KH, LV), then on 2/22 a nice count of 82 were photographed on the ice with the 2 Trumpeter Swans; 58 were observed at KT7 (MVT, ph.) and 21 were noted at KL (AB, SG).

The only report of **Wood Ducks** was of 2 on the Butler-Freeport Trail at Laneville 2/26 (TR). A high count of 30 **American Black Ducks** was observed at CCL 1/7 (MVT, ph.) and the highest count of **American Wigeons** was 10 at TT (PW). Two **Northern Pintails** were spotted at RT 1/23 (TR), 8 at KT7 (TR), and 2 at MV 2/26 (AB). Two **Green-winged Teal** were reported at MCL 1/21 (AD), and one was seen at KT7 1/25 (AB). There was a nice showing of **Canvasbacks** at RT (AB, MD, MH, RH, KH), MV (AB, SG), and FP5 (JK, TK, MM); **Redheads** were noted

all along the Allegheny R., and 2 showed up for several days at PBF pond (MVT).

Only a single **White-winged Scoter** had been observed, near KC 2/14 (TA). Single **Long-tailed Ducks** were reported at RT 12/19 and 1/11 (TR), near KC 2/15 (TA), and KT7 (AB, SG). **Buffleheads** were reported all along the river and lakes as were many **Common Goldeneyes** and **Common Mergansers**, but only a few **Red-breasted Mergansers** were seen at RT (TR), LD7 (CB, AB, SG) and the Kiski R. (MVT). Twelve **Ruddy Ducks** were reported at RT 12/18 (TR), and singles were noted until 2/3. The only **Common Loons** were one at KL 12/3 (MH, RH), 2 at RT 12/14 (TR), and one noted there 12/23 (DB). A lone **Double-crested Cormorant** was at RT 12/23 (DB), and 1/6 (MH, RH, TR).

One noteworthy sighting, with a beautiful photo, was an adult **Golden Eagle** in South Bend Twp. 1/20 (TB). **Short-eared Owls** were reported in WT first on 12/18 (DB, ph.) then for a few more days in the same area (AB, LCr, PF, BG, SG, m.ob.) with 2 viewed and photographed 1/4. The last day they were seen was 2/14 (DB) when 2 were observed at a farm near Pine Furnace (MW). **Peregrine Falcons** are nesting again at the Graff Bridge, where 3 were observed first 12/14 on the AT near MV; an adult was observed first by itself, then chasing a Bald Eagle (CR, ph.) 2/10, and the pair were seen on a patch off ice on the river 2/12 (CR, ph.); one is often seen in WT (CB, DB, LC).

An early **Eastern Phoebe** had been sighted at KL 12/27 (AB, SG) and another near KL 2/4 (MH, RH, LW). Quite a few **Horned Lark** flocks were observed as usual in WT, and good counts were 79 on 12/26 (RB), 79 on 12/27 (LC, RC), 90 on 1/2 (RH, SM), with best count of 110 on 2/24 (AB). A few **Lapland Longspurs** were mixed in with the larks on 12/26 (RB) and 12/27 (LC, RC). One **Eastern Meadowlark** was reported 12/1 in WT (DB). The first **Common Redpoll** was noted near KC 12/1 (TA, ph.) and another 12/2 at SHR farm (AB); the first and one of a few at CCL were reported 12/2 (CR).

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Beaver County

Locations: Ambridge Reservoir (AR), Rochester – Beaver River mouth (RCH).

A brief but deep freeze around the second week of Feb caused many waterfowl to collect at RCH, and these comprise the bulk of the highlights of this report. A few waterbirds started to show up by late Jan, but numbers really spiked beginning around 2/8, and continued for the next two weeks. A flock of 76 late southbound **Tundra Swans** were sighted over Rocky Bend Nature Preserve 12/26 (DZ), and one was along Cork-Bocktown Road in Independence Twp. 1/7-24 (MV, JM). Five more Tundra Swans, certainly now northbound, put down at RCH 1/31 (MV).

Up to 3 **Northern Shovelers**, rare in Feb here, were at RCH 2/8-26 (MV, m.ob.). Similarly rare for late Jan and early Feb, one or 2 **Gadwalls** were at RCH beginning 1/26. Two **American Wigeons** were at New Brighton 12/26 (MV), and a great Feb count of 15 was made at RCH 2/26 (MV). A group of **American Black Ducks** at AR fluctuated between 12 and 22 birds 12/23-1/16 (MV). Fourteen **Canvasbacks** appeared at RCH 2/8 (DZ), and thereafter jumped to counts as high as 40 from 2/21-24 (DZ, et al.). The biggest story, though, was the **Redheads**, whose max count was 164 on 2/13 (MV), a new county record. Counts of up to 150 were made periodically through 2/25, but they moved out rather quickly thereafter. A **Ring-necked Duck** at Montgomery Lock and Dam 1/30 (TJ, KJ) was rare for Jan. Up to 7 were at RCH for much of Feb with the other bay ducks. Also nice was a max count of 20 **Greater Scaup** at RCH from

2/8-28. **Lesser Scaup** max was 14 during the same time; Feb is perhaps the only month of the year when Greater might be the more expected species here, so these totals were not a complete surprise.

A **White-winged Scoter** was at RCH 2/19 (DZ). **Long-tailed Ducks** there included one 2/16 (MV) and 3 from 2/25-26 (DZ). Top count of **Bufflehead** was a solid 56 on 2/19 (DZ). Scattered reports of up to 7 **Common Goldeneye**, a species frequently missed altogether in milder years, were made throughout much of Feb at RCH. Nineteen **Hooded Mergansers** at AR 1/11 (MV) was another unusual Jan total, but more remarkable were the counts of **Common Merganser** in Jan. A count of 42 was made at AR 1/11 (MV), and 79 were on the Ohio River 1/30 (TJ, KJ), split 42 to 37 between Montgomery Lock and Dam and the mouth of Raccoon Creek a few miles upstream from the dam. Another 45 were counted at RCH 2/8 (MV), and smaller numbers continued there for the rest of Feb. Rare for Feb, one or 2 **Red-breasted Mergansers** were at RCH in the second half of Feb (MV, DZ, JM). Even a few **Ruddy Ducks** showed up as early as 2/1 at RCH, but the month max was just 8 (m.ob.). Also notable for the date was a **Pied-billed Grebe** at RCH 1/31 (MV).

Big counts of **Wild Turkey** included 80 in Economy Borough 12/16 (KD) and 160 along Park Road, outside of Raccoon Creek SP, 1/4 (DZ). A **Wilson's Snipe** was noted along Little Blue Road in Greene Twp. 2/7 (MV); frequently the only reliable location for this species in winter is the Siebel Farm in Independence Twp. A **Bonaparte's Gull** was reported at RCH 2/7-11 (MV), rare for Feb. Despite larger numbers of gulls in downtown Pittsburgh during the cold spell, top count of gulls at RCH was just 300 **Ring-billed Gulls** 2/10 (DZ), and no rarities were reported. A lingering **Common Loon** was at AR 12/23 (MV).

A **Northern Harrier** was seen in the vicinity of the Siebel Farm on four dates 12/3-1/25 (MV, JM), and up to 4 were at the Little Blue Lake area in Dec and Jan (DZ, m.ob.). Two **Short-eared Owls** also continued at Little Blue to 12/15 (DZ) but were not reported thereafter. The **Merlin** in Ambridge continued from the fall season to 12/25 (MV). **Peregrine Falcon(s)** were seen regularly at both RCH (primarily around the P&LE railroad bridge) and on the Ambridge-Aliquippa Bridge (MV).

Common Raven was noted in eight or nine locations. A nice count of 37 **Horned Larks** was made at Little Blue Lake 12/19 (TJ). After a bustling fall season, reports of **Red-breasted Nuthatch** dropped off sharply after Nov. One persisted around Hanover Twp. (JM) but only a few others were reported anywhere else. A great count of 6 **Hermit Thrushes** was made at SGL 173 on 12/26 (TJ). These gamelands are a hidden gem of the Pittsburgh area, rarely birded even in spring let alone the winter, so this count represents but a small hint of what may be found there by birders looking to try something new. Another Hermit Thrush was at AR 2/20 (MV). Single **American Pipits** at New Brighton 12/26 and at Siebel Farm in Independence Twp. 2/5 (both MV) both represented atypical dates for the species in *Beaver*.

Like Red-breasted Nuthatches, **Pine Siskins** also dropped off sharply after Nov. A flock of up to 36 remained in Economy Borough through 12/25 (KD), but thereafter only ones or twos were reported there, and the only other report was of one at the mouth of Big Sewickley Cr. 1/20 (OM). Little Blue Lake continues to be a winter stronghold for **White-crowned Sparrow**; up to 9 were seen there 1/30-2/12 (TJ, KJ).

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Bedford County

Locations: Aahyndman Road (AR), Belden (BL), Blackberry Bottom Farms (BF), Foor Farm (FF), Jackson Property (Mountain Meadows) near Everett (MM), Mountain Road (MR), Shawnee State Park (SSP), Woodbury Reservoir (WR).

Although the county had an early, heavy snowfall in December, most had melted by 1/2, when the 32nd Bedford CBC tallied 66 species – significantly higher than the average of 55 species. There was also an uptick of individuals for a total of 5533 birds – 1102 more than the

previous count, even though waterfowl diversity was down due to mostly ice-covered impoundments. The raptor highlight for the CBC was the first ever sighting of a **Peregrine Falcon** just north of Bedford. A few other highlights of the count included 61 **Black Vultures**, 7 **Northern Harriers**, 6 **Bald Eagles**, 2 **Short-eared Owls**, and 23 **Pine Siskins**.

Waterfowl diversity was slightly higher this season with 16 species compared to 12 last year. Thirteen **American Black Ducks** were at BF 1/2 (JC). A high of 4 **Ruddy Ducks** made a brief appearance 2/7 at SSP (AB). One **Horned Grebe** and 2 **American Coots** were reported at L. Koon 2/23 (JBC). An early showing, 3 **Killdeer** were reported at WR 2/27 (EB). The only gull report was of 100 **Ring-billed Gulls** near Hopewell 2/20 (TM).

Turkey Vultures returned to the county in early Feb, a high of 42 was reported at FF 2/28 (EB). The only **Golden Eagle** (adult) was reported at MM 2/14 (MLJ). There were scattered sightings of single **Northern Harriers** during the first part of the season, with the last one reported at AR 1/25 (ND). **Bald Eagle** sightings were on the increase, occurring 12/25-2/27 at MM (MLJ). Two **Red-shouldered Hawks** displayed courtship behavior 2/24, observed from 1/21-2/28 at FF (EB). There were 3 sightings of single **Rough-legged Hawks** late in the season: one at SSP 2/26 (GN), one at MM 2/22 (MLJ), and one at Fields near REI 2/23 (AB).

The only consistent sightings of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were at MM 12/25-1/20 (MLJ), but there were single reports from 3 other locations in the county. There were numerous **Common Raven** sightings in the county (m.ob.), with a high of 4 at SSP 12/27 (JP).

Due to snow cover for most of the season, there were scattered reports of **Horned Larks**, with a high count of 35 at both MR 12/21 (AB) and Dutch Corner 2/14 (AB). Only three sites reported **Golden-crowned Kinglets** with a high count of 2 at both BF 1/2 (JC) and SSP 1/10 (AB). Surprisingly, **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were reported in only 3 locations: SSP had 2 on 12/27 (AB), Deerbrook Farm had 2 on 1/2 (KB), and one was at Cessna 1/2 (BC). One **Brown Creeper** was reported regularly at AR from 12/8-2/18 (ND), with other reports scattered around the county (m.ob.). A single **Winter Wren** was reported at BL 1/2 and 1/8 (AB).

A flock of **Evening Grosbeaks** was present at Birch Lane from 1/8 to present – the only location reported for this season. The high count was 20, low count was 8, and they averaged 15 (JD). Sightings of **Purple Finches** were numerous, with a high of 8 at FF 2/16 (EB). Only one **Common Redpoll** was reported at the Jackson Home 1/2 (AB). Sightings of **Pine Siskins** were limited; a high of 33 was seen at MM 12/27 (MLJ).

Providing the only report, 3 **Lapland Longspurs** were at MR 12/21 (AB). A high of 7 **American Tree Sparrows** were at BL 1/8 (AB) and a high of 4 **White-crowned Sparrows** were at Powell Road 1/2 (MLJ). The only reports for **Swamp Sparrows** were at BL 1/2 and 1/11 (AB). **Eastern Meadowlarks** were reported at just 4 sites: a high of 2 at both East Mattie Road 2/14 (EB) and Union Memorial Church 2/5 (EB). **Brown-headed Cowbirds** were reported from just 3 locations, with a high of 4 at WR 2/27 (EB). Three **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were seen at Bedford Elementary Trail 1/2 (JC) – the only report for the season.

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Berks County

Locations: Blue Marsh Lake (BML), E. J. Breneman Quarry (BQ), Hawk Mountain Sanctuary (HMS), Lake Ontelaunee (LO), Pheasant Valley Farm, Robesonia (PVF), Reading CBC (RCBC).

Except for a storm that dropped ten inches of snow 12/17, Dec and Jan continued the trend of open, fairly mild winters. A major storm that dropped up to two feet of snow 2/1 brought much colder weather that froze waterways and kept the ground covered with snow till Mar.

Two major rarities shared headline space this winter. An immature male **King Eider** seen at LO 1/2 (BS) was in view for a brief ten minutes before it flew away, not to be seen again. That was enough time for the observer to capture a grainy but identifiable photo via cell phone through a scope (photo and description submitted to PORC). It was the first King Eider recorded in *Berks*, making this the only Pennsylvania county to have recorded both eastern eiders. An adult male **Common Eider** seen at LO 3/12/98 is on the PORC provisional list.

A **Northern Wheatear**, the second in *Berks* and about the ninth in Pennsylvania, seen at Hamburg Commerce Park 12/10-12/15 (JSp), was a crowd pleaser, attracting dozens of birders from several states (many photos on eBird). This barren-lands breeder found the highly disturbed, sparsely vegetated landscape of this golf course-turned-warehouse development much to its liking and might have stayed longer but for the cold front and snowstorm that froze it out. Had it flown the right way on migration from its nesting ground in eastern arctic Canada or Greenland, it might have been in North Africa by then.

In contrast to recent winters, the persistent cold and snow of Feb delayed most waterfowl migration till Mar. **Snow Goose** flocks of a few hundred to a few thousand were reported as flyovers or field gleaners as usual. One to 3 **Cackling Geese** were occasionally seen in the large **Canada Goose** flock wintering at BQ Dec to Feb (m.ob.). A **Snow x Canada Goose** was intermittently reported at BQ 12/6-2/10 (JH, RK, MS). This hybrid has been reported a few times since the resurgence of **Snow Geese** in the 1990s. **Mute Swan** has not resurged since the culling of the flock of about 30 birds at LO several years ago. The largest group reported this winter was of about 6 birds at Bernhart's Dam near Reading in Dec and Jan (m.ob.). A flock of 64 musical **Tundra Swans** in a slow glide over BML 12/28 (RK) was the largest reported this season.

One or 2 **Wood Ducks** lingered till 1/2, but 4 seen near Robesonia 2/14 (PM) were probably early migrants. BQ, reliably ice-free, is the place where uncommon ducks end up after the lakes freeze. One or a few **Northern Shovelers**, **Northern Pintails**, and **Green-winged Teals** were reported there in Feb (m.ob.). The season's high count of the **Gadwall** flock that winters around LO was 85 on 1/25 (RK). Among them was a **Gadwall x Mallard** drake 12/22 and 1/6 (RK), the third time that this hybrid has been reported since 2017. The winter high count of **American Wigeons** was of 22 at LO 1/30 (RK). For decades, this duck has wintered as Gadwall and once outnumbered it. Birders are more frequently identifying and reporting **American Black Duck x Mallard** hybrids, mostly drakes. One to 4 of these were reported at multiple locations, mostly among the hundreds of **Mallards** at BQ, where an adjacent homeowner feeds them corn. **American Black Duck's** decline continues – the season's high count was only 80 on the RCBC 12/20.

Besides common **Ring-necked Ducks**, one to 4 **Redheads**, **Greater Scaups** and **Lesser Scaups** were among the *Aythya* ducks reported at BQ most of the period (m.ob.). A flock of 11 **Long-tailed Ducks** stopped briefly at BML 1/2 (PJW). A few **Buffleheads** and **Common Goldeneyes** popped up on various lakes, with 10 of the latter at LO 1/28 (AW). Just before the Feb freeze, seasonal high counts of 43 **Hooded Mergansers** (AW) and 312 **Common Mergansers** (RK) were made at LO. A few **Red-breasted Mergansers** have been reported every winter since at least 2010. These are often Dec migrants heading for the coast, such as 2 at LO 12/10 (PJW). Seven seen on the Schuylkill R. during the RCBC 12/20 (AZ) provided just the third record of the species on that count since 2008. One was at BQ 2/3 (JH). Many counts of the annually wintering flock of **Ruddy Ducks** at BQ ranged from a few to 47. Among them wintered 3 **Pied-billed Grebes** and one **Horned Grebe**, the latter irregular in this season.

As noted in the Fall 2020 report, the **Eurasian Collared-Dove** colony in Shartlesville seems to be growing. There were the usual reports by passing birders padding lists of one or 2 birds along Main St., but one observer found 6 on 12/22 and 11 on 1/9 (SB). Three **Rufous Hummingbirds** stayed from fall into winter, one all winter. All were banded by Sandy Lockerman. An immature male in Exeter Twp. first seen 11/11 was last seen 12/13 (LV). A different Rufous visited the same garden last year. An adult male near Boyertown first seen 10/3 was last seen 1/7 (C&MM). There are good photos on eBird of this bird visiting a

heated feeder on a snowy day. An adult female first seen near Boyertown in mid-Sep (DM) was still there in Apr 2021 (R&KW), having survived the winter by alternating between two feeders about an eighth-mile apart.

American Coots wintering at BQ numbered 2-22, the higher counts made during the first half of the period. Three **Sandhill Cranes** migrated south over HMS 12/7 (BB). One to 5 **Killdeer** and one to 6 **Wilson's Snipe** were seen in open springs in farmland at various times during the period as usual. Two first winter **Iceland Gulls** visited BML, a light bird 1/22-27 (m.ob.) and a darker bird 1/30 (RK). Up to 5 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** (a normal number) and one or 2 **Great Black-backed Gulls** (low) were occasionally seen at BML (m.ob.). Most gulls left after the Feb freeze-up. The season's only reported **Red-throated Loon** was at LO 12/10,12 (RK, JV). One or 2 late migrating **Common Loons** were at BML and LO on various dates 12/4-14 (RK, AM, SS). There was no overwintering attempt by **Double-crested Cormorant**, last seen at LO 12/10 (RK, PJW).

Single **Northern Harriers** were reported at 15 locations on 15 dates spanning the period (m.ob.). Modern intensive agriculture provides very little vole habitat, so harriers moved through farmland fairly quickly. The few maintained grasslands, such as at PVF, a gamebird farm and private hunting preserve, and some state game lands, can attract them all winter. The snow and cold of Feb brought 2 light morph **Rough-legged Hawks** 2/13, one to Fleetwood (PH) and the other to Robesonia (BL), neither seen again. A **Snowy Owl** first seen near Topton in early Jan (*fide* SSc) stayed till about mid-Feb (*fide* RK). It was seen and photographed by a few local birders 1/25-28, but its location was kept secret because it spent most of its time on a farm whose owner is notably hostile to any perceived trespassers, including birders. A **Short-eared Owl** was flushed by hunters at PVF (see above) 12/22 (BL). This farm has hosted these birds in previous years. A **Barn Owl** was seen at PVF 2/16 (BL). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** roosted in a hemlock at a residence in Bern Twp. 12/2-9 (EB). Another was heard calling in daytime at HMS 1/20 (PH).

Considering its sadly low numbers, **American Kestrel** was fairly widely reported, decreasing after the Feb snowstorm. There were scattered reports of **Merlins**, most often seen at BML as usual. Birders reported single **Peregrine Falcons** at 10 places on various dates through the winter. It is unclear if these were wandering birds or were sightings of Reading's resident pair sallying out from their urban towers into the countryside. An **Eastern Phoebe** was at Kernsville Dam and Recreation Area 12/13, 12/24, and 1/4 (KG). This flycatcher has been reported one or more times during each winter in eight of the last ten years.

Black-capped Chickadees staged their largest irruption into Berks since 2010-11. As during two previous irruptions, birds were first noticed flying southwest along the Kittatinny Ridge at HMS in early fall and were more widely reported when they started visiting feeders later in fall and early winter. Most reports were of single birds, but groups of 3 to 7 were reported at some feeders and in the field. There was a slight uptick in numbers on CBCs, but true numbers were probably masked by common use of designations such as "chickadee sp." or "Carolina/Black-capped" or calling all chickadees Carolina on local CBCs, as Berks is still partly in the Carolina/Black-capped Chickadee hybrid zone. This irruption was smaller than the one in 2010-11, when some feeder watchers reported groups of 10 to 12 birds, and flocks of similar size were found in the field during the peak of the movement. An irruption in 2007-08 was even larger than that in 2010-11. See the appropriate previous seasonal issues of [Pennsylvania Birds](#) for details. As in previous irruptions, reports tapered off in Feb and Mar as birds quietly vanished. One would assume they flew back north. A report of 104 Black-capped Chickadees migrating past Derby Hill Bird Observatory at the eastern end of L. Ontario in New York 4/7/21 may provide evidence that they actually do.

A small movement of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** continued from fall, a few found on CBCs and a few more at some feeders all winter. **Tufted Titmouse** counts on the RCBC have slowly risen from 17 at the nadir in 2018, when West Nile Virus decimated the population, to 36 in 2019 and 61 in 2020. The 20-year average count on the RCBC is 186.

Gray Catbirds were reported at four places. One at Shillington Park was monitored 12/7-23 (NW). One at Green Hills Preserve survived till at least 1/30 (RH). This species has been reported one or more times in nine of the last ten winters. After an excellent fall showing, **American Pipits** continued in smaller numbers into winter, with 35 near Fleetwood 12/21 (JSp) and one to 5 lingering at a few open springs into frozen Feb.

The northern finch superflight lightly touched **Berks**. Except for a few that settled in at feeders, the **Purple Finches** of fall moved on. **Common Redpolls** made their best showing since 2007-08, but numbers were small and they were seen by few birders. Most were recorded at HMS, where 50 flew by North Lookout 12/8 and a flock of 45 was seen feeding on black birch seeds deep in the forest 1/20 (PH). South of the Kittatinny Ridge, two flocks of 4 (JSp) and 5 (M-TG) were seen on field trips, and two lucky feeder watchers (LC, CB) got visits from one or 2 birds, the last in Gilbertsville 2/15 (CB). The 2007-08 flight was similar in size and distribution. HMS tallied 5 Red Crossbills 12/5, 3 on 12/7 and 14 on 12/14. The only other report was of 2 heard at Monocacy Hill in Amity Twp. 12/22 (S&F). As often before, **Pine Siskins** were the most numerous northern finches. There were many reports of a few to 40 at feeders, with numbers highest in Dec and Jan.

The snowstorms 12/17 and 2/1 brought gratifying numbers of **Lapland Longspurs** and **Snow Buntings**. Both species were most numerous after the Feb storm, when one to 5 **Lapland Longspurs** were reported near Fleetwood 2/2-7 and 2-10 near PVF 2/6-13 (m.ob.). Due to continuous snow cover on the fields, birds often foraged along roadsides cleared of snow, allowing very good views. The chiming twitter of **Snow Buntings** could be enjoyed when their flocks, sometimes numbering 40 to 50 birds but usually smaller, also came to roadsides. Several flights in previous years have brought hundreds of these living snowflakes. Both species were gone by mid-Feb.

The changing composition of winter sparrow populations seems to become more apparent every year as **Chipping Sparrows**, **Fox Sparrows** and **Eastern Towhees** become more regular, and **American Tree Sparrows** become harder to find. **Vesper Sparrows** have always been rare in winter, so one photographed at Rodale Experimental Farm 1/19 (TW) and another near Clayton 2/6 (JB) were noteworthy. This sparrow was last reported in winter in 2012. Snow cover that forced field birds to feed conspicuously at roadsides resulted in an all-time high count of 45 **Savannah Sparrows** on the RCBC 12/20.

Single **Eastern Meadowlarks** were reported at three locations 12/19, 2/8, and 2/13. The other drastically declining icterid, **Rusty Blackbird**, was reported twice, a singleton on the RCBC 12/20 and 4 at Union Meadows Park in Birdsboro (currently the most reliable location to see this species) 1/16 (JT). Two **Palm Warblers** were seen along the roadside near Rodale Experimental Farm 12/18 and one nearby 12/19 (TW). A western Palm Warbler was photographed at Peters Cr. at LO 1/31 (BS). There are a few previous winter records of this warbler. A stressed-looking **Magnolia Warbler**, the first reported in winter, was photographed near Boyertown 12/2 (BSp). It was not seen again.

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Blair County

Locations: Albemarle Nature Trail (ANT), Bells Gap Trail (BGT), Canoe Creek State Park (CC), Henry's Pond (HP), Lake Raystown CBC Area 1 only (LR-CBC), Lower Trail Mount Etna (LTE), Plummers Hollow (PH), Reese Pond (RP), Sabbath Rest Wetland (SRW), State Game Lands 278 North (SGLN), Watts Pond (WP), Yellow Springs Pond (YSP).

Information for this report was obtained primarily from eBird data. Additional information was pulled from the 52nd Culp CBC held 12/19. The winter weather brought moderate snow accumulation and average to below-average temperatures in February, causing many of the big bodies of water to be frozen most of the winter.

A total of 96 species were reported and included some rare and uncommon visitors such as 2 **Trumpeter Swans** on WP 2/24 (JC). The Tag Z675 male Trumpeter Swan stayed for less than one day and was the same one from YSP two years ago. There were 2 **Evening Grosbeaks** at LTE 12/26 and a lone flyover **Red Crossbill** at BGT 1/21 (JC). The biggest surprise during the Culp CBC included first-count record of a **Short-Eared Owl** in Sinking Valley area 12/19 (GM, JO).

Other notable sightings during the CBC included a **Peregrine Falcon** along with 5 **Lapland Longspurs** in mixed company with 145 **Horned Larks** (CE, KE). Other high counts for the CBC included 5 **Bald Eagles**, 280 **Mourning Doves**, 56 **Red-bellied Woodpeckers**, 45 **Carolina Wrens**, 17 **Hermit Thrushes**, 5 **Fox Sparrows**, 1013 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, 39 **White-crowned Sparrows**, 352 **White-throated Sparrows**, and 5 **Swamp Sparrows**.

Large flocks of flyover **Tundra Swans** were noted across the area in Feb. There were 16 waterfowl-species sightings, including a single female **Northern Pintail** 12/31 HP (MD). A group of 14 **Green-winged Teal** showed back up at the Army National Guard Readiness Center Pond 1/3 (PI) and a single on WP 1/1 (JC). Four **Canvasbacks** and 3 **Redheads** were photographed at SRW 2/15 (JC). A lone **Common Goldeneye** was observed at CC (JP).

The first-of-the-year **Killdeer** was noted on New Year's Day near WP (LC, MN), while a lone **Wilson's Snipe** was observed on Sportsman's Rd 1/16 (DG, GG).

Raptors that were documented included a single **Golden Eagle** being chased by **Common Ravens** along Interstate 99 near Tyrone 12/25 (RR). Single **Northern Harriers** were noted in the Sinking Valley area (m.ob.). There were nine separate reports of lone **Sharp-shinned Hawks** and an impressive 20 separate sightings of single **Cooper's Hawks** across the county. **Bald Eagles** continued to be reported widely in the area, with an increase of 5 single reports of **Red-shouldered Hawks**. **Red-tailed Hawks** continued to be reported consistently across the county, especially along the Interstate 99 corridor. One of the more uncommon raptors documented included a light-morph **Rough-legged Hawk** near a field by Del Grosso's Park 12/17 (JC).

Part of the L. Raystown CBC is in *Blair where*, a few owls were documented including 2 **Great Horned Owls** and 6 **Eastern Screech Owls** 12/28 (DB). A **Barred Owl** was heard in PH 12/19 (MB, MkB), and 2 **Great Horned Owls** were duetting at a residence near Bellwood 12/19 (JC).

A winter highlight was a lone **Eastern Phoebe** at LTE 12/31 (MD). Two **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were near a home in Altoona 2/12 (CH), and one at CC 1/3 (JC). A group of 5 **American Pipits** was reported in the Sinking Valley area 12/26 (JC), along with single sightings of **Snow Buntings** and as many as 2 on Crawford Rd. (m.ob.). **Pine Siskin** sightings were observed mostly at CC with a high count of 14 on 12/6 as well as a few sightings at home residences. A high count of 7 **Eastern Meadowlarks** were along Crawford Rd in Sinking Valley 2/5 (JC).

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Bradford County – no compiler

Bucks County

Locations: Bradford Dam (BRD), Central *Bucks* CBC (C-CBC), Maple Knoll Farms in Buckingham Township (MKF), Nockamixon State Park

(NSP), Peace Valley Park (PVP), Penn-Warner Tract (PWT), Southern *Bucks* CBC (S-CBC), Upper *Bucks* CBC (U-CBC).

During December, both temperature (+0.7°F) and precipitation (0.16") were fairly normal compared to the average. January was warmer than usual (+2.1°F) and a good bit drier (-1.53"). February turned chilly (-2.5°F), and precipitation rose, too (+2.07"). Normal weather data have been taken from the National Weather Service in nearby Trenton, New Jersey, but snowfall totals were not available here. However, the February snowfall totals made a huge impact on bird life. On the northern and southern ends of *Bucks*, the cities of Allentown (39.6", +28.5") and Philadelphia (14.3", +5.5") both had much higher than normal monthly snowfall totals. In fact, the storm on 2/1 dropped 20 to 30 inches of snow on much of the upper county! The following days and weeks proved to be very good for finding concentrations of open field birds and sparrows in general. Snow cover lingered for the entire month, given cold temperatures and periodic "refills." The total number of 139 species boosted the five-year average to 137. Raptors, sparrows, and winter finches undoubtedly helped bring the numbers up. Several rarities highlighted the winter season, either for true rarity or seasonal significance. These included **Pink-footed Goose**, **Sandhill Crane**, **Golden Eagle**, **Northern Goshawk**, **Rough-legged Hawk**, **Evening Grosbeak**, and **Common Redpoll**.

The 53rd U-CBC was run 12/20 with mild temperatures but significant ice cover on small water bodies and a good 6 inches of snow on the ground. A total of 25,589 birds of 95 species was about average, with 9 new high counts established. The 55th C-CBC happened 12/27, with the compiler noting that the pandemic caused an increase in feeder-watches and changed the driving parties somewhat. The total of 19,660 individuals of 81 species was a little low, with just one new high count set. The 74th S-CBC occurred 12/19 amidst bitter cold morning temperatures and 6 inches of snow, but effort was still high. The total of 71,520 birds of 102 species was average in number but good in species variety. Five new high counts were set. Please note that every area had 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 some general notes and observations. Ken Kitson's 1998 *Birds of Bucks County* was referenced for some historical information.

Estimates of 2000 **Snow Geese** were made over Riegelsville 12/19 and BRD 2/6 (BF, VP) for the high counts. **Greater White-fronted Geese** put in a normal showing. One was in Middletown Twp. 12/19 (LJ, ph., KrL, KL) for the sixth S-CBC occurrence. Another appeared at Pine Run Dam 1/2 and stayed in the PVP area until 1/27 (SB, ph.) A **Pink-footed Goose** stopped at PVP 1/10-11, thought to maybe be the same as one in neighboring *Montgomery* (HB, AM). Nowadays, **Cackling Geese** are reported in ones and twos at almost every reservoir in the area. The high count of 5 at Core Creek Park 12/17 (MG, ph.) was on the lower end for recent years. One female **Canada Goose** seen in Bedminster Twp. 1/2 (DF), X8A6, was banded 7/6/2015 near Pointe-Aux-Trembles, Quebec, Canada. It was at least 6 years old at the time of this year's observation. A high count of 39 **Mute Swans** at PWT 1/14 (WK, ph.) was much higher than recent years' aggregations here. By contrast, 5 **Tundra Swans** at NSP 2/25-26 were the only ones seen the whole winter (KI, VM).

Twenty-one duck species made an appearance, about average. Dabbling duck numbers are usually insignificant here during winter, but increased reporting from PWT helped that a bit. **Northern Shovelers** spent plenty of time at PWT, with a high of 46 on 1/31 (DF). Up to 35 **Gadwalls** were showy at Silver Lake Park, with the high reported 1/23 (KrL). Modest counts of 36 **American Wigeons** and 38 **Northern Pintails** at NSP 2/25 (AM) far surpassed any other reports. A very high count of 190 **Green-winged Teal** at PWT 12/13 (AH) was a continuing quantity from the fall. A total of 11 **Canvasbacks** consisted of singles and pairs (m.ob., ph.), with the highest group of 7 at Neshaminy SP 2/15 (AH). At least 26 **Redheads** were found throughout the winter, with most reports at PVP and the PWT area (m.ob., ph.). The high of 10 was at PWT 2/20 (DF). **Greater Scaup** were apparent mostly in southern *Bucks*, with the total of 30 (m.ob., ph.) bolstered by 10 at Core Creek

Park 2/25 (RS). Their **Lesser Scaup** counterparts were seen in low single digits through the winter (m.ob., ph.), with the exception of 28 at PWT on 1/2 (DD).

One scoter, a male **White-winged Scoter**, made for a first-ever U-CBC occurrence 12/20 (JH, ph., SGo, ph.). Another individual furnished just the second S-CBC record 12/19 (*fide* MG). Contrary to some other duck species, **Long-tailed Ducks** were fairly elusive. Three made it on the U-CBC at NSP 12/20 (SGo), a female was at NSP 1/1 (IB), 3 stopped at PVP 2/7 (TF), and 4 were on the Delaware R. at Falls Twp. 2/15 (DDo). Maxima of 34 **Common Goldeneyes** at NSP 2/4 (JH) and 22 on the Delaware R. at Morrisville Levee 1/30 (DDo) were probably far enough apart to represent different flocks. The large flocks of **Common Mergansers** at PVP were even less frequent this year after a low showing last winter. The high of 1750 was early on 12/23 (KI), and many counts were well below this. Accordingly, **Red-breasted Mergansers** were in short supply. Four at PVP 1/17 were the high count (HB), although ones and twos stayed at the larger lakes and on the Delaware R. (m.ob.). A healthy number of **Ruddy Ducks**, up to 107 on 1/31 (AH), wintered at PWT. An honorary duck for the purposes of this report, one **Horned Grebe** at NSP 12/21 was the only report (AH).

A **Virginia Rail** at Quakertown was added to the U-CBC, 12/20, just its second occurrence in the past 10 years. The high count of 297 **American Coots** was fairly modest at PWT 12/7 (AH), while coots were all but absent from the rest of the county. The 2 celebrity **Sandhill Cranes** stayed from 12/18 (JV) through the end of the reporting period (m.ob., ph.). One **American Woodcock** that flew across a road at PVP 1/11 (MF) demonstrated how tough the species is to see outside of the early spring. One or 2, and up to 4, **Wilson's Snipe** wintered at their usual BRD location (VP, m.ob., ph.). Four more snipe were tallied on the C-CBC, its third occurrence in 10 years and first since 2012.

Gull counts for all three CBCs are in the table. Numbers for nearly all species were significantly lower than normal, except for **Iceland** and **Glaucous Gulls**. **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were comparatively low in their northern haunts, but a strong S-CBC total averaged out numbers. Other than the CBCs and at PWT, gull reports were uneventful. **Bonaparte's Gulls** put in brief appearances at NSP, with 7 on 12/2 (KR) and one on 2/6 (KBB, ph.). One **Iceland Gull** was at PVP 1/9 and 1/28 (AM, KR, ph.), possibly the same bird. Two were seen at widely spaced intervals on the Delaware R. at Morrisville Levee (DDo, ph.), and one put in an appearance at NSP starting 2/25 (AM). Five **Laughing Gulls** were seen at Van Sciver Lake 12/7 (AH).

CBC GULL COUNTS

SPECIES	U-CBC	C-CBC	S-CBC	TOTAL
Bonaparte's Gull				0
Ring-billed Gull	711	190	420	1,321
Herring Gull	19	36	31,470	31,525
Iceland Gull			13	13
Lesser Bl.-backed Gull	241	92	273	606
Herring x Lesser Bl. Bk.			4	4
Glaucous Gull			2	2
Herring x Glaucous Gull			2	2
Great Black-backed Gull		4	214	218
TOTAL	971	318	32,398	33,687

Loon reports were light, with none received for Red-throated. **Common Loons** were seen at three locations along the lower Delaware R. (AH, RD), with a high of 2 at PWT 12/7 (AH). **Great Cormorant** numbers were up significantly from several down winters. The sum of the high counts from 8 Delaware R. locations was 46 (m.ob., ph.), though perhaps a large chunk of these were the same birds commuting up and down this long stretch. The single-site high count of 15 came from Bristol Twp. 2/20 (DF). Late lingering **Great Egrets** were at PWT 12/7 (AH, ph.) and at Silver Lake Park 12/10-11 (RN, ph.), quite likely the same bird.

One **Golden Eagle**, likely an immature, was described at Pine Run

Dam 1/12 (KI). They are rare in any season, but well-described winter records seem to be increasing. **Northern Harrier** winter reports were similar to last year, with 25 or so birds at about 21 locations (m.ob., ph.). Any **Northern Goshawk** reports in *Bucks* fall under heavy scrutiny, given the county's off-ridge and southern placement. An immature was photographed stunningly well at PVP 1/4 (WC, ph.) for a very rare park and county record. The **Bald Eagle** roost at PWT yielded 101 birds 12/19 (DF), making for a record S-CBC total of 108. This is likely the highest single-site count for the species in *Bucks*, perhaps even the entire state.

Red-shouldered Hawk winter numbers are also skyrocketing in the county. The U-CBC (24, new high count), C-CBC (12, second highest count), and S-CBC (10, new high count) totals accumulated to an impressive 46 birds. After weeks of heavy snow cover to the north, **Rough-legged Hawks** appeared with a flurry of records in the southeastern counties. One light morph bird was described over Newtown 2/13 (BS).

