

The Todd Nuthatch



Indiana, PA

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Todd Bird Club
www.toddbirdclub.org

January 2012

Meetings

Todd Bird Club meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month, September through April, at Blue Spruce Lodge in Blue Spruce County Park, located just off Route 110 east of the town of Ernest. We will socialize and snack till 7:30 when the meeting will be called to order. Refreshments are provided at each of our meetings. In May we hold our banquet meeting which starts at 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 7 – Dr. Marja Bakermans will inform us about the plights of the Cerulean Warbler at this meeting. Dramatic population declines of Cerulean Warblers have not been totally understood as the demographic responses of this species to habitat alteration are almost completely unknown. As a result conservation efforts have been somewhat limited.

Dr. Bakermans' research on the Cerulean's wintering grounds examined the suitability of shade coffee plantations and the foraging and habitat use by wintering migrant birds, with emphasis on Cerulean Warblers. This portion of her study was conducted in three primary forest sites and three shade coffee plantations on the western slope of the Cordillera de Merida of the Andes Mountains.

Be sure to come to learn more about this beautiful threatened species.



Cerulean Warblers have undergone a steep decline in recent years. Come learn more at our February meeting.

Photo by Marja Bakermans

Tuesday, March 6 – Jason Hill will present his findings concerning grassland birds at the Piney Tract in Clarion County at our February meeting. Many of you will remember the excellent program he presented to Todd in April 2010.

Originally from Marshalltown, Iowa, Jason earned his BS in Wildlife Biology from the University of Montana in 2001. He has completed many years of field research in California (Sea Otters), Costa Rica (House Wrens), New York (Barn Swallows), Florida (Red-cockaded Woodpeckers), Minnesota (American Woodcock), California (cavity-nesting birds), and Maui (Po'ouli capture team). He completed his M.S. in Ecology at University of Connecticut under Chris Elphick studying post-fledging ecology of saltmarsh sparrows. He is currently finishing his PhD at Penn State in Ecology under Duane Diefenbach studying the population dynamics of grassland sparrows on reclaimed surface mines.

Tuesday, April 3 – Join well known photographer-birder Geoff Malosh on his 1,300-mile trek through interior Alaska at our April meeting. He traveled through Alaska in the summer of 2009. Geoff, a member of the Three Rivers Birding Club, is also the editor of Pennsylvania Birds, the quarterly journal of The Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology and the compiler for two counties, Beaver and Washington.

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Outings

Tuesday Morning Outings at Yellow Creek will continue, weather permitting. Meet at 8:00 at the park office located on Rt. 259 just off Rt. 422 east of Indiana. Everyone – from beginner to expert birder – is welcome. If you have questions, contact Lee Carnahan (724-465-7323) or Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493).

Friday - Monday, March 9-12 – Coastal New Jersey. This trip will target Barnegat Light, Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, Cape May, and Sandy Hook. Possible species include Brant, Harlequin Duck, King Eider, Great Cormorant, Northern Gannet, Purple Sandpiper, and Am. Oystercatcher. We'll check the list serves for possible vagrants. If you are interested in going, please contact Roger or Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493).

Saturday, March 17 – Yellow Creek State Park at 8:00 a.m., led by Lee Carnahan. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office.

Saturday, March 24 – Yellow Creek State Park at 8:00 a.m., led by Gloria Lamer. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office.

Saturday, March 31 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by Roger and Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493). Meet at 8:00 at the park office. This is a joint outing with the Friends of the Parks.

Saturday, April 7 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by Roger and Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493). Meet at 8:00 at the park office. This is a joint outing with the Three Rivers Birding Club.

Meetings

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Tuesday, May 1 – 6:00 p.m. This is our annual banquet. Please bring a covered dish to share and your own place settings.

Our state bird, the Ruffed Grouse, has been hard to find the past several years, but now numbers seem to be increasing somewhat. WCO Patrick Snickles will discuss the cyclical nature of the grouse, its life history, and many other interesting facts. Details will appear in April's *Nuthatch*.

Todd Website Update

by Ed Donley

The Todd Bird Club website has been on line for almost a year now, so I thought that it was a good time to look at how it is doing. We get about 30 visitors per day, each viewing an average of 2 pages. These visitors are not all human beings, though; some are computer programs that search the web. Our most commonly visited pages are event announcements, outing reports, the main page, and the photo gallery.

People who find us through web searches, such as Google, are often searching for information about regional birding activities or local parks. Two searches struck me as being particularly interesting. One was for "american coot and bald eagle predator prey" and the other was for "wood duck fledglings." These searches led to two of our outing reports. I hope that whoever was researching these topics found our outing reports to be helpful. These searches show how our outing reports can benefit not only ourselves, but they can provide useful information for people outside our own group.