The cumulative CBC total of 165 **Eastern Screech-Owls** was fairly low. In fact, the U-CBC alone can total this many in a good year. Compilers noted that conditions seemed good, but owls were uncooperative and owling effort was a bit low (BE, DA). This writer pleads guilty to the latter! After two incredibly poor years for **Great Horned Owls** (25 in 2019 and 12 in 2018), the CBC total spiked to 48 this year. **Barred Owls** fared well, too, with an above-average 4 on the U-CBC and just the fifth count record on the C-CBC. Two **Long-eared Owls** eked out an existence at PVP, seen 1/2 (DF). A single **Short-eared Owl** was a welcome, if odd, sight high over PVP in the middle of the day 1/14 (DM, ph.). The species is rarely found here in winter nowadays. Despite not being found on any CBCs, **Northern Saw-whet Owl** reports were indicative of a good flight year. Singles were found at Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve 11/20 (MN), NSP 12/20 (BE), Haycock Twp. 1/27 (DF), and Solebury Twp. 2/12 (LC, ph.).

Woodpecker counts remain high in general on the CBCs. The cumulative CBC total of 92 **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** may be one of the highest ever, although no count had a record number. **Hairy Woodpecker** numbers were high, with the U-CBC total of 65 the best in that count's history. **Pileated Woodpeckers** have been increasing for several years. The U-CBC (35) and S-CBC (8) set new record highs, while the C-CBC's count of 19 were only topped by last year's record. In mildly good **American Kestrel** news, the U-CBC had its highest count (12) since 2005 and the S-CBC its highest count (6) since 2002. The C-CBC had a low count (6) typical of recent years. The S-CBC also had its highest **Merlin** count ever, coming in at 4. **Peregrine Falcons** may not be mentioned in future winter reports, as birds now line the lower Delaware R. at regular intervals and are occasionally seen at major highways and lakes inland (m.ob., ph.).

This winter was not especially mild. Therefore, one **Eastern Phoebe** at BRD 12/24 (BK, ph.) and 2 total in Solebury Twp. 1/21 (RS) and 1/5 (MR) were normal in being the only reports. **Blue Jay** numbers were very low on all CBCs, whether due to West Nile Virus, departing migrants, or some other factor. **Common Raven** featured well on all three CBCs. Both the U-CBC (11) and C-CBC (10) had second-best counts one below the record, while the S-CBC hopped on board with one for its fourth occurrence. A single count of 11 ravens over Buckingham Twp. 2/6 was a very high count for the lower county (KR, IB).

It appears that **Carolina Chickadee** numbers are slowly rebounding after two shockingly low years, although the U-CBC total of 103 was still the third-worst result in the count's history. **Black-capped Chickadees** were present on all three CBCs, with a good cumulative total of 47. This species showed a strong 2-year irruptive pattern in 10-year CBC data. Numerous Black-capped showed up at feeders and parks throughout the county, too (m.ob., ph.). **Tufted Titmouse** numbers spiked considerably in two of the three CBCs, with the U-CBC's count of 154 more than tripling the previous two years' low counts. They still have progress to make in order to approach previous averages.

The CBC total of 396 **Horned Larks** was easily the highest since 2009. It is important to note that snow featured prominently in count circles that historically held numbers of larks. Likewise, the peak estimate of 380 larks at MKF 2/2 (RS) was high, but in line with past snowy winters. Three **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** at PWT 12/13 (AH)

were likely bouncing between the nearest water treatment facilities along the lower Delaware R. After a moderate to large fall irruption, **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were at approximately 25 sites. The CBC total of 11 was low for an irruption year though. After an apparent fall irruption, **White-breasted Nuthatches** were on the higher side of average. **Carolina Wrens** continued above-average CBC numbers, too.

European Starling numbers again fell far below average on the C-CBC and U-CBC. Five **Gray Catbirds** on the U-CBC made for an odd distribution of the species in the upper county. The other two counts totaled 2 birds, although PWT and PVP each hosted a wintering catbird (m.ob., ph.). Two **Brown Thrashers** were on the CBCs, one each on the C-CBC and S-CBC. Only one other report came in from Lower Makefield Twp. 12/19 (MG). This is a low number for the half-hardy thrasher. **Northern Mockingbird** CBC totals were all above their five-year averages, but still low. Totals for **Hermit Thrush** were high on the U-CBC (45) and S-CBC (14), both good for second-best in those counts' histories. **Cedar Waxwings** did not stay for the winter in numbers and were low on all three CBCs. **American Pipits** were found at 10 locations, mostly in ones and twos (m.ob., ph.) with up to 8 at MKF 2/6 (RS). One made it on the U-CBC for a rare occurrence, while 13 on the S-CBC were also a healthy number. Many of these sightings were undoubtedly snow related.

Parts of the large autumn invasion of irruptive finches spilled over into the winter season. **Evening Grosbeaks** kept going south for the most part. Two were photographed at a Falls Twp. park 12/5 (KrL), and 2 more were at a Buckingham Twp. feeder on 12/20 (LT). Another made it on the U-CBC for the fourth occurrence in the past 25 years. Many **Purple Finches** also cleared out of the area, but the U-CBC (16) and C-CBC (3) still had a few. Single-digit numbers were somewhat thinly spread across the county otherwise, with the exception of an estimate of 25 at BRD 1/8 (MG). **Common Redpolls** treated a few birders to their presence. The 5 on the U-CBC were the first since 2008, while one was on the S-CBC for the first time since 2007. Singles showed up 2/4 in Tinicum Twp. (DA), in NSP (JH), and at MKF (RS, ph.). **Pine Siskins** were reasonably common in several locations until Feb, when numbers dwindled to single digits (m.ob., ph.). Counts of 30 at a Buckingham Twp. home 12/5 (Ronald Jones) and 18 at a Lower Makefield Twp. feeding station 1/7 (Susan Harrison) topped other reports. While they were missed on the U-CBC, both the C-CBC (23, second highest ever) and S-CBC (12) had decent counts.

The late-winter snow brought a plethora of sparrows and other field birds into *Bucks* for many birders to enjoy as a real seasonal highlight. **Lapland Longspurs** were at two locations. Two birds appeared after a light to moderate snowfall at MKF 12/18 (RS, ph.), and one stayed there 2/4-6 (AM, RS, m.ob., ph.). The preserved Patterson Farm in Lower Makefield Twp. hosted a great number of 4 birds on both 2/8 (MG, ph.) and 2/10 (JP, ph.) among some larks. At least one stayed here until 2/20 (MO), a prime example of how long the snow stayed on the ground. **Snow Buntings** were detected at seven sites this winter, most with one to 2 birds (m.ob.). Again, the prime locations were MKF and the Patterson Farm site. At least 25 to 50 buntings spent time at MKF 2/3-6 (RS, m.ob., ph.), with a high of 60 on 2/6 (KR, IB). This show was enjoyed by many, thanks to the Smiths' generous efforts to attract the birds and welcome visitors as usual (RS). Dates at the Patterson Farm ranged from 2/16-25 (m.ob., ph.), with 10 birds 2/22 and 2/23 (MG, CV). The number of sites and individuals far exceeded that seen in most recent years.

Back to the rest of the sparrows, **Chipping Sparrows** were represented by 4 each on the S-CBC and U-CBC. They were also seen in single digits at a total of 24 locations, with a high of 12 at Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve 1/6 (MG, ph.). **Field Sparrows** were well-reported overall, including a very large single-species group of 25 at Tyler SP 2/10 (MG). One species seen in surprising quantities this winter was **American Tree Sparrow**. Birds were reported from at least 37 sites (compared to 10 last year), topped by a large flock at Pine Run Dam 1/4 (MD, ph.) that could have been anywhere between 15 to 30 birds in size. The cumulative CBC total of 45 was a jump from recent years, but still just a drop in the historical bucket. **Dark-eyed Junco** numbers were above recent averages on the S-CBC (452) and the U-CBC (1864), the latter being that count's highest number since 2007. **White-crowned**

Sparrow numbers and reported locations were both high, with an impressive single count of 18 at the usual Bedminster Twp. site on 2/21 (HB, ph., FB). The CBC total of 43 was more than in the past several years, even considering that none were seen on this year's C-CBC. **White-throated Sparrows** were above average on all CBCs, with the U-CBC record total of 2188 coming in at 35 percent higher than the previous record.

Savannah Sparrows were more visible after snow fell, too. High counts were led by 19 at MKF 2/6 (KrL, ph.) and 30-plus in Bedminster Twp. 2/14 (JH, ph.). The CBC total of 93 was the highest in at least 10 years, including an all-time high of 29 on the U-CBC. **Song Sparrows** set another sparrow record for the U-CBC (591), while the C-CBC (339) had its best total since 2006. One **Lincoln's Sparrow** on the S-CBC was that count's fifth ever. **Swamp Sparrow** joined the U-CBC record-breaking club with 42 counted. After an unbelievable CBC total of 128 **Eastern Towhees** last winter, this year's cumulative total fell all the way back to 11.

A flock of 6-7 **Eastern Meadowlarks** apparently wintered at Tyler SP 12/23-1/25 (MG, SF, CF). Two were also at the Delaware Canal SP-Giving Pond 1/31 (JR). Probably the rare highlight of the winter and the second-ever *Bucks* record was a stunning adult male **Bullock's Oriole** that appeared at a Northampton Twp. feeder sometime in late Dec. It was identified on 1/22 (SG) and stayed until 2/14 (*fide* DF). Thanks to Devich Farbotnik for coordinating with the homeowner to allow small groups of birders to visit. Not all folks followed the homeowner's request, unfortunately, but such things happen. The only previous county record was of another adult male back in 1980. This was not the only significant oriole happening, though, as **Baltimore Orioles** put in an unprecedented winter showing. The C-CBC had its first oriole in 10 years, a fairly rare occurrence on any CBC. One visited a yard in Bristol Twp. 12/6 (EG, ph.). Another was at Warwick Twp. feeders 1/11-2/14 (HB, FB), and one was at a New Britain Twp. feeding station 2/15 (MM, ph.). Two more made appearances in a Buckingham Twp. yard 1/9-2/12, one of which was a bright male (SS, ph.). Plumstead Twp. hosted an oriole 12/4-17 (LD), and 2 more were in New Britain Twp. 12/9-12/10 (LS, ph.). Including the ones mentioned in the fascinating account below, at least 17 Baltimore Orioles were seen in *Bucks* this winter! **Rusty Blackbirds** had a quiet winter, with all three CBCs contributing to a total of 6 birds. The high counts of 16 in Doylestown Twp. 12/10 (NG) and 10 at Silver Lake Park 1/31 (DD, ph.) were on the low end.

No doubt, the placement of *Bucks* as a southeastern county puts it in a position to host normally rare wintering passerines. One yard in Lower Makefield Twp., however, took this to a completely different level. On 12/12, a **Pine Warbler** arrived at the homeowner's suet cage setup. More and more slowly joined this bird until, on 2/9, an amazing high count of 10 Pines descended on her feeders! This was not the end of the story, though. On 1/5, 2 **Baltimore Orioles** found the suet feeders as well. These, too, increased until they reached an astounding maximum number of 8 on 2/1! The homeowner was very diligent in providing food and water, getting the orioles to come to grapes, jelly, and an oriole feeder in addition to the suet. Multiple birds of each species continued to visit through the end of the period (CF, ph.).

Prior to this winter, there was one accepted eBird record of **Tennessee Warbler** in the state during the winter season. One bird was photographed well by the surprised observer as it fed in weedy growth in a Tinicum Twp. yard 12/1 (DA, ph.). Given that several more were photographed elsewhere in the state this winter, might this be a species to watch for in the future? **Orange-crowned Warbler** is rare but more expected in winter, and one was photographed in Falls Twp. Community Park 1/30 (MS, ph., JH). **Common Yellowthroat** falls into a similar category, with this year's bird providing the fifth S-CBC record. Including the 10 mentioned in the previous stand-alone box, a total of 32 **Pine Warblers** were documented at 18 locations this winter. This is quite an impressive total compared to prior winters, dwarfing last year's high number of 17. The CBC total of 56 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** was about a third of the long-term average.

Possibly due to West Nile Virus, **Northern Cardinals** had two down

years in a row on the CBCs. This year, the U-CBC's count of 386 was the best since 2010, while the C-CBC (245) and S-CBC (278) had about-average counts. Finally, a drab winter-plumage **Indigo Bunting** was a big surprise to the observer in Solebury Twp. 2/13 (AM, ph.). Others were able to see the bird, or photos of it, until 2/17 and reached a consensus on its identification (m.ob., ph.). There are six previous eBird records of Indigo Bunting during the winter season in the state, and no previous *Bucks* records.

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Butler County

Locations: Lake Arthur (LA), Lake Oneida (LO), Moraine State Park - South Shore (SS), Thorn Reservoir, (TR), Moraine State Park - Waterfowl Observation Area (WOA).

Migrant waterfowl activity faded out quickly in December as Lake Arthur and Lake Oneida froze over except for very limited areas of open water. However, a few warm days just after 1/1 caused thin ice to melt, opening some large expanses of open water which attracted **Tundra Swan, Long-tailed Duck** and two rare visitors to Lake Arthur. Both **Glaucous Gull** and **Iceland Gull** thrilled many observers who braved the cold to compare these birds to the taken-for-granted **Ring-billed Gull** and **Herring Gull**. Details are below. Despite snow and cold temperatures, highlights from the Butler Christmas Bird Count include the highest number of species observed since 2012. The total number of individuals (16,127) was the highest since 1999 and nearly double the average (7856) over the 61 years of the CBC. (GK, MAK)

Late and lingering birds included **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** at LA and Cranberry Twp. 12/20 and 2/13, a **Brown Thrasher** at McDanel Boat Launch 2/13 (CK), a **Gray Catbird** at Succop Nature Park 12/10, and a **Chipping Sparrow** that visited a feeder 12/31 through the end of the season (KB). **Eastern Towhee**, and **Red-winged Blackbird** were seen in multiple locations through the season. Irruptive northern finches made an impressive display in several locations.

The resident **Canada Goose** population is down compared to the high numbers that caused problems 20 years ago, but they seem to have found a preferred winter roost at LO where flocks of 383 and 368 were counted 12/17 and 1/31, respectively. There were 462 counted at LO 2/2 (KB). Numbers remained relatively low at LA, perhaps because of increased hunting pressure noted by some observers. The resident **Mute Swan** continues at Zelenople. **Tundra Swan** movement started 12/2 and continued through 1/30 with a family group of 2 adults and 3 juveniles remaining at LA long after the lake froze over (m.ob.).

Eighteen duck species were seen including **Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, American Black Duck, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser and Ruddy Duck**. One late **Wood Duck** was at Thorn Res. 12/9 (KB) and 2 were at Johnson Road 12/18 (MC). Between 12/24 and 1/18 high double-digit counts of **Gadwall** were tallied 10 times (m.ob.) including high of 84 at South Shore 12/29 (MC) and 84 at WOA 1/17 (MC). High double-digit flocks of **Common Merganser** remained at LO through the

first week of Dec before flocks arrived at LA (KB). Ducks reported only a few times included **Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead**, both **Scaup** species, and **Long-tailed Duck**.

During the last two weeks of Feb, while migrant ducks were arriving on the rivers in nearby *Allegheny* and *Beaver*, the large lakes in *Butler* were still frozen so early spring migrants arrived the last few days of Feb, including very small numbers of early **Wood Duck, Gadwall, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser** and **Common Merganser**.

Two **Ring-necked Pheasant** were seen at Branchton Road 12/1 (BB), and one was at Pry Road 12/26 (KB). Though it is very disappointing that only one **Ruffed Grouse** was spotted during the entire season, it is shocking that this was the only grouse reported in the region (eBird), the closest being near Oil City. The bird was spotted in heavy cover near LA 12/20 during the CBC (OM). Three nice flocks of **Wild Turkey** were reported: 56 near Danville Road 12/24 (KB), 67 at Campbell Road 1/27 (KB), and 66 at Kelly Road 2/28 (KB).

Pied-billed Grebe and **Horned Grebe** visited LA and TR in small numbers until the lakes froze over in early Jan. The highest counts for **American Coot** occurred the first days of Dec with 114 at SS 12/2 (KB) and 120 there 12/3 (RN). Numbers dwindled steadily to single digits until early Jan. There were nine reports of **Sandhill Crane** from 3 locations: the Miller Esker Area, SGL 95, and LA.

A late **American Woodcock** surprised birders at Johnson Road 12/4 (MH, RH). Early **Killdeer** arrived in multiple locations the last few days of Feb. Small numbers of **Bonaparte's Gull** visited LA; the high count was 14 at SS 12/4 (MC). **Ring-billed Gull** and **Herring Gull** were expected at LA with Ring-billed Gull numbers climbing to 500 at SS 1/3 and 646 there 1/5 (MAK, GK). **Herring Gull** totals, normally less than 20, increased to unusual totals of 38 at SS 1/3 (MAK, GK), 44 at LA 1/9 (MH, RH), and a very unusual high of 71 at WOA 1/16 (MV). Frigid temperatures brought two rare visitors to LA in Jan: an **Iceland Gull** found at SS 1/12 (DD *fide* MV) thrilled many observers and provided the (probable) third *Butler* record (eBird and the listserv). Previous records are from 1977 (PH) and 2017 (CE). Adding to the excitement and attracting many visitors was the discovery of a **Glaucous Gull** at WOA 1/16 (MV). This bird represents just the (probable) second *Butler* record. The first record was at LA in 1984 (GW).

One **Red-throated Loon** was spotted at SS 12/6 (RN) and up to 3 were seen at LA in early Dec. **Northern Harrier** was seen regularly in its usual haunts although no gray ghosts were noted (m.ob.). A Winter Raptor Survey 1/29 turned up seven species including **Rough-legged Hawk** (GW). Four Owl species were reported including **Eastern Screech Owl, Great Horned Owl, and Barred Owl. Short-eared Owl** appeared at Johnson Road and in fields just east of McConnell's Mill, and though up to 7 were present last winter season, the high count was 3 this year (MC).

Merlin was seen in various locations, most often at LA through Jan. A late **Eastern Phoebe** was noted at Swope Road 12/20 (LW). **Common Raven** was seen in many locations but almost all reports were of a lone bird (m.ob.). **Horned Lark** gleaned farm fields through the season with the high count of 32 at Miller Road 2/21 (OM). A beautiful, almost all white, leucistic **Black-capped Chickadee** was found at Cranberry Twp. 1/7 (JC, ph). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was present in widespread locations, although in small numbers.

Adding to the excitement of rare gulls, the irruption of northern visitors thrilled observers starting with **Evening Grosbeak**, noted at eight locations with the high count of 12 at Bonniebrook Road 1/18 (LF). Birders were hoping for crossbills because of 4 seen 11/29 but alas just a single **Red Crossbill** stopped at a pine grove near LA 12/3 (RN). Northern finches were scarce at feeders near Slippery Rock and other northern *Butler* locations (GW), but at other sites they made quite a showing. First, **Common Redpoll** appeared at North Shore 12/4 (EH) and 2 were at Claytonia Road 12/24 (BB), then a large flock gathered at a sunflower planting at SGL 95, attracting many observers through Feb. Many reports included flocks of 30 to 40 birds foraging with hundreds of **American Goldfinches**. The high count was 75 at Meals Road 1/7 (MF). Two rarities were among the flocks: a **Hoary Redpoll** was photographed there 1/2 (DY) and a possible rostrata sub-species, sometimes called the "Greenland Redpoll," was photographed 1/9 (DB). The **Pine Siskin**

invasion was of historical proportions: 41 appeared at Portersville 12/1, and double-digit flocks continued there through 12/19. High count was 66 there 12/7 (MC). Many double-digit flocks visited feeders, and smaller numbers were seen in widespread locations through the season (m.ob.).

Rarely seen in *Butler*, **Lapland Longspur** was found in fields near Miller Road 2/13 and 2/21 feeding with **Horned Larks** and **Snow Buntings** (KB, MC, OM). A lone Snow Bunting was present at SS 12/3 (RN), 2 at Book Road 12/20 (BB, MC), 5 at Miller Road 2/17 (DF), and 5 were observed nearby 2/21 (OM). Although reported to be in steep decline, reports of larger than usual flocks for *Butler* of **American Tree Sparrow** were encouraging, including 20 at Meals Road 12/18 (KB), 40 there 1/24 (KB), 35 on 1/30 (MAK, GK) and 29 at Swamp Run Road 2/14 (MAK, GK). The only warbler species reported included the expected **Yellow-rumped Warbler** in several locations and the unexpected appearance of an **Orange-crowned Warbler** at Watters Station Road 12/17 (DS, ph).

Observers: **Oscar Miller**, aoscarmiller3@gmail.com, (412) 855-0483, Brendyn Baptiste, Kimberly Berry, Dave Brooke, Martin Carlin, Linda Croskey, Debbie Darney, Michael David, Carl Engstrom, Mike Fialkovich, Eric Hall, Louis Freeland-Haynes, Paul Hess, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, Frank Izaguirre, Deborah Kalbfleisch, Mary Alice Koeneke, Glenn Koppel, Chris Kubiak, Richard Nugent, Aidan Place, Theo Rickert, Deborah Sherman, Ryan Tomazin, Shannon Thompson, Mark Vass, Linda Wagner, Dan Weeks, Gene Wilhelm, Joanne Wilhelm, David Yeany II.

Cambria County

Locations: Chest Springs (CP), Patton (PA), Prince Gallitzin St. Park
Locations: Prince Gallitzin State Park (PG).

With the exception of February most of the winter was mild and some of the lake at PG was ice free. Good numbers of waterfowl were present until the lake completely froze around mid-February. Two **Snow Geese** were with a flock of **Canada Geese** on 1/11 at PG (TD). This was our best year for sightings of these birds as there were several reports during the fall migration. We usually get a few mixed in with other geese, but that happens only every few years.

A lone **Trumpeter Swan** which had been present since spring finally left when the lake froze over. Flocks of Tundra Swans began showing up at the end of Feb. Some of the better duck sightings were **American Black Duck**, **Northern Pintail**, **Canvasback**, **Redhead**, **Black Scoter**, **Long-tailed Duck**, and **Common Goldeneye**. **American Coots** continued into the period. Their numbers were overall much higher this year.

A single **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at Carrolltown 2/13 (MK) was the only report. A **Winter Wren** was at SGL 279 on 1/3 (TA). Only our second county record for winter, a **Gray Catbird** was at a marsh adjacent to PG 2/21 (TD). This is extraordinary as this was during a brutal stretch of weather. The other record was in early Dec during a mild early winter. Six **American Pipits** were at PG 12/21 (TA).

Sightings of **Evening Grosbeaks** continued with several flocks seen; a flock of 26 was at a feeder near Lilly throughout the period. A single **Common Redpoll** which hung around the feeders at PG for a while was the only report. Two **Lapland Longspurs** and several **Snow Buntings** were mixed in with **Horned Lark** flocks in the St Augustine area during the period. First winter records of **Cape May Warblers** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were made on 12/3 at PG (TA).

On a final note, we are saying goodbye to Tony DeSantis as our environmental educator at Prince Gallitzin SP. Tony is taking a job at another state park. Tony is an outstanding birder and a friend to all. He will be missed.

Observers: **Dave Gobert** (814) 674-8359, davidjgobert@gmail.com, Tina Alianiello, Tony DeSantis, Matt Kline.

Cameron County

Locations: Emporium Christmas Bird Count 12/18 (ECBC), Driftwood
Locations: Emporium (EM), Sinnemahoning State Park (SSP), Sterling Run (SR), Sterling Run Mines (SRM), West Creek (WC), Wykoff Run (WR).

Seventy-three species were found this season. Emporium held its 32nd consecutive Christmas Bird Count on December 20, with 19 participants. Forty-five species were reported. The highlights were one **Northern Goshawk**, 4 **Eastern Screech Owls**, 38 **Common Ravens**, 6 **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, one **Gray Catbird**, and 47 **Evening Grosbeaks**. In mid-December there was an unusual snowfall of as much as 37 inches. This snow cover continued to blanket the landscape through Feb.

A **Northern Shoveler**, one **American Black Duck**, 3 **Long-tailed Ducks**, and a **Ruddy Duck** were at SSP 12/2 (AB). Forty **Wild Turkeys** were at SR 1/1 (ES). A **Ring-billed Gull** was at EM 1/20 and 2 **Golden Eagles** were there 1/18 (SVV). A **Northern Goshawk** was at SRM 1/5 (MJ), and a **Red-shouldered Hawk** at EM 1/1 (SVV). Two **Great Horned Owls** were at SR 2/4 (BH), 2 **Barred Owls** were there 2/14 (MS), and one **Short-eared Owl** was at SSP 12/3 (AB).

A **Belted Kingfisher** was at EM 2/2 (AS). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was at SR 2/12 (MJ) and 2 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were there 2/15 (SS). A **Winter Wren** was at WC 2/9 (MS), 20 **Cedar Waxwings** at EM 1/21 (SVV), and 16 **American Pipits** at WR 12/2 (AB). Thirty-five **Evening Grosbeaks** were at EM 2/6 and 15 **Common Redpolls** were there 2/1 (AS). Eight **Pine Siskins** were at SR 2/15 (SS), 2 **Snow Buntings** at SRM 2/13 (MPB), and one **Yellow-rumped Warbler** at SSP 12/2 (AB).

Observers: **Mark Johnson**, 72 **Mason Grove**, **Driftwood, Pa 15832**, 814-546-2886_luckybirder@gmail.com, Adam Bartles, Mary and Phil Burkhouse, Bill Hendrickson, Mathew Schenck, Susan Schenck, Andrew Sidelinger, Eric Stafford, Susan Stahr, Steve and Valerie VanEerden.

Carbon County

Locations: Beltzville State Park (BSP), Blue Mountain Ski Resort (BMSR), Little Gap (LG), Mauch Chunk Lake (MCL), Penn Forest Reservoir (PFR), Wild Creek Reservoir (WCR).

Two of this period's headliners were birds that, while more or less annual in *Carbon*, were not where one might expect them. A **Sandhill Crane** several hundred yards out on the ice at BSP 2/27 (RR, ph.) took off soon after its discovery. Unfortunately, its method of taking to the air -- axel, lutz, salchow, etc. -- was neither documented nor scored. Surely the most surprising backyard bird was a **Snow Bunting** frequenting a feeding station in the center of Nesquehoning 2/5-9 (JB, ph.).

As usual, BSP hosted most of the waterfowl (both possible species and overall sightings). There were 2 **Tundra Swans** 2/9-10 (RR). Seven of the nine regular dabblers included 3 **Northern Shovelers** 12/21 (TS), a hen **Canvasback** 2/23 (RR), a **Redhead** 2/17 through the period's end (SH et al.), max 9 on 2/28 (JM). There were 64 **Ring-necked Ducks** 2/28 (PN), 6 **Greater Scaup** 2/7 (RR) and at least one daily from 2/21 on (MG et al.); a drake **White-winged Scoter** 1/14 (RR, BR), 2 **Long-tailed Ducks** 12/22 (RR) followed by 8 on 12/24 (JM), and a lone drake 1/24-28 (RR et al.). As well there were 39 **Buffleheads** 12/2 (RR), 21 **Common Goldeneyes** 1/30 (EK), 16 **Hooded Mergansers** 2/28 (JM), 75 **Common Mergansers** 1/31 (WS), a **Red-breasted Merganser** 12/3 (RR), and 3 **Horned Grebes** 12/5 (BW). Away from BSP, 2 **Tundra Swans** were at PFR 12/27 (JH), and 11 passed through LG 12/29 (JM). Predictably arriving by late Feb (much like Killdeer), 12 **Wood Ducks** were noted in Lehighton 2/27 (SH). A late fem./imm. **Black Scoter** was a superb find on MCL 12/15 (TS, ph.), along with the season's only **Pied-billed Grebe**.

Somewhat unseasonal was a **Wilson's Snipe** flushed from the tall grass of a field near BSP 12/28 (RR). Interesting larids were limited to a **Bonaparte's Gull** at BSP 12/5 (RR, BR) and 2 more Bonies there 2/6

(AM). One **Golden Eagle** was observed from LG 12/29 (JM). **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was detected at BMSR 12/26 (RR), while another called monotonously a half hour before sunset at PFR 1/19 (BE). Single **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, uncommon in midwinter, enlivened BSP 1/16 (NF) and 1/24 (MG).

With the fall's northern finch irruption reduced to a trickle, 25 to 30 **Evening Grosbeaks** remaining through the period in Lehigh Tannery southeast of White Haven (BB) — in the same neighborhood where they have appeared in previous years — made the highlight reel. **Purple Finch** and **Pine Siskin** were reported on eBird sparingly during each month. **Common Redpoll** occurrences, conversely, plummeted after Dec; contrast the flock of 22 at BSP 12/28 (RR) with the new year's grand total of perhaps 10 individuals.

The season saw isolated reports, respectively, of **White-crowned Sparrow** at BSP 12/2 (RR), **Rusty Blackbird** at MCL 1/2 (SH), and **Yellow-rumped Warbler** at BMSR 12/27 (JM), lately a difficult over-winterer to locate in northeast Pennsylvania and even the Lehigh Valley.

CORRIGENDA: In the fall 2020 summary, a **Townsend's Solitaire** was described just yards outside *Carbon* at LG 11/3. The LG hawk watch proper, where this bird was reported, is in *Northampton*, but many birds seen from there (including most fall raptors) actually have been in *Carbon* or cross the county line during observation. This writer has no idea whether such a scenario applied to the Solitaire but, if its travels had taken or proceeded to take it slightly northward, it represented only the second *Carbon* record.

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Centre County

Locations: Bald Eagle State Park (BESP), Black Moshannon State Park (BMSP), Colyer Lake (COL), State Game Lands 333 – Spring Creek Canyon (SCC).

Information for this report was obtained primarily from eBird and the State College Bird Club listserv with background and status now from *Birds of Central Pennsylvania* by Nick Bolgiano and Greg Grove, 2010 (B&G, 2010). The following species were reported five or more times and will not be discussed further in this report: **Tundra Swan, Hooded Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Short-eared Owl, Merlin, Winter Wren, Gray Catbird, Hermit Thrush, American Pipit, Snow Bunting, Fox Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, and Common Grackle.**

A single **Snow Goose** was spotted “with [some] **Canada Geese** landing in a field” between Boalsburg and State College 2/17 (DO). Most duck species are rare in winter but many, probably late fall or early spring migrants, were reported. With the mild weather, some over-wintered.

A few **Wood Ducks** were reported, including a “drake and hen” on Little Fishing Cr. 12/13 (MH) and a single bird along Penn's Cr. Rd. 12/26 (CE, KE). Two were observed at a Johnson Rd. pond 2/28 (RF). A single **Blue-winged Teal** was present at Talleyrand Park in Bellefonte 2/21-23 (JP, BY). One **Northern Shoveler** was seen at Fairbrook wetlands 1/31-2/15 (AM, et al.). It was probably the same bird as the one seen nearby off Tadpole Rd. 2/13-16 (AGR, et al.). **Gadwall** were present at several locations, including at Muddy Paws Marsh 12/1 (DR), up to 6 at the Duck (Centre Furnace) Pond 12/26-2/16 (MB, et al.), 4 at BESP 1/27 (JP), and 3 to 5 at a Johnson Rd. pond 2/23 (MB, RF). An **American Wigeon** was present at BESP 12/12 (JM). Up to 3 **Northern Pintails** were observed at BESP 1/2-29 (CE, JP, TS), and one was at the Duck Pond 2/12 (CK, NK). As many as 3 were noted at the Fairbrook wetlands 2/27 (BH, SB). One **Green-winged Teal** was spotted at the Axemann Rd. pond 1/1 (JP), while 2-5 were noted at BESP 2/25-27 (RF, KE, BY).

A male and female **Canvasbacks** were reported at the Duck Pond 2/11-14 (NBo, et al.); 2 were also observed at the Fairbrook wetland 2/14 (NKe). A **Redhead** made a short visit to BMSP 12/2 (RH), and 2-5

lingered 2/11-26 at a Buffalo Run Rd. pond (BY). Two males were seen 2/2-25 at Talleyrand Park (BY, JP, RF). A single **Ring-necked Duck** was reported at BESP 1/2-3 (MK) and 3 males were spotted there 2/27 (KE). Two were seen at the Duck Pond 1/5 (MB), and another 2 were present at a pond on Buffalo Run Rd. 2/14 (NKe). **Greater Scaup** were noted at two locations: 8 were at BMSP 11/2 (RH) and one at BESP 1/29 (BY). **Lesser Scaup** were also present with one at BMSP 12/2 (RH), 5 at BESP 2/19 (KE, TS), and one at the Axemann Rd. pond 2/19-21 (JP, et al.).

Two **Long-tailed Ducks** were at BESP 12/15-24 (TK, JP), and 2 others were observed there 2/15 (KE). Two were also spotted at the Duck Pond 2/15 (BY), and a male was present at the Johnson Rd. pond 2/19 (KE). Up to 11 **Common Goldeneyes** were present at BESP 12/10-1/6 (P&RW, et al.), and one was there 2/16-26 (AM, BY). As many as 7 **Red-breasted Mergansers** lingered at BESP 12/2-1/2 (MS, et al.). Late migrating **Ruddy Ducks** were also present, with 2 at COL 12/3 (MB), up to 42 at BESP 12/6-27 (SH), and 22 in Howard 12/12 (BSn). Two were identified at the Duck Pond 1/24 (SB), and a single visited BESP 2/15 (KE).

A **Horned Grebe** was seen at BESP 12/8 (TD), and another was there 2/26 (BY). One **Greater Yellowlegs** was observed foraging in a flooded field on S. Nixon Rd. 12/2 (SBr).

A **Black-legged Kittiwake** was identified and admired by many birders at BESP 12/13-14 (JH, et al.). At one point, observers were “able to get great looks as it swam around and slept and at a relatively close range” (CE). According to eBird, this is not only a county first, but also for the six-county region covered by B&G (2010).

Twenty **Bonaparte's Gulls** were noted at BESP 12/2-16 (MS, BY). Between one and 3 **Common Loons** were spotted at BESP 12/8-24 (TD et al.). One-two **Double-crested Cormorants** were present at BESP 12/10-13 (P&RW et al.). The two spotted from the Howard Causeway 12/13 were probably the same birds (CE).

Single **Golden Eagles** were observed flying over Upper Georges Rd. 1/17 and 2/16 and at Kline Rd. 2/12 near Spring Mills (DR). Two birders spotted a **Barn Owl** in the Frogtown area 2/3 (GH, JE). A **Peregrine Falcon** seems to have wintered around State College as there were reports from two locations 12/6 (KE) and 12/14 (JG). There were multiple sightings in the vicinity of Beaver Stadium 12/22-1/30 (KE, et al.), as well as on Orchard Rd. 1/12 and the Penn State central campus 2/26 (JG). One birder was able to get the band information and determined that the falcon “is... the same bird [that was present at the stadium] last year... [and] was born at the Mississauga Executive Center near Toronto in the spring of 2019” (JG).

A rare **Eastern Phoebe** was encountered on Marsh Cr. Rd. 1/23 (BS). Several reports of single **Northern Shrikes** occurred in Jan. These included Mid-State Airport 1/2-23 (RR, et al.), Apple Butter Rd. near Woodward 1/6 (JP), Rusnak Hill reclaimed strip mine 1/17 (BS), and an immature bird that vocalized at BESP 1/27 (JP, BSn). Another BESP sighting of one “perched... on top of a tree”, possibly of the same bird, was made 2/20 (GJ).

Sightings of single **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were noted with reports coming from BESP on 12/8 (TD) and 12/27 (BS). There were two observations from SCC: one 12/30 (JV) and the other 2/13 (JC). One was spotted in Howard 2/11 (BSn) and another at Fisherman's Paradise 2/27 (DW).

The winter finch irruption continued from fall with **Evening Grosbeak, Purple Finch, Common Redpoll, and Pine Siskin** each being reported in at least five locations. An accidental **Hoary Redpoll** took up residence in Park Forest 12/29-2/28 and was frequently accompanied by **Common Redpolls** (SBr, et al.). A **Red Crossbills** was observed flying over the Rockview fields-north 12/20, and another flew over Bear Meadows Rd. 12/20 (JG). At least 2 were present in SCC 12/20 (NBo), and 10 were observed at Upper Georges Valley Rd. 2/3 (DR). Another casual species, **White-winged Crossbill**, was also present. A male was spotted in SCC 12/20 (NBo), and one was recorded as it flew over Park Forest 1/2 (JP).

A **Lapland Longspur** was seen near Spring Mills 12/19 (JG). **Chipping Sparrows** were also present with one reported at Sinking Cr. 12/5 (LR); singles also visited feeders at Remington Ridge 12/6 and 12/23 (JV) and at Alder Ct. 12/11-1/31 (JV, RC). A male **Eastern Towhee** was spotted "scraping earth and a few leaves under a very large bush" in Park Forest 1/13 (MTK, NEK) and one was observed 2/14 on Polecat Rd. (AG). Three rare-in-winter **Eastern Meadowlarks** were at BESP 2/6 (BF). Two warbler species were also present – **Ovenbird** and **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, the latter spotted at BESP 2/17 (NF).

The **Ovenbird** was observed "foraging in the bare ground... and eating sunflower chips" 12/19 in State College and was counted on the State College CBC the next day. Unfortunately, some time after being counted, "something flushed all the birds, and the Ovenbird flew directly into a porch window and died... Examining the body showed it had decent amount of fat reserves on its body" (CE, KE). This is the second Ovenbird winter record – eBird indicates the first was "Dec. 2017 at Rockview Fields-north" (CE); B&G (2010) does not list any winter records for this species.

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Chester County

Locations: Chambers Lake (CL), Homestead Road (HR), Marsh Creek State Park (MCSP), West Vincent Township Sewage Pond (WVT).

A change from last year, winter made itself evident with several notable snowfalls and overall colder conditions. Snow-covered fields and partially frozen lakes resulted in sightings of multiple cold-weather species. The boreal irruption continued from the fall, but with mixed results. More common species were reported consistently throughout the region, while more sought-out species were hard to come by.

Target winter goose species were few; a single, and the only, **Ross's Goose** of the season was picked out from an overhead flock while birding at CL on 1/2 (ZB). Still considered rare, **Cackling Goose** was reported from several locations throughout the area, with a high count of 10 at WVT 1/12 (RG). An interesting bird, a **Snow x Canada Goose**, was photographed, again at WVT 1/13 (KC, WSy). A second report was made 1/27 (AB). (Despite this dearth of *Chester* birds, there was plenty of goose excitement in the surrounding counties of *Delaware*, 12/16-12/20 and *Philadelphia*, most of Jan, where a Tundra Bean-Goose made its mark on many life lists.)

Eurasian Wigeon is a regular, but rare visitor in late Feb to early Mar; a dapper drake was reported at MCSP 2/26 (LL, m.ob.). This observation was just one result of a major waterfowl movement that began with a warm front that pushed through the area. Increased numbers of **Hooded Merganser**, **Common Merganser**, **Bufflehead**, and **Ring-Necked Duck** began to be reported, and puddle ducks, as well, with **Wood Duck**, **American Wigeon** and **Northern Pintail** becoming more common.

Tundra Swan sightings also began to increase (m.ob.) At MCSP alone, **Common Merganser** numbers were estimated at 500 (LL). A female **Long-Tailed Duck** made an appearance also at MCSP 2/13 (MH). **Redhead** reports exceeded those of **Canvasback**, in both numbers and frequency, with a max of 20 Redhead reported from MCSP 2/26 (MD), but Canvasback was limited to max of 3 at CL and Struble L., on various days. A cool **Common Goldeneye** courtship display report

came from Atwater Quarry 2/24 (AB). Atwater Quarry was also the lone location for **Horned Grebe**, where 2 were reported 1/30 (MD); up to 3 were observed throughout much of Feb. A few reports of **Pied-Billed Grebe** came from The Mill at Anselma (SS) and several other expected locales. The much sought-after species of Red-necked Grebe grebe was not reported.

A single report of 5 **Sandhill Cranes** came from Bucktoe Creek Preserve 12/8 (IS); these birds were in the sky headed north. "PEENT!" reports of **American Woodcock** began during the last half of Feb (m.ob.), as did those of **Killdeer**. A **Virginia Rail** was heard by LL on 1/1 at CL.

When the area lakes begin to freeze over, gulls have used the ice for roosting, providing a good, but often quite chilly, opportunity to scan the flocks for unusual species. One such appearance of note was that of an **Iceland Gull** at MCSP (LL, m.ob.), found initially 2/16 and remaining through 2/24. This bird was a juv., consistent with the majority of sightings in Pennsylvania, excepting the Lake Erie Shore. MCSP was also the place for black-backed species, both **Great Black-backed Gull**, where as many as 30 were counted on the ice (LL, m.ob.), and **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, where one bird was noted on 2/8 (SS), followed by as many as 17 on 2/16 (ZB), last reported on 2/28. A single fly-over bird was noted at Longview 2/19 (JS). Another somewhat less scenic opportunity for gull watching in *Chester* has been the South East Chester County Refuse Authority, where the first Great Black-backed Gull of the season was found 1/18 (BQ).

The lone report of **Golden Eagle** came from SGL 43 (SS, NF), where an imm. bird was identified circling overhead. It is not uncommon for soaring birds to be mistaken for Turkey Vulture until binoculars are brought to bear. An **Osprey** was seen by Laura Wagner on 12/17 on HR. The season's only but most enjoyable **Snowy Owl** was found along HR 12/25 (Kfo, m.ob.). Merry Christmas to birders! For those who could not break away from the day's festivities, a second chance was given when the bird was re-found the next day, 12/26, a short distance away along Rte. 322, Horseshoe Pike, in Honey Brook (RR, m.ob.). **Saw-whet Owl** was reported from several areas, all audio sourced; **Long-eared Owl** was also "heard only" from Struble L. 1/19 (AB). The **Red-headed Woodpecker** has been believed to be a long-term Honey Brook area resident, where it has been found along Pleasant View Rd and other local "roadways." Several reports were received during this period.

The finch irruption continued with inconsistent representation. Reports of **Black-capped Chickadee**, **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, **Purple Finch**, and **Pine Siskin** were on the decline by the end of Jan, despite good numbers being reported from many locations. **Evening Grosbeak** reports were limited to three, with two occurring at feeders and one bird heard. All reports were for singles, with only one lasting more than the report day, that being at a feeder 12/12-16 (PVL). One report of 90 **Common Redpolls** from French Creek SP 2/15 (SS) provided hope of additional, larger flights of northern species. One other report for this species was of 4 fly-over birds in Malvern on 2/5 (KJ). Of the four reports of **Red Crossbill**, all single birds, one was heard and 3 were fly-overs.

The first **Lapland Longspur** report was 12/9, following the first snowfall of the season, with 4 birds together on HR (RR). Reports continued through 2/28, with a max of 8 on 12/19 (ZM). One was found and photographed in a field not far from CL 2/9, (RR). Typically, looking for longspurs begins with locating a flock of Horned **Larks**, then patiently searching through the ever-moving mass. Oft-times the more widespread American Pipit can be found in the same field.

On 1/8 a lone **Snow Bunting** was reported as a fly-over near the fields of Honey Brook (LL). Then on 2/1 the second snowfall of the year occurred, and with it came the first report of a single Snow Bunting at HR 2/2 (AB). For the rest of Feb, the fields of the area remained snow-covered, and reports were nearly daily, up to a max of 10 birds 2/8 (m.ob.). Last report was submitted 2/28.

White-crowned Sparrow is just one of those not-rare but always cool-to-see birds. Among the numerous reports submitted, one was of a pale-lored bird coming to a feeder 12/26-1/26 (IS). Identified as a *gambelii*, the bird was photographed and clearly showed the absence of

a dark lore, making it a bird from the west. See SibleyGuides.com for an interesting read.

Reports of **Rusty Blackbird** were submitted throughout the period from multiple locations; historically, Great Marsh has been a dependable location to find this species. This period, Kimberton Ponds produced the most sightings and numbers, with a max of 18 on several days. First reported 2/14 with 2 birds (KC), sightings continued through 2/27. Rusty Blackbird population decline has been widely publicized since the 1990s.

Every winter, some individuals of a given species decide to remain in Chester rather than depart for warmer clime and find more readily available food source. **Eastern Phoebe**, **Gray Catbird**, **Brown Thrasher** and **Eastern Towhee** were reported multiple times from multiple locations throughout the winter season. A **Chipping Sparrow** or two usually show up, but a group of 15 reported from an area south of Coatesville during the Western Chester County CBC was noteworthy (LL). **Lincoln's Sparrow** was reported at Goat Hill Serpentine Barrens on both 12/7 (MJ) and 1/16 (RG). Not as expected was a **Blue-headed Vireo** at Warwick County Park on 1/1 (TS, ph.) or **Marsh Wren** at Legacy Fields Marsh on 12/19 during the Wilmington CBC (JS, ph.). **Eastern Meadowlark** was still on site and reported at Wilson Rd. Pond from 12/23-2/21 with a max. of 4 (JS, SS, NF); up to 3 were found in the fields of Honey Brook, reported 2/6-11 (BB, EW, EE, BS, JDP). Last of the hardy lingering species, **Baltimore Oriole** was reported seven times with nearly all reports of birds coming to nectar feeders.

Last, that is, except for the warblers, Barry Blust found a **Bay-breasted/blackpoll warbler** on 12/1 at MCSP. Others mostly coming to suet feeders were a **Black-and-White Warbler** 12/30-1/21 (KC) and a **Tennessee Warbler** in Longview with no feeder 2/16 (JS). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** visited a home in Landenberg, where possibly the same bird was also seen the previous year; this year the bird appeared in Dec and was last reported 2/28 (CW). At the same residence a **Pine Warbler** was observed from Jan through 2/12, while a second visited a residence in Coatesville 12/15-2/28 (MN). A **Common Yellowthroat** was at ChesLen Preserve 1/1 (JD, ph.). **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was reported frequently.

Observers: **Rick Robinson, 114 Mallard Drive, Coatesville, PA 19320, (610-639-0114), birder18@verizon.net**, Josh Auld, Zach Baer, Adam Bartles, Dorothy Bedford, Debbie Beer (DeB), Anne Bekker (ABe), Adrian Binns (ABi), Barry Blust, Sharon Burke, Sara Busch (SBs), Brian Byrnes (BBY), Kayann Cassidy, Brian Chilcote, Evan Coates, Steve Cottrell, Mike Coulter, John Daniel, Beth Daugherty, Hank Davis, Mike DeFina, Joey Della Penna, Paul Dietz, Beth Domboski (BDo), Ed Edge, Andy Ednie, Nikki Flood, Judy Ford, Kevin Fox (KfO), Kevin Fryberger, Melissa Gallardy, Ross Gallardy, Michael Gardner (MGr), Steve Gautier, Peter Gibb, Al Guarente, Frank Haas, Denice Hardtmann, Michael Hartshorne, Katie Henderson, W. Brian Henderson, Jason Horn, Lou Horwitz, Eric Hughes, Chad Hutchinson, Kristen Johnson, Mark Johnson, Luc & Therese Jacobs, Sheryl Johnson, Rick Keyser, Carol Kuniholm, Larry Lewis, Sandy Lockerman, Dave Luning, Carol Majors, Ron Majors, Doris McGovern, Michael McGraw, John McNamara, Carl Mease (CMe), John Mercer (JMe), Holly Merker, Patrick Millar, Zach Millen, Jim Moffet (JMof), Rob Murray (RMu), Pat Natase, Tony Natase, Michael Niven, Bill Oyler, Liz Pettet, Brian Quindlen, Brian Raichich, Timothy Schwartz, Joe Sebastiani, Win Shafer, Vince Smith, Tim Sterrett, Ian Stewart, Scott Stollery, Brian Storey, Wendy Sykora (WSy), George Tallman, Gerry Tieg (GTi), Andy Urquhart, Patty VanLandeghen, Patricia Verbosky, Laura Wagner, Jeff Wahl, Elizabeth Walshe, Chris Weaver, John & Patty Werth, Ann Williams.

Clarion County

Locations: Clarion (CL), Curlsville (CV), Kahle Lake (KL), Lucinda (LU), SGL 330 -- Piney Tract/Mount Zion (MZ), New Bethlehem (NB), Rimersburg (RI), Strattanville (ST).

The first waterfowl of note for the season was **Gadwall**, with 5 noted lingering later into migration at KL 12/8 (ES). **American Black Duck** is a species with declining numbers, but a larger flock was found on the

Allegheny River at Foxburg, with 35 there 2/13 (ES) and 9 present 2/26 (TS). Also present at this location 2/26 were 4 **Northern Pintails** (TS). A **Black Scoter** was reported at KL 12/5 (JH), 12/6 (DS), and 12/8 (ES). Likely a late migrant, a single female **Long-tailed Duck** was seen on the Allegheny R. near East Brady 1/5 (CW).

Only one report of **Ruffed Grouse** was noted, a bird seen at SGL 63 on 1/23 (MW). **Turkey Vultures** are still unusual in Jan, but a single bird was found near CL both 1/12 and 1/21 (*fide* DF). There were more reports for **Northern Harrier** than the fall season. Unusually, one was seen in the northern end of Clarion near LU 12/12 and 1/3 (ES). In their more regular areas south of I-80, one was found near NB 12/13 (ES), and near CV on Rankin Rd 12/4, 12/10, 12/13 and 1/30 (CB, DD, ES, TS, CW). Single birds were also noted over fields near RI 2/27 and near Sligo 2/28 (DR). **Rough-legged Hawks** were noticeably absent on many WRS routes this year, but they were still reported in five locations throughout the season. Near Wolfs Corners a light phase was found 12/16 and 2/7 (ES), and 3 birds were found there 2/4 (FM). One bird was also noted near Miola 12/19 (FM), near CV 1/28 (CW), and near West Freedom 2/13 (ES). In the best showing of the season, 4 birds were seen over the fields at MZ 2/28, possibly in migration (MW).

Two local birders over the past year placed 17 **Eastern Screech-Owl** nest boxes throughout the various game lands in Clarion. After monthly checks through the end of February, eight boxes had shown owl activity, with four having been found with owls in them, and four other boxes with pellets and feathers to show use as well. Of the feathers found, they included three species: blue jay, northern cardinal and junco (MH, LT). **Short-eared Owls** were noted twice in one of their regular winter locations on Rankin Rd near CV, with one bird 12/10 (CB, ES) and 12/13 (DD, CW). Three were seen in several locations in the southern part of the county for the CBC 12/19 (m.ob.). One was also reported at MZ 1/8 (WD). As always, it is difficult to accurately judge presence in the county with the low level of birder activity for locating this species.

Still generally rare in winter, it was interesting to have two reports of **Northern Flicker**, one near Turkey City 1/7 (DDa) and another near Fisher 2/14 (DK). **Merlin** are infrequent enough to always be of note, with one found at MZ 1/23 (MW). **Northern Shrike** are regular winter visitors but numbers can vary year to year. Just 2 were seen this year, one near CV 12/3, 12/17 and 12/28 (CW), and another bird outside of Sligo 1/15-1/17 (DD, ES, CW, MW).

The only significant flock of **Horned Larks** reported was 56 birds seen at L. Lucy 12/1 (ES). Plenty of agricultural fields in the area have provided good habitat for this species. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were numerous this winter with reports of mostly single birds at various locations near CV, CL, Leeper, and Shipperville throughout the season (JHo, JH, SK, ES, TS, et al.). Thrush reports are unusual for winter and, with more severe weather this year, it is worth noting a hardy **Hermit Thrush** was found at SGL 63 on 1/10 (TS). Another had been found in the count circle during the CBC 12/19 (m.ob.), only the 12th time for the count since 1988. Also at SGL 63, where there is woodland, brushy areas, and large sections of orchard habitat, a flock of 100-plus **Cedar Waxwings** was found 1/23, feasting on crabapple, hawthorn and common buckthorn (MW).

The biggest story this season was the invasion of northern finches, and the first species of note is **Evening Grosbeak**. More reports were received from the northern half of the county. Near Miola, 26 birds were first seen 12/19 (FM) and 15 to 20 seen 1/27 (MH). Up to 23 birds were at feeders near LU from 12/3 through the season (ES). Nine birds were found near Leeper 12/11 (ES) and one on 2/10 (SK). A banded bird was found at a feeder near ST 2/11 (LT). South of I-80, 2 birds were seen near Limestone 12/19 (DD, CW), and then not far away 29 were reported 2/15 (AT) and another 2/20 (JC).

Common Redpolls were reported from numerous areas. The larger numbers were seen as flocks feeding in weedy fields. One of these was near Lickingville with 35 birds seen 12/11 (ES). Near LU 25 to 40 birds were seen in three locations 12/5, 12/29, and 1/13 (ES). In the south, flocks were also reported near CV with 30 seen 12/10, 15 on 12/13, and another group of 100-plus near Leatherwood 12/22 (ES). A smaller group of 5 was seen at MZ 1/16 (MW). At feeders, there were typically one to 2 birds present, and these were reported from locations

in LU, CL, and ST 12/25-2/22 (MH, ES, LT). The largest number at a feeder was 6 birds seen briefly in CL 2/10 (DF). There was one sighting of **Red Crossbill** also, with 2 birds seen feeding on pitch pine at SGL 63 on 1/23 (MW). There were only a few reports of **Pine Siskin**, with one at a feeder in LU 12/24-12/25 and again 1/12 (ES). Seven were found at a feeder near NB 12/25 and one there again 1/24 (ES).

A single **Chipping Sparrow** was found at a feeder near LU 1/31(ES), certainly unusual for the season. **American Tree Sparrows** continue to be reported, but only in small numbers, with scattered locations throughout the county and no more than 8 birds per sighting (PC, SK, JH, FM, ES, et al.). Not a typical winter visitor, a **Fox Sparrow** was seen at a CL feeder 12/16 and continued until 2/21 (ES). Another unusual winter sparrow is **White-crowned Sparrow** - one was located during the CBC 12/19 (m.ob.), just the 11th time for the count since 1988. Only occasionally reported after fall migration, a single **Swamp Sparrow** remained in marshy habitat near CV 12/17 (CW). The last lone species of note is that of **Common Grackle**; they were found returned just a little earlier than usual at feeders near CL 2/10 (JW).

Observers: **Carole Winslow**, cjwinslow94@gmail.com, Chelsea Beck, Paulette Colantonio, Joseph Croskey, Doug Davis (DDa), W. Dwayne DelGrande, Donald DeWolf, Deb Freed, Jeffrey Hall, Mal Hays, Janice Horn (JHo), Danette Karls, S Kaye, Flo McGuire, Dan Richards, Eric Schill, Tabassam Shah, Daria Sockey, Alice Thureau, Larry Towse, Mike Weible, Jack Williams.

Clearfield County

Locations: Bimini Lake (BL), Curwensville Lake (CL), Curwensville Tannery Ponds (CTP), Kirk Road near Luthersburg (KRL), Treasure Lake (TL).

Personal communication was supplemented by information from the PABirds listserv and eBird for this report. The Dubois Christmas Bird Count was held 12/19 with 21 participants; unusual count-day birds included 2 **Green-Winged Teal**, 2 **Black Vultures**, and 4 **Red-Headed Woodpeckers** (MA, JSm).

An unusually large flock of 140 **Snow Geese** was seen at TL 2/26 (PF). Two **Surf Scoters** were at CL 12/1-11 (JF) and a **Black Scoter** at CL 12/2-18 (JF). A hen **Common Goldeneye** was present on BL 1/6 (DR). The male **Rufous Hummingbird** first seen on Green Glen Drive in Dubois 9/26 continued through 12/10 (DN, ML). A lone **Bonaparte's Gull** was present at BL 1/7 (DR).

Black Vulture sightings continued to increase in the Northern Plateau with one seen circling a snow-covered field in Brady Twp. 1/6 (DR). An early-season light-morph **Rough-Legged Hawk** was seen circling the fields along KRL 12/4 (DR). Rough-Legged Hawks were also seen along Sandy Ridge Road 1/10 (DR), near Croft 1/12 (DR), and along Pottersdale Road 1/12 (DR). A **Barred Owl** was seen perched on a utility wire in Huston Twp. 1/7 (DR).

A **Northern Flicker**, a Dec rarity in the Northern Plateau, was seen along Bloom Road near Luthersburg 12/20 (JF). **Merlins** have continued to be seen regularly in the DuBois area with one near Juniata L. 2/24 (DR). A **Peregrine Falcon** was near Pottersdale 12/28 (JF) as was a **Northern Shrike** 1/9-16 (BB, JF). **Northern Mockingbirds** are being seen more frequently in the Northern Plateau with individuals at CL 1/10 (JF), in East Brady 1/16 (DR), and at the CTP 2/26 (JS).

During this irruption year, **Evening Grosbeaks** were seen throughout *Clearfield*: near Anderson 12/5, 12/6, and 12/8 (JS); at Parker Dam SP 12/6 (DK), 1/2 (JG, CK, NK), and 1/23 (JF); near Houtzdale 12/18 (SK); along Clover Run Road 12/20 (BV, NV); near Olanta 12/30 (JF); near Sabula 1/1 (DR); near TL 1/29, 2/7, 2/13 (DR); at Karthaus 2/9 (VG); near Mahaffey 2/12 (RK); at the CTP 2/26 (JF, JS). A large flock of 85 **Common Redpolls** was seen feeding on grass seeds along KRL 1/18 (DR) while smaller flocks were seen in DuBois 12/19 (BM) and 12/24 (MKL); at CL 12/5 (JF), 12/31 (JS), and 1/10 (JF, JS); in Houtzdale 2/15 (MAB) and 2/20 (JF); at CTP 2/26 (JF, JS). **Pine Siskins**, numbering as many as 83 at one time, were seen frequenting a feeder in Curwensville 12/31-2/16 (JS). Six **Snow Buntings** were seen near

Karthaus 12/10 (JF) and one was there 2/25 (JF).

Observers: **Diane K. Bierly**, 143 W. Lytle Ave., State College, PA 16801. (814) 238-8183, dkb246@usa.net, Marianne Atkinson, Mary Ann Belin, Bill Bishop, Martin Carlin, Peter Foradora, John Forcey, Vicki Guenot, Joe Gyekis, Chad Kauffman, Noah Kauffman, Raymond Kauffman, David Keith, Sue-Ann Krupa, Mary Kay Long, Bill Mendat, Don Nixon, Dan Richards, Jerod Skebo, Jocelynn Smrekar (JSm), Bill Voris, Nick Voris.

Clinton County

Locations: Avis (AV), Beech Creek (BC), Cedar Springs (CS), Lock Haven (LH), McElhatten (MN), Mill Hall (MH), South Avis (SA), Swisssdale (SW), Woolrich (WR).

A lone **Snow Goose** was spotted at SA 12/19 (CH, ChH) and a flock was found at SA 2/20 (SP). Two **Gadwalls** and 2 **American Wigeons** were seen near CS 12/19 (BSB). Another American Wigeon was at MN 12/18 (BS). A **Long-tailed Duck** was spotted in MN 12/19 (BS). One **Hooded Merganser** and 2 **Wood Ducks** were reported at MN 12/18 (BS). A **Red-throated Loon** was discovered at Kettle Creek SP 12/2 (AB).

A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was reported in WR 12/19 (LF, SF). Three **Black Vultures** and 2 **Turkey Vultures** were tallied during the CBC near Rauchtown 12/19 (DK, DR). Two **Merlins** were reported 12/19, one at MH and one at SA (RS, CH, ChH). A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was at MN 12/18 (BS).

Two **Red Crossbills** were seen near BC 12/5 and one at Tamarack Natural Area 1/17 (MS, BS). One **White-winged Crossbill** was observed near AV 12/21 (EZ) and one was also seen at feeders in Woolrich 2/13-23 (CH, LF, SF). Individual **Common Redpolls** were reported at several locations including MN, CS, and near BC 12/5-15 (BS, TS, MS). Another single bird was at a feeder in WR 2/15 (CH, ChH). A large flock of up to 75 was reported foraging in weedy fields at SA 2/5-24 (m.ob.). A lone "**Greater/Greenland**" **Common Redpoll** (*A. f. rostrata*) was reported coming to a feeder at SW 1/24-29 (WL). This represented only the third confirmed state record for this subspecies. Several **Pine Siskins** were reported at WR and near AV 12/19 (CH, ChH, LB).

Small flocks of **Evening Grosbeaks** were reported in several locations including WR, Lock Haven, Flemington, SW, and near BC 12/1-18 (CH, CHH, BG, BD, MS). A flock which varied in size from about 25 to 55 birds was reported throughout the period at a hunting camp in West Keating Twp. (BS, PG, DP). Another small flock was reported at a location in Eastville from 2/6 through Feb (LH, LS, LB, AK).

A **Baltimore Oriole** was reported coming to feeders at a residence near AV 12/4 and 12/19 (BE). One **Swamp Sparrow** was observed at MN 12/18 (BS). Small numbers of **Lapland Longspurs** were found at SA 12/19, 2/7, 2/12, and 2/13 (CH, ChH, AK, MS, EZ, JP, LB). A flock of **Snow Buntings** was at SA 1/4 (MS) and large flocks were there 2/3-23 (m.ob.). Another group was reported between MH and Lamar 2/10 (BS). An **Eastern Towhee** was at AV 12/18 (EZ).

Observers: **Wayne Laubscher**, 749 E. Croak Hollow Road, Lock Haven, PA 17745, 570-748-7511, wnlaubscher@comcast.net, Adam Bartles, Beth & Steve Bason, Lisa Blazure, Brenda Dunlap, Barry Engdahl, Linda Frye, Skip Frye, Polly Graybill, Brenda Grove, Lucy Heggenstaller, Carol Hildebrand, Charles Hildebrand (ChH), Andy Keister, Dave Krempasky, Dan Page, Steve Pinkerton, Julia Plummer, Dave Rothrock, Brian Schmoke, Lauren Shaffer, Matthew Schenck, Tom Shervinski, Robert Snyder, Elizabeth Zbegner.

Columbia County

Locations: Bloomsburg (BLOOM), Montour Township (MONT).

The winter season saw overall seasonable temperatures with above-average snowfall that limited the ability to get out in the field and

observe birds. The snow cover did provide excellent conditions for winter finches and field birds that were concentrated at road edges and in spread manure.

Peregrine Falcons have recently nested in the county and show up more regularly in the winter season. Sightings were limited to two observations. One falcon was seen along Interstate 80 in BLOOM 12/10 (JH, MS) and one was noted along Fort McClure Boulevard 1/5 (KP).

Although probably present in low numbers during every winter season, this year's lone report of **Hermit Thrush** was a single bird feeding on berries along Quarry Road 12/20 (AK). Winter finches were the highlight of the season. **Evening Grosbeak** were seen at two locations. One was seen and heard flying over a private residence in Madison Twp. 12/12 (AK), and a group of 4 briefly visited a feeder location in MONT 1/14 (AK). Four **Common Redpolls** were observed feeding on weed seeds protruding from the snow in MONT 12/11 (AK).

A **Lapland Longspur** spent several days feeding with a mixed flock of **Snow Buntings** and **Horned Larks** in mid-Feb along Crawford Road, the dividing line between *Columbia* and *Montour*. It was seen on the *Columbia* side of the road 2/12 (AK). A **Cape May Warbler** visited a feeder location in BLOOM on three occasions: 12/18, 12/20, and 1/9 (KY). This is the same location that hosted a Townsend's Warbler several years ago.

Observers: **Andy Keister, 110 Hawk Ridge Road, Bloomsburg, 17815, (570) 337-3802, akeister110@gmail.com**, Jason Horn, Karol Pasquinelli, Matthew Sabatine, Katie Yelinek.

Crawford County

Locations: Pymatuning State Park (PSP), Pymatuning State Park - Causeway (PSP-C), Pymatuning State Park - Jamestown Campground/Beach Area (PSP-J), Pymatuning State Park - Miller's Ponds (PSP-MP).

The only observation of **Snow Goose** was a single bird seen at Tamarack L. 12/26 (SD). Two **Greater White-fronted Geese** were reported along Route 99 in northern *Crawford* 1/2 (JN). Observations of **Cackling Goose**, rare for *Crawford*, included a one at PSP-MP 1/18 (MHi, RH) and another at the same location 2/15 (CA, KA). A high count of 4350 **Canada Geese** were observed in the Pymatuning area 12/20 (m.ob.) during the Linesville CBC. **Mute Swan** is rare for *Crawford*, so observations of 2 birds off Rte. 77 in the Townville area 1/3 (AL) and 2 at PSP-Tuttle Beach/Manning Boat Launch area 1/10 (MH) are notable. A notable high count of up to 400 **Tundra Swans** were observed at PSP-Spillway 2/26 (AL, BM).

Observations of **Wood Duck**, a notable bird during the winter, included 2 birds seen at SGL 214- Hartstown Towpath during the Linesville CBC 12/20 (CN), 2 birds at PSP-Jamestown 12/22 (EH), and one at PSP-MP 2/24 (TN). A notable count of 137 **American Black Ducks** were observed in the Pymatuning area during the Linesville CBC 12/20 (m.ob.). A high count of 160 **Redheads** were estimated at PSP-Spillway 1/30 (AL).

Two **Surf Scoters**, a notable bird for *Crawford*, were observed at PSP-J 12/18 (MH). Observations of **Long-tailed Duck**, an expected but scarce species, included 2 at PSP- Orchard Boat Ramp 12/6 (EH), one at PSP-C 12/11 (RL), 5 at PSP-J 12/18 and 12/23 (MH), and one at Conneaut L.-Fireman's Beach 1/5 (IF, CG). **Common Merganser** was observed in high numbers in the Pymatuning area (m.ob.) with a high count of 1500 seen 1/5 (CG). A **Red-necked Grebe**, rare for *Crawford*, was at PSP-C 1/9 (RL).

American Coots were observed in lower numbers than average for a second winter season at CL- M, their expected location (m.ob.). **Sandhill Crane** were observed as expected in numbers and location (m.ob.). A notable high count of 177 was observed in the Pymatuning area 12/20 during the Linesville CBC (m.ob.). Late observations of **Killdeer** included a single at Roselawn Memorial Park in the Meadville area 12/9 (TN) and 2 flying over the Cambridge Springs area 12/17 (KZ). A **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, notable for *Crawford*, was observed at PSP-C 2/24 (TN).

A notable count of 65 **Bald Eagles** were observed in the Pymatuning area 12/20 during the Linesville CBC (m.ob.). **Rough-legged Hawk** was observed in expected numbers and locations (m.ob.). Notable observations of **Snowy Owl** included one in the Meadville area 1/6 (CG) and one at PSP-C initially found 2/20 (MW) and seen through 2/23 (m.ob.). Observations of **Short-eared Owl**, notable for *Crawford*, included multiple observations at PSP-MP: 2 on 12/6 (EH), one on 1/2 (NR), one on 2/21 (RB), and 2 on 2/24 (KA). Other sightings included one in fields off of Wayland Road east of Meadville 12/11 (RL) and one in fields along Tower Road 2/24 (CN).

Up to 3 **Red-headed Woodpeckers**, expected but notable during winter, were observed in the PSP-J throughout the season (m.ob.). **Merlins** have been increasingly observed in *Crawford*, particularly in the Meadville area. Observations included a singles on the Allegheny College campus 12/19 (TN) and 12/21 (AL), at Woodcock L.-Dam 1/21 (BW), in Meadville 1/27 (RHo), and at Lincoln Avenue park in Meadville 1/30 (BW). Observations of **Peregrine Falcon** included one at PSP-C 12/6 (BD), one at PSP-J 12/19 (MHa), and another at PSP-MP 1/5 (IF).

Observations of **Northern Shrike** included singles seen at SGL 146 on 12/6 (AL, TN, KP), Erie NWR-Shafer and New Roads 12/13 (TN), Erie NWR-Seneca District 1/4 (RS), the Cambridge Springs area 1/14 (AL), and at a private residence along Tower Road in northwestern *Crawford* 1/18 (CN). Observations of **Common Raven** in the eastern half of *Crawford* were made in expected numbers and locations (m.ob.). A high of 13 were seen in the Erie NWR-Sugar L. area 1/8 (RE). Sightings of **Horned Lark** included 3 birds seen off East Spring Road in northwestern *Crawford* 1/30 (CN), 11 off Rte. 18 in southwestern *Crawford* 2/22 (KB), and one at PSP-MP 2/25 (AL).

Red-breasted Nuthatch was seen in higher than expected numbers throughout the county, as was **Winter Wren** (m.ob.). A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** observed at SGL 214-Hartstown Towpath 12/20 (CN) during the Linesville CBC is notable for the date. **American Robins**, with a high of 283, were observed in the Pymatuning area 12/20 during the Linesville CBC (m.ob.). The only observation of **Northern Mockingbird** was one at Pymatuning SP-Ford Island 12/1 (RL).

The irruption of **Common Redpoll**, **Purple Finch**, and **Pine Siskin** from the fall season continued into the winter season (m.ob.). High counts included 150 **Common Redpolls** seen in the fields of Ernst Seeds outside of Meadville 2/7 (JS) and 2/8 (JH), 200 Common Redpolls in fields in the Erie NWR-Sugar L. area 1/16 through end of season, and 200 **Pine Siskins** at a private residence in the Townville area 12/1 (AL). A green-morph Pine Siskin was seen at the same location 12/15 (AL). A **Hoary Redpoll** was reported visiting feeders at a private location in the Erie NWR-Sugar L. area with a flock of Common Redpolls 2/22 through the end of the season (RE).

Lapland Longspur is infrequently reported in *Crawford*, so the observation of up to 8 birds at PSP-C 2/20-22 (m.ob.) is especially notable. **Snow Bunting** groups were observed in their usual numbers and locations (m.ob.). Observations of **Eastern Towhee** included one at Lincoln Avenue Park in the Meadville area 12/31 (BW) and 2/4 (BW). A single late **Chipping Sparrow** was at a private residence in the Meadville area 12/12 (KP). One **Field Sparrow** was observed at SGL 214- Hartstown Towpath 1/2 (RHo), a notable date for this species. A late **Fox Sparrow** was seen in the Pymatuning SP area 12/20 (MW).

Reports of **Red-winged Blackbird** in Dec and Jan are relatively rare, so the observation of 45 at Conneaut Marsh-Geneva 12/29 (EH) is notable. Observations of **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, scarce during winter, included one at Pymatuning SP-Orchard Boat Ramp 12/13 (EH), 2 at Conneaut Marsh-McMichael Road 12/19 (IF, SR), 2 near Fries Road in the Pymatuning area 2/22 (MHi, RH), and one along South Lake Road in the Pymatuning area 2/23.

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Friewald, Chuck Gehringer, S Gormley, Eric Hall, Jeffrey Hall, Mark Hanneman, Will Harrod, Margaret Higbee (MHi), Roger Higbee, MiMi Hoffmaster (MHo), Brian Kaldorf, Gloria Kelly, Care Kerlin, Darla Keyes, David Kirk (DKK), Mary Alice Koeneke, Glenn Koppel, David Kwasnick (DKw), Patrick Lister, Michael Leahy, Ron Leberman, Alejandra Lewandowski, Jim McConnor, Brian Miller, Ron Mumme, Elizabeth Nicholson, Ken Nicholson, Claire Nicolls, Oscar Nigam, Jesse Nolt, Tomas Nonnenmacher, Richard Nugent, Ken Pinnow, Tom Pinter, Nicole Rekich, Steve Rotkovecz, Sarah Sargent, Robert Scribner, Shawn Sowers (SSo), Jerry Stanley, Travis Suckow, Robert VanNewkirk, Katie Wickert, Bill Wilkinson, Michael Williams, Jim Wilson, Suzanne Winterberger, Cecily Woodward, Frank Zalik, Kendall Zook.

Cumberland County

Locations: Boiling Springs Children's Pond (BSCP), Mud Level Road (MLR), Newville CBC (PANV), Stage Game Land 169 (SGL 169).

Locations: Big Spring (BS), Mechanicsburg (MECH), Mud Level Road (MLR).

There were 120 species reported for *Cumberland* during this period. Unless otherwise stated, occurrences and the number of prior occurrences of the species listed in this report are according to eBird records and "Annotated List of Cumberland County Birds" (*Pennsylvania Birds* 30:138-147, V. Gauthier, 2016). It should also be noted that there may be current and historical sightings for *Cumberland* listed on eBird from the Susquehanna River that may be possible to list on this report, but without clear documentation otherwise, they are considered to have occurred in *Dauphin* since the county line is the west shoreline of the river.

Cackling Goose made a few appearances with 2 each at MLR 12/23 (AM), at the mill at BS 1/6 (VG, TA), and at Brackbill Pond 2/27 (VG, DW). Two **Mute Swans** were seen along the Condoquinet Cr. at Valley View Drive in MECH 12/31 (JR). The **Trumpeter Swan** pair was found at a few locations within a few miles of their recent nest, including at the mill at BS 1/25-2/7 (VG, m.ob.). One **Canvasback** was at Huntsdale 2/16-28 (TJ, KJ, VG, CP, RP, DW), and 13 were at the quarry along PA 533 in Shippensburg 2/27 (VG). A **Common Goldeneye** was at Pennsy Supply's Silver Spring Quarry in MECH 12/27 (KM), 9 were at the quarry along Lisburn Road in Camp Hill 2/6 (SK), and 3 were in the Conodoguinet Cr. at Vincent DeFillipo Park 2/19 (JM).

American Coot has been somewhat scarce in recent winters but showed at two of its more reliable locations with one at SCI Camp Hill along Lisburn Road 12/19 (KM) and one at Children's L. 2/8 through the end of the season (TJ, m.ob.). Quite a rare find for winter, a **Great Egret** was at a pond along Pine Road near Hays Grove Road 12/4 (RM). This marked the first winter record in *Cumberland* since the 2011-12 winter. With typically only a few reports in *Cumberland* most winters, a single light-morph **Rough-legged Hawk** was a nice find along I-81 not far from North Locust Point Road 2/6 (TA).

Despite the finch irruption across the state this season, locally this winter will be remembered primarily for visits by some of our rarest owls. Kicking off the season was a single **Barn Owl** at BS, a new location for them, which was found when it flushed from a thicket during the day 12/6 (VG). The most visited owl this winter was unquestionably a **Snowy Owl** near the Trindle Road and South Middlesex Road intersection, the first for *Cumberland* since the 2011-12 winter. It was first reported 1/11 but according to locals had been present for about two weeks by that point. Hordes of birders and non-birders alike visited the owl after local news outlets reported the sighting. Despite all the attention, the owl remained for weeks with the last report 2/26. Not as rare but equally as interesting were 2 to 3 **Long-eared Owls** that were joined by a single **Short-eared Owl** in the Plainfield area (KJ, TJ, m.ob.). The Long-eared Owls were first found 12/21 and, while the Short-eared Owl was only confirmed 1/13, it is believed that it was also present starting 12/21, with all owls continuing through the end of the season. Both species routinely emerged from a similar area after sunset and hunted the same field together. Single Short-eared Owls were also reported along Pine Road

1/1 (RM) and along Shughart Road not far from the Snowy Owl 1/15 (RH, SM).

Following their invasions this fall, **Black-capped Chickadee** and **Red-breasted Nuthatch** were both widely reported this winter. Irruptive finches were also reported but generally in more modest numbers than the past fall. **Evening Grosbeak** had just a few showings with 3 near PA 944 in Lower Frankford Township 12/11 (BF), and up to 12 in Michaux SF near Ridge Road and Shippensburg Road intersection 2/4-20 (BO, KR). One **Common Redpoll** was at SGL 169 2/3 (BK) and one flew over Opossum L. 2/21 (KJ, TJ). **Red Crossbill** made just one appearance with at least 3 at Pine Grove Furnace 2/23 (TJ). Both **Purple Finch** and **Pine Siskin** were widely reported this season, with the former having an excellent winter by recent standards.

Following multiple snowstorms, both **Snow Buntings** and **Lapland Longspurs** were found much of the season. A fantastic count of 26 Longspurs was made at MLR 2/15 (CP) and up to 12 were at Horners Road in Carlisle 2/13 (MH). A Snow Bunting flock stayed at Horners Road 2/12-21, maxing out at 11 on 2/19 (DK), but was dwarfed by an impressive flock of 48 at the Cumberland County Landfill in Newburg 2/27 (TA, IG). An exceptional winter sighting, a **Lincoln's Sparrow**, was at Mountain Cr. Campground for the York Springs CBC 12/30 (AD).

A **Cape May Warbler** was at a feeder in MECH 1/4-1/6 (AB). This is only the second winter record for *Cumberland* with the previous from Jan 2019. A **Palm Warbler** with an apparent tail injury was at South Middleton Township Park 12/3-10 (TJ) and another was along Ridge Road north of Shippensburg 1/9 (MS).

A male **Indigo Bunting** in nonbreeding plumage was well described at a feeder in Carlisle 12/2 (ED). This species is very rare in Pennsylvania during winter months and represents the only winter record for *Cumberland*. Equally rare was another first *Cumberland* winter record, a female **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** seen with a flock of **Northern Cardinals** at SGL 169 2/3 (BK).

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Dauphin County

Locations: Highspire Reservoir (HR), Milton Hershey Lands (MHL), Millersburg Ferry Wall (MFW), Wildwood Lake (WL).