If you haven't been submitting outing reports, I encourage you to consider submitting them. This is a great way for us to share information about the birds that we have seen, not just once per month at our meetings, but continually as we see them. Through outing reports, we can keep in touch with each other and reach out to potential new members. Tom Glover plans to submit daily outing reports during his trip to Texas. I cannot wait to have a vicarious experience, reading about his adventures. To submit outing reports, go to the website at <http://www.toddbirdclub.org>, move your mouse over the Events tab in the horizontal brown navigation bar, click on Outing Reports, and follow the instructions on that page. As soon as you submit the report, an email message will go out to everyone who requested to be notified of new outing reports.

If you wish to sign up to receive email notifications of outing reports, go to our website, place your mouse over the Members tab in the horizontal brown navigation bar, click on Members Control Panel, and enter your first name, last name, and password. This will display a form where you can update your contact information and specify the email notifications you wish to receive. If you don't remember your password, contact me at hedonley@iup.edu and I will give you a new one.

A Note from Our Co-President

The calendar may say January, but the weather could certainly fool us into thinking it was spring. The natural food supply, though, must be getting scarcer, as more birds are showing up at the feeders. Yesterday, I had my first ever orange variant house finch. It was only here for a short time, but it's always exciting to see something new.

As the weather has been making us think of spring and the seed catalogs start to arrive in the mail, I'm sure many of you are thinking ahead about what you are going to plant in your garden to help our feathered friends survive our PA winters. At the January meeting the members decided to support a gardening revitalization project that is going to occur at the Blue Spruce park office. We are very fortunate to have a beautiful place to meet each month; and by participating in this worthwhile project, it is our opportunity to support our local park. The gardens have been planned by Kristy Helfer who holds a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture. She is currently employed through AmeriCorps by Indiana County Parks and Trails. The gardens will include all bird-friendly native plants. We will concentrate on planting the garden around the existing water feature. A few of the shrubs already in the plan include winterberry holly, dwarf fothergilla, red osier dogwood, and lowbush blueberry. A committee has been formed and will meet with Kristy in February to discuss the perennials that will be included. That's where all members can lend a helping hand. In order to reduce the cost, we're hoping members can contribute plants, either from your own garden or by purchasing. We will also need help in preparing and planting our section of the garden. In order to increase the community's awareness of our club, a Todd Bird Club plaque will be installed in the garden. I'm really excited that Todd Bird Club is going to be part of a project that will not only benefit the bird community but will help us support Blue Spruce Park.

Good birding!

– Donna Meyer, Co-President

Notes from a Novice

Back to Texas

by Tom Glover

According to my birding diary, as of December 28, 2011, I have now been actively birding for two years. My very first entry was about a Whooping Crane Tour aboard the "Skimmer" out of Fulton, TX, with Captain Tommy Moore in 2009.

This January 2012 my wife Emry and I are spending two months in Rockport, TX. This is the location where my birding adventure began. I was introduced to birding by fellow Todd Bird Club members and daughter and son-in-law Elyse and Tom Fuller. Tom and Elyse will join us in Texas for about a week in January, and that means birding. We are looking forward to a number of trips to local hot spots in and around the Rockport area, and we will make a trip to the Rio Grande River Valley.

Now I plan to look up some old friends, like the Great Blue Heron that patrols the boardwalk at Indian Point Park just out of Portland, TX, and I will definitely check in with the Whooping Cranes of Lamar, TX. I will stop by the Rockport Demo Bird Garden and Wetlands Pond to see how the foraging Snowy Egret is making out. And just across from Demo Garden I will look for the Couch's Kingbirds that nest in the Walmart parking lot. One group of toothy friends that I will make it a point to visit live in the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.

The condo that we are renting is just outside Rockport on Cape Velero peninsula overlooking Copano Bay. The area around the condo is surrounded by water. In fact my brother-in-law told us that the whole area is a swamp. Ah...all the better for birding. I have visions of walking out the door to find flocks of shorebirds.

I promised the Tuesday group that I would take my laptop and post on Todd's website summaries of my birding outings. So I am looking forward to sharing my Texas adventures with all of you. With some luck I will introduce you to a whole flock of new friends.

Special Thanks!

Sincere thanks to Gloria and Clayton Lamer, Alice and Buck Beatty, and Lee Carnahan for handling the water stops for the Ghost Town Trail Race, sponsored by the Indiana Roadrunners. Thanks, too, to the Roadrunners for their generous donation of \$50 to the Todd Bird Club.

Thanks to Lee Carnahan and Ed and Donna Meyer for collecting money for Blue Spruce's Light-up Night on Tuesday, December 13. This is one way in which we support our county parks