Snow was frequent this period with ice and sleet added in, but the Susquehanna River did not freeze over so there were numerous duck and goose sightings. Both Christmas Bird Counts that include *Dauphin* had slight decreases in the number of species this year. There were 91 species for the Harrisburg CBC (AM), down from 97 last year, and 66 species for the Curtin CBC (S&SB), down from 69 last year.

A rarity for the Susquehanna R., a female **King Eider** was reported and photographed at the Susquehanna R. Rockville Bridge 12/18 (SB). This is the first record since 1920 for this species. A **Eurasian Wigeon** was photographed at MFW 2/26 (S&SB). Four and then 5 **Canvasbacks** were seen at MFW 2/12 and 2/14 (S&SB).

There were 2 reports of **Ruffed Grouse**, one on the Harrisburg CBC 12/19 and one in SGL 211 on 1/10 (ZR). With their population declining, it was good to get a report of a flock of 28 **Wild Turkeys** in the Camp Hebron area 2/10 (AB).

Thirty-four **Sandhill Cranes** were observed in a flyover of Harrisburg Italian L. 12/15 (IG). One **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was spotted from HCl 12/10 (TA). No loons were reported. The pair of **Bald Eagles** along the Swatara Cr. in Hershey began their nest repairing in early Feb, and it is thought that the female laid her first egg 2/15 (BH). A **Short-eared Owl** was observed on MHL 12/13 (NMCK).

The resident pair of **Peregrine Falcons** at the Clark's Ferry Bridge

was seen on a regular basis during the period (SL, S&SB, P&RW). The wintering pair in the area of Hershey ZooAmerica and the Hershey Cocoa Silos returned in early Jan and were spotted and photographed through Feb (TB, BH, AMc). This pair does not appear to have bands on their legs. They have been spotted regularly at this location since 2017. The drama at the Rachel Carson State Office Building-Harrisburg for **Peregrine Falcons** was still unfolding as of the end of this reporting period with 2 males being seen in skirmishes with the resident male (SL, AMc).

Eastern Phoebes are uncommon in the winter but 3 were observed this period. Singles were at WL 1/9 (JP), at MHL 1/27 (ST), and in a Harrisburg neighborhood 2/18 (HH). The irruption of northern species did not materialize in *Dauphin* this winter. There were only 2 reports of **Evening Grosbeaks**: one in Tower City 2/12 (ES) and one north of Hershey 12/19 (RP). Since 2000, there are only 2 reports in eBird for them in this county, in 2003 and 2018. Only one flock of 70 **Common Redpolls** was reported at the Fort Indiantown Gap west corridor 2/19 (JD). There were Thirteen **Red Crossbills** were observed along Greenland Road north of Halifax 12/6 (S&SB). **Pine Siskins** were seen throughout *Dauphin* in low numbers, mostly north of Harrisburg.

A few **Lapland Longspurs** and **Snow Buntings** were observed with flocks of **Horned Lark** in the fields of northern *Dauphin* 2/3, 2/7 and 2/9 (S&SB, AK, SS). A **Northern Parula** was observed and photographed on the Capital Area Greenbelt near PennDOT 12/19 (ZR, SS) and a **Pine Warbler** was seen in the HR area 1/17 (M&TB). Two **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were at WL 12/6 (AB), and one at HR 12/7 (DS).

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Delaware County

Locations: Bethel Springs Elementary School (BSES), Commodore Barry bridge/riverfront (CB), Crum Creek Reservoir (CCR), Darlington Tract (DT), Delaware River/Hog Island Road (DRHIR), Governor Printz Park (GPZ), John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge (JHNWR), Lester FedEx Complex Wetlands (FEDEX), Marcus Hook (MH), Ridley Creek State Park (RCSP), Springton Reservoir (SR).

This winter, *Delaware* finally saw some snow: a snowstorm 12/16-17 brought 3 to 6.5 inches of snow in time for the CBC. Snow squalls rolled through 1/8, followed by temperatures in the upper 60s three days later, then back to snow, sleet and freezing rain 1/18, but snow totals were only about 2 inches for the month. Significant snow in Feb, particularly 2/1 (over 10 inches), 2/8 (about 4 inches) and 2/18-19 (over 6 inches) contributed to a monthly total of over two feet. Temperatures

December brought rare birds and birders to *Delaware*. The excitement began on 12/9 when a *Selasphorus* hummingbird visited a feeder in Springfield (DB, AB). The bird was banded 12/11 (SL); measurements determined it to be an adult female **Allen's Hummingbird**. A somewhat leery bird who often hung out in a magnolia in the far back of the yard, it was present 12/9-19 feeding consistently throughout the day at a feeder kept stocked and warm. More than 330 birders from 13 states signed the logbook when visiting the site of Pennsylvania's sixth Allen's. She stayed long enough in *Delaware* to be counted on the CBC, but that was not the end of the story. On 1/6, a hummer in East Falls, *Philadelphia*, caught the eye of a birder (PD); photos soon showed that at least two digits on the band matched those of the *Delaware* bird. Eventually it was confirmed as the same individual (SL), displaced about 10 miles from her first location. See *Philadelphia* for details of its stay there.

ran slightly above average in Jan but slightly below in Feb.

On 12/16, a tantalizing glimpse of a goose on Springton Reservoir (RF) suggested possible Pink-footed. Unfortunately, it flew off with a group of Canada Geese before its identity could be confirmed. Luckily, it was soon relocated in the neighborhood (JHo), feeding amongst its cousins. To everyone's surprise and delight, the odd goose turned out to be a much rarer **Tundra Bean-Goose**, a species that breeds in Siberia but winters among other geese in farmlands or wetlands in Europe. Soon birders were flocking to *Delaware* to see it and scouring the neighborhoods as it moved around a bit but, like the hummer, it was counted on the CBC. A first for Pennsylvania, and one of only a few ever reported in the US, it is the only **Tundra Bean-Goose** to be recorded on a US CBC. Interestingly, a Tundra Bean-Goose was seen in Regina, Saskatchewan, 2/25-3/27 2020 and in Ottawa, Ontario in Nov 2020. Given the extreme rarity of this species in North America, speculation was that these sightings may represent a single individual. The **Tundra Bean-Goose** was last seen in *Delaware* 12/20 but amazingly was found again in *Philadelphia* 1/9 (LG) on the Philadelphia Mid-winter Census. Like its tiny avian relative, it was only a few miles from its first location. Birds do not recognize county borders, a boon for birders who do!

The 101th Glenolden CBC was held 12/19 and recorded 96 species on count day, the third highest among the Pennsylvania counts, with eight more species during the count week. Importantly, two new species were contributed to the Pennsylvania CBC list: **Tundra Bean-Goose** and **Tennessee Warbler**, while the previously mentioned **Allen's Hummingbird** was new to the *Delaware* count list. High counts were recorded for **Gadwall** (87), **Red-shouldered Hawk** (24), **Merlin** (5), **Common Raven** (12 – double the high set just the previous year), and **Chipping Sparrow** (28). **Pine Siskins** (60), not reported since 2015, also put in a good appearance (DE).

Several thousand **Snow Geese** spent the end of Dec through mid-Jan on the river at MH (m.ob.). Found among them was one **Greater White-fronted Goose** 12/23 (RF) and 12/30 (RF, AG) and a **Cackling Goose** 1/9 (MMu) and 1/18 (DO). The latter species was also at BSES 1/14 (BQ) and 1/23 (AG, HM, JM), and at least one of the birds at JHNWR occasionally wandered across county lines into *Delaware* 1/4 (RZ). One Cackling was reported frequently 12/19-1/23 at CCR (m.ob.) and one or two birds occasionally surfaced in the Media area during the Tundra Bean-Goose period (m.ob.). One was at SR 2/16 (RF). **Tundra Swans** were regular at MH 12/4-1/21 and CB 12/3-1/22 (m.ob.) with a high of 59 at CB 1/20 (AG). Three appeared at MH again 2/8 (RF).

Among the more unusual ducks, a **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** was seen DRHIR 12/28 (RF, AG, DO). A **Canvasback** visited SR 12/13 (AB) and two were there 12/25 (RF), but 20 were at MH 1/5 (AG). **Greater Scaup** were reported from both MH and DRHIR multiple times (m.ob.), and a single **Lesser Scaup** was at MH 12/4 (RF) and DRHIR 2/24-26 (MMu, SB, DO). A

White-winged Scoter seen from GPZ was a good find 12/23 (RF) as was a **Long-tailed Duck** at MH 1/16 (RF) and one at DRHIR 2/26 (DO, JZ). A **Common Goldeneye** spent 12/11-21 at CCR (JZ, m.ob.), but multiple reports also came from SR and GPZ in Dec and Feb (m.ob.) and a one report of two birds was from DRHIR 1/29 (RF). Two **Red-breasted Mergansers** were at DRHIR 12/7 (RF), one was found on the CBC 12/19 at Ridley Twp. Marina (AG), and one was at MH 1/7 (RF). A **Horned Grebe** was at MH 2/8 (RF) and at DRHIR 2/24 (MMu). A **Common Loon** spent 1/16-17 at SR (RF, m.ob.).

Eight **American Woodcock** were at the usual 4th Ave location in Lester 2/25 (DH, JMc) and up to 3 at the nearby FEDEX area 2/26 (JZ, DO, AG). One was in Glen Mills 2/28 (JP). Four **Wilson's Snipe** were counted at JHNWR 12/19 (RM).

A likely **California Gull** was reported from DRHIR 12/31 (RF), but unfortunately no photos were obtained. An **Iceland Gull** was reported at MH 2/14 (DB, AB). There were many more **Lesser Black-backed Gull** reports than usual: from MH 1/7 (RF, AG), 1/17-18 (DO), 1/21 (RF), 1/25, 1/27, and 2/21 (all AG) and CB 1/15 (MMu), which could easily have been one of the same birds. This species was also found at DRHIR 1/15,

2/13, and 2/20 (all RF). A **Common Loon** spent 1/16-17 at SR (RF, m.ob.). **Great Cormorant** was reported from MH 1/30, 2/10, 2/15 (RF), and 2/16 (DO), from CB 1/11 (MMu) and 4 from DRHIR 2/22 (RF).

An imm. **Golden Eagle** was over DT 12/11 (NK). **Northern Harrier** reports were numerous and from many locations (m.ob.). A **Rough-legged Hawk** was seen at DRHIR 2/20 (DO, AB, DB, AG) and JHNWR (CR) on the same date. That bird apparently crossed county lines into *Philadelphia* more than once and was seen in the general area throughout the day.

Unlike last year when **Barred Owl** reports clustered in Feb, this year's reports were fewer and more scattered. A pair was heard at Barrett's Meadow 12/12 (RG), one at Newlin Grist Mill 12/19 (CW), a pair in Lansdowne 1/24 (Sean Gallagher), and one in Media 2/15 (anon.). From 12/27(DB, AB)-1/25 (m.ob.) a **Short-eared Owl** was often hunting the DRHIR area behind Philadelphia Airport, its forays taking it into both counties. At RCSP a tooting **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard in the early morning 12/21 and again 1/16 (SB) and in the evening of 2/14 (DB, AB); one was also heard in Swarthmore 2/12 (SD). Encouraging is that reports of all three falcons were too numerous to list here.

An **Eastern Phoebe** hung out at CCR 12/1-1/10 (m.ob.), one was at Glen Providence Park 2/12-20 (SG, m.ob.), and one at JHNWR 12/18 (JMc, DH). **Black-capped Chickadee** reports were sporadic throughout the period representing what appeared to be a small incursion from the north. **Horned Lark** reports came from DRHIR 12/17 (RF) and 2/20 (JMc, DH), but there were also a couple incidental reports from visitor birders to our area: from Springfield 12/20 (AK, SU) and from Arlington Cemetery 1/2 (PH). Early **Tree Swallows** were reported with 6 at DRHIR 2/26 (AG) and 2 at JHNWR 2/27 (DO). Although **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were widespread, they never reached high numbers. A single **Marsh Wren** report came from JHNWR 1/13 (MMu).

A **Brown Thrasher** was found at RCSP on the CBC 12/19 (AM, TB). **Hermit Thrush** reports were numerous there and at locations across the county. **Gray Catbird** also overwintered at RCSP, but other reports also came from Tyler Arboretum, DT, and FEDEX (m.ob.). An **American Pipit** flew over BSES 12/9 (BQ.) adding a new species to that location list, but a flock of 35 at JHNWR 12/18 (JMc, DH) was a sizeable number. Otherwise, the best bet for this species was DRHIR where 4 were noted 12/13 and 12/17, and one 2/20 (RF).

An **Evening Grosbeak** 12/19 at CCR (AK) was the only lingering individual of this species. More than 15 **Purple Finch** reports were scattered across the county (m.ob.), but these were surpassed by **Pine Siskins** in both the number of reports and number of individuals throughout the entire period. The only possible **Common Redpoll** report was of 4 birds at CCR 12/20 (JH, RH).

In addition to the new high count on the CBC, **Chipping Sparrows** overwintered at several locations, including a consistent contingent at BSES (BQ, m.ob.). **American Tree Sparrow** reports were unusually numerous. **Fox Sparrows** were reported from many locations. **White-crowned Sparrow** was found at about a half-dozen locations, not just limited to the usual JHNWR. **Savannah Sparrows** were frequently found at DRHIR (m.ob.) and were also noted at Linvilla Orchards, First State National Historic Park, Harvey Run Trail, and CB (m.ob.).

A male **Baltimore Oriole** spent the season visiting a Wallingford feeder (DR), while another male visited a Drexel Hill feeder 1/16 (JT). In addition to the usual sightings at JHNWR and some in the DRHIR area (m.ob.), **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported from CCR 12/21(MJ) and 12/29 (AB), Ryan, and a Springfield yard 2/2 (AB, DB). Winter warbler reports were the aforementioned **Tennessee Warbler** at CB 12/19-1/12 (AG, m.ob.), a **Common Yellowthroat** at CCR 12/8 (MM) and one at JHNWR 12/19 (RM), a **Pine Warbler** that visited a Wallingford yard 2/14 and 2/27-28 (RF) and single **Yellow-rumped Warbler** at CB 12/5 (AB, DB), in Newtown Square 1/31 (MD), in Media 2/5 (AG), and in Garnet Valley 2/24 (TK). A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, one of two seen during this time period, was found in Media 2/11 (AG).

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Elk County

Locations: Benezette Township (BEN), East Branch Clarion River Lake Vicinity (EBL), Johnsonburg (JB), Kersey (KER), Moshannon State Forest – Marion Brooks Natural Area (MB).

Reports from eBird totaled 63 species for this period. A single **Snow Goose** was noted in JB 1/4 (DK). Fourteen **Tundra Swans** were photographed and recorded at Allegheny NF - Buzzard Swamp RA 12/22 (ON); 73 flew overhead at MB 12/27 (BH) and 6 were heard in BEN 2/26 (CL). A **Ruffed Grouse** was near MB 12/27 (BH), and one was seen several times in EBL 12/14-2/18 (BB); 5 were in EBL 2/21 and 2 on 2/24 (BB, MC).

A **Golden Eagle** was seen at Bendigo SP 1/18 (CG, ES), and one was observed at Dents Run Elk Viewing Area 2/3 (KE). **Bald Eagles** were seen throughout *Elk* 12/22-2/24 (m.ob.) with a high count of 4 near Ridgway, when 2 adults and 2 juvs. were photographed 1/25 (MM). A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was observed several times at EBL 1/28-2/22; it was seen "continuing to follow grosbeak flock" on 2/7 (BB). A dark-phase adult **Rough-legged Hawk** was reported near JB 12/29 (BB) and 2/17 (SS); a light morph was seen at Rasselas Marsh 1/13-2/24 (BB, m.ob.).

An **Eastern Screech-Owl** was reported at EBL 12/10 (BB). Two **Great Horned Owls** were heard during the night in BEN hooting back and forth every 10 to 15 seconds, sometimes overlapping, almost non-stop for 25 minutes on 1/6 (CL). They were also heard at several other *Elk* locations 12/17-2/25 (BB, CB, MS). Single **Barred Owls** were reported in six locations 1/16-2/21 (m.ob.).

A **Belted Kingfisher** was seen in Jay Twp. 12/27 (MJ) and again near Ridgway 1/25 (MM). A **Northern Shrike** was photographed in EBL 1/29 (AS). One **Horned Lark** was seen in EBL 12/7 (BB) with 3 reported there 2/24 (BB, MC, GK, MAK). One **Hermit Thrush** was seen in EBL 12/7 (BB).

Evening Grosbeaks continued arriving in *Elk* into the winter season in EBL 12/7 (BB), continuing there through 2/28, and being reported from six county areas (m.ob.). They were in BEN 12/24-2/28 with a high count of 21 (CL) and in Weedville 12/4-1/21 with a high of 42 (KH). Triple-digit counts increased regularly in EBL 1/27-2/28 with a high of 525 on 2/25 (BB, MC, MAK, GK). Twelve to 20 **Common Redpolls** were observed and photographed in KER 1/15-2/19 (CB, ES). One was seen in EBL 1/23 (BB), one in BEN 2/6 (CL), and another 50 were photographed in St. Marys 2/6 (SL) with 3 still there 2/10 (MSc). Eight were feeding on goldenrod in EBL 2/9 (BB). The only **Hoary Redpoll** observed was in KER 1/15 (CB). Three **Red Crossbills** were seen in EBL 12/11 (BB). **Pine Siskins** were seen regularly in KER 1/1-2/19, with high counts of 7 reported several times (CB, ES).

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Erie County

Locations: Edinboro Lake (EDL), Gull Point (GULL), Presque Isle State Park (PISP), Sunset Point (SUN).

Winter remained fairly mild with the surrounding waters of Presque Isle State Park remaining ice free until early February when the bay

began to freeze over, and a week later a deep freeze blanketed Lake Erie in over 80-percent ice cover. February remained colder than normal and most gulls left the area at that time, but huge concentrations of waterfowl gathered in the remaining areas of open water. **Canvasbacks**, **Redheads**, and **scaup** made up the majority of ducks numbering into five figures. Highlights of the season included a fly-by eider on the waterbird count, **Black-legged Kittiwake**, and later remains of a kittiwake, an adult **Black-headed Gull**, remains of a **Franklin's Gull**, and a **Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler**. Except for a few **Common Redpolls**, most of the northern finches reported during the fall season were nearly absent during the winter season.

The following birds of note were recorded from eBird unless noted otherwise. Up to 2 white-morph **Snow Geese** were on EDL 12/9-12/24 (JH) and a single blue morph was seen over Long Pond 12/24 (CV). Up to 11 **Cackling Geese** were at the Fairview Business Park 12/20-12/26 (JF). A female **King/Common Eider** flew past SUN during the waterbird count 12/1 (JM). Up to 4 **Red-necked Grebes** were reported off Beach 11 until 1/02 (CV), and singles flew past SUN during the waterbird count to 12/11 (JM). An **Eared Grebe** was on EDL until 12/11 (JH). The **Black-bellied Plover** at GULL on 12/3 broke the late fall *Erie* record by three days (CV). A **Purple Sandpiper** passed SUN at the waterbird count 12/1 (JM) and another was spotted at GULL 12/6 (JB).

An immature **Black-legged Kittiwake** was spotted at the waterbird count off SUN 12/2 (JM), and the next day a **Peregrine Falcon** was seen eating the remains of one at GULL, which may have been this bird (CV). The remains of the kittiwake were retrieved (CV) and placed in the Museum of Natural History at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center (JM). An adult **Black-headed Gull** was seen and photographed feeding off the west pier 1/22 (JM, JF). On 12/29 the remains of an adult **Franklin's Gull** were found at GULL (CV). They were also placed in this Museum of Natural History (JM).

An adult **Herring Gull** x **Great Black-backed Gull** was in Presque Isle Bay 1/20-23 (JM). Single **Iceland Gulls**, of both **Thayer's** types and **Kumlien's** types, were reported through early Feb (m.ob.). **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were also seen as singles or in two or threes through Jan into early Feb (mob). Single **Glaucous Gulls** were reported throughout Presque Isle Bay to early Feb (m.ob.). Up to 4 **Red-throated Loons** were rather late, but not unexpected, 1/16-2/4 off SUN (JM).

The only **Snowy Owl** reported was an immature at the Erie International Airport 12/3 (IB *fide* SSm). A **Long-eared Owl** was found 12/18 in the pines (RD). Single **Short-eared Owls** were at SUN during the waterbird count 12/19 (JM), at GULL 12/23 and 12/24 (TS, JF), and again at GULL 2/27-28 (JB, RD). **Northern Shrikes** were in Venango Twp. to at least 12/12 (JS), Greene Twp. on 12/18 (JM), in North East on 2/6 (JD), and at SGL 109 through the season (BS). **Common Ravens** have been seen regularly in *Erie* in recent years, but they have not always been easy to find. However, deer carcasses placed in a field near Edinboro attracted a pair that could be reliably seen throughout the season (JH).

As many as 85 **Common Redpolls** were at the east end of PISP to at least 12/29, then singles and small groups remained in the park and in the county through the season (m.ob.). A **Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler** was discovered at GULL 12/13 (SS) and again 12/15 (CV) where it was well photographed.

Observers: **Jerry McWilliams, 3508 Allegheny Rd., Erie, Pa. 16508-2129, jerrymcw@aol.com**, Justin Berkheimer, Ian Bogle, John DePaul, Roger Donn, Jennifer Ferrick, Jamie Hill, Steve Schmit, Bob Scribner, Susan Smith (SSm), Travis Suckow, Joe Susi, Connor Vara.

Fayette County

Mild weather kept lakes open but few waterfowl were reported du Locations: Confluence (CON), Farmington (FAR), Greenlick Run Lake (GRL), Jacob's Creek Wetlands (JCW), Spring Valley (SV).

A few **Tundra Swans** were present during the season including 2 at GRL 12/29 (KB), one at Virgin Run L. 1/10-31 (KB) and 4 at the Heritage Scout Reservation 2/27 (MDo).

There was a good variety of waterfowl at CON and just south at the Youghioghny Res. in Feb, probably due to the freezing of nearby bodies of water. Several observers submitted reports from CON 2/18-21 that included 2 **Gadwalls**, 3 **American Wigeons**, 2 **American Black Ducks**, 6 **Redheads**, 2 **Ring-necked Ducks**, 30 **Greater Scaup**, 45 **Lesser Scaup**, 85 **Buffleheads**, 25 **Common Goldeneyes**, 25 **Hooded Mergansers**, and 15 **Common Mergansers** (TO, BO, MDo, RM, DBu). The counts are maxima over the course of the four days of reports.

A good variety was also found just downriver at the Youghioghny Res. 2/20 that included one Greater Scaup, 8 Lesser Scaup, 2 **Long-tailed Ducks**, 45 Buffleheads, 8 Common Goldeneyes, 6 Hooded Mergansers and 2 Common Mergansers (RH, SM, DB).

A **Northern Pintail** was a nice find just north of Smock 1/13 (MM). Five **Green-winged Teal** were at JCW 12/7 (MJ), and one at CON 1/24 (MH). A **Canvasback** was at the lake at Yogi Bear Campground in Mill Run 2/20 (KB), 2 were in SV 2/13 (MDo), and 4 were there 2/15 (DBu, RM, MDo, DB). A nice count of 250 **Redheads** were at GRL 12/3 (AB). Seven **Ring-necked Ducks** were at Hutchison Res. 12/2, and 2 there 1/25 (EJR). Two **Long-tailed Ducks** were at CON 2/18-27 (BO, TO, m.ob.), 2 were at FAR 2/15 with one remaining to 2/18 (DB), and 2 were in SV 2/15 (DBu, RM). A male was photographed at close range along Rte. 40 near Nemaocolin Resort 2/17 (DBu, RM). Thirty **Ruddy Ducks** were at GRL 12/5 (EJR), one was there 12/31 (MF), and one was at Filbert L. 2/27 (MJ, DBu).

A **Horned Grebe** was at CON 1/2 (BO) and 2/21 (DBu). Feb brought the first **Killdeer** of the spring: 3 were at SV 2/25 (DB), 3 at Jackson Farm 2/27 (DBu), and one in FAR 2/28 (DBu). Rare in winter, a **Bonaparte's Gull** was at CON 1/17 (DBu).

A **Northern Harrier** was at Jackson Farms 12/27 (KB). A **Snowy Owl** spent the winter at Seven Springs Mt. Resort which lies on the county line of *Fayette* and *Somerset*. It spent most of the time in adjacent *Somerset* but was seen in *Fayette* 1/23 (KB), and into the spring season 3/7 (MD) and 3/17 (KK). Two **Barred Owls** were at Virgin Run L. 12/11 (KB), and one at FAR 2/6 (DB).

Two **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were at FAR 1/22 (DBu). A **Merlin** was at Jackson Farm 2/26 (DBu). A **Winter Wren** was at JCW 1/9 (KB) and another at FAR 2/21 (DBu). Up to 3 **Pine Siskins** visited feeders near Brownfield 12/1-1/8 (EJR). One was in FAR 1/31 (DBu). Two **Lapland Longspurs** were at Brier Hill 2/7, and one was at New Salem 2/21 (MJ), rare finds there.

Up to 2 **Savannah Sparrows** were an out-of-season find in FAR 12/25-2/7 (DBu). A **Swamp Sparrow** was at JCW 1/9 and 1/30 (KB). **White-crowned Sparrows** have been rarely reported in winter, so 3 at Dunlap Cr. Park 12/20 (KB) and 3 at FAR 1/20 (DBu) were notable. A male **Pine Warbler** was photographed visiting a feeder near Brownfield 12/1-2 (EJR).

Observers: **Mike Fialkovich, mpfial@verizon.net**, Kerry Bell, Dwight Blough, David Burleson (DBu), Alex Busato, Michael David, Matthew Domer (MDo), Rebecca Hart, Mark Hopey, Matthew Juskowich, Kjerstin Klein, Ryan Mathis, Mark McConaughy, Steve Manns, Becky Ohler, Tiffany Ohler, E.J. Regula.

Forest County

Locations: Cook Forest State Park - Cooksburg (CK), Marienville (MAR), Pleasantville (PL), Tionesta (TIO), West Hickory (WH).

Tundra Swans were seen twice: 2 were in WH 2/21 (EN, JN, KN) and 2 in TIO 2/27 (FM). A **Canvasback** was also seen in WH 2/21 (EN, JN, KN). Two **Common Goldeneyes** were photographed in CK 1/13 (SKy). Two **Hooded Mergansers** were noted in WH 2/21 (EN, KN). Unusual for *Forest*, 2 **Ring-billed Gulls** were watched as they flew up river at PL 12/12 (KS).

There was only one report in eBird for **Great Horned Owls**, when 2 were recorded for almost 10 minutes while they landed in various trees around a yard near WH 12/14 (KS). There was also only one report for **Barred Owl**, one near Mayburg 2/14 (SK). Numerous sightings of **Common Ravens** were submitted. Seven were seen "cavorting in a field

over the nearby woods" of PL 1/3 (FM) with a group of 8 in MAR 1/6 (DY). A **Hermit Thrush** was photographed and recorded near WH 12/14 (KS), and photographed there again 1/3 (JS, KS).

Evening Grosbeaks were seen in three locations. One was photographed in WH 12/12 (KS), and three reports from Hemlock Cr. Bridge included 38 in maple trees and sumacs 12/14 (KS), 62 observed for an hour 12/15 (KS), and 47 on 1/3 (JS, KS); and in nearby Neiltown Fields, 24 were photographed 2/6 (JS, KS). In a yard in TIO, they were noted most days 12/1-2/28 with a high of 42 on 12/29 (FM). Banding continued in a yard in MAR 12/6-2/23 (KC, TK, AL, DY) with a high of 125 on 12/17 as multiple flocks moved from tree to tree in the yard and cycled through the feeders (DY). A solitary **Common Redpoll** was in TIO for four consecutive days 1/29-2/1, the only location reporting (FM). **Pine Siskins** continued from late autumn in TIO through 2/7 (FM) with a high of 30 on 12/28. Only one was reported in MAR during these three months, on 12/17 (DY). Six were seen near Mayburg 2/14 (SK).

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Franklin County

Locations: Antrim Commons Ponds (ACP), Caledonia State Park (CSP), Conococheague Creek (COCR), Greencastle Reservoir (GRRE), Letterkenny Reservoir (LERE), Mountain Brook Road Pond (MBRP), Mountain Lake Fannettsburg (MLF).

Birder anticipation in *Franklin* for the winter period was expected to be focused on winter finch possibilities. But in addition to visitors from the north, birder attention continued to be focused on two western North American vagrants that showed up here in the prior reporting period and continued on long into the winter. A female **Rufous Hummingbird** was first observed by Kathy Lauver at her hummingbird feeder 10/9. The bird continued at Kathy's feeders through the entire winter period and into the month of March, a stay of five months and counting. The big attention-grabbing rarity was a **Townsend's Solitaire** first found by Bob Koontz at Caledonia State Park 11/12. The solitaire continued to be reported by state and out-of-state birders through 1/13 in the trees around the perimeter of the park office parking lot, in the junipers behind the office, or perched on the solar panel behind the office. Both these rarities were successfully recorded for the 12/19 Chambersburg-Conococheague Audubon Christmas Bird Count, making our CBC compiler very happy!

Waterfowl were not plentiful; however, there were several noteworthy birds. A single **Snow Goose** was reported at ACP 12/30-31 and again 1/12-1/23 (CG, GA, DE, m.ob.), and another was reported along Falling Spring Branch near Chambersburg 2/3 (BO). A **Cackling Goose** was reported at GRRE 12/5 (CG), at MLF 1/18 (BKn), at ACP 1/24 (CG), and occasionally from MBRP 12/17, 12/25, 1/9 and 2/11 (BO, DE). A late migrating flock of 53 **Tundra Swans** was observed over West Creek Road 12/26 (BKn). Large numbers of migrating Tundra Swans were reported northbound in the last days of Feb with high counts of 249 at GRRE 2/26-27 (CG, DE, DC), of 150 at MBRP 2/26-27 (BO), and of 485 near Upper Strasburg 2/27 (BO).

A male **Canvasback** was on a pond along Warm Spring Road 2/20-21 (BKn, BO, GA, CG). A male **Long-tailed Duck** was at ACP 2/16-18 (CG, DE, BO, m.ob.), and 2 males were present there 2/19 (CG, DC). A male **Common Goldeneye** was found at Keefer Road Farm Pond 12/13-14 (BO, BKn, CP, RP, m.ob.). Three Common Goldeneyes including a breeding male, first-winter male, and a female were at MBRP 2/14 (BO, BK, TK), and the first-winter male bird continued to be reported 2/15 and 2/19 (BO, BKn, CG, GA). Also, 2 male Common Goldeneyes were at MLF 2/27 (BO). Typically, *Franklin* has a small number of goldeneye reports, so this was a good winter for Common Goldeneyes. A **Ruddy Duck** was reported at several locations in the Greencastle area over a lengthy period of time. A bird had a confirmed stay at GRRE 12/1-1/30, and likely the same bird was seen at ACP as late as 2/20 (CG, GA, DE, m.ob.).

Late **Pied-billed Grebes** were reported at LERE 12/4-16 with a high count of 6, and a single lingered 1/11-19 before forced out by icing of the reservoir (BKn, BO). There were the expected occasional winter reports of **Eurasian Collared-Dove** from Shady Grove, Five Forks, Clay Hill, and Marion with a high of 9 along Alleman Road near Marion (GA, BO, MV). Out of normal season, a single **Bonaparte's Gull** was at MLF 12/9 (BKn).

A **Northern Goshawk** was observed in Path Valley near Spring Run during a Winter Raptor Survey (BO). **Rough-legged Hawk**, a bird possibly here only in winter, is infrequently reported in *Franklin*. Prior to this winter, the only eBird reports in the current century were Dec 2007 near Duffield (DH), Feb 2015 near Shippensburg (DC, BO), Feb 2015 in Path Valley (MW), and Jan 2019 between Roxbury and Newburg (BKn). Reports in the 2020-2021 winter were near Upton 2/21 (GA, CG) and near Upper Strasburg both 2/22 (CG) and 2/26 (BO, BKn).

Barn Owl reports were from the Edenville area (BO, BKn, GA, MV) and from the Upper Strasburg area (BO). A **Snowy Owl** was reported at two farms near Upton 2/11 and 2/19 (JS), but after extensive searching the owl was not relocated. The effort was made more difficult by extensive snowpack, and the bird had probably moved on by the time the fields became bare of snow. This same area has a history of previous winter sightings of Snowy Owl with up to 3 owls in 2014 and one in 2018. A late-dusk **Short-eared Owl** was seen hunting along Hissong Road 2/21-22 (BO) and was seen again 2/24 (VB, DE). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard and seen in Michaux SF 12/11 (BO, GA). As is normal during recent years, there were frequent reports of **Merlin** and occasional reports of **Peregrine Falcon** from a number of locations by a number of birders.

Winter **Eastern Phoebes** were reported along the COCR near Brindle Road 12/11 and 1/16 (BO) and 12/19 during the local CBC, and along the COCR near Dump Road 1/15 (DE, BO). The invasion of northern **Black-capped Chickadees** and **Red-breasted Nuthatches** that began in the prior reporting period waned as winter progressed; although, both could be found through the end of the winter period. A hardy wintering **Gray Catbird** was in a brushy area full of berries along the COCR near Ragged Edge Road 1/16 (BO). Winter hardy **Brown Thrashers** were reported at Creekside Nature Trail-Menno Haven 12/19 during the local CBC (GA, BO) and in a Blue Ridge Summit yard 2/12 during the Great Backyard Bird Count (KS). **Hermit Thrush** is a regular wintering bird in *Franklin*, and this winter there seemed to be many more sightings and numbers reported than in past normal winters. A **Swainson's Thrush** was found at Caledonia SP 12/2 (JG).

As with all over the Mid-Atlantic, there was a high level of excitement regarding the irruption of several winter finch species. Widespread **Evening Grosbeak** reports that began in Nov continued into Dec but became less frequent as the winter progressed. CSP had a high count of up to 18 birds in Dec, but no reports afterward (BO, BKn, DE, m.ob.). Other known locations of irregular but repeated visits were up to 12 at Knob Hill Road feeders (DK, JT, BO, GA) and up to 12 at Greene Knolls feeders (AZ). Frequent hoped-for sightings of **Common Redpoll** did not materialize. The single bird that was at a Greene Knolls feeder the last week of November continued 12/1-2 (VB), and 3 were seen picking road grit in Lower Horse Valley 1/21 (BO). Flyover **Red Crossbills** had been reported frequently at CSP in Nov by birders seeking the Townsend's Solitaire there; however, the only reports during the winter period were from the South Mtn. Restoration Center campus with 13 birds 12/13 (GA) and 3 birds 1/5 (BO). The crossbills that migrated here in late fall and early winter very possibly kept going south to other wintering locations. Widespread sightings of **Pine Siskins** that began in Oct continued through mid-winter, then began to decrease in sightings and numbers. Larger flocks sighted were 35 at LERE 12/4 (BKn), 40 at Knob Hill Road 1/8 (BO), and 24 in Lower Horse Valley 1/19 (BO). However, the year-to-year consistent location for high numbers of siskins in *Franklin* is Val Barne's feeding station in her Greene Knolls yard. Numbers that were up to 150 from Nov into Dec decreased to mid-double digits by end of Dec and fifty or less in Jan to Feb. Impressive numbers though!

Sightings continued from Nov of overwintering northern field birds sought by birders. Up to 2 **Lapland Longspurs** continued along Church Road near Pleasant Hall between 12/9-1/24 (BO, BKn, GA, DC), 2 were

found along Hartzok Road near New Franklin 2/19 (GA), and up to 12 were found feeding roadside after heavy snow 2/4-6 along Oellig Road near Upton (BO, DC, RM, MV). Single **Snow Buntings** were reported along Church Road 12/14-16 and 1/24 (BKn, DE, BO, DC), at Ebenezer Road 12/21 and 12/26 (BKn, AK), and along Wye Road 2/9 (BO). Unusual in numbers and timing was a report of 4 **Chipping Sparrows** under feeders in Mercersburg during the Great Backyard Bird Count 2/13 (AR). **Fox Sparrows** during winter are not out of the question, and two local birders had regular and long-staying birds at their feeders for most of the winter period (CG, LL). Very unusual was a **Dark-eyed Junco x White-throated Sparrow** hybrid that was reported, including photo documentation, from a residence near Caledonia 2/15-24 (DP). The bird had the facial and bill characteristics of Dark-eyed Junco with most of the rest of the bird having characteristics of White-throated Sparrow. Wintering **Eastern Towhees** were reported from CSP 12/12 (DH, KH), 2 from SGL 124 in Little Cove 1/14 (BO), and a bird in Antrim Twp. during the Great Backyard Bird Count 2/14 (SB).

Rusty Blackbirds are normally found in *Franklin* in migration in windows of time during late fall into early winter and late winter into spring. A mid-winter bird was found along the COCR on the Wilson College nature trail 1/31 (BO). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** overwinter in *Franklin* in small numbers. This year there were only two reports: one from Antietam Meadows Park 12/9 (GA) and another from Mont Alto 1/12 (JF, LF). Finally, a surprising and late male **Wilson's Warbler** was in the north end of Chambersburg 12/27, coincidentally in a yard on Wilson Avenue (BO).

Observers: **Bill Oyler, 1216 Wilson Ave, Chambersburg, Pa 17201 (717-360-5191), oylerbill@gmail.com**, Gavin Anderson, Val Barnes, Dave Cooney, Dave Ebbitt, Jean Fry, Larry Fry, Carl Garner, John Greer, Dennis Hallman, Kevin Hallman, Donna Hocker, Andy Keister, Dan Kennell, Bob Kochert, Terri Kochert, Bob Koontz (BKn), Kathy Lauver, Larry Lehman, Ryan Martin, Chris Payne, Rebecca Payne, Doug Powless, Alicia Ricker, Kathleen Seiler, Joyce Stuff, Janet Tice, Mark Vass, Martin Wilson, Anthony Zibolski.

Fulton County

Locations: Buchanan State Forest - Redbud Natural Area (BSF), Haines-Seville wetland (HS), McConnellsburg (McC), Wells Tannery (WT).

Lightly birded *Fulton* saw only 63 species recorded for the season. A good total of 162 **Tundra Swans**, in two flocks, flew over HS 2/26 (VG). The only **Ruffed Grouse** reports were of singles at WT 12/5 and Crystal Spring 1/6 (JC). An immature **Northern Harrier** was photographed near Union Cemetery 2/26 (TM). Not often reported, **Peregrine Falcons** were noted near McC 12/30 and WT 1/9 (both TM).

Most chickadees in *Fulton* are Black-capped, but some Carolina are routinely reported. **Carolina Chickadees** recorded were 2 at Cowan's Gap SP 1/21 (BO), one at BSF 2/20 (VG), and one at HS 2/26 (VG). **Horned Larks** were present through much of Feb in the open farmland south of McC, with highs of 50 on 2/13 and 60 on 2/19 (TM, GG, DG). Four **Hermit Thrush** provided a nice find at BSF 2/20 (VG).

The only location with **Evening Grosbeaks** was a feeding station near WT, where the big birds were noted several times 12/5-1/2, with a max of 25 on 12/12 (TM). Top counts among many reports of **Purple Finch** were 21 at McC 2/15 (TM) and 8 at Needmore 1/1 (AE). Two **Red Crossbills** were identified at Meadow Grounds L. by call notes 12/11 (MK). Among many reports of **Pine Siskin** were counts of 115 at McC (TM) and 50 at the Barnett farm near WT 12/25 (EB).

Observers: **Greg Grove, gwg2@psu.edu**, Erika Bowman, Jason Chamberlin, Amy Evans, Vern Gauthier, Deborah Grove, Matt Kello, Tracy Mosebey, Bill Oyler.

Greene County

Locations: Claylick (CL), Dunkard Township (DT), East View (EV), Greene River Trail (GRT), Morgan Township (MT), Ryerson State Park

(RSP), Sycamore (SY), Waynesburg Borough (WB).

Among ducks, **Canvasback** and **Long-tailed Duck** were sighted along GRT in MT 2/24 (JF). **Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, and Hooded Merganser** were found at GRT 2/20 (SM). **Common Merganser** was observed at EV 1/26 (MH). **Pied-billed Grebe** was spotted in Franklin Twp. 12/11 (MH, KK). A **Horned Grebe** was rescued from ice-covered snow and placed in a creek in Morris Twp. 2/15 (CA). **Ring-billed Gull** was observed at GRT 2/17 (JF).

Turkey Vulture was in Monongahela Twp. 2/6 (ZT). **Bald Eagle** was observed in several locations (m.ob.) and a new nest was located in Franklin Twp. (MH, KK). **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was observed at SY 1/14 (AC, JC) and **Red-shouldered Hawk** was in WB 12/27 (SB). **Great-horned Owl** was heard at CL 1/3 (LA). **Barred Owl** and **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** were at RSP 12/10 (GK).

Belted Kingfisher was in Center Twp. 1/8 (LA, RA). **Merlin** was observed in DT 12/19 (CL). **Eastern Phoebe** and **Brown Creeper** was seen at SY 1/19, (JC). **Winter Wren** was at RSP 2/2 (MD). **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was found at EV 1/9 (MH) and **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** at RSP 1/2 (MD). **Hermit Thrush** was found in DT 12/19 (CL).

Among winter finches, **Purple Finch** was found at SY 2/14 (JC) and **Pine Siskin** was at a feeder in WB 12/19 (SB). **American Tree Swallow** and **Fox Sparrow** was found at SY 12/4 (JC). Over 25 **Dark-eyed Junco** were seen at Last Chance Ranch 1/27 (MLP). **White-crowned Sparrow** was reported in SY 2/12 (JC). **Swamp Sparrow** was found at RSP 2/2 (MD). **Rusty Blackbird** was found at CL 2/23 (RA) and **Brown-headed Cowbird** in MT 1/25 (KK). **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was observed in DT 12/19 (CL).

Observers: **Marjorie Howard, (724) 852-3155, rkbirdclub@yahoo.com**, Carol Andrew, Lyn Argent, Ron Argent, C David Bell, Leah Bell, Steve Bowes, Shelley Christy, Al Churney, Jan Churney, Diane Clark, Michael David, Terry Dayton, Lucy DeFrank, John Flannigan, Myra Gibson, Mary Grey (MGr), Larry Helgerman, Jerry Howard, Ed Kern, Kathy Kern, Glenn Koppel, Mary LaPlante, Chris Lituma, Steve Manns, Marjorie Moffatt, Jennifer Lantzer Novak, Joyce Poag, Zachary Turner.

Huntingdon County

Locations: Brumbaugh's Access at Raystown Lake (BA), Entrikey Overlook at Raystown Lake (ENT), Huntingdon (HU-town), McAlevys Fort (MF), Old Crow wetland (OC), Pennsylvania Furnace Rd (PF), Raystown Lake (RL), Stone Mountain hawk watch (SMHW), Stone Valley (SV), Tussey Mountain (TM).

The Huntingdon CBC was held a couple days after a heavy snow. There was brief thought to postpone because of concern over back roads, but we went ahead and, in fact, experienced a good day with some species counted in remarkable numbers probably because of the snowstorm. Ground-feeding sparrows were forced to roadsides for foraging, making them easy to find and count with cautious approach. The stand-out was **Dark-eyed Junco**, of which 2936 were tallied, more than twice the previous record for this count, which began in the early 1980s. **White-throated Sparrows** also set a record - the total of 665 was nearly 50 percent above the previous record. Not to be outdone, and perhaps most notable of all, 71 **Hermit Thrushes** were counted, the highest total ever on any *Pennsylvania CBC*. The thrushes were feeding on abundant berry crops which, in combination with the concentrating effects of the snow cover, provided unprecedented CBC numbers for a species that does winter in *Huntingdon* but is normally uncommon at best.

By weather conditions, the season could be divided into two parts. Warm December and January, averaging about 3°F above normal, and then colder February, averaging 1.5°F below normal. Despite the warmth in December, there was a major snowstorm 12/16-17, just before the first CBCs, that played a role in some record counts (see box). January featured no significant snow until the 31st when a storm that continued the next day dropped about a foot of snow. February continued to see

smaller amounts of snow, especially notable given the warmth of recent winters.

The Huntingdon CBC was held 12/20, with some notable record high numbers (see box). While not a count first, a well-described **Ovenbird** was nevertheless quite unexpected. The L. Raystown CBC was held 12/28. **Northern Pintail** was a new species. Record highs included 192 **Tundra Swans**, 10 **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, and 18 **Purple Finches**.

Thirty **Snow Geese** over the MF area 12/6 was a good number for the county (MM). Three **Cackling Geese** were at PF 12/19 (TK, DK, SM) and one there 2/7 (SM); one was at OC 2/26-27 (KT, TD). High counts of **Tundra Swan** were 123 southbound at SMHW 12/2 (NB, SM) and 200 northbound on the Raystown Branch of Juniata R. 2/26 (AP).

The outstanding duck report was the 120 **American Black Ducks** in a wet bottom in farmland along Beers Rd, near Orbisonia 1/14 (GG, DG). Black Duck numbers have been low in recent winters here, but this report is the highest for the county in the experience of this compiler. Other notable high counts were 15 **Northern Pintails** at BA 2/27 (KT); 12 **Canvasbacks**, unusual in mid-winter, at ENT 2/11 (KT, DK, TK); 25 **Redheads** at ENT 2/11-13 (TK, DK, SM, MMu, JO); 45 **Hooded Mergansers** at RL 12/25 (TK, DK); and 141 **Common Mergansers** at ENT 2/3 (TK, DK, KT).

The only **Ruffed Grouse** reports were of singles at the Peach Chapel area of Juniata College 12/8 (DG) and on Stone Mt. 12/31 (NB), plus 2 on the L. Raystown CBC 12/28. **Killdeer** reports were few - the high count was 13 at PF 2/26 (GG, DG); most other counts, about half dozen in total, were of only one to 2 birds. With Feb's harsh weather, **American Woodcock** was slightly behind schedule; one in SV 2/26 provided the only report (SM).

An impressive total of 350 **Ring-billed Gulls** were at Seven Points RA at RL 2/11-12 (SM, TK, DK). Late for such a high number, 72 **Common Loons** passed over SMHW 12/2 (SM, NB). Occasionally a Common Loon is found on RL in mid-winter; up to 5 were at Seven Points Marina through the season (m.ob.).

Black Vultures always winter, but a flock of 100 near HU 2/3 was notable (KT). **Northern Harrier** reports topped a dozen. **Rough-legged Hawks** were scarce as usual in recent years. Singles were at Petersburg 1/17-19 (KE, CE, KT), on Summit School Rd in SV 12/26 (DC) and 2/12-15 (SM, RF), at PF 2/24 (GG), and at TM hawk watch 2/27 (NB). WRS results for the county are summarized elsewhere in this issue.

The only **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was in SV 12/9 (SM). One **Red-headed Woodpecker** apparently wintered in SGL 322, where a small number have been consistent in recent years, seen at least five times 12/27-2/5 (SM, DK, TK, KT, CM). Single **Merlins** were at Grazier's Mill Pond 2/6 (DM, PM) and SGL 420 on 2/19 (DK, TK). For the second consecutive winter, at least one **Peregrine Falcon** stayed in the HU area, reported to eBird seven times 1/4-2/23 (m.ob.). An **Eastern Phoebe** was at OC 12/28 for the only report (KT).

Fifty **Common Ravens** set a new record for the Huntingdon CBC. On the other hand, **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were curiously low on both CBCs; 7 were recorded at Huntingdon and 6 for the L. Raystown count, where averages are 64 and 37, respectively. On the L. Raystown CBC, and in keeping with the invasion from the fall, 27 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were tallied, compared to just one last year.

Despite the attention they received, **Evening Grosbeaks** were seen at only three locations. The most persistent flock was at a feeder off Miller Road, near MF, where present all season. In Dec, numbers there were in the 30s but declined gradually to mostly single digits by Feb (SM, LM, MM, m.ob.). A hunting camp, also near MF and occupied mainly during the holidays, had as many as 45 around the holiday season (MB, GG, DG), but no further reports were received, probably because feeding was discontinued. Finally, 7 grosbeaks made a one-time visit to a feeder in Smithfield Twp. 12/8 (DK, TK).

Common Redpolls were at four locations, with highs of about 25 at SMHW 12/3 (DK, TK), OC 12/13 (DK, TK), and TM hawkwatch 2/24 (NB, SM). **Red Crossbills** were 2 at TM 12/10 (NB), one at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center 12/11 (JK), and 2 at Red Rose Rd in SV 1/10 (RR). **Pine Siskins** were widespread, with highest numbers, including counts over 50, occurring mostly in Dec and early Jan. There

were reports of sick and dead siskins.

One to 3 **Lapland Longspurs** were at PF until 1/7 and then from 2/5 through end of season (m.ob.). **Snow Buntings** were at PF though most of Feb (but not earlier), with a high of 31, an unusually high number for the county (m.ob.) Fresh manure spreads and deep snow cover concentrated the field birds and made for easy locating in Feb. Elsewhere the only report of either species was 3 Snow Buntings near Donation 12/22 (DG).

There were dozens of reports of **American Tree Sparrow**, mostly single-digit counts, with a few counts reaching just past 10. Unusual in mid-winter, 2 **Fox Sparrows** were near Tyrone 12/19 (CE, KE) and singles were at Ennisville 12/20 (SM) and BA 1/5 (KT). Not quite so unusual but nevertheless very uncommon in winter, **Eastern Towhees** were reported six times, all singles.

Observers: **Greg Grove**, gwg2@psu.edu. Nick Bolgiano, Mike Butzer, Darlene Chivers, Tony DeSantis, Carl Engstrom, Kurt Engstrom, Roana Fuller, Graham Gorgus (GG), Deborah Grove, Jon Kauffman, David Kyler, Trudy Kyler, Mark McLaughlin, Laurie McLaughlin, Sean McLaughlin, Crystal McNeal, Dennis Miranda, Pedro Miranda, Max Muller (MMu), Jacob Owings, Alicia Palmer, Ken Tucker, Doug Wentzel.

Indiana County

Locations: Indiana (IN), Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), Shelocta (SH), White's Woods (WW), Yellow Creek State Park (YC).

YC hosted 3 **Cackling Geese** 1/2 (MH, RH) of which 2 were still present 1/5 (MH, RH); at least 4 were counted 1/14 (TR), but that observer noted that as many as 6 may have been present. These are the first Jan sightings on record with all previous reports in either Nov or Mar. High count of 157 **Tundra Swans** 12/26 (RC) at YC is the second highest Dec eBird record for *Indiana*. Only 2 **Wood Ducks** were noted - one in IN 12/16 (JP) and one south of Strongstown 12/30 (MH, RH). Some water remained open at Yellow Cr. through Dec and into early Jan. Nine **Gadwalls** lingered at YC 12/2 (MH, RH), the first Dec record since 2017. Three **American Wigeons** were sighted 12/27 (MH, RH), the latest record since 2012 when 2 remained until 1/6 (TS).

Lesser Scaup were last found at IUP 12/2 (JT) where at least 75 were present; this is a high winter count for the species. An all-time high winter count of 116 **Buffleheads** at YC 12/2 (MH, RH) occurred the same day 15 were also noted at IUP (JT). A **Common Goldeneye** was found at YC 1/3 (RH, SM), the lone report. **Hooded Mergansers** showed a steady presence at YC through 1/14 (TR) when 12 were last listed; 12/27 (MH, RH) yielded the second highest winter count of 37, one less than the top count of 38 on 12/1/2010 (JB). YC hosted as many as 55 **Common Mergansers** 1/3 (RH, SM), the highest winter tally on record, with the last 2 noted 1/19 (SD). Two Lick Res.'s high was 32 on 1/17 (MH, RH); this was Two Lick's highest Jan count. A single **Red-breasted Merganser** at YC 12/20 (MD) comprised the entire report for this species.

A **Northern Harrier** was reported this season at YC 12/23 (MK, GK). A dark morph **Rough-legged Hawk** flew over a field adjacent to the Ghost Town Trail near Dilltown 12/30 (MH, RH). A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** 1/19 (SD) and a **Winter Wren** 2/6 (JC), both at YC, were species not found every winter. **Hermit Thrushes** showed a stronger than usual presence with sightings on four dates at YC (m.ob.) and one in Dark Hollow 12/26 (MH, RH).

An **Evening Grosbeak** flew over a yard near SH 12/4 (ON). YC hosted as many as 36 on 12/23 (MK, GK), 38 on 1/5 (LC, GL), and 33 on 1/14 (TR); last noted at YC were 3 on 1/21 (MH, RH, LW). Near Strongstown, 8 Evening Grosbeaks first appeared at a feeder 1/28 (JM) where the count peaked at 20 on 1/28 (JM). Last report in the county mentioned 2 at Nolo 1/30 (GL). A flock of 25 **Common Redpolls** was found near Brush Valley on the IN CBC 12/26 (GL); 18 were still present the following day (CL, GL). Singletons were listed near Lewisville 1/3 (MH, RH) and near SH 1/27 (MC); 2 stopped at Graceton 2/15 (JU). **Pine Siskins** continued at four locations with top counts of 27 near SH 12/5 (MH, RH) and 5 northeast of IN 12/26 (DW).

Unusual were multiple wintering **Chipping Sparrows**, the first of which appeared in a yard near SH 12/25 (MH, RH) and near WW 1/21 (HR); high counts were 3 near WW 1/24 (HR) and 5 near SH 2/10 (MH, RH). The **Clay-colored Sparrow**, which was first observed 11/30 (MH, RH), continued through the end of the period (MH, RH) at the same SH location above; another Clay-colored Sparrow was reported near WW 2/8 (HR). The SH yard also hosted one **Field Sparrow** 12/25-2/19 (MH, RH) and a continuing **Fox Sparrow** which was last observed 2/20 (MH, RH). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** at YC 12/29 (MH, RH) was a nice addition to the IN CBC count-week list. Although there are numerous fall and several spring records, this is the first winter report for this species.

Observers: **Margaret Higbee, 3119 Creekside Road, Indiana, PA 15701-7934; 724-354-3493; bcoriole@windstream.net**, Justin Bosler, Rich Carlson, John Carter, Marcy Cunkelman, Michael David, Sue Dickson, Patience Fisher, Rebecca Hart (RHa), Roger Higbee, Mary Alice Koenke, Glenn Koppel, Clayton Lamer, Gloria Lamer, Steve Manns, Jim Michny, Oscar Nygam, Joseph Pumford, Theo Rickert, Henry Rummel, Tim Schreckengost, Nancy Smeltzer, John Taylor, Josie Usko, Dawn Winstead.

Jefferson County

Locations: Brown Road (BR), Galusha Road (GR), Ringgold (RG).

The highlight of the winter season was a rooftop **Snowy Owl**, which occurred in Rathmel 2/18 (SR). Frozen lakes and ponds limited waterfowl activity in the county during the winter months; however, tagged **Trumpeter Swan** Z603 returned to Richardsville 2/27 for the fourth consecutive year (LC). Additionally, 13 **Ruddy Ducks** were reported at Kyle Lake 12/7 (JO).

A variety of raptors was observed over the winter months including a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** at a feeder in RG 2/12 (JAK) and a **Cooper's Hawk** along BR 2/17 (JS). A sporadic winter resident, a **Red-shouldered Hawk**, was observed along GR 2/4 (DK). A light-morph **Rough-legged Hawk** was encountered at Rte. 536 intersection 2/23 (JAK). At least 3 **American Kestrels** were located, with observations at GR 2/4 (DK), along State Route 36 on 1/12 (DR), and State Route 830 on 1/24 (NB, DR).

Owl discoveries included the aforementioned **Snowy Owl**, a **Barred Owl** in Warsaw Township 2/20 (DK), and an **Eastern Screech-Owl** along GR 2/4 (DK). Other species of note included a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** in RG 2/14 (JAK), a flock of 11 **Horned Larks** along Ames Road 1/24 (JAK), and a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** at GR 2/14 (DK). A pair of **Red Crossbills** were found in Punxsutawney 12/5 (NV). A **Common Redpoll** was discovered near BR 2/14 (JS), and a lone **Pine Siskin** was seen at the same location the following day 2/15 (JS).

Observers: **Dan Richards, 1151 Treasure Lake, DuBois, PA, (814) 771-2471, drichards7@verizon.net**, Nate Brownlee, Lisa Catarouche, John and Avis Keener, Dave Keith, Jared Oliver, Sean Russell, Jocelynn Smrekar, Nick Voris.

Juniata County

Locations: Casner's Crossing - Juniata River (CC), Juniata River (JR), Lewistown Narrows Canal Park (LNCP), Licking Creek Valley (LCV), McAlisterville (MA), Metz Road (MR), Mifflintown (MIF), Muskrat Springs (MS), Thompsontown (TT).

For the season, 98 species were recorded in eBird. The 34th Lewistown CBC (which is mostly in *Juniata* with a small section in *Perry*) was held 12/19 with reasonably good weather following a snow fall a few days earlier. Thirty-nine participants recorded 73 species, down from 76 last year, but still above average. Coverage was somewhat lower, thanks to COVID and the need for social distancing, which reduced numbers sharing cars. The highlight was, unfortunately, only a count-week bird -- a **Snowy Owl** seen 12/20-21 in the Doe Run and Red Rock Rds. area. Four species set record highs: **Cooper's Hawk**, **Dark-eyed Junco**, **White-throated Sparrow**, and **Common Redpoll**. Redpolls were tallied

for the fourth time in count history, **Gadwall** and **Merlin** fifth time, and **Chipping** and **Savannah Sparrows** sixth time.

Wood Ducks returned to the county beginning 2/20, with seven reports through the end of the period. Not often found, 2 **Northern Shovelers** were at CC 2/24 (JP, CK, NK). **American Wigeon** reports were 2 on the JR at MIF 2/20 (JP, CK, NK, TF) and 5 at TT 2/27 (JP). **Mallard** reports exceeded 50 on more on a half-dozen occasions. Five **Green-winged Teal** were at MR 2/28 (JP). A **Canvasback** was in the Arch Rock area 2/26-28 (CK, NK, JP, TW). Eleven **Redheads** were at MS 2/13-14 (JH, CK, NK, JP) and 5 at MIF 2/14-28 (CK, NK, JP, TF). A lone **Long-tailed Duck** was on the JR near Cuba Mills 2/28 (JP, CK, NK). Top count of many **Common Merganser** reports was 40 at TT. **Red-breasted Mergansers** are rare in mid-winter; one was at MIF 2/14 (CK, NK) and 2 at MS 2/20 (CK, NK, TF). A **Horned Grebe** was at CC 2/28 (JP).

Among a limited number of **Killdeer** reports, the high count was only 7. Max count of **Wilson's Snipe** along Doe Run Rd 2/7-13 was 8 (JP, CK, NK, TW). A **Golden Eagle** was photographed at MA 1/2 (JP). **Northern Harriers** were near Academia 1/6 (CK) and on MR 2/13-14 (DB, JP). **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were reported only two times, in contrast to **Cooper's Hawks**, with more than two dozen reports in eBird. Twenty **Bald Eagles** were counted at Little Evandale 2/13, feeding near a chicken operation (CK, NK).

A **Short-eared Owl** was found near MIF 1/7 (JP). The three common owls -- **Eastern Screech-Owl**, **Great Horned Owl**, and **Barred Owl** -- were reported four times, five times, and once, respectively. A **Peregrine Falcon** was seen at the bridge on the JR at MIF 1/26 (CK).

An **Eastern Phoebe** at LNCP 2/7 and 2/13 was likely a wintering bird that found a sheltered river-side location with enough insects to get through the tough weather of Feb (JP, CK, NK). Peak count of **Horned Lark** was 125 at MR 2/14 (DB). Rare but likely regular in winter, single **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were at CC 1/25 (CK, NK) and LNCP 2/7 (JP). A late **Gray Catbird** was in LCV 12/5 (DBr). **Hermit Thrush** were widespread, with at least nine reports; presumably in response to a good crop of fruit and berries.

The only **Evening Grosbeak** reports were of singles at a feeder in LCV 12/27, 1/11, and 1/28 (DBr). Among a few reports of **Common Redpoll**, the highest count by far was 75 near MA 1/23 (DP). **Pine Siskins** were numerous and widespread, with several reports of 50 to 100 birds. At least one feeder station saw a serious infection outbreak, with several dead birds found.

One **Snow Bunting** was near MIF 2/13 (JP) and 2 on MR 2/14 (CK, NK). At least 15 reports of **American Tree Sparrow** included none of more than 8 birds. A **Fox Sparrow** at MIF 12/5 (CK) was late, as was one seen only once in LCV 12/25 (DBr), given the mild Dec. Singles in LCV 2/17-25 (DBr) and at Red Rock Rd. 2/27 (JP) may have been early migrants. Rare in winter, a **Savannah Sparrow** was at Fogleman Farm 2/7 (CK). Up to 5 **Eastern Meadowlarks** were seen several times at MR in Feb (CK, NK, DBr, GH). Ten **Rusty Blackbirds** were at TT 2/28 (CK, NK). A **Palm Warbler** was photographed at Fogleman Farm 2/7, the first winter report for the county (CK).

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Lackawanna County

Locations: Pinchot State Forest (PSF).

Temperatures rarely dipped below zero degrees throughout the period, but a seemingly endless snow-filled February outshaded this and reminded residents of the way northeastern winters used to be. Multiple storms collectively buried the region in 2-plus feet of snow cover. This reality undoubtedly impacted the region's wintering bird populations, but birders still made efforts to locate the remnants of the fall finch invasion among other expected cold-weather species.

Populations of **American Black Ducks**, although low, continued to persist as regional winter residents; the period high was 9 along the Lackawanna R. Heritage Trail in Jermyn 2/16 (RA). Surprising was a seasonal high of just 4 **Common Mergansers** on the Lackawanna R. in Throop 2/14 (JS, JoS); this result does not match the frequency of this species in neighboring counties. The most noteworthy waterfowl sighting was that of *Lackawanna's* first **Red-necked Grebe** at L. Scranton 12/13-15 (CF, RJ). Several attempts to locate **Rough-legged Hawks** proved unsuccessful; only one was discovered, along Jermyn Farm Rd. 1/20 (RA). One birder was rewarded with a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** that vocalized from the Spruce Swamp NA at PSF 1/15 (CF). A **Merlin** was seen from Creamery Rd. 2/28 (DS), an unexpected winter find.

No Evening Grosbeak sightings occurred. **Purple Finches** were also underreported resulting in a countywide tally of just 5 individuals (m.ob.). Unlike its relatives, **Common Redpolls** remained in the region in good numbers for the entirety of the season; a minimum tally of 132 was reported countywide (m.ob.). A single **Hoary Redpoll** was photographed at Chapman L. 1/7 (MM). This observation marked the first of its kind for the county. At PSF, 9 **White-winged Crossbills** flew from a spruce swamp 1/15 (CF, RJ). The minimum countywide **Pine Siskin** total for the period was 27 (m.ob.). The Scranton CBC on 12/19 produced several noteworthy sightings that are highlighted in the chart below. Significance pertains specifically to *Lackawanna* and may not adequately represent the state's entire northeast region.

Noteworthy Scranton CBC Sightings		
Species	# Observed	Significance
Pied-billed Grebe	1	Unexpected
Great Black-backed Gull	4	Unexpected
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	Unexpected
Fish Crow	40	Higher than Expected
Brown Creeper	1	Lower than Expected
Gray Catbird	1	Higher than Expected
American Tree Sparrow	5	Lower than Expected

Observers: **Ryan Johnson, 140 Hollisterville Hwy, Moscow, PA 18444, (570) 702-9118, natureguy13@gmail.com**, Ralph Allen, Chris Fischer, M. Mack, Jerome Scott, Joanne Scott (JoS), David Snyder.

Lancaster County

Locations: Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (MCWMA), Noel Dorwart Park (NDP), Octoraro Reservoir (OR), Susquehanna River Lake Clarke (SRLC), Susquehanna W.T.P. Washington Boro (SWTPWB), Wood's Edge Park (WEP).

Dec and Jan remained somewhat balmy with above average temps, but by Feb we finally "cooled off" to around normal. In fact, 2020 tied 1998 as the warmest year on record. Dec 17 saw a record 9.3 inches of snow, the fourth highest one-day accumulation for this month ever. In Feb alone, 20 inches of snow was received, double the average. As a result, Feb saw an influx of "field birds" and "winter raptors," likely pushed out of northerly areas by the repeated snowstorms. In all, 36 inches of snow fell, about 10 inches above the average. Birders were thankful for the much-improved birding this season versus last, when we received only a dismal 5 inches! Weather information is derived from Harrisburg data from the National Weather Service, which dates back to 1888. There were 141 species recorded during the period, slightly above the four-year average of 138 (133, 138, 146, 133 previous).

The prevailing cold temps and ice cover in Feb held numbers of **Snow Geese** back from migrating, which barely reached 40,000 at MCWMA by the end of the month. **Ross's Geese** were therefore difficult to find, with only two reports of single birds there 2/12-13 (BC, DS). **Cackling Geese** were frequent in small numbers across the county, per usual. A late **Blue-winged Teal** was described at OR 12/28 (NW, WW). On SRLC a **Surf Scoter** was photographed 2/24 (AL), and **Long-tailed Duck** sightings were fairly numerous with up to 4 on 2/22 (ML, m.ob.). In total, 28 species of waterfowl were tallied.

The two **Rufous Hummingbirds** from fall continued into Dec, with

the adult male last observed 12/10, and the juv female 12/26 (*fide* SL). Two **Virginia Rails** overwintered at WEP, per usual. Three **Sandhill Cranes** were photographed in flight together near Columbia 1/6 (DS). A juvenile **Laughing Gull** was found at Wissler Run Park 2/8-11 (TA), and several **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** wintered on SRLC. A number of **Common Loons** were found on various dates throughout the season, and a late, **Great Egret** was seen at OR 12/4 (CG).

The first **Rough-legged Hawk** showed early in the season at SGL 220 on 12/13 (BC), which was a light adult female. None were seen until Feb, when a light adult male was photographed cruising over NDP 2/4 (SM). The late Feb snows pushed several more to our area, with a dark juvenile right along Rte. 283 near Mt. Joy 2/22-24 (DH, m.ob.), and up to 3 at MCWMA 2/20-28 (m.ob.). From photographs, these were two juveniles, one light and one dark, and a stunning, dark adult male. This was an unusually good season for this scarce winter raptor, which are difficult to find. An **Osprey** was at Riverfront Park 2/25 (Bill Libhart).

A heavily marked **Snowy Owl** was photographed by a passerby in Witmer 1/2 (anon.). Fortunately, they passed the photo on to a local news anchor, and special thanks goes to KM for finding this post on Instagram. Relocation attempts were not successful, but to my eye it was quite similar to one seen for several days in *Chester* around Christmas, and may have been the same individual moving through. At least 3 **Short-eared Owls** wintered at MCWMA for the season, and 2 hunted around New Holland farmland 2/7-22 (DK, m.ob.). It was a good year for **Northern Saw-whet Owl** based on banding success in the state, and reports were numerous during the season throughout the county.

At least 7 **Eastern Phoebes** were recorded, mostly from Dec through the first week of Jan, but one successfully overwintered at OR (CG, m.ob.). The **Barn Swallow** lingered at SWTPWB to 12/20 (JB, m.ob.), but sadly perished soon after. **Black-capped Chickadees** irrupted substantially for the first time in five years, and reports were very widespread. It was also a banner winter for **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, which were incredibly prevalent. Uncommon over-winterers, 6 each **Gray Catbirds** and **Brown Thrashers** were recorded throughout the season (m.ob.).

Finches put on a real show during the fall and, of the 8 species recorded then, only Evening Grosbeak was missed this winter. Notably, about 50 **Common Redpolls** comprised a wintering flock at MCWMA, first found on CBC 12/27 and continuing for several weeks (JH, m.ob.). A remnant group of 17 **Red Crossbills** were heard and seen in flight near Columbia 12/11 (DS), and two immature/female **White-winged Crossbills** were photographed at NDP 1/1 (SM). **Pine Siskins** were common.

Lapland Longspur and **Snow Bunting** reports were above average, after being nearly impossible to find last winter.

The best bird of the season was an immature **Harris's Sparrow**, photographed at a New Holland home 1/22 and posted to a Facebook bird-identification group. Fortunately, the homeowner graciously allowed visitation, and the bird remained to 2/24 marking the fourth county record (CB, m.ob.).

Several **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** were found with large, mixed blackbird flocks in the southern end of the county, which is typical. Immature-type **Baltimore Orioles** were photographed in Ephrata 1/17-2/24 (EW, MSI) and Strasburg 2/12-17 (BL). An impressive wintering flock of up to 81 **Rusty Blackbirds** hung around a wet Columbia woodlot for the season (DS, m.ob.). A female **Brewer's Blackbird** was briefly seen and very well-described with a large blackbird flock near Peach Bottom 1/15 (MS). These can be quite difficult to pick out and are no doubt under-reported.

Four warbler species were recorded which were the expected late-season lineup. An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was nicely photographed in a Lancaster backyard 1/23 (ER), and a **Palm Warbler** was seen near Bird-in-Hand 12/19 (DK). A male **Pine Warbler** wintered at a Millersville feeder through 1/27 (anon.), and another was seen near Wrightsdale 2/10 (SB). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were regular, particularly near the Susquehanna R. and MCWMA. As always, last but far from least, the adult male **Painted Bunting** again successfully overwintered near Bowmansville 1/4-2/21 (m.ob.).

Observers: **Zach Millen, 101 Bridle Path, New Holland, PA 17557, (717) 723-1279, zjmillen@gmail.com**, Tom Amico, Cynthia Beyer, Sabrena Boekell, Jerry Book, Bruce Carl, Carlton Groff, Jonathan Heller, Dan Hinnbusch, Dan Keener, Bill Lewis, Sandy Lockerman, Austin Loewen, Meredith Lombard, Seth McComsey, Kim Morelock, Ed Roper, Matt Sabatine, Mike Slater (MSI), Derek Stoner, Stan Stahl, Eric Witmer, Nina Wolf, Warren Wolf.

Lawrence County

Locations: Black Swamp (BS), McConahy Road (MR), Plain Grove Twp. (PGT), Shaner Road marsh (SR), Volant Strip Mines (VSM).

Lawrence enjoyed fine coverage from birders this season, perhaps fueled by a measure of stir-craziness from a year of disruptions to normal life. As usual, winter birding in the county delivered mostly in terms of waterfowl and field birds, but there was one major passerine rarity which, unfortunately and perhaps a bit ironically in a season of well-above-average coverage, could not be shared with the birding community at large.

A flock of 11 **Greater White-fronted Geese** appeared at SR 1/2 (MV) and was seen nearby for the next week. A **Cackling Goose** was teased out of a Canada flock by white-fronted chasers at Golf Course Road 1/6 (GK, MAK). Prior to that, 2 were photographed at SR 12/7 (TP), and a flock of 10 was again at SR 1/15 (RT). A late push of **Tundra Swans** brought 78 to the county 12/27 (BB, MC), with 66 at Lake Road and 12 at VSM that day. These were followed by 2 at MR 1/9 (MK, MH, RH, LW).

Northern Shoveler skipped Jan, but one was at SR 12/5-24 (MV), and 4 were at MR 2/19-27 (MV). Many reports of **Gadwall** throughout the season culminated with 16 at MR 2/25 (RN). An **American Wigeon** at VSM 1/2 (ST) was an excellent New Year's (plus one day) find. Ten were at the Copper Road Marsh on the more timely date of 2/27 (MV). A **Northern Pintail** was at Edinburg L. 1/11 (MV), another good find for Jan. Similarly, 6 at MR 2/25 (RN) were also more "on time." Small numbers of **Green-winged Teal** were at SR and nearby nearly all season, absent from checklists only in late Jan and early Feb. Rare for the county, especially in winter, is **Canvasback**; reports this season included 3 at SR 12/28-29 (AH), one at Golf Course Road 1/2 (ST), and one at MR 2/24 (DB, LC). The female **Redhead** that was present from late spring 2020 at MR was still present as late as 2/13, though by then it had relocated to the marsh across the road. Perhaps she got mixed up with the group of 25 that appeared at MR 2/24 (DB, LC) and finally departed. As usual, **Ring-necked Ducks** were the most numerous duck in the county. A good count of 165 lingered from the fall at SR 12/5 (MV), and MR still held a remarkable 40 of them 1/9 (MH, RH, LW). Spring arrivals (at least as of the end of Feb) maxed at 59 at MR 2/27 (MH, RH). Three **Lesser Scaup** hung around the Heather Heights Road area near the New Wilmington area 2/16-26 (MV, KD, DF).

The top count of **Sandhill Cranes** was a "paltry" 52 this season, at SR 1/21 (MF). The PGT area is still their strongest winter refuge in the state, but numbers have been down in the past few years. Perhaps they are just spreading out more. A **Wilson's Snipe** wintered at Heather Heights Road, as often happens (GK, MAK, m.ob.). A great total for *Lawrence* were the 210 **Ring-billed Gulls** at Galilee Road 1/9 (MV). Lake Road was the most-reported location for **Rough-legged Hawk**, but a few were seen around the county all winter. Two **Short-eared Owls** were seen outside McConnell's Mill SP near Portersville again this winter, present for much of Dec (MC, et al.). Another 2 were at Golf Course Road 2/21 (GK, MAK). Two **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were found at SGL 151 on 12/27 (BB, MC), and another was located at BS 2/27 (MC). **Red-headed Woodpecker** continued at SGL 151 all winter (BB, MC, m.ob.). Somewhat unusual for *Lawrence* was a mid-winter **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** found at SGL 151 on 12/27 (BB, MC). Five sightings of **Merlin** were spread around the county and season (m.ob.).

Sightings of **Common Raven** are still worth explicitly annotating in *Lawrence*, but perhaps not much longer. This season saw one at Galilee Road 1/9 (MV), 2 at SR 1/23 (MV), and one at McConnell's Mill SP 1/24 (FI). Lake Road was thick with **Horned Larks** after Dec, where top count was 320 on 1/18 (JP, JF). Like in adjacent *Beaver*, sightings of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** dropped off considerably after the fall migration, but a few were seen here and there through Feb (m.ob.). A **Hermit Thrush** was at

McConnell's Mill 12/20-26 (RN), and another, or by some lucky chance, the same, was there 2/17 (MC).

The bird of the season was easy to name this time: a **Varied Thrush** appeared at a private residence near New Bedford 2/13 and stayed into early March. The homeowner was strongly against allowing visitors or even publicizing it at all, but a friend of the family was allowed to visit and photograph the bird (BR), who shared the info for this report, and whose photos confirmed *Lawrence's* first of the species.

An **American Pipit** was at Moore's Corner Road in PGT 12/20 (MH, RH, LW). **Pine Siskins** were sparse after the fall here as well; around 6 of them hung out in New Castle through 12/27 (LW), and 2 were at BS also 12/27 (BB, MC, RT), but these were the last reported. Making up for this was a surprising flock of 60 **Common Redpolls** near Volant 1/9 (AH, MH, RH, LW). That same day another 4 were seen at Lake Road (MH, RH, LW). Earlier in the season, a count of 5 was made at BS 12/27 (BB, MC). The main spot for **Lapland Longspur** and **Snow Bunting** was Reese Road near Volant, where top count of the former was 5 from 2/10-27 (MC, GK, MAK), and 100 for the latter in the last week of Feb (DB, LC). Both were also seen in small numbers around Volant as well. Three **Rusty Blackbirds** were at PGT 12/20 (MH, RH, LW), and one was at New Castle 12/25 (LW). Probably the second-best bird of the season, this one by way of a very unusual date, was a **Common Yellowthroat** at BS 12/27 (RT).

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Lebanon County

Locations: Clear Springs Rd (CLSP), Cornwall Area (CA), Fort Indiantown Gap (FIG), Hostetter Rd (HR), Lebanon Valley Rail Trail (LVRT), Lions Lake (LL), Meadow & Forney Rd (MFR), Memorial Lake State Park (MLSP), Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area (MC), Mount Pleasant Rd (MPR), Spring Hill Acres, (SHA), Swatara State Park (SSP), Union/Mount Zion/Greble Rd (UMZG).

The 41st *Lebanon* CBC was held 12/19. Thirty participants found 76 total species. New CBC high counts were achieved for 11 species, including 30 **Ring-necked Ducks**, 84 **Common Mergansers**, and 20 **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, to mention a few.

A **Ross's Goose** was found among the **Snow Geese** at MC 2/27 (JH). The only **Cackling Geese** of the winter were found at LL 1/10 and MC 2/27 (both JH). Seven **Long-tailed Ducks** were at MLSP 12/14 (TB, KB, JDr, CT). Three **Common Goldeneyes**, a male and 2 females, were at MLSP 12/27-31 (DHo, TB, KB). A single female remained 1/1 (TB, KB, MC, JH, SW, TO). The only **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was found at MLSP 12/5 (JH).

A **Rough-legged Hawk** was at MC 2/14-27 (SF, JS, DH, ML, MCo, JH, JFi). Four **Barred Owls** were heard at SGL 211 on 1/1 (JH). Single Barred Owls were found at MC 1/16 (AB), at SSP 1/27 (DM), and at Ironmaster Rd 2/13 (P&RW). A **Long-eared Owl** was seen at SSP 1/22-24 (RSt, BWr, JH, m.ob.). Two **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were found in the Gold Mine Rd area of SGL 211 on 1/1 (JH). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were seen along Obie Rd 1/4-2/16 (JFi, JH, JW, FH, TB, KB), at MLSP 1/7 (BK), and at LVRT 2/12 (LF). **Merlins** were at Palmyra 12/4 (TN), at CA 1/6 (P&RW), at State Rd 1/27 (P&RW), at CLSP 2/14 (SM), and at Milbach 2/27 (AB). **Peregrine Falcons** were found at Greble Rd 12/6 (JD), at CLSP 1/13 (KB), and at Obie Rd 2/12 (P&RW).

Single **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were seen at five locations, with the longest-staying individual at a home near Newmantown 1/29-2/28 (JS). A great count of 220 **American Pipits** was provided along Greble Rd 12/5 (JH), with 50 along nearby Union Rd 12/14 (TBu). Thirty were at Greble Rd 2/20 (JH).

An **Evening Grosbeak** was a nice find at Governor Dick Park 12/4 (PB). **Common Redpolls** were found in multiple county locations during the winter quarter. Good counts were provided of up to 45 at SGL 145 from 12/3-

6 (DK, JHu), and up to 13 at SGL 211 from 1/1-3 (JH). At least 60 were at SGL 211 on 1/30 (JH). A new county high count of Common Redpolls was provided by at least 225, counted from a photograph on a gravel road at FIG 1/15 (JDr). **Pine Siskins** were abundant in the Cornwall area throughout the winter. Up to 120 were at CA 12/27 (P&RW). Up to 24 Pine Siskins were at SGL 145 from 12/6-13 (JH).

Field birds were readily found after snow cover brought them to the roadsides. **Lapland Longspurs** were found in numerous open agricultural areas throughout the county. Up to 10 Longspurs provided a notable count at MFR 2/9-12 (MD, MCo, JFi, MS, TN, P&RW, m.ob.). **Snow Buntings** were also frequent finds in the same open habitats. Up to 24 were at MFR 2/4-27 (MD, RS, BW, PB, m.ob.). Twenty Snow Buntings were at Birch Rd 2/12 (P&RW), and up to 26 were at UMZG 2/20-12 (JH, TK). Thirty **American Tree Sparrows** provided a good count at FIG 12/18 (CT). Rare in winter was a **Common Yellowthroat** at SGL 145 on 12/3-9 (DK, JH).

A **Black-throated Gray Warbler** continued at a home along CLSP 1/7-2/14 (EF, NF, JF, SB, JHn, JH, m.ob). The gracious homeowners have allowed many visitors to find this exciting bird during the past two falls and winters.

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Lehigh County

There were fewer Snow Geese wintering in *Lehigh* this year, despite (or possibly due to) the fact that there were more than ever a bit to the east in Northampton County. Some high counts were at Heidelberg Twp (5000) 1/6 (JH), and Haafsville (2500) 1/17 (EK). The only reported Ross's Goose was a flyover at Alburtis 2/2 (JV). A Tundra Swan spent some time wandering the county, seen 12/27-1/6 at Fogelsville and Haafsville, then at Trexler Park 2/12-21. General assumption is that it was the same bird, but this can't be known for sure. A group of 3 Tundras was photographed in a flooded cornfield at Whitehall Twp 3/13 (LR).

Two Redheads were at Fogelsville Quarry 12/26, followed by 2 Common Goldeneyes the following day (FD). Two Common Goldeneyes were also found on the Lehigh River at Lehigh Gap 2/12 (MG). The first Killdeer of 2021 was reported at Germansville 2/23, despite a foot of fresh snow and drifts up to four feet deep (JG). American Woodcock was first noted 2/21 at Upper Saucon Country Club (BB).

Trexler Nature Preserve (TNP) hosted several really good birds this winter, though these were all reported one day only: A Rough-legged Hawk described as a light morph female or immature was at the South Range 2/14 (HE, JE). It's of interest that other Rough-leggeds showed up in neighboring counties at about that same date. Also at TNP, a fly-over Snowy Owl was well described from the area around the elk enclosure (GD). Last, a Short-eared Owl was reported 12/20 (JM, RL, BS). Trexler Nature Preserve has some of the most diverse habitat in the county, but remains under-birded. Anything seems possible from this incredible birding hotspot!

Red-headed Woodpecker continues to do well here. The birds near Slatington spent the winter once again. The landowner remains curmudgeonly, and doesn't like people looking at his rural pasture because...well...who knows? It's weird. Be advised. Other reports came from Coopersburg 1/3 (RS), Zionville 1/30 (KB), and Haafsville (a juvenile, with pics) 2/25 (DN). There were 14 Peregrine Falcon reports on eBird for the period, reported from many locations, but mostly Bethlehem and Allentown.

Red-breasted Nuthatch was reported consistently; not daily, but more often than usual. It's of interest that there was a notable spike in eBird reports

during the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) over a span of four days in mid-Feb, driven by reports from feeder watchers outside of the active birding community, most of whom only report their findings one weekend out of the year. It seems that Red-breasted Nuthatch may be severely under-reported at times. The same GBBC trend was noted for Purple Finch, though these present an ID challenge that probably leaves many GBBC records highly suspect, as many participants seem to be completely unfamiliar with House Finch. The joys of Citizen Science...sometimes it's all we got though. Anyway, an Evening Grosbeak was definitely heard over an Alburtis yard 1/18 (JV). Common Redpoll was reported from Leaser Lake (3) 12/11 (FD), as well as 1/1 and 1/10 (FD, JH). Four birds were photographed at Neffs 2/2 (RR). Pine Siskin was reported regularly, but in single digits 12/3-2/23.

A Lapland Longspur was at Bullhead Rd in Heidelberg Twp 2/6 (RR). Snow Bunting was present in the county 12/17-2/14, with max count (25) at Germansville 2/27 (ML). Rare in winter, a Rusty Blackbird was photographed at Haafsville 1/3-5 (DN). A Palm Warbler was a great find on the Allentown CBC 12/19 (TW), one of three for this CBC that spans multiple counties.

Observers: Bill Etter, 407 S. Cigar Rd, Northampton, PA 18067, billletter01@gmail.com, Kris Bealer, Brandon Brogle, Frank Dickman, Heather Eline, Jim Eline, Maricatherine Garr, John Good, Jeff Hopkins, Ed Komito, Renae Losey, Matt Loyko, Jon Mularczyk, Dave Neimeyer, Lee Rackus, Rich Rehrig, Robert Stein, Brandon Swayser, Jeff Vinosky, Todd Watkins. This report benefits greatly from the contributions of many regular eBird users in *Lehigh*, and from posts to the Facebook page of Lehigh Valley Audubon Society.

Luzerne County – no compiler

Lycoming County

Locations: Mill Hill Road (MH), Mill Street (MS), Nisbet (NB), Pine Creek Rail Trail (PCRT), Rose Valley Lake (RVL), Williamsport Dam (WD).

This winter came with high anticipation, with one of the biggest finch irruptions in decades kicking off in the fall season. In general, though, most of the finches seemed to keep going and ended up south of *Lycoming* for the winter. In general, there weren't too many surprises during the winter, with no big pattern of rarities, and no exceptional weather patterns. In total, 105 species were reported.

In stark contrast to last winter, where tens of thousands of **Snow Geese** were present during Feb, the only Feb sighting was about 30 in NB 2/14 (BB, DeB, BoB, RB). The only other report from the winter was 40 in Eldred Twp. 12/18 (JD). Five **Tundra Swans** were in NB 2/26 (DBg), and 6 at the same location 2/28 (BB, DeB, BoB, RB).

After a complete lack of reports in 2020, **Canvasbacks** were regularly seen along the river from Williamsport to NB during the second half of Feb (m.ob.). Additionally, 3 were at Indian Park 2/23 (BB). Some flocks of up to several dozen **Redheads** were also seen along the river during the second half of Feb. About the same timeframe the Canvasbacks were present, up to 24 **Greater Scaup** were at WD. Some **Lesser Scaup** were also at WD at the same time, but generally less than 10. Up to 2 **Long-tailed Ducks** were consistently seen at WD during the second half of Jan and all of Feb (m.ob.), and one was at MS 1/9 (BB, DeB, BoB).

A **Eurasian Collared-Dove** was found at Lime Bluff Recreation Center 2/15 (GM). The bird was also seen at the same location the following day (BB, DeB, BoB, RB). This represents one of very few records for *Lycoming* and the first known photographed record.

A flyover **Golden Eagle** was reported from South Williamsport Park 12/5 (DF). **Rough-legged Hawk** reports were concentrated in the MH area and in Jackson Twp. The lone report outside of those areas was near Elimsport 2/13 (BB, DeB, BoB, RB). A **Short-eared Owl** was seen in Antes Fort several nights during late Dec (SP). The formerly reliable MH had no Short-eared Owls again this winter, the third straight year with no sightings.

A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was reported along the PCRT 12/28 (JH), and one was at RVL 12/31 (BB, DeB). A **Brown Thrasher** wintered at RVL, seen 12/31 (BB, DeB), 1/1 (BB, DeB, BoB), 2/14 (BB, DeB, RB), and 2/24 (BB, DB, DeB, BoB, RB). Up to 4 **American Pipits** were at WD during much

of Feb (m.ob.).

After a big push during the fall season, **Evening Grosbeak** numbers dropped off significantly, but there were a couple one-off sightings, including Eldred Twp. 12/10 (JD) and Steam Valley Rd. 2/6 (BB, DeB, BoB, RB). There were also at least two feeders in *Lycoming* getting regular flocks. Likewise, **Purple Finches** dropped off quite a bit from the fall, presumably because they mostly continued south, but there were scattered sightings. There were some significant flocks of **Common Redpolls** during the winter, with MH hosting the largest of about 100 birds. There were scattered sightings elsewhere throughout the county, and it was easily the best winter for the species in recent years. A **Hoary Redpoll** was mixed into the MH redpoll flock and was first seen 2/6 (BB, DeB, BoB, RB). The huge **Pine Siskin** numbers of fall also gave way to a pretty scarce winter for them presumably, again, because they kept moving south.

Two **Lapland Longspurs** were seen off and on for over a week in Feb near MH (SP, et al.). There was also one in Antes Fort 2/6 (SP) and 2 in NB 2/7 (BB, DeB, BoB, RB). There were two consistent **Snow Bunting** flocks in the county during Feb, with a few dozen in Cogan House Twp. and over 100 near MH (m.ob.). Two were also mixed into a **Horned Lark** flock near Pennsdale 2/20 (BB, DeB, BoB, RB). Three **Savannah Sparrows** were in NB 1/4 (BB, DeB, BoB). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was reported near Williamsport 12/4 (DF), and an **Eastern Towhee** along the PCRT 12/27 (PL). An **Eastern Meadowlark** was found near Picture Rocks 2/6 (EHO).

Observers: **Bobby Brown, bobbybrown1011@gmail.com**, Dan Brauning (DBg), Bob Brown (BoB), David Brown, Deb Brown (DeB), Rebecca Brown, Jean Dalton, Maddi Dunlap, Dave Ferry, Norwood Frederick, Eric Hartshaw, Jared Hollick, Evan Houston (EHO), Andy Keister, Patrick Lister, Brett Matlock, Gary Metzger, Steve Pinkerton.

Mercer County

Locations: Chestnut Run (CR), Greenville (GN), Jackson Center (JC), Lake Latonka (LL), Transfer (TF).

This winter was forecast to be a good winter-finch season due to lack of food in Canada. This certainly proved true as good numbers of Siskins and Redpolls were noted. The Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) helped this immensely by planting large sunflower patches on many game lands throughout western Pennsylvania. These areas provided the highest numbers of finches found during the period, not just in *Mercer* but in many other counties.

Bodies of water stayed open a large part of the period leading to good numbers of waterfowl. Single **Cackling Geese** were noted from late Dec until early Feb, when lakes began freezing over. The earliest was found on LL 12/27 (GK/MAK). In early Jan, a large flock of **Canada Geese** was at LL with a number of 1162 (GK/MAK). **Northern Pintail** showed up at Hartford Landing with 14 on 1/9 (BW). Good numbers of **Redhead** were at Mahaney RA with 45 found 2/15 (MS). **Long-tailed Ducks** have been seen occasionally in *Mercer*, 2 were at CR 12/28 (MS) and 2 more at CR 1/2 (KS). **Common Goldeneye**, regular here when the water has been open, tallied 80 at Propagation Area 12/3 (MW).

Game birds are found periodically. Only one **Ring-necked Pheasant** was reported, at Pennsy Road 12/27 (BB, MC) during the Grove City CBC. A nice flock of 63 **Wild Turkeys** were at Delaware Road 1/23 (MW). As mentioned above, PGC planted large sunflower patches mainly to attract **Mourning Doves**. This really showed when a flock of 200 was found at the Carlisle Rd game lands in TF 2/1 (MW). Large numbers like this were found throughout the period (m.ob.).

Sandhill Cranes have continued to show up in increasing numbers; a group of 19 was at SGL 284 on 1/16 (KK). Some shorebirds were noted. A single **Dunlin**, the only one found in the state during this time period, was at Shenango Res. on 1/24 (MW). **Wilson's Snipe** were found in multiple locations where there was open running water with muddy areas around. Highest counts were 11 at New Wilmington 12/26 (MW) and 6 at Rodgers Road 1/25 (BW).

The many open grasslands are a favorite area for finding hawks in winter. A **Northern Harrier** was at JC 1/31 (MC). **Rough-legged Hawks** were found mostly in early Jan at various locations (m.ob.). This was also an

excellent year for **Short-eared Owls**. They were found at many locations, but the most consistent was JC. Highest count there was 6 on 2/12 (DK). The good news this year was very few reports of harassment of these birds even with all the photographers present. Only one report of **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was received, one owl from GN 1/7 (MW). In a bit of a surprise, **Northern Shrike** was only reported twice with one at Folk Road 1/19 during a WRS (MH, RH, LW) and another 1/25 at Big Bend Area Game Lands (MW).

As noted, this was a good year for northern finches. **Common Redpolls** were noted throughout the county, but the most reliable spot was the Carlisle Rd. game lands in TF with a count of 60 there 1/11 (MW). A single bird continued at a private residence in TF through the end of the period (KS). Most exciting was a **Hoary Redpoll** at the game lands 2/4 (MW). This bird was confirmed through photographs by Matthew Young, president and founder of the Finch Research Network at Cornell Lab of Ornithology. **Pine Siskins** were not as numerous and mostly seen earlier in the period; 17 were found at GN 1/29 (MW).

The relatively mild winter kept sparrows in the area. **Field Sparrows** were noted throughout Dec and Jan with up to 2 at TF 1/31 (MW). The sunflower fields were also good for finding sparrows. A high count of 165 **American Tree Sparrows** were at the Carlisle Road game lands in TF 1/20 (MW). Six **White-crowned Sparrows** were at WR 1/10 (GK, MAK). Single **Savannah Sparrows** were also noted at the sunflower field in TF through February (m.ob.). **Common Grackles** were first noted 12/17 in TF (KS). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were seen occasionally with a maximum of 3 at TF 1/15 (SS).

Observers: **Glenn Koppel, 122 Linsdale Dr. Butler, PA 16001 macatilly@gmail.com**, Brendyn Baptiste, Martin Carlin, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, Dave Keith, Ken Knapp, Mary Alice Koeneke, Steve Sanford, Matthew Siefert, Kim Springer, Linda Wagner, Michael Williams, Bill Winkler.

Mifflin County

Locations: Granville River Access (GRA), Lewistown (LEW), Lancaster Valley (NLV), River Road (RR), Victory Park (VP).

The winter season concluded with 21 species of waterfowl observed. Highlights included **Canvasback** at VP 2/20-24 (RD, JK, m.ob.), a pair of **Northern Pintails** at RR 2/21 (JG, CK, NK), and a **Long-tailed Duck** at VP 2/15 (RD). An increasingly hard-to-find **American Coot** was observed at VP 12/28 and 1/4-7 (RD).

The irruption of winter finches was somewhat disappointing in *Mifflin*. A single **Evening Grosbeak** was observed at a feeding station at NLV 2/18-20 (AE), and a single **Common Redpoll** in LEW 1/31 (RD). **Purple Finch** and **Pine Siskin** were regularly observed at a feeding station in LEW with a high count of 7 **Purple Finch** 2/22 (RD).

Single **Snow Buntings** were observed at Knepp Road 2/4 and again 2/11 (JZ). Three **Rusty Blackbird** were found at GRA 2/21 (JG, CK). The highlight of the season was a female **Black-and-White Warbler** found at VP, observed from 1/4-17 and again 2/17 (CK, RD).

Observers: **Rob Dickerson, 44 Oakridge Rd, Lewistown, PA 17044, radickerson@gmail.com**. Anonymous eBirder, Joe Gyekis, Chad Kauffman, Jon Kauffman, Noah Kauffman, Jay Zook.

Monroe County

Locations: Broadhead Creek Recreation Area (BC), Cherry Valley National Wildlife Reserve (CV), East Stroudsburg (EST), Silver Valley Natural Area (SV), Skytop (ST), Weir Lake (WL).

The Winter Season continued with some finch-invasion holdovers and a smattering of common-species leftovers. December and January continued seasonal like the past few winters, with February coming in like a lion with a wrenching of a 4-day snowstorm bringing 24-inch snow totals county-wide, and temperatures freezing all the open waterways. Birding was best done with all-wheel or 4-wheel drive.

The **Trumpeter Swans** continued in the Pocono Summit area, with most of the observations taking place at Pocono Summit Lake (RK, JD, JM,

BJ). Five **Tundra Swans** were observed loafing up and down the Delaware R. around Shawnee 5/7-11 (BJ, MC). Two **Cackling Geese** were espied at WL 12/20 (JM). The first **Northern Pintail** was found on Frailey Road 1/10 (JM), with a few other single birds being observed throughout the winter. A high of 58 **Hooded Mergansers** was at WL 12/27 (PN), a regular occurrence at this location. Two **Horned Grebes** put down for a snooze on Pincrest L. 12/2 (BJ). No other waterfowl of note made an appearance, most likely due to the big four-day blizzard putting a clamp on everything.

A late **Golden Eagle** was spotted at ST 12/30 (RK). Twenty-two **Bald Eagles**, another high count, must have been quite a sight feeding on residual scraps at a butcher shop in Kunkletown 12/24 (TS). The lone **Rough-legged Hawk** of the season was observed at BC 2/22 circling high in the sky (JW). The Stroudsburg area was treated to a rare **Peregrine Falcon** 1/11 (MSb). **Mertins** seemed more conspicuous this year, with observations in Jan at EST and CV (NT) and BC (JS).

A **White-Eyed Vireo** was found on two occasions at CV headquarters: on 12/5 (JM) and again on 12/12 (DH). Two **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, New Year's holdovers, were found at SV 1/3 (JM). A high count of 31 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** was observed at ST 1/1 (RK) to start the New Year off right. **Catbirds** seemed to enjoy a renaissance this winter, with one being found at CV 12/22-14 (JM, RL) and 2 observed together on Keokee Chapel Rd. 1/12 (BJ).

Common Redpolls continued their onslaught of the Pocono Region that started in Nov. A secluded section of shoreline of Stillwater Lake held 55 redpolls 12/1 (BJ), 120 were found gritting along the roadside at Long Pond 12/8 (BJ), 56 were at SV 12/27 (BS, JM), and 19 were in the birches at iconic Big Pocono 1/12 (JH). One to 3 redpolls were observed at a feeder in EST all of Feb, with the photo of one closely matching what looks to be a Hoary Redpoll. **Red Crossbills** were found 2/7 at both SV (RL, JM) and ST (RK).

A **Chipping Sparrow** was a great Feb find at a feeder in Stroudsburg (JS). **Savannah Sparrows** were spotted in late Dec at CV on two occasions (SA, JM), with possibly a winter holdover being observed at the same location 2/20 (BJ). A **Rusty Blackbird** was spotted under a feeder in Blakeslee 12/23 (KA), with another found at SV 2/21 (JM). Rounding out this report is the lone male **Wilson's Warbler** that teased multiple observers at SV throughout Dec (JM, m.obs.), putting a beautiful sparkle in another dreary winter's day! A second warbler, Black-and-white warbler, was seen at Silver Valley Natural Area 12/04 (PN)

Observers: **Bruce Johnson**, brucejohnson207@yahoo.com, Kate Abell, Scott Angus, Mike Cavigelli, Jonathon DeBalko, Nate Fronk, Tim Grover, Jack Hutchinson, Diane Husic, Rick Koval, Renae Losey, Paul Nale, Jon Mularczyk, Paul Nale, Jeff Pace, Matt Sabatine (MSb), Mike Schall, Ty Sharrow, June Smith, Brandon Swayser, Nancy Tully, Jeff Wilkins, Rick Wiltraut.

Montgomery County

Locations: Butter Valley Golf Port (BVGP), Flat Rock Park (FRP), Green Lane Park (GLP), Gwynedd Wildlife Preserve (GWP), Norristown Dam (ND), Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust (PERT), Schuylkill River Trail at Oaks (SRTO), Valley Forge National Historical Park (VFNHP), Wissahickon Waterfowl Preserve (WWP).

Although peppered with warm stretches, this winter saw enough consecutive nights below freezing to keep small bodies of water and much of GLP iced over for significant chunks of the season. We also received a few substantial snowfalls, including a fairly unusual heavy snow in mid-Dec, though the rest was primarily concentrated in Feb, as is more typical. The ground was snow-covered for most of Feb.

Through a combination of effort and luck, birders managed to find 128 species in the county this period. This bests the winter average, since 2012, of 121 species. Those species included two PORC review list birds – Pink-footed Goose and Western Tanager – as well as a frustrating Eurasian Wigeon and a couple of county winter-first wrens.

Due to at least in part to GLP being frozen over during late Feb, the park did not host a significant number of **Snow Geese** this year. By contrast, during the final days of Feb 2020, more than 30,000 geese were observed here. All sizable counts for winter 2020-21 came in the form of flyover groups (m.ob.) with the biggest of these, and sole report over 1500, being 3000 over

Upper Frederick Twp. 1/9 (JT). A **Greater White-fronted Goose** was located at GLP 12/13-27 (PH, m.ob., ph.). Another one turned up at the less traditional location of PERT 12/20 (DS). A possible third White-front was found at Huntingdon Valley Country Club 1/1 (EK). Based on date and proximity to PERT, it was quite likely that the 1/1 goose was the same as the one found twelve days earlier at the nearby park.

Representing a top find of the period, and also a third county record, was a **Pink-footed Goose** at GLP 12/31-1/6 (KC, m.ob., ph., doc. submitted via eBird). Unlike the Pink-footed Goose discovered the previous winter at a construction site in the extreme southeastern corner of the county, this one was readily viewable, and many birders were able to come out to see it. A **Cackling Goose** was photographed at Fischer's Park 12/8 (ED). The species was present at GLP in mostly small quantities 12/9 through the end of the period (m.ob.), though there were a few instances where greater accumulations were observed: 9 cacklers were at GLP 12/11 (PH) and 7 were present 1/7 (KD, PH). Four **Tundra Swans**, typically unusual in Dec and Jan, were seen at GLP 12/23 (JH). Sixteen more flyover Tundra Swans were photographed at GLP 12/28 (JD.).

Northern Shovelers were present at GLP in low numbers through Dec (m.ob.), plus 2 on 1/11 (KC, PH). A female shoveler was regularly seen at WWP 12/2-1/23 (m.ob.). **Gadwall** were plentiful at GLP, exceeding 100 on two occasions: 133 were counted 12/13 and 117 on 12/11 (both PH). Deeper into the season, 75 Gadwall were still present at GLP 1/9 (LH) and 1/11 (KC). A female-type **Eurasian Wigeon**, the first of its kind to be documented in *Montgomery* in a decade, was photographed at GLP 2/5 (PH, ph.). Efforts to re-find it were unsuccessful. Concentrated by ice, 34 **American Wigeons** were counted in one of the few open patches of water at GLP's Hill Rd. 1/31 (KC, WBH). A high quantity of **American Black Ducks**, 101, was noted at GLP 1/7 (KC). One to two **Northern Pintails** were spotted at GLP 12/9-1/2 (m.ob.). Three pintails at GLP 2/28 (KC) followed a long stint of none. Away from GLP, a pair of pintails were found on the pond at Carl Kohler Park in Horsham Twp. 12/16 (RW).

A female **Canvasback** resided at GLP 2/8-24 (JH, m.ob.). The sole report of a male came from FRP, on the Schuylkill at Gladwyne, 2/20 (DB, SGr). Three **Redheads** were present at GLP 12/5 (SGr, m.ob.), followed by another group of 7 on 2/8 (AD, ED, m.ob.). Three Redheads also turned up on the Schuylkill at Lock 60 from 2/21-26 (JH, m.ob.). **Ring-necked Ducks** were scarcer than typical this season, with the highest count recorded being only 35, at GLP 2/27 (ML), and very few people noting flock sizes exceeding a meager 5 (m.ob.). A **Greater Scaup** was at SRTO 2/16-21 (MRo, m.ob.). An 82-strong group of **Buffleheads** was on the Schuylkill at VFNHP 2/10 (PD), and a female **Red-breasted Merganser** was reported at ND 2/10 (PD). **Ruddy Ducks** were present in mostly single digits at GLP to 12/14 (m.ob.), including a count of 22 on 12/6 (KR, LH), and a few counts in the 10 to 16 range 12/3-5 (m.ob.). One Ruddy Duck was still at GLP 12/27 (CH, m.ob.), and one lingered at WWP to 12/13 (m.ob.). **Wild Turkeys** were noted only eight times from four sites (m.ob.). The largest flock of turkeys seen was 15 at Collegeville 2/13 (PK).

An unidentified *Selasphorus* hummingbird, present at an undisclosed residence in the Pennsburg/Red Hill area since approximately 10/10, remained at that location through 1/24 (anonymous *fide* BE). The homeowner did not want the bird to be trapped/banded, and consulted experts were unable to draw a definitive conclusion from photos alone. Odds favored **Rufous Hummingbird**, however.

A solo **American Coot**, usually a tough bird to locate in winter, showed up at WWP 1/1 (JM, m.ob.). Larger-than-typical groups of **Killdeer** included 36 near Graterford Prison 12/15 (KR) and 22 in Franconia Twp. 2/28 (AH, ph.). Two early-ish **American Woodcocks** were displaying at PERT 2/25 (MG). Single **Wilson's Snipe** were reported in Hatfield Twp. 12/13 (KR) and at Prophecy Creek Park 12/19 (DL).

The monumental **Lesser Black-backed Gull** quantities of last winter were not topped this season, nor were they in danger of being topped. Whereas winter 2019-20 featured 17-plus days of 100-plus Lesser Black-backed Gulls at GLP, and an astonishing high count of 307 noted in mid-Jan, winter 2020-21's high count was just 79, observed at GLP 12/13 (PH). Even halving our expectations, just 8 Lesser Black-back reports surpassed 50 (m.ob.). Maybe next year. There were also scattered reports of one to 2 **Great Black-backed Gulls** from the Schuylkill River, between ND and Bala Cynwyd, 12/31-2/23 (m.ob.). A **Common Loon** was at WWP 12/3-7 (ML,

m.ob.), and another hung out on the quarry pond at Sandy Run Park 12/30-1/4 (DB, m.ob.). A **Double-crested Cormorant** remained at FRP to the fairly late date of 12/11 (MW).

Particularly rare for us outside of fall migration, an adult or near-adult **Golden Eagle** flew over Pennsburg 2/24 (PH, ph.). A group of 5 **Long-eared Owls** was noted by several at a southern *Montgomery* site 12/26-1/15 (m.ob., ph.). Single **Short-eared Owls** were spied at GLP 12/30 (PH, ML, ph.) and at VFNHP 2/10 (PD, KF). A healthy population of overwintering **Northern Saw-whet Owls** was confirmed, mostly through the efforts of one birder, who captured audio recordings of the species at eight different parks 12/19-1/31 (PD, vr.). Another was noted in the Unami Creek Valley 2/4 (SG, WBH, vr.).

Tenacious **Eastern Phoebe**s were found at 5 locations 12/11-2/23 (m.ob.). A flock of roughly 300 **American Crows** at Norristown Farm Park 12/26 (PB) exceeded the old park record by about 50. Sixteen **Fish Crows** were observed over Huntingdon Valley 1/17 (CA). As has been the case with every *Montgomery* summary over the last few years, lots of **Common Ravens** were detected (m.ob.). The southeast portion of the county experienced a fairly heavy irruption of **Black-capped Chickadees** this season. Black-caps were noted from approximately 30 locations in quantities of one to 4 throughout the period (m.ob.).

A flock of, conservatively, 47 **Horned Larks** was present in the farm adjacent to BVGP in Upper Hanover Twp. 2/4-10 (m.ob., ph.), a pretty good number for a county that has lost much of its farmland to development over the last few decades. In addition to records of smaller number of larks from the usual farmland remnant areas (m.ob.), one was photographed during a snowstorm in a suburban backyard in Horsham Twp. 2/2 (EP). **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** lingered at the Heuser Park S.T.P. until 12/22 (SGr, KR), numbering as high as 8 on 12/2 (SGr). A solo Rough-wing was also at the S.T.P. at SRT0 12/20 (SGr). Twelve early **Tree Swallows** were at ND 2/25 (MRo).

Red-breasted Nuthatches, though not abundant, were reasonably widespread at feeders throughout the season (m.ob.). A **House Wren** was at Evansburg SP 12/27-1/6 (KR), and a **Marsh Wren** was at Valley Center Park in Lower Moreland Twp. 12/12 (PD, vt.). Both of these wrens represent first winter records for *Montgomery*, and also new late dates for their respective species by 3 to 4 weeks.

At least 11 **Gray Catbirds** were detected, primarily in the southern half of the county (m.ob.). A near-white leucistic **Eastern Bluebird** was photographed at Nike Park in Worcester Twp. 12/27 (EF, SF). An unusually large flock of 90 **Cedar Waxwings** was at GLP 1/11 (PH). Seventeen **American Pipits** were seen on high school athletic fields near GLP 12/26 (ML, SGr).

The fall's big winter finch irruption had mostly fizzled out for *Montgomery* by the time winter rolled around. **Purple Finches** were infrequently witnessed, with most noted in quantities of only one to 2 (m.ob.). The largest group of this species seen, 10, was at GWP 1/2 (MR), a location that has seemed to attract Purple Finches even in low/non-irruption years. Two **Common Redpolls** visited a Gilbertsville yard 2/12-15 (JK, m.ob., ph.). **Pine Siskins** frequented some feeders, mostly in the southern portion of the county, and were largely absent from the rest. Fifty were reported at Shortridge Memorial Park 12/5 (JW, DM), early in the season, before numbers had really dwindled. Bird feeders at a Penn Valley yard pulled in the biggest and most consistent volume of siskins throughout the winter, including 31 on 2/22 (BK, PS, ph.). A startlingly white, leucistic **American Goldfinch** visited a feeder in Abington 12/11 (EG, ph.).

A **Lapland Longspur** was found with the previously mentioned group of Horned Larks by BVGP 2/4 (PH, m.ob., ph.). This was the first confirmed longspur sighting in the county since 2002. Also present at BVGP 2/4-8 were **Snow Buntings**, numbering as many as 9 on 2/5 (KR). Most other sightings were in the 3 to 4 range, however (m.ob.). Another Snow Bunting was spotted in a yard near GLP 2/8 (DR). Winter **Chipping Sparrows** at PERT included a flock of 62 on 12/19 (PD). Away from PERT, Chipping Sparrows were noted in low, single digits from at least 30 locations throughout the period (m.ob.), a larger haul than typical. Most of the half-dozen sites with confirmed **White-crowned Sparrows** were regular wintering areas (m.ob.), but one immature bird frequented feeders at the edge of PERT, not a typical location, until 2/6 (RC, ph.). A stupefying 158 **White-throated Sparrows** were counted at a Salford Twp. feeding station 2/7 (WBH). This high concentration of sparrows,

which also included 25 **Song Sparrows** and 37 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, was snow-related. A skulky **Lincoln's Sparrow** was seen a few times at PERT 12/11-1/30 (MG, PD, ph.).

The sole **Eastern Meadowlark** to be reported were one in East Greenville 2/4 (ML) and a few groups as large as 5 at VFNHP 12/12-2/7 (m.ob.). An abnormally high number of **Baltimore Orioles** were seen at county feeders this winter. At least 11 different orioles were seen visiting nine yards 12/15 through the end of the period (m.ob., ph.). By contrast, just 8 **Rusty Blackbirds** were seen at four sites 12/19-2/14 (m.ob., ph.).

An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was located at SRT0 2/16 (MRo) and remained there through the end of the period (m.ob., ph.). The twist: Orange-crowned Warblers have been found at this precise spot during Jan/Feb 2014, 2015 and 2019. Given the number of years involved and the gaps between them, it seems unlikely to be the same returning individual. Assuming we are talking about multiple Orange-crowned Warblers then, what it is about this few hundred feet of seemingly unremarkable roadside brush that makes it so appealing to this species? Three **Palm Warblers** were at DMP 12/1 (JHe, ph.), followed by 2 potentially continuing Palms 1/9-30, after a month-plus-long gap (PK, m.ob.). Another Palm Warbler was at GWP 1/12 (TM). Like Baltimore Oriole, **Pine Warbler** was another species that was encountered with higher frequency than usual. Of the 14 Pine Warblers reported, split over 11 locations, most were seen at suet feeders (m.ob., ph.).

A male **Western Tanager** was an amazing spot at a Trappe feeder 2/26-27 (LT, m.ob., ph., doc. submitted via eBird). Regrettably, by the time viewing access had been fully set up for birders, the tanager had moved on. This bird represents a fifth county record.

CORRIGENDA: The winter 2019-20 report indicated that a Pink-footed Goose sighting from that period represented a first county record. It was actually the *second* Pink-footed Goose to have been found in *Montgomery*. The first was at GLP in 1998-99.

Observers: **W. Brian Henderson, Salford Twp., PA, wbhenderson@gmail.com**, Cindy Ahern, Dave Belford, Paul Bernhardt, Josh Cooper, Robin Cooper, Kevin Crille, John Daniel, Kayley Dillon, Andrew Dolan, Edward Dolan, Paul Driver, Bill Etter, Eliza Fraser, Scott Fraser, Kevin Fryberger, Elizabeth Glaum-Lathbury, Scott Godshall, Mike Grubb, Steve Grunwald (SGr), Jason Hall, Andrew Harrington, Jane Henderson (JHe), Paul Heveran, Len Hillegass, Clifford Hirst, Jason Horn, Jeff Kenney, Paul Krepto, Bill Kunze, Eric Kubilus, Dan Lanzo, Michael Lyman, Jack McBrearty, Tom McKeeman, David Moyer, Erin Prebil, Madelyne Ray, Kenneth Rieker, Michael Rosengarten (MRo), Diana Rudloff, Diane Sembello, Perri Strawn, Jaime Thomas, Lenore Tichnell, Marshall Walthew, Jason Weckstein, Robert Willis.

Montour County

Locations: Stamm Road (SR).

A **Snowy Owl** seen sporadically in January and February in the northern part of the county provided this season's highlight (AK). Other visitors from the north included a **Northern Shrike** on SR (m.ob.); this is likely the same individual that has overwintered here for four consecutive years. There was only one report of a **Rough-legged Hawk**, also coming from traditional haunts in the northern part of the county 2/7 (AK).

As part of the statewide finch invasion, single **Common Redpolls** were reported at the Montour Preserve 12/6 (AK) and SR 2/3 (KP), and 3 were along Arrowhead Rd. 12/20 (AK). A **Vesper Sparrow** on High Rd. 2/3 (KP) was highly seasonally unusual, providing the only county eBird winter record. Five **Lapland Longspurs** on Laidacker Rd. 12/23 (JD) were the all-time county high count on eBird.

Observers: **Evan Houston, evanhouston@gmail.com**, Jonathan DeBalko, Andy Keister, Karol Pasquinielli.

Northampton County

Locations: Martins Creek Environmental Preserve (MCEP), Seiple's Farm Pond (SFP).

The county has boasted high numbers of **Canada** and **Snow Geese** nearly every winter season, and with these high numbers of geese there are usually a few rare geese found. **Greater White-fronted Goose** was reported at MCEP 1/30 (BW), at Silver Crest Rd Pond 1/10-29 (MS) and at SFP 12/29 (RE, PO). A first county record **Pink-footed Goose** was seen at SFP 1/20-30 (MS). The same goose also spent time at Silver Crest Rd. Pond 1/24-25 (BB). A female **Barrow's Goldeneye** was on the Delaware R. in the foul rift section by the MCEP 12/26 (MS). This goldeneye spent the winter on the river moving between Easton and Portland and was last seen 2/26 (SA).

A light morph **Rough-legged Hawk** was at the Tatamy exit off Rte. 33 on 2/14-27 (MSb). A **Short-eared Owl** was seen hunting the Gravel Hill Rd. farmland 1/30 (MSb, BW). This bird continued through the period. **Long-eared Owl** wintered at MCEP, with a high of count 7 at this roost (MS, CCS). Another Long-ear was at Ballas Park 1/4 (RL). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard 12/27 at MCEP (MS, CCS).

A **Red-headed Woodpecker** was observed at the Martins Creek Nature Trail 12/27 (AM). **Common Redpoll** was found at scattered locations around the county throughout the period. High counts for **Common Redpoll** were 11 at Fritchman Reservoir Park 12/25 (BB) and 45 at the Little Gap Hawk Watch 12/13 (JH).

A powerful nor'easter at the beginning of Feb dumped around 27 inches of snow. Birds like **Lapland Longspurs** and **Snow Bunting** become much easier to find with the snow. One **Lapland Longspur** was at Arrowhead Rd. 2/4-12 (JM). Lapland Longspur was also found at Hill Top Rd. 2/6 (DG), Graver's Hill 2/6-8 (PN, AM), Grouse Dr in Bath 2/21 (SL), and the Miller Rd. farmland area 2/13-21 (MSb). The high count for **Snow Bunting** was 76 at Miller Rd. 2/13 (DD). They frequent an active dairy farm on Miller Rd. in Lower Mt. Bethel Twp., and it offered a plentiful food supply despite the heavy snow cover.

A rare **Ipswich Savannah Sparrow** was photographed feeding on the roadside 2/20 (MS). The Ipswich race is known to winter on the Atlantic coast and any inland records are rare. If accepted by PORC, it could be a second state record following another recent discovery in *Bucks*. A **Baltimore Oriole** was at Nisky Hill Cemetery 12/24-25 (DG).

Observers: **Michael Schall, 610-737-5275, mdtjschall@yahoo.com**, Scott Angus, Brandon Brogle, Dave DeReamus, Danielle Gustafson, Jason Horn, Shelly LaBarre, Renae Losey, Adam Miller, Jon Mularczyk, Paul Nale, Rett Everett & Priscilla Oren, Matt Sabatine (MSb), Corinne Campbell Schall, Billy Weber.

Northumberland County

Locations: County Line Road (CLRD), Fort Rice Road (FRRD), Weiser State Forest (WSF).

The winter season saw overall seasonable temperatures with above-average snowfall that limited the ability to get out in the field and observe birds. The snow cover did provide excellent conditions for winter finches and field birds that were concentrated at road edges and in spread manure.

Unfortunately becoming more and more uncommon, the season's only report of **Ruffed Grouse** was one bird flushed from a trail edge above WSF 1/10 (AK). Grouse have been seen in this location on a regular basis over the last year, so this might represent one of the best locations to observe this species within the county. A **Snowy Owl** spent most of the winter season hiding out in the farmland in the northern part of the county. It was most frequently seen near CLRD 1/8-2/15 (m.ob.). The only report of **Short-eared Owl** was of one near CLRD 12/23 (EH).

Common Redpoll were one of the highlights of the winter season. Large flocks were observed feeding on birch catkins in WSF. A group of 42 was observed 12/3 (KP) and another of 45 on 12/27 (AK). Later in the season, a group of 35 was intermixed with **American Tree Sparrows**, **Horned Larks**, and **Snow Buntings** at Martz Game Farms 2/13 (AK). Persistent snow cover created excellent conditions to search for field birds. **Lapland Longspur** was seen at many locations in the northern portion of the county; the most notable sighting was of 7 birds along CLRD 12/23 (EH). At least a few **Snow Buntings** were mixed in with every Horned Lark flock, and the largest group was seen along FRRD where as many as 150 were seen together 2/19-20 (AK).

Observers: **Andy Keister, 110 Hawk Ridge Road, Bloomsburg, 17815, (570) 337-3802, akeister110@gmail.com**, Eric Hartshaw, Karol Pasquinelli.

Perry County – no report

Philadelphia County

Locations: Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), Art Museum Waterworks (AMW), Benjamin Rush State Park (BRSP), Fort Mifflin (FM), Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park (FDR), John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge (JHNWR), Navy Yard (NVY), Northeast Water Treatment Plant (NEWTP), Northeast Philadelphia Airport (NEPA), Philadelphia International Airport (PHL), Pennypack on the Delaware (POD), Science Education and Research Center (SERC).

While for a brief moment it felt a little bit like *Lancaster* farmland in *Philadelphia* with **Short-eared Owls**, **Rough-legged Hawks**, and **Snow Buntings** around, undoubtedly the best birds traveled even farther. An **Allen's Hummingbird** was discovered in the East Falls neighborhood on 1/6, and people started to speculate if it was the same bird that stayed in a *Delaware* yard 12/9-19 just 11 miles away (PD). It was caught again 1/13 and confirmed to be indeed "Allena." She apparently hit the jackpot by staying at a sheltered deck where she feasted on cedar tree sap and was enjoyed by many until 1/22.

At the same time during the 35th Philadelphia Mid-Winter Bird Census - which again bested all Pennsylvania CBCs with a total of 108 species recorded - a **Tundra Bean-Goose** was discovered floating on the Schuylkill R. between East and West Fairmount Park 1/9 (LG). This bird also traded the quiet *Delaware* suburbs for some *Philadelphia* action. In fact, this individual was east of Ottawa, Canada, in November 2020, then flew 400 miles south to *Delaware* and stayed in *Philadelphia* for three weeks before turning up in the Albany, New York, area in mid-March.

The hunt for the bean goose turned up 2 **Cackling Geese** in the same general area (m.ob.). Up to 3 were at JHNWR 1/9-19 (JP et al.), one at FDR 12/23 (HP), and one at POD 12/19-1/30 (PM et al.). A **Blue-winged Teal** on the frozen impoundment at JHNWR 2/5 is only the third eBird record for Feb (GG). A male **Green-winged Teal** of the Eurasian subspecies was again at JHNWR 12/29-1/28 (RZ et al.). Two **Black Scoters** were at NVY 1/30-31 (HP, PM).

Common Gallinules have generally only been seen at JHNWR in winter these days, but a bird was calling at NEWTP 1/11 (MG). The first winter record in almost ten years, a **Spotted Sandpiper** was along the Schuylkill R. in the Manayunk neighborhood 1/8 (DE). Eight years ago, a juvenile **Ring-billed Gull** was banded at Lowell Heritage SP in Massachusetts and was now photographed at POD 2/10 (PM). **Iceland Gulls** were at NVY 1/30 (LH, PM), at Glen Foerd 2/13 (GA, MD), at Tioga Marine Terminal 2/13 (BQ), and at ACE 1/24 and 2/21 (m.ob.). One **Glaucous Gull** flew over ACE 1/24 (m.ob.).

Golden Eagles headed south over northwest Philadelphia 12/3 (TC) and 1/9 (BS) and another was photographed at NEPA 1/9 (PM, KR). Aside from the established **Bald Eagle** nests at JHNWR and POD where birds started remodeling in mid-Jan and early Feb, respectively, pairs built new nests at FM and NVY, though the latter appeared abandoned later on. At JHNWR the adult male (banded as A95) was discovered to be 19 years old and banded as a nestling at Mannington Marsh, New Jersey, in 2002. An odd pairing of a male **Red-shouldered Hawk** and a female **Red-tailed Hawk** was copulating close to FM 2/24 (DE). A well-known successful breeding pair in Susquehanna SP, Maryland, has led to a few observations of hybrids along that river in Pennsylvania. Feb has seemed to be the month to see **Rough-legged Hawks** in recent years. The first sighting in six years was a hunting dark morph at the police academy north of POD 2/13 (PM). The next morning multiple observers were surprised to see a light-morph bird, which stayed until 2/16, in the exact same spot. Possibly the same individual was at FM drifting northwest over the city 2/20 (RK, SM, JS). A scarce **Long-eared Owl** was at POD 2/9-16 (MG) and so was a **Short-eared Owl** - the first in seven years there - 2/8-14 (JD et al.). Another individual was at PHL 1/8-18 (m.ob.).

Horned Larks flew over BRSP 12/6 (GA, LH), FDR and FM 2/20 (HP, TF, MW), and 22 were on the soccer fields at POD 2/28 (PM). A **Blue-Gray**

Gnatcatcher was very late at POD 12/6-13 (PM, VS). The only **Marsh Wren** at JHNWR was there 12/30 (JA). An individual at FDR 12/10 was unusual, the first one since 2015 (HP). The SERC building at Temple University appeared to be a veritable heat island that was sought after by up to 7 **Gray Catbirds** 12/14 and up to 2 **Brown Thrashers** 12/10 (MP).

Few remnants of the winter finch irruption continued. **Purple Finches** were few and far between, though with a max. of 4 at Southampton Woods 12/6 (HP). Up to 7 **Common Redpolls** were at Houston Meadow 1/16-2/26 (LA et al.), and 14 were at ACE 2/21 (AB, GA, KK). The best chance to see lingering **Pine Siskins** was in northwest Philadelphia backyards with a max. of 15 on 1/14 (VS). A **European Goldfinch** frequently visited a feeder in the Torresdale neighborhood 12/17-2/27 (FW). Provenance is questionable, but the bird could have easily traveled from the population in the Midwest with good tailwind.

Not seen in almost a decade in Philadelphia, **Snow Buntings** were a rare treat at NEPA 12/19 (RM) and 15 at PHL 2/13 (PM). The first winter **Grasshopper Sparrow** was photographed at BRSP 12/27 (LW) a few hundred miles north of its usual wintering range in the Carolinas and further south. It was a great season for **American Tree Sparrows**, which were seen in every corner of the city. High counts of 15 were at POD (MG), 14 at ACE (m.ob.), and 11 at Delaware R. Trail (EE). This is still a few hundred short of the 350 the late John C. Miller recorded at JHNWR in 1956. **White-crowned Sparrows** continued in good numbers at ACE with up to 9 birds 12/12 (m.ob.). Single **Lincoln's Sparrows** enjoyed the urban heat island at Rittenhouse Square 12/5-2/28 (MD et al.) and AMW 12/23-1/30 (PD).

Up to 3 **Baltimore Orioles** at NEWTP 12/6-1/24 were a new high for the season (m.ob.). One bird sampled from a few backyard feeders in northwest Philadelphia 2/11-22 (JG, LR, LV). Among the twelve warbler species were an **Ovenbird** at Kaskey Park 12/10-1/27 (NN), a **Black-and-white Warbler** at NEWTP 12/26-1/13 (m.ob.), a **Cape May Warbler** at AMW 12/30-1/1 (PD), a **Magnolia Warbler** in a backyard in the Germantown neighborhood 12/9-10 (BD, ED), up to 2 **Yellow Warblers** at NEWTP 12/18-2/13 (m.ob.), and a **Black-throated Green Warbler** at SERC 12/7 (MP). Three **Nashville warblers**, the only ones reported in PA were seen near Delaware R. 12/11 (EE, GA) and near Schuylkill R. 12/18 (SE) and 1/6 (LH).

A **Blue Grosbeak** at Lardner's Point Park 12/19 was the first *Philadelphia* winter observation and the northernmost record in eBird at that time (PM). Scarce in winter, 2 **Dickcissels** were at ACE 12/12 (GA, PM, BQ).

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Pike County

Locations: Lake Wallenpaupack (LW), Pecks Pond (PP).

Freeze-up in the county was slow with plenty of open water into January. Some waterfowl like **Greater** and **Lesser Scaup** found in early Dec remained into the New Year. A **Cackling Goose** was seen at PP 12/6 (MS, CCS). **Long-tailed Duck** was reported at LW 12/20 (MS), 12/30 (BW), and 1/3-4 (CF). Once freeze-up occurred, the only waterfowl around were seen on the Delaware R.: 2 **Canvasbacks** were at Milford Beach 2/16 (BW), a **Red-necked Grebe** was at LW 12/20-23 (MS), and a **Wilson's Snipe** was at the Dingmans Ferry mitigation wetland ponds 12/26 (MS).

A light morph **Rough-legged Hawk** was seen flying over the fields at the Toms Creek Picnic Area 12/27 (BW). A young **Snowy Owl** was found at the Tafton Dike of LW in the early morning 12/24 (MS). The bird stuck around for the day, allowing a number of people a chance to see this Christmas Eve bird. A **Horned Lark** was found at LW 12/16 (CF). There were only a few winter finch reports, which did not give a clear picture for the finch invasion of 2020-21. **Common Redpolls** were mostly seen in small numbers at scattered sites that included PP, LW, and the Delaware SF. **Red Crossbill**

was seen at Little Mud Pond 1/15 (BW) and the Bushkill Access of the Delaware Water Gap NRA 2/14 (JM). Two **Snow Buntings** were at LW 12/7 (CF, RJ, and BW).

Observers: **Michael Schall, 610-737-5275, mdtjschall@yahoo.com**, Chris Fischer, Ryan Johnson, Jon Mularczyk, Corinne Campbell Schall, Bradley White.

Potter County

Locations: Coudersport (COU), Cross Fork (CRF), Genesse (GEN), Hebron (HEB), Joerg Road (JOR), Nelson Run Road (NRR), Ole Bull Road (OBR), Ole Bull State Park (OBS), Oleona (OLE), Plank Road (PLR), Roulette (ROU), Scott Hollow (SCH).

Reports taken from eBird for the winter season totaled 49 species for the county. Data for notable sightings were obtained from 24 locations, submitted by 15 observers and checked through the overview-data page, bar charts and the species maps from eBird. Waterfowl sightings were few, tallying five reports of **Mallards** with a high of 20 at Colesburg 2/14 (AB). One **American Black Duck** was seen at COU 2/6 (MV), and 2 **Common Mergansers** were reported from COU 1/11 (MS, SS).

Reports of single **Ruffed Grouse** came from JOR 12/17 and Keeny Hollow 1/29 (SL). **Wild Turkeys** were reported from seven locations in low numbers with two high counts of 17 at PLR 2/14 (AB) and 12 at JOR 12/11 (SL). One **Great Blue Heron** was seen at COU 2/3 (MS, SS).

Single **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were reported from Galeton 2/3 (MS, SS) and Page Run at Kettle Creek Road 2/3 (SL). One **Cooper's Hawk** was seen at HEB 2/15 (AB). There were four reports of single **Bald Eagles** with two of the reports from COU 1/1 and 2/3, one from ROU 1/11 (MS, SS), and another from GEN 2/15 (HN). **Red-tailed Hawk**, mostly reported as single-bird sightings, appeared in 15 reports spread over the county. One **Rough-legged Hawk** was seen from Phoenix Run Road south of SCH 1/18 (CG). **Great Horned Owl** was reported from three locations: 2 at Hopper Run/OBR 1/15 and one from a residence on JOR 1/10 (SL), with an unspecified number noted at Yahn Road, Kettle Creek 2/14 (MH). Ten single-bird reports of **Barred Owl** came from eight locations including Austin Campground/NRR 12/5 (RB), a residence on JOR 12/17 and 2/16 (SL), CRF 12/17 (SL), Hopper Run, OBR 1/15 and 2/9 (SL), ROU 2/3 (MS, SS), Ulysses 2/21 (MS, SS), and Sweden Hill Road 2/14 (RS).

A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was seen at OBS 2/9 (SL). There was just one county report of an **American Kestrel**, from Phoenix Road, SCH 1/18 (CG). **Golden-crowned Kinglet** appeared in three reports: 2 were reported twice from JOR, 12/2 and 2/2, and 5 were seen at OBS 1/31 (SL). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was reported 22 times from seven locations: 2 at Gold Road south of GEN 12/15 (HN), one at 1981 Lodge, NRR 12/30 (BR), one at OBS 1/21 and 1/26 (SL), one at PLR 2/14 (AE), one at a Rte. 6 farm at Crandall Hollow 2/15 (LM) and 14 sightings of one to 2 birds were reported from a residence on JOR between 1/9 to 2/20 (SL). **Brown Creeper** was reported from six locations, mostly as single-bird sightings: Hopper Run at OBR 12/5 (SL), at JOR 1/31 (SL), at PLR 2/13 (AE), at Rte. 872 at Freeman Road 2/14 (DO), and 2 at a clear cut along JOR 12/11 (SL). **Eastern Bluebird** was reported three times: 3 from OBS 1/6 (SL), and 3 at OLE on 2/12 and 2/23 (MH, SL). Only one **Hermit Thrush** was reported from OBS 1/6 (SL), and this was the only winter report found over "all years" recorded in eBird.

Evening Grosbeaks were present in ten reports, with most of the sightings coming from CRF and ranging from a low of 6 to a high of 50 on 12/29 and 1/21 (SL) with an additional 4 observed at Corbett Road, Water Tank Hollow 12/24 (BB), and one seen at JOR 12/18 (SL). Single sightings of **Purple Finch** were noted from CRF 12/4, 2/17-18, and 2/23 (SL), and a high count of 9 was seen at HEB 2/15 (AE). **Pine Siskins** were also an irruption species, with 10 and 15 birds reported from Shinglehouse 1/27 and 2/14 (KE), and single birds seen at OBS 12/8 and CRF 12/15 (SL).

American Tree Sparrow was reported 13 times, in low numbers of one

to 3 birds, though a high count of 21 was reported from HEB 12/15 (AE). Two **White-crowned Sparrows** were seen at OLE 2/12 (MH). After checking all years for eBird, only one other report for White-crowned Sparrow was recorded, on 2/16/2013. Single **White-throated Sparrows** were few and only reported from OLE 12/15 (MH) and at CRF 12/4, 12/18, 12/22 and 12/23 (SL). Two single-bird sightings of **Red-winged Blackbird** were reported, from Wharton 2/22 and CRF 2/23 (KL, SL).

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Schuylkill County

Locations: Air Products Wildlife Sanctuary (APWS), Deer Lake (DL), Hawk Mountain Sanctuary – North Lookout (HM), Landingville Marsh and Dam (LVD), Stillwater Creek Reservoir (SCR), Sweet Arrow Lake (SAL), West Schuylkill (WS).

A portion of this narrative was gleaned from two Christmas Bird Counts; the WS CBC took place 12/20, and the Tamaqua CBC 12/29. Thanks to Dave Kruel and Jonathan DeBalko, respectively, for heading those efforts. In addition to species' sightings provided directly to this compiler and posted to PABIRDS listserv, many posted their sightings to 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 *Schuylkill*. Overall, this season's temperatures varied by month. Dec and Jan were at or above average, but Feb was cold and snowy, freezing most of the lakes. As typical in most years, sightings tended to be in Dec for ducks moving south and in Feb for birds moving north as soon as open water was available.

An early **Tundra Swan** was at LVD 2/13 (TB). A flock of 10 **Wood Ducks** was found at LVD 2/27 (DK), and another at APWS 12/1 (JD). The most dependable spot to find **American Black Ducks** has been APWS, which was true again this winter. These ducks were found here throughout the winter (JD, JtD) with a high count of 28 on 1/9 (JD). They were also observed at various times at SAL (BR, RR, TB, DD), near Tamaqua (JD), at DL (JtD), and on the WS CBC (BC). A pair of **Ring-necked Ducks**, considered rare here in winter, was reported at LVD 2/27 (TB). Considered uncommon in *Schuylkill* in winter, a small flock of 8 **Buffleheads** was reported at SCR 12/2 (JtD, JD), and singles were found at SAL in early Dec (BR, DD), early Jan (TB), and late Feb (RR). Three **Hooded Mergansers** were reported at DL 12/9 (RR) and 12/12 (JtD). Another pair was seen at LVD 2/13 (TB).

Only the seventh eBird record in the county, 3 **Sandhill Cranes** were spotted flying past HM 12/7 (HMD). Eight **Great Black-backed Gulls**, uncommon in winter, were reported at HM 12/6 (HM) and another, also at HM, was seen 12/7 (HMD). Notably, a **Red-throated Loon**, a rare winter visitor, was seen at SCR 12/2 (JD, JtD). One **Common Loon** was also seen at HM 12/6 (HMD).

Northern Saw-whet Owl reports posted to eBird over the last three winters show an interesting geographic spread along a single ridge running from LR in the west to Tuscarora SP to the east. Credit goes primarily to Dave Kruel for spearheading this effort to locate Northern Saw-whet Owl territories in this county.

American Pipits are difficult to locate, but one was found on the WS CBC 12/20 (BC) and another 12/18 and 2/3 near Pitman (TB). A rare sighting over the last few years, an **Evening Grosbeak** was seen at a private feeder 1/12 (RR) and another found 2/15 in Tower City (ES). A very pleasant surprise was the number of **Common Redpolls** that spent time at various locations here (m.ob.). The northern finches found also included **Red Crossbills**, which were seen in early to mid-Dec at HM (HMD), and a **White-winged Crossbill** heard in Molino 12/27 (DK). A **Lapland Longspur** was spotted near Pitman 2/21 (TB). Rounding out the more notable winter visitors, **Snow Buntings** were reported at various locations: near Suedberg 12/16 (TB), near Hegins 12/20 (JtD), near Tamaqua 2/3 (JD), near Pitman 2/5 (TB), and on Spancake Road 2/25 (RR).

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Somerset County

Locations: Berlin Area (BA), Confluence Area (CA), Flight 93 National Memorial (FLT93), Indian Lake (IL), Payne Property on Allegheny Mountain (PP), Quemahoning Reservoir (QR), Youghiogheny River (YR).

A season with more typically snowy and cold weather proved interesting for a variety of waterfowl when water was unfrozen, for a smattering of winter finches, and for a nice assortment of raptors of both diurnal inclinations and especially the more crepuscular.

Three **Cackling Geese** from the fall quarter persisted until 12/3 with a flock of **Canada Geese** at QR (LG). A flock of 550 Canada Geese stayed at QR through the Jan and Feb freeze with only small holes of open water available and most fields covered with 20 inches of snow. **Tundra Swans** started to stage at QR 2/14 and built up to 202 on 2/27 (LG). The first 5 **Wood Ducks** appeared at QR 2/26 (PL). Eight **Northern Shovelers** stayed at QR until 12/3 (LG), then were not seen through rest of period. Three **American Wigeons** at QR 12/3 (LG) were the last fall migrants, and 2 returned 2/14 (DB). Small numbers of **American Black Ducks** persisted through the period with a maximum of 14 at Cranberry L. 1/3 (JP). Six return-migration **Northern Pintails** at QR on 2/26 (PL) became 8 by 2/27 (LG).

One lonely **Canvasback** was at QR 2/21-23 (JP, PL). **Redheads** were at IL 12/18 (CP, JP) with 6 returning to YR 2/13 (BO). **Greater Scaup** were seen all months at QR, but the high was 12 on YR 2/14 (DB). **Lesser Scaup** were first found at YR 2/13 (BO) then through rest of period at QR. Unusual was a **Long-tailed Duck** on the Casselman River at Confluence 2/15 (RC). **Buffleheads** were found throughout the period at YR with a high of 22 on 1/23 (BO, TO). Likewise, a few **Common Goldeneyes** were found on open water on YR through the period with a notable 31 on 2/14 (BO). **Hooded Mergansers** maxed at 45 on 12/20 at QR (CP, JP), and 17 **Common Mergansers** on Stonycreek R. 2/15 was a nice count (SA). **Ruddy Ducks** were found all months with 22 the maximum at IL 12/20 (J&MM).

No Ruffed Grouse were reported. **Wild Turkeys** seemed to do well with a wintering flock of 60 found at Mt. Davis 1/13 (DB), and 73 total on the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society's (APAS) CBC 12/20. **Pied-billed**

The star attraction of the season was an apparent first-year female **Snowy Owl** who took up a winter territory at Seven Springs Ski Resort. Starting in early Jan at the latest, it was seen by resort staff and visitors. By direction of eBird, the reviewer (CP) tried to keep the owl's presence quiet, but this only kept birders at bay as thousands of skiers saw the bird and in some cases repeatedly flushed it. It was seen with prey but the forested mountain resort did not seem like prime wintering habitat. She persisted through the period and became a front-page newspaper star. Hopefully she had enough reserves for the return flight north

Grebes persisted at QR until 12/20 with a high of 8 on 12/3 (LG). Three reports of **Horned Grebe** included 2 at QR 12/19 (CP, JP), one at YR 1/2 (BO), and one at QR 2/19 (PL).

Killdeer returned to Markleton with a group of 5 on 2/22 (TO). A lonely **Ring-billed Gull** was at High Point L. 1/13 (DB) with a more normal mob of 15 at QR 2/26 (PL). **Common Loons** persisted at QR through 1/6 with 4 there 12/19 (CP, JP). **Great Blue Herons** were a bit sparse this winter with reports from CA 1/3 (JP), QR 2/14 (KH), and at Stoughton L. 2/15 (TST) and 2/27 (SM, RH).

Turkey Vultures have been found in counties to the east and west in winter season, but are rare to non-existent in this county. The first returning birds were 6 in Meyersdale 2/25 (TM). An exciting mid-winter sighting was a **Golden Eagle** passing by PP 2/1 (JP). They occasionally winter if prey or carrion is available. It was a good winter for **Northern Harriers** with numerous reports, including up to 5 at FLT93 on 1/12 (KK). Only 2 **Sharp-**

shinned Hawks were reported in CA 1/3 (JP), and Bluebird Hill Farm near Quemahoning Res. 2/19 (PL) while **Cooper's Hawks** were widespread. Both **Bald Eagles**, with many reports, and **Red-shouldered Hawks** with 3 in CA 1/3 (JP), one near Shanksville 12/19 (CP, JP), and one at QR 2/15 (EG) have become much more common in winter in recent years. **Rough-legged Hawks**, both dark and light morphs, were in BA (m.ob.), FLT93 (PL, JP, LB) and near L. Stonycreek (T & JK). The only **Eastern Screech Owls** were 2 dueling trillers at QR 12/20 for the APAS's CBC (CP, JP). **Great Horned** and **Barred Owls** were reported in several spots.

It was a very good year for **Short-eared Owls** with birds in at least 4 locations: at FLT93 from 12/18-2/7 with 4 on 1/4 (BB), 3 in BA 1/28 (CaP, JP), one at KRNA 12/28 (JP), and one north of Somerset 2/14 (LR). **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** are uncommon during this season so one for APAS's CBC 12/20 and one in Meyersdale 2/12 (JB) was good. Very uncommon for winter was a **Red-headed Woodpecker** that visited a feeder near Somerset 12/18 (*fide* JP). **Northern Flickers** vacated until reports started 2/12. **American Kestrels** were very scarce with 4 reports of singles. A wintering **Northern Shrike** found at FLT93 on 1/12 (SB, JB) persisted at least until 1/30 (JP), representing several consecutive years at this site.

Red-breasted Nuthatches were sparse after a decent fall flight. There were at least 6 reports of single **Brown Creepers**. The only **Winter Wrens** were 2 in CA 1/3 (JP). **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were found at QR only 12/20 (CP, JP), and 2 were in BA 1/9 and 2/13 (TM). A few **Eastern Bluebirds** persisted through the period, but no **American Robins** until 2/13 in Friedens (DD). One **Hermit Thrush** at QR 12/19 (CP/JP) was the only report. At least 6 **Northern Mockingbirds** were observed. Unexpected was a large flock of 13 **American Pipits** near Holsopple for APAS's CBC 12/20 (CP, JP).

After a decent showing in the fall season, **Evening Grosbeaks** were sighted only twice: 2 at a feeder in CA 1/3 (JP), and a magnificent 50 at SGL 111 also near Confluence 1/16 (KA). **Purple Finches** were reported all months, and **Common Redpolls** were found twice, with a flock of 23 near Somerset L. IBA 12/20 (DBo, B&SC) and one near Holsopple 1/29 (PL). A **Red Crossbill** was heard flying over PP 12/1 (JP). **Pine Siskins** were reported in at least five locations in early Dec, then from mid-Feb to end of period. Six **Lapland Longspurs** were found on Shaffer Rd 12/17 (JP), 2 in northern *Somerset* 2/11 (JB, SB), and one near BA 2/19 (JP). Four **Snow Buntings** in BA 12/17 and 12/19 (CP, JP) were down to 2 on 12/20 (J&MM).

Field Sparrows are rare in winter, so one for Ohiopyle's CBC at SGL 111 on 1/3 was nice (JP). There were over 50 reports for **American Tree Sparrows** this year, including 69 for APAS's CBC 12/20, much better than past two years. There were four reports of single **White-crowned Sparrows** and then a remarkable 30-plus in one flock near Friedens for APAS's CBC (SB). There were 8 separate reports of a single **Savannah Sparrow**, perhaps the same bird, in CA (BO, TO). **Swamp Sparrows** were sparse with five reports. One **Eastern Towhee** returned to Hidden Valley 2/25 (CAS). A cold **Eastern Meadowlark** was in the parking lot of FLT93 12/20 for APAS's CBC (JM, MM, CP and JP) and re-found 12/31 (TA). FLT93 also hosted a winter roost of over 200 **Red-winged Blackbirds** and several **Brown-headed Cowbirds**. One **Rusty Blackbird** persisted in CA until 12/1 (BO).

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Sullivan County

Locations: Kinsley's Corner (KC), Splashdam Pond (SDP).

The winter season in *Sullivan* was normal in both the weather and the lack of submitted eBird checklists. Standing water was frozen for most of the

period. There was at least one significant snowfall. There were no extreme rarities and few reports of northern invasives.

Canada Geese were still seen flying south in early Jan with a report of 400 over SDP 1/6 (DG). There was still some open water at the beginning of the period. The last report of ducks was of 3 **Ring-necked Ducks** and 11 **Hooded Mergansers** at Deer L. 12/2 (WE). Two WRS routes were run 1/23. There was little variety found with one light-phase **Rough-legged Hawk**, one **American Kestrel**, and 17 **Red-tailed Hawks**. Single juvenile **Northern Harriers** were present at Litzelman Rd and KC 12/29 (RM). A **Bald Eagle** was observed at SDP 1/5 (DG).

There were a few good mid-winter sightings including a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** in LaPorte 2/13 (HS), a **Purple Finch** in Forksville 2/13 (BF), and a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** in Natalwood 2/15 (Anon). The lone non-annual winter finch entry was of a pair of **Common Redpolls** at KC 1/23 (RM).

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Susquehanna County

Locations: East Great Bend Swamp (EGBS), Lake Montrose (LM).

A single **Snow Goose**, normally only seen overhead as they migrate through the county, was spotted on Upper Lake during the Montrose Area CBC 12/14 (JD, KF). A late, lone **Bufflehead** added its name to the same list by lingering on LM 12/14 (SN, TN). **Hooded Mergansers** were present in above-average numbers, first found across the open waters of the county and then only in the unfrozen stretches of the Susquehanna R. A 30-member flock was present on Quaker L. 12/11 (EM). Joining the hoodies on the river were many **Canada Geese**, **Mallards**, and **Common Mergansers**. A **Red-necked Grebe** was a surprise visitor to LM 12/3-4 (TN, JS). An unusual winter flock of 10 **Ring-billed Gulls** was seen over Hallstead 12/25 (BS, GS). The season's last **Great Blue Heron** was spotted on EGBS 12/1-2 (BS, GS).

A **Golden Eagle** flew over Friendsville, escorted south by a trailing **Red-tailed Hawk** 12/29 (MM). Six reports of **Northern Harriers** across the county suggest this winter's rodent hunting season was a good one despite persistent snow cover. Four individual birds were seen on two WRS routes 1/22 and 1/25 (EM, TN). A modest presence of **Rough-legged Hawks** suggested a portion of the population wintered as far south as our northern-tier county. They were seen in each of the three months and at locations across the breadth of *Susquehanna* (m.ob.).

Despite accelerated natural-gas activity at the site that has been used for decades by **Short-eared Owls**, they continued to return to spend the winter season with us. Four observers had the privilege of watching the aerial antics of the species at dusk on five separate occasions. A high count of 4 was reported 1/28 (MM). Equally exciting was the discovery of another location for viewing the species. Open fields adjacent to SGL 236 appeared to be the winter home of at least 3 owls 12/14-15 (SS).

Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers have rarely been reported in this northern county during winter. This year several were present in the southern half of the county. One visited a suet feeder near Kingsley 12/5 and 12/12 (MF), and one was in Clifford Twp 1/12 (MMA). Difficult to locate in any season, a **Merlin** allowed good views and photos at EGBS 12/11 (SN, TN, BS, GS). A paparazzi of one managed wonderful pictures of a rare visitor, a **Northern Shrike**, on 12/5 (MM). Subsequent chasers missed seeing the bird but, even better, met a new birding friend.

Twenty **Horned Larks** appeared at an expected spot near Harford 2/20 for the season's only report (SF). Elusive **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were spotted at two locations: Memorial Park in Great Bend 12/11 (BS, GS) and a property near Springville 12/16 and 1/12 (NB). Two **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** completed the kinglet sweep on a property in Great Bend Twp. 12/11 (BS, GS).

Visits to backyards by **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were too numerous to list. In this irruptive year this colorful, active, vocal sprite was enjoyed by many feeder watchers around the county. A quiet, unusual winter season **Hermit Thrush** was photographed in SGL 35 on 12/4 (BS). **Common Redpolls** were present throughout the season and around the county. A flock of 6 **Red Crossbills** was photographed on Harmony Road 12/3 (BS).

A female **White-winged Crossbill** spent Jan just north of Jackson. Besides local birders who got to see this rarity (CF, RJ, EM, TN), the bird attracted a number of out-of-towners. **Pine Siskins** completed the suite of wintering northerners, and they were welcomed to backyard feeders by many across *Susquehanna*.

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Union County – no report

Tioga County

Locations: Asaph (ASP), Hills Creek State Park (HCSP), Ives Run Recreation Area (IRRA), Mansfield (MAN), Marsh Creek Road (MCR), Marsh Creek/The Muck IBA (MCM), State Road 660-Middle Ridge Swamp (MRS), Nessmuck Lake (NEL), South Bullock Road (SBR), Tioga-Hammond Lakes Area (THLA), Wellsboro (WEL).

A total of 83 species were reported on eBird during the winter season. Species data are from 40 locations by 36 observers, obtained from eBird using bar charts and the species map features. One **Snow Goose** was seen at NEL 12/9 (LD). Two **Tundra Swans** were observed at IRRA 12/23 (D&KP). Eight **Wood Ducks** were at Lamb's Creek Trail 1/2 (BS). Fourteen reports of **American Black Duck** included high counts of 10 at IRRA 12/21 (LD), 13 at the THLA spillway overlook 12/3 (WE) and 16 on 1/25 (LD). Two **Green-winged Teal** were observed at IRRA west launch 12/8 (LD).

Three reports of **Redhead** came from THLA spillway overlook 1/30-2/14 (SM, LD, JH), and one **Ring-necked Duck** was at the Tioga L. outlet 1/30 (SM). **Buffleheads** were seen at THLA channel overlook 1/21-2/8 (D&KP, SM, LD) and 2 **Common Goldeneyes** at IRRA 12/6 (JC). **Hooded Mergansers** were reported 18 times in low numbers of 3 to 10 mainly from THL at the channel overlook and the Ives Run area, HCSP, NEL, and Marsh Cr. near ASP. Numerous reports of **Common Merganser** came primarily from IRRA campground and the channel overlook at the dam with a high count of 100 on 12/27 (LD), 34 at HCSP 12/6 (LD), 62 at Cowanesque L. 12/19 (JC), and 6 at NEL 12/9 (LD). One **Ruddy Duck** was reported from Cowanesque L. 12/19 (JC).

Ruffed Grouse was reported from the following locations: one at NEL 12/31 (SM), 2 at Round Top Road in WEL 1/2 (SM), 2 at Webster Road (JC, GM), and 2 in Leetonia 1/19 (LS). **Wild Turkeys** were reported from 30 locations, with most sightings numbering up to 25 birds, and three high counts of 39 at MRS 12/27 (RM, SM), 42 at Sherman Hill Road 2/13, and 35 at SBR 2/24 (LD). One **Horned Grebe** was found at IRRA 12/6 (JC), and a **Virginia Rail** was photographed at MCM 1/2 (RR). Up to 4 **Herring Gulls** were reported from IRRA and the channel overlook at the dam 12/6-31 (JC, LD, WE). A **Double-crested Cormorant** was observed at NEL 12/9 (LD).

Black Vultures were reported from two locations: 5 at MRS 12/23, and 2 at MHR 1/2 (SM). Single **Turkey Vultures** were reported from Blossburg 1/29 and at MAN 2/26 (MJ, AJ, MS). Four sightings of single **Northern Harriers** were near WEL 1/2-24 (RM, SM) and one was at Orebed Road 2/5 (LD). **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was observed from 18 locations, and there were 22 reports of **Cooper's Hawk**. **Bald Eagle** was reported 67 times, mostly as single birds, with most of the multi-bird reports of 2 to 9 individuals from the THLA area; high counts included 10 at the Tioga L. spillway 2/13 (SF) and 20 from the Pennsylvania Welcome Center Rte. 15 at Tioga 12/28 (MW). A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was observed near Cherry Flats Road in WEL 1/1 (RF). When checking eBird data across all years, Red-shouldered Hawk was reported only 16 times, with most of the reports clustered between THLA southwest to MRS and east through the valley to WEL. Ten single-bird sightings of **Rough-legged Hawk** were reported from six locations 12/22-2/17 (D&KP, LD, RM, SM, BS, TA).

Eastern Screech-Owl was reported from three locations: 2 at MCM 1/2 (RR), 2 at MCR 1/2 (JC, GM) and one at Jobs Corner South 2/15 (LB). **Great Horned Owl** was reported from four locations: 2 near ASP 12/30 and 1/2 (JC), one at MCR 1/2 (JC, GM), and one at MAN 1/4, 1/17 (MH). Five single-

bird reports of **Barred Owl** came from WEL 12/2, 2/13, and 2/19 (SL, SM, AR); from Krueger Road 2/13 (D&KP); and from Leetonia 2/15 (LS). There have been just 20 winter reports of **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, all occurring within the last 10 years, with the most recent coming from Knapp for one bird 2/12-14 and 2 birds 2/18 (D&KP).

Horned Larks were reported from only four locations, one at Pine Creek Rail Trail 2/3 (MS, SS), 3 at Lawton Road 2/28 (LD), 12 at SBR 2/24, and 16 at HCR 2/23 (LD). **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was observed at eight locations 12/2-1/19 with a high of 3 at Leetonia 1/19 (LD, SM, m.ob.). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was reported mostly as single-bird sightings from 11 locations 12/2-2/15 (GT, RH, SM, KB, m.ob.) with 15 observations of single birds at a residence on Randall Road from 12/31-2/28 (MS). **Brown Creeper** was mostly reported as single-bird sightings from 10 locations 12/1-2/26 (LD, SM, LS, AE, AC) with 20 single-bird observations at Knapp 12/6-2/18 (D&KP). **Winter Wren** was reported from just three locations: 6 at MCR 1/2 (JC, GM), one at MCM 1/9 (LD), and one at Old Route 287 along Ives Run 1/8 (LD). There was just one report of a **Hermit Thrush**, between mile markers 2 and 3 on the Pine Creek Rail Trail 2/3 (MS, SS). Winter reports of Hermit Thrush have been rare for the county, with only four historical reports on eBird between 2007 to 2021.

Snow Bunting was reported from just three locations, with highs of 30

During this irruption year, **Evening Grosbeak** was reported from just three locations: one at MAN 12/4 (JT), 26 at a residence near ASP 12/27 (JC), and a high count of 32 at Knapp 12/30 with nine additional reports there 12/6-2/18 (D&KP). **Common Redpoll** was reported from seven locations with two high counts of 25 and 45 from IRRA 12/14-15 (LD, SM) and other reports including 20 at MCM 1/5 and 1/9 (D&KP, LD). **Pine Siskin** was reported in low numbers from six locations with two high counts including 14 at MCM 1/2 (RR) and 10 from IRRA 12/15 (SM).

and 50 at Stony Fork 3/21 and 3/28, respectively (LD). A **Fox Sparrow** was at Hills Creek L. Road 12/6 (LD). **White-crowned Sparrow** was reported from three locations 1/2 (JC, GM, SM) and 2/13 (LB). **White-throated Sparrows** were reported from many locations in small numbers from one to 6, with the high count of 16 from a four-mile stretch of MCR 1/2 (JC, GM). Five **Red-winged Blackbirds** were first reported from ASP 12/22 (JC), with 6 additional reports, including a high count of 12 at MAN 12/28 (PH). There were multiple reports of **Rusty Blackbirds** from only one location, a residence along Marsh Cr. northeast of ASA, between 12/6-2/20, with a high of 10 birds 2/18 (JC). Two **Common Grackles** were noted at Morris 2/15 (AE).

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Venango County

Locations: Allegheny River (AR), Buttermilk Hill Nature Sanctuary (BHNS), Franklin area (FA), Kahle Lake (KL), Oil City area (OCA), Seneca area (SA), Two Mile Run Park (TMRP).

An uneventful winter season included low duck variety. Numbers of some species of diving ducks picked up when the Allegheny River started to freeze. Highlights included one report of **American Black Duck** at AR 1/3. A **White-winged Scoter** was observed at KL 12/9 (JS) and a **Black Scoter** there 12/5-13 (JH, GE, mob). **Long-tailed Duck** was at KL 12/6 and 12/13 (GE). The only **Red-breasted Merganser** sighting was at AR 12/7 (GE, JW). A **Ruddy Duck** was seen at KL 12/5.

American Coot was sighted 2/13-14 on AR at Franklin (JS, RS). A **Pied-billed Grebe** was in the same location 2/13 (JS). The first **Turkey**

Vulture sighting for the season was at BHNS 1/14 (JS, KG), our first Jan record. A **Killdeer** was reported at Polk 12/1 (MW). Both sightings of **Ring-billed Gull**, fairly uncommon in *Venango*, were on AR 12/11 (RS) and 12/27 (RS, GE).

Northern Flicker sightings were at BHNS 12/28 (JS) and in the Seneca area 1/5 (NK, MK). First **Red-breasted Nuthatch** of the season was at OCA 12/28 (RS) and then all of Jan and Feb (m.ob.). A **Northern Mockingbird**, a good bird anytime in *Venango*, was in SA 2/14 (MK, NK). A total of 421 Cedar Waxwings were tallied on the Pleasantville CBC with over 300 in one flock near Windy Hills (MC, BB). The first **American Tree Sparrow** of the season was found 12/4 (GE). A winter **Savannah Sparrow** was at Polk on 1/19 (MW). A late **Field Sparrow** at TMRP 12/17 (RS). Our only northern finch reports were one **Common Redpoll** at SA (MK, NK) and 2 **Pine Siskins** at BHNS 12/23 (JS, KG).

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Warren County

Locations: Big Four Road (B4), Columbus (CO), Crescent Park (CP), Hatch Patch fields (HP), Hillside Acres (HAC), Kinzua Dam (KD), Mickle Hill Road (MH), Route 59 (R59), River Road in Starbrick (RR), Tidioute Trail (TT), Wenzel Road (WNZ) City of Warren (WRN).

For the first time in several years, *Warren* experienced a "normal" winter: reasonably cold with close to normal prodigious accumulation of snow, making ideal conditions for winter finches irrupting from the Great White North.

Tundra Swans passed through in good numbers, with a few resting on the Allegheny R.; as many as 25 were seen off R59 on 2/26 (SSc, MS). A group of 11 **Gadwalls** were spotted at KD 2/19 (MS, SSc). **American Black Ducks** seemed unusually frequent, with as many as 35 seen together at TT 2/6 (EN, KN). The Allegheny R. along RR remained one of the best spots for winter ducks, such as 4 **Canvasback** amidst a flock of 55 **Redhead** and 40 **Lesser Scaup** 2/19-21 (m.ob.). The same site had 24 **Greater Scaup** reported 2/18 (EN, JN, KN).

An unusual **Surf Scoter** seen at TT 1/10 (m.ob.). Adorable **Bufflehead** commonly occur on the Allegheny R. and its tributaries; in WRN high counts of 14 were seen 12/27 (BC, TS) and 13 on 12/19 (SG), and 13 were at RR 2/18 (EN, JN, KN). A high count of 20 **Hooded Mergansers** was seen 2/21 at TT (EN, KN). As usual, **Common Mergansers** were much more common and widespread, with high counts of 46 at TT 2/06 (EN, KN), and a whopping 53 at RR 2/17 (SGz). Two **Red-breasted Mergansers** were along R59 on the CBC 2/19 (DW), with a single **Red-breasted Merganser** spotted at CP 12/19 (EN), and 3 **Ruddy Ducks** at KD 12/23 (MK).

Wild Turkey flocks were seen across the county, with a max of 47 on MH 12/6 (JH). A trio of **Pied-billed Grebes** at RR 1/31 were a surprising find (EN, KN). A **Horned Grebe** was seen at TT 2/15-2/16 (EN, KN). A high count of 61 **Ring-billed Gulls** were at KD 1/7 (MS). Two **Common Loons** lingered at Kinzua Point 12/23 (MK); the Allegheny Res. typically has frozen solid by that date.

Cooper's Hawks seemed unusually abundant (m.ob.). Of note, the western *Warren* WRS tallied 5 individual Coops, 4 more than the 16-year average (SHS, DW). Of particular interest was an adult **Northern Goshawk** spotted outside CG 2/2 (BC, TS); goshawks have continued to disappear from Pennsylvania and neighboring states, so such a sighting was heartening. Single **Rough-legged Hawks** were spotted on OC 1/6 and at Hatch Run Conservation Area 2/20 (BC, TS). Although **Barred Owls** have been common and widespread residents, and often heard in late winter as they begin courtship, they are rarely seen during the day...except for this winter. For some odd reason, numerous Barred Owls were spotted during the day across *Warren* and neighboring counties. Could these birds have been wanderers from further north? It seems unlikely, as Barred Owls are notoriously sedentary and, with their rather broad prey base, less prone to scarcity-based irruptions than other raptors. Who knows?

Northern Flickers rarely remain for the winter, particularly when there has been a decent snow cover, so 3 seen at Locey Road 12/29 was unusual (BC, TS). Increasingly, **Merlins** have overwintered in *Warren*: one was spotted at WNZ 1/30 (m.ob.). Single or paired **Common Ravens** have been commonly seen, but a flock of 17 feeding on offal from a slaughterhouse on MH 12/6 was noteworthy (JH). A pair of **Horned Larks** were found feeding in a farm feed pit near CO 12/29 (BC, TS). One of this year's *Warren* CBC highlights was a **Gray Catbird** photographed on B4 12/19 (TR). Even rarer for this area was a **Northern Mockingbird** photographed just south of HP 12/3 (BC, TS); unfortunately, it chose not to stay for the CBC. A lone **Hermit Thrush** was found eating sumac berries at Dutch Hill Road 2/27 (TS). **Cedar Waxwings** took advantage of a good fruit year by wintering in large flocks: 40 on B4 on the 12/19 CBC (TR), 57 at Scandia Road 1/16 (TS, SS), and 125 at AS 1/27 (TS).

Poor seed crops to the north precipitated a major irruption of winter finches throughout Pennsylvania. Among the northern species seen, **Evening Grosbeaks** were at several feeders scattered across the county with high counts of 35 at a home on MR 2/26 (BC, TS) and 11 at HAC 1/17 (EN, KN). Flocks of **Common Redpolls** primarily fed in weedy fields. Significant concentrations included 25 at Dalrymple Road 2/24 (BC, TS), 127 at WNZ 12/2 (TS), and a huge flock that persisted through all of Feb feeding on a sunflower field at HP that included anywhere from 80 to an estimated 700(!) individuals – most days had 300 to 400 (m.ob.). Amongst all the Common Redpolls at HP were up to 2 **Hoary Redpolls**, well documented with photographs (m.ob.), as well as several significantly larger Commons apparently of the subspecies *Acanthis flammeus rostrata* (TS). Three **Red Crossbills** were found at CP 1/19 (EN), and one was at Economite Rd 12/11 (CW); 11 **White-winged Crossbills** were at HAC 12/4 (EN). Thirteen **Pine Siskins** frequented a feeder in WRN 12/6 (BC, TS). Up to 16 **Snow Buntings** were seen feeding among all the Redpolls at HP on multiple days (m.ob.).

A late **Chipping Sparrow** was found at a feeder in WRN 12/10 (BC, TS). Up to 3 **Savannah Sparrows** also hung out with the redpolls at HP 2/6-11 (BC, MS, TS). Other highlights of the *Warren* CBC on 12/19 included a **Fox Sparrow** north of R59 (DW), a **Swamp Sparrow** along B4 (TR), and a single **Rusty Blackbird** photographed at Egypt Hollow Road (AL).

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Washington County

Locations: Cross Creek County Park (CC), Fredericktown (FR), Ginger Hill Ponds (GHP), Peters Township (PET), City of Washington (WASH).

Tundra Swans were seen only on the southbound side of the winter period: 50 on 12/2 (RT) and 28 on 12/25 (JP), both in PET. A lingering **Northern Shoveler** was at GHP 12/19 (GG), but more notable was one that attended the AMD pond on Hahn Road 1/30-2/8 (MV, JF). A **Northern Pintail** at CC 2/13 (MJ) was a nice find. The female pintail that wintered for many years at Washington Cemetery has been gone for several years, so this bird represented what is once again an unusual winter record. A **Green-winged Teal** was with the pintail at CC the same day (MJ). A mid-winter **Gadwall** at GHP 1/10 (JF, LF) was also a surprise. The Monongahela R. at FR proved to be a waterfowl hotspot in Feb during an extreme cold snap that arrived in the middle of the month. Four more wintertime Gadwalls were there 2/10 (JF). Other highlights at FR were as follows: 7 **American Wigeons** 2/10 (JF), 5 **Canvasbacks** 2/17 (JF), 6 **Redheads** 2/17-24 (JF), 2 **Ring-necked Ducks** 1/8-2/10 (JF), up to 6 **Greater Scaups** 2/10-24 (JF, LF), one **Lesser Scaup** 2/24 (JF, LF), and one **Long-tailed Duck** 1/8 and 1/28 (JF). The last, especially, is quite a rarity for the county. Also on the Mon, the Millsboro area proved productive in Feb, where the highlights were 42 **Canvasback** 2/20 (JF, LF), 5 **Common Goldeneyes** 2/20 (JF, LF), and 16 **Common Mergansers** 2/20 (JF, LF). Several of the other species seen at FR were also

noted at Millsboro in comparable numbers.

Away from the Mon, other highlights included a **Surf Scoter** at GHP 12/21 (JF) and 3 **Long-tailed Ducks** at GHP 12/19-21 (GG), as well as 26 **Common Mergansers** 12/14 (JF). There were scattered reports of **Hooded Mergansers** in several areas of the county through Feb, culminating with 10 at the mouth of Ten Mile Cr. 2/21 (JF, LF). This species is usually scarce in Jan and Feb. One or two **Horned Grebes** were at FR 2/10-20 (JF) as well.

A **Killdeer** was a nice New Year's Day bird at Canonsburg L., and one (or the same) was still there 1/21 (FK). Eight **Herring Gulls** were at GHP 12/19 (GG), but somewhat surprisingly, gulls were not well reported at FR or Millsboro while ducks (and birders) were present in Feb. A **Common Loon** was at CC 12/3 (RI). Up to 4 **Short-eared Owls** were enjoyed in fields along the Panhandle Trail near Midway through Dec and Jan (MM, m.ob.). One **Merlin** was reported from Washington Cemetery, a traditional wintering location, 1/24 (RT), but this year they were more widely reported than usual. Singles were seen elsewhere in WASH 12/4 (LC), continuing from the fall at the Queen of Heaven Cemetery in PET to 12/5 (JP), in Houston 1/1 (FK), and at Frosty Valley G.C. 2/13 (JP, JF).

A **Peregrine Falcon** was seen on the Speers Railroad Bridge 2/13 and 2/20 (FK). This rail bridge is part of the Wheeling and Lake Erie line and spans the Monongahela R. adjacent to the I-70 Bridge, on the interstate's north side. The Speers Bridge spans both *Washington* and *Westmoreland*, and is also just a few hundred yards upstream from the *Westmoreland/Fayette* line on the east side of the river, meaning that if a pair takes up territory on the bridge, they would probably make for an easy "tick" in three separate counties, while the nest itself may not actually end up on the *Washington* side.

Common Raven was noted in about a half-dozen locations, but most frequently at Mingo Creek County Park. Parkview Road outside CC hosted field birds, including nice flocks of about 40 to 50 **Horned Larks** in both Dec and Feb (MJ). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** remained plentiful throughout the winter, especially around WASH (LC, m.ob.). A **Hermit Thrush** at Washington Park 1/15 (LC) was a nice bird for Jan. A well-described **Gray Catbird** was eBirded at Hillman SP 12/13 (JO).

Purple Finch was noted several times at PL 12/17-1/23 (JF, et al.), and was also seen in a handful of other locations, including 5 in Washington Park 1/8 (LC). Ten **Pine Siskins** in PET 12/2 (RT) and 2 at Dutch Fork L. 12/20 (RT) were the only reports after the fall siskin explosion. One **Lapland Longspur** was at Parkview Road 12/26 (MJ), and a "nice sized flock" of unspecified count was there 2/7 (MJ). Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, **Snow Bunting** was not seen at Parkview, but one was found along the Panhandle Trail in Robinson Twp. 1/10 (TR).

Two reports of single **Fox Sparrows** bookended the season at a WASH yard 12/2 (RI) and at North Strabane Twp. 2/21 (JF). Seven **Rusty Blackbirds** were noted at Claysville 12/25 (MC *fide* LC). The bird of the season was also taxonomically last in this report: a **Dickcissel** photographed at a feeder in Amity 12/8 by an anonymous eBirder. Though the observer will remain uncited, the photos were unambiguous, and the observer indicated that the bird had been present there for about a week.

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Wayne County – no report

Westmoreland County

Locations: Allegheny River Lock & Dam #4 at Natrona (LD#4), Bardine Road (BARD), Beaver Run Reservoir Route 380 Overlook (BRR), Bushy Run (BSH), Crabtree Farm Area (CFA), Donegal Lake (DL), Ethel Springs Reservoir (ESR), Hamilton Road Ponds (HRP), Helen Road – Crabtree area (HR), Keystone State Park (KSP), Kuehl Property - Murrysville (KP), Latrobe Reservoir (LR), Ligonier Valley (LIGV), Loyalhanna Dam (LYD), Rector (REC), St. Vincent Lake (SVL), Tubmill Reservoir (TMR), Westmoreland Heritage Trail: MAWC Beaver Run property (WHT-BR), Sarah Steel Trailhead to Saltsburg (WHT-SS).

Two Christmas Bird Counts were conducted during the season: the 47th Bushy Run 12/26 and the Rector Count 12/20, with thanks to Steve Manns, Jim Pemberton and Annie Lindsay for their compilation work. New South WRS (MS, GS) and South-Central WRS (TK, JK) routes were added, providing for seven routes in *Westmoreland*. Several irrupting species and the best birding in many years, with a "real" winter as a partial factor to the productive season in the Crabtree Farm Area, provided for an exciting season. A neotropical migrant also added excitement, as did the largely record-setting results of the WRS routes. Raptors per hour of 10.7 and per mile of 0.62 are the best in 10 years of data. Excepting **Red-tailed Hawk** by a small margin, the two new routes were not a real factor in record tallies of 14 **Black Vultures**, 15 **Cooper's Hawks**, 9 **Red-shouldered Hawks**, 178 **Red-tailed Hawks**, 8 **Bald Eagles**, and 19 **American Kestrels**.

Snow Goose was reported at several locations, but never more than one, including at TMR 12/5 and 12/12 (AM), at Mirror Lake Campground 12/15 (AM), at BRR 12/19 (MM), and at LR, also known as Trout Run Res., 12/19 (AL). Five **Cackling Geese** were reported at SVL 2/24 (RC) and continued there for just one day with 4 on 2/25 (ON). As expected, there were many locations with high counts of **Canada Geese**, and many of those at SVL included the worth-mentioning tally of 650 on 2/23 (AM). **Tundra Swans** were reported at SVL from 2/23-26, with the high count of 35 on 2/25 (RC).

Due to the cold weather and thus iced-over water, dabbling ducks were rare. **Wood Ducks** were found only at SVL in Feb, including 3 on 2/14 (PC). Perhaps the same bird, one **Northern Shoveler** was reported at DL 12/11 (AB) and 12/12 (ST); the dam had been repaired and filled with water. **Gadwall** was reported in modest numbers at several locations, however none more than the 6 at SVL 2/25 (ON). It was much the same for **American Wigeon** with 3 at BRR 12/28 (HH), 3 at SVL 2/23 (AM), and 3 at ESR, also more commonly known as Derry L., 2/24 (JLK, TK, MM). **Northern Pintails** were reported at several locations, yet no more than 2 on reports at SVL 2/23-27. A higher count of 5 Northern Pintails were found on the creek below LYD 2/24 (GS/MS). There were higher counts for **American Black Duck**, and again it was SVL that was most productive for reports 2/3-27 with a high of 25 on 2/25 (ON). Nine Black Ducks were at WHT-SS 2/14 (KB). Blue-winged Teal were not reported; **Green-winged Teal** was only found in Dec with one at Unity Res. 12/7 (MJ).

There was limited reporting of diving ducks, and none of Greater Scaup or Long-tailed Duck. A sampling of the low counts for species that were reported were 4 **Canvasbacks** at Twin Valley Cemetery in Delmont 2/13 (KB), 4 **Redheads** at SVL 2/25 (RC, ON), 8 **Ring-necked Ducks** at HR 12/15 (MM), one **Lesser Scaup** at ESL 12/5 (SM), and 3 **Buffleheads** at DL 12/12 (ST). There were higher counts for **Common Goldeneye** at ESL where reports of one were made from 1/1 (RH, SM) with a raft of 19 on 2/3 (SMr). The high count for Common Goldeneye was of 48 at LD#4 on 2/22 (AL), where reports of 2 were made 1/24-2/22 (AP). The LD#4 location provided the only report of a scoter species with one **White-winged Scoter** 2/27 (SMr). As expected, **Hooded Merganser** and **Common Merganser** were widely reported. The only **Red-breasted Merganser** was at LR (AL), tallied on the REC CBC. The most productive location for **Ruddy Duck** was LR with reports 12/6-1/2, including an impressive count of 83 on 12/12 (AL).

Sadly, no Ruffed Grouse were reported. However, there were many reports for **Wild Turkey**, including a crazy 157 turkeys on Creek Road outside of Scottsdale 1/14 (GS/MS). The only grebe species was **Pied-billed Grebe**, with BRR being the most productive location beginning with 6 on 12/3 (KB), continuing to 2 on 2/25 (MM). The open winter-waters of ESL were productive for **American Coot** with never more than the 10 on 1/26, however 8 were reported there from 12/5 (SMr) and through the 7 seen 2/27 (RH, SM).

It was good to have two reports for **Bonaparte's Gulls** with 3 at ESL 12/5 (SMr) and 4 at BRR 1/3 (RH, SM). Scattered reports for **Ring-billed Gull** included 10 at BRR 2/27 (KB). **Herring Gulls** were found only at BRR: one 1/7 (RB) and 3 2/27 (RH/SM). An eBird checklist provided the only report for the season for 2 **Common Loons** at BRR 1/19 (MG), and one **Double-crested Cormorant** was at DL 12/4 (AM).

There were around a dozen well-scattered reports for **Turkey Vultures**, and most of those in the LIGV; **Black Vultures** were found only in the LIGV. Further documentation of this winter season's vulture hot spot is that for the REC CBC, which includes the LIGV area, the tallies were for 44 Black Vultures and 82 Turkey Vultures. Six of the 14 Black Vultures tallied on the

1/24 running of a WRS route were at carrion across from the Foggy Mountain Lodge (JLK, TK) and 10 had been found near that location along Rte. 711 on 12/20 (LD). A **Golden Eagle** was reported at TMR 1/10 (AM). The few reports for **Northern Harrier** away from the CFA included one at LYD 12/5 (MM), a male **Northern Harrier** in the Scottsdale area 12/23 (GS/MS), and one at the Rte. 981 strips south of New Alexandria 12/23 (JLK, TK). **Bald Eagle** was reported at many scattered locations 12/5-2/4 at YLD, including the high of 10 on 1/7 (MM). The Murrysville-to-Mamont area was productive for **Red-shouldered Hawk** with 4 pairs observed over the season (JLK, TK), and the feeders at the KP were evidently a popular hunting location, as one or at times 2 were heard or seen on 38 days.

Among the several reports for **Great Horned Owl** was a report of a pair making contact calls in Ligonier in the early morning 1/30 (AL). BSH CBC owling effort provided one **Eastern Screech-owl** on Maiolie Road in Murrysville and one **Barred Owl** at the Walters Reserve (JLK, TK). Good owling results for the REC CBC were 8 Eastern Screech Owls, 2 Great Horned Owls and 3 Barred Owls. Evening effort at the productive grassland habitat of Laughlin Farm Road provided one **Short-eared Owl** 2/26 (RH/SM). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was a periodic visitor to the KP 12/22-2/18. Four **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were at Rolling Rock Club (AM), contributing to a record high of 7 for the REC CBC.

One **Merlin** photographed in Ligonier 12/30 (AL) continued to 1/1 (AL/RH/SM). Another was photographed on Airport Road in Latrobe 2/13 (AM). Apparently living up to its wandering character, one **Peregrine Falcon** was reported on Mountainview Road near TMR 2/27 (AM). Well documented in eBird is that **Common Ravens** have been regularly observed at both high and low elevations in *Westmoreland*, and perhaps the new record count of 20 for the REC CBC is indication of the success and spread of this species.

As expected, **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was widely reported; rare in winter, one **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was at SVL 1/19 (RC). There was a report of 2 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** at KSP 12/12 (AL). A good tally of 6 Red-breasted Nuthatches was made for the REC CBC. Scattered reports for **Brown Creeper** included 2 tallied for the BSH CBC (RM, LN). **Winter Wren** was hard to find, however one was at WHT-D 12/7 and one 2/8 (KB). Two Winter Wrens were tallied for the REC CBC. A nice photo provided documentation of a should-not-be-here **Gray Catbird** in Murrysville 1/24 (CN). Quite a flock, 20 **Eastern Bluebirds** were seen on Walker Road during a WRS route 1/21 (JLK, TK). One of the few expected scattered reports of **Hermit Thrush** included one on the Blair Brother Trail during the REC CBC (JLK, TK). They can be rare in the winter with just a few reports, however 52 **Cedar Waxwings** were tallied on the REC CBC and 3 on the BSH CBC.

Although irrupting this season, the only report was of **Evening Grosbeak** was of 2 seen for the REC CBC near Laurel Valley G.C. (AL et al). Also given the irruption, it was somewhat surprising to see modest, although well-scattered, reporting of **Purple Finch**. Feeder visitors at the KP included the high count of 3 male Purple Finches 1/15 (JLK, TK). On other irrupting species, the only report was of 4 **Red Crossbills** 12/22 that made a quick stop in the spruces at Love Hollow - Ligonier location (AM), and there were scattered reports for **Pine Siskin** with the higher counts coming early in the season, including 11 at the feeders at a home in Murrysville 12/4 (PF) and an 8-bird flyover at LR 12/12 (AL). Reports provided for a total of 31 **Pine Siskins** for the REC CBC (m.ob.).

Rare, but not unprecedented in the winter were several scattered reports for **Field Sparrow**, including tallies for both the BSH CBC of 3 near Saltsburg (RH, SM) and 5 for the REC CBC. One **Fox Sparrow** was a reliable visitor to the feeders at the KP 2/12-28, with a field report for a Fox Sparrow seen at HR 2/4 (MM). Abundant this season, so perhaps a reflection of an irruption year for **White-throated Sparrows**, the 485 tally for the BSH CBC was the second highest count on record. Project FeederWatch counts at the KP included 5 counts over 30, including 45 on 2/16 (JLK). These are new record high-counts for 22 years of data. Several reports provided evidence for over-wintering **Eastern Towhee** – all reports were at lower elevations including one near Saltsburg for the BSH CBC (RH, SM).

Not entirely unusual for wintering reports for this grassland species, there were 2 reports for **Eastern Meadowlark**, a late fall report of one on Hunter Hill Road south of Kecksburg 12/13 (MS) and one in the CFA 2/7 (NL). A **Baltimore Oriole** was photographed just south of KSP for the BSH CBC (LN, RM), a new species for the count. **Red-winged Blackbird**,

Common Grackle, and **Brown-headed Cowbird** were reported, including a whopping 18 cowbirds that raided feeders in Delmont 12/17 (KB). Unusual was that there were no reports of Yellow-rumped Warbler.

This comparably cold and snowy winter provided some exceptional birding in the Crabtree Farm Area. The first indication of a special season was the BSH CBC effort with 12 **Common Redpolls**; “Small flock flew over us along Pine/Gears Hill Road. Some of them landed in a nearby tree and photos are of a few of the individuals” (MM, LLB). The checklist also included one **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, 4 **American Kestrel**, one **Merlin**, an estimated 150 **Horned Larks**, one **Lapland Longspur** and 6 **White-crowned Sparrows**. Not surprisingly this CBC effort sparked substantial birding of the area that would continue throughout the season. The long-time **Wilson Snipe** hotspot on HR was exceptionally productive with numerous reports. Adorable in the seep and snow, the Wilson Snipe high of 10 was tallied 2/19 (JLK, TK). Over-wintering **Killdeer** were also there, with the high of 5 on 2/25 (MM). Ten reports of singles **Northern Harriers** began in the area 1/1 (MH, RH) and continued to 2/24 (JLK, TK, MM). An excellent photo of a light-morph **Rough-legged Hawk** 2/8 documented the first county record since Feb 2018 (DB). A dark-morph Rough-legged Hawk was reported 2/18 (MH, RH). Many reports for **Horned Lark** included 250 in fresh manure on HR 2/19 (JLK, TK). The cattle-feeding area on BARD was very productive and provided the only other report for Common Redpoll – an estimated 35 on 2/13 (AP). Not reported in *Westmoreland* since 2014, BARD provided many Feb reports for **Lapland Longspur** with the highest count an estimated 50 on 2/13 (AP). While also found on HR, most reports for **Snow Bunting** were on BARD, including a 2/21 report of 40 (KP). Always the best *Westmoreland* location to find winter-season **White-crowned Sparrows**, among the many reports in the CFA, were 17 on Tucker Road 12/27 (RH, SM).

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Wyoming County

Locations: Brown's Farm (BF), Grist Flats (GF), Lake Carey (LC), Lake Winola (LW), Oxbow Lake (OL), Sordoni's Farm (SF), Vosburg Neck, including the Endless Mountains Nature Center (VN).

Despite COVID and heavy snow cover, a number of hardy souls recorded 59 species and 4132 individuals during the 2020 Tunkhannock Christmas Bird Count. However, the snow affected our access, and the virus affected our teamwork and collaboration; those factors had at least some impact on our results. The species count is the fourth lowest of the last 20 years. Despite all that, the count produced 59 species and some uncommon visitors.

A flock of 75 **Snow Geese**, uncommon for the count, were at GF 12/20 (RK, SG). A single **Tundra Swan** appeared at LC 1/30 among a small number of **Canada Geese** and **Mallards** (JD). This was the only record of Tundra Swan this winter. A few **Gadwall** were able to find open water at LC, and 2 were recorded 2/10 (JD) and 3 on 2/13 (MC). Other transient waterfowl, all recorded in small numbers, included 5 **Ring-necked Ducks** 12/5 and 3 on 2/13, all at OL (JD). Four **Buffleheads** paid a visit to Scavazzo's Pond 12/5 (JD), and one was recorded at LW 12/20 (RK and SG). One **Ruddy Duck** was recorded at OL 12/10 (JD).

In what has become an infrequent occurrence, a single **Ruffed Grouse** was recorded at GF 12/20 (RK, SG). A single **Pied-billed Grebe**, unusual for this time of year, made an appearance on LW 1/1 (SB). Nine **Killdeer** made an early, or late, visit to BF 12/28 (JD).

Black Vultures have normally been recorded in single digits, usually among large flocks of Turkey Vultures. On 2/28, however, 13 birds were found feeding on a deer carcass on the immediate side of the road just north of Tunkhannock along Rte. 29 (JD). Three owls that are uncommon for the annual CBC were reported. **Long-eared Owl** was recorded at an undisclosed location 12/20 (SG and RK). **Northern Saw-whet Owl**, a local breeder, was discovered at Lovelton 2/13 (RV). Finally, instead of traveling to adjacent counties to observe **Short-eared Owls**, this year a single bird was observed in *Wyoming* flying along the road just south of Tunkhannock 12/14 (JM, ABY), and only two birders got to see it.

Horned Lark, a usual winter visitor to *Wyoming*, was reported from several locations: 2 birds during the CBC at BF 12/20 (RK and SG), one at SF 12/21 (RK), 7 at BF 1/30, and 8 at BF 2/28 (JD). A single **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was recorded at VN 12/23 (RK); this is uncommon. The CBC provided another surprise with a rare winter holdover, a **Veery**, as it perched for many minutes in a stand of leafless trees at Jayne's Bend (JD, CD).

A much more common visitor is **Common Redpoll**. This year they did not disappoint as birds were seen in several locations including 75 in Meshoppen Twp. 12/2 (TB), 12 near OL 12/16 (RK), 75 at SF 12/14 (JHy), 14 at SF 12/26 (EZ), and 48 at VN 12/31 (TB). A few **Pine Siskins** were reported with the 12/20 CBC netting 5 in North Eaton and one in downtown Tunkhannock (RK, SG). In addition, 2 were at VN 12/23 (RK) and one appeared at a bird feeder at LC 1/24 (MC).

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York County

Locations: Codorus State Park (CSP), Fairview Township (FVTP), Gifford Pinchot State Park (GPSP), Hopewell Township Park (HTP), Long Arm Reservoir (LAR), Spring Grove (SG).

The 120 species reported marks a new winter high for the county. A good waterfowl showing, northern field birds and irruptive finches, and fall carryovers by **Rufous Hummingbird**, **Calliope Hummingbird**, and **Least Sandpiper** were the difference makers versus prior winter-species totals. All four CBCs – Harrisburg, Southern Lancaster County, York and York Springs – containing portions of the county produced typical *York* species' counts versus last five-year averages.

Snow Goose observations continued to reflect minimal migration movement west of the Susquehanna R. Six non-riverside sites reported birds with a high count of 35 over Dogwood Dr 2/23 (GE). Up to a pair of **Cackling Geese** were at LAR 12/5-1/12 (SA, CB, BR, AS), and one was at SG 2/16 (DNN). SG continued to hold the honor of regularly producing the high count for **Mute Swans** with up to 8 on 2/15-25 (m.ob.). A strong **Tundra Swan** count of 700 birds at LAR 2/26 (HM) led the counts from 10 sites.

Northern Shoveler was a tough find with singles at L. Redman 1/9 (DA), GPSP 1/16 (BM), and up to a trio at SG 12/29-2/21 (m.ob.). Of the six sites reporting **Gadwall** (m.ob.), nice counts came from SG with up to 30 birds 2/20 (DA) and 28 at L. Lea 2/24 (DN). Impressive *York* counts of up to 125 **American Wigeons** and 78 **Northern Pintails** came from LAR 2/16 (HM). Seven sites reporting **American Black Duck** is typical with a high count of 10 at LAR 1/27-2/16 (DA, D&NN, BR). CSP produced nice counts of 25 **Redheads** 2/27 (DNN), 20 **Greater Scaups** 2/16 (CB), and 24 **Lesser Scaups** 2/20 (DA, CE).

A pair of **White-winged Scoters** visited CSP 2/15-25 (DA, AM, AS, RS). LAR held up to 4 **Common Goldeneyes** 12/23-2/27 (m.ob.), and CSP produced a nice 14-count 2/17 (JP). **Red-breasted Merganser** singles were at Goldsboro 2/25 (DNN) and LAR 2/27 (DN). Up to 5 **Horned Grebes** were

at CSP 12/12-27 (m.ob.). CSP had a history of producing triple-digit **American Coot** winter counts, with the last being the winter of 2017-18. This winter continued a downward trend as max count was only 12 birds at CSP with two other sites producing single birds.

Very unexpected, a **Ruffed Grouse** was found in the Lewisberry area 12/19 (EB, et al). Fifteen reports of **Wild Turkey** were paced by a 37-count along Mt. Airy Rd 2/12 (ANON). The Seven Valleys' **Rufous Hummingbird** was last seen 12/9 (JT) while the FVTP **Calliope Hummingbird** was last reported 12/19 (JC). Both birds were hatch-year males and were successfully banded in the fall.

An equally impressive fall carryover was up to 5 **Least Sandpipers** at CSP through 12/15 (m.ob.) and a 1/7 visit still found a single bird feeding with **Killdeer** (BR). County records appeared to indicate two prior Dec sightings (both 12/18) while the Jan sighting was a county first. A very good Dec find was an **American Woodcock** at HTP 12/10 (BP). A pair of **Wilson's Snipe** was found at CSP 12/4-15 (DN, BR) and one at HTP 2/27 (DF). **Bonaparte's Gull** sightings were limited to a single over Wrightsville 2/24 (AS). Single **Greater Black-backed Gull** were at Lock 12 on 1/10 (DHo) and at the Riddle Rd landfill 1/14 (CB). Although there was limited reporting, **Double-crested Cormorants** were found in all months.

Northern Harrier was found at nine sites with up to 5 seen at HTP 12/17 (TM). Up to 12 **Bald Eagles** were at GPSP 1/17 (RK). Backyard birds at a FVTP home faced a determined **Red-tailed Hawk** 1/11 (DN), and a **Mourning Dove** found shrub cover inadequate as the hawk dove into the shrub and came out with a meal. Sites other than HTP have rarely produced **Short-eared Owl** reports. However, single birds were at the SGL near York New Salem 2/22-25 (EP) and Sunnyside Rd 2/27 (SB). HTP held **Short-eareds** all period (m.ob.) with up to 6 reported 1/24 (AB) and 2/6-7 (BR, JT). Eight sites reporting **Red-headed Woodpecker** were led by an 8-count at GPSP 12/4 (DNN). A **Merlin** was found at HTP 2/3 & 21 (MH, ES, LS). Six **Peregrine Falcon** reports is a strong winter showing for *York*.

Eastern Phoebes were at Sunnyside Rd 12/5 (DA), Airville 1/19 (J&WH), and along the Rail Trail 1/20 (CK). **Horned Larks** put in a strong showing with clusters of reports along farmland roads in Dover Twp., Lower Chanceford Twp., and Hopewell Twp.; high count was about 200 birds 2/8-23 (DA, CE, AS) along E. Posey Rd. Thirty-plus sites reporting **Red-breasted Nuthatch** and **Purple Finch** and 25 sites holding **Pine Siskin** reflect the strength of this irruption year as far as being widespread. It was a remarkably strong showing for **Hermit Thrush** with 20 sites reporting this welcomed winter thrush. **Gray Catbird** singles were at Stewartstown 1/19 (MM), Lake Williams 1/8 and 2/8 (both CK), and Dover Twp. 2/20 (ANON). **Brown Thrashers** were at Spring Valley C.P. 1/2 (DA) and GPSP 1/27 (SV). Eight sites reporting **American Pipit** were led by a 100-count along Dairy Rd 1/15-16 (CB). A 115-count of **Cedar Waxwing** came from L. Redman 1/22 (BR).

An Alpine Drive backyard feeder produced the only **Evening Grosbeak** report 12/1-3 (SR). A yellow-colored variant **House Finch** was at a *York* backyard feeder 12/27 (BE). High counts for **Purple Finch** and **Pine Siskin** were 12 birds at CSP 1/26 (HM) and 46 birds at Goldsboro 1/2 (BS), respectively. A nicely photographed **Common Redpoll** was at Rippling Run Rd 12/25 (MH). Up to 2 **Lapland Longspurs** were at Dover Twp 12/17-18 (DA, CE) and 2/3 (CB), Muddy Creek Forks Rd 12/19 (DA), and East Posey Rd 2/6-23 (DA, CE). A trio of **Snow Buntings** was at LAR 12/5-6 (JI, JO) and one along East Posey Rd 2/21 (DA).

Chipping Sparrows were found in Dec (PM, AP, TS) and Feb (BR). A **Dark-eyed "Oregon" Junco** was at Dillsburg 2/1 (JD). An impressive 36 count for **Savannah Sparrow** came from Eagle Scout Rd 12/19 (DNN). Although all were expected species, 20 sites with **American Tree Sparrow**, 16 sites holding **Fox Sparrow**, 15 sites reporting **Savannah Sparrows**, 14 sites producing **Swamp Sparrow**, and 18 sites with **Eastern Towhee** reflect strong winter reporting. HTP held **Eastern Meadowlark** all period (m. ob.) with a 25 high count 1/4 (AM, RS). Dover Twp held up to 17 meadowlarks 12/19-2/5 (m. ob.). **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Brown-headed Cowbirds**, and **Common Grackle** were found in all months. Noteworthy with that group was a mixed flock at HTP 1/24 (AB) estimated at 5000 blackbirds, 5000 cowbirds and 10,000 grackles. **Rusty Blackbird** singles were found on the *York* Springs 12/19 CBC and at FVTP 2/21 (DN). A yellow-variant **Northern Cardinal** was in the Dillsburg area in mid-Feb (*fide* JD).

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Winter Wren in the photographer's yard, *Bucks* 19 February 2021. (Kerry Loux)



Carolina Wren in the photographer's yard, *Carbon* 18 December 2020. (Denise Dost)

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 2021 - WINTER RARITIES



Black-legged Kittiwake at Bald Eagle SP, *Centre* 13-14 (here 14) December; first county record and one of two for the season in the state (the other in *Erie*). (*Bill Chambers*)



This **Varied Thrush** appeared in New Bedford, *Lawrence* 13 Feb (here 28), staying into March; first county record. (*Bobbie Rochow*)



Northern Wheatear at Shoemakersville, *Berks* 10-15 (here 13) December; second county record (first was 2012) and about ninth for Pennsylvania. (*Mike Shull*)



This **Harris's Sparrow** kept company with White-throated Sparrows at New Holland, *Lancaster* 22 January through 24 (here 8) February; fourth county record. (*Mike Shull*)



Remarkably, this **Black-throated Gray Warbler** returned for a second winter to the Felty property, staying several months again this season (here 12 January), on Clear Spring Road, *Lebanon* – Thanks to the family for allowing visitors all through the past two winters! (*Mike Shull*)



An even more remarkable encore, for the *fourth* winter out of the last five this **Painted Bunting** was at Mohnton, *Lancaster*, seen here 16 January. (*Mark Nale*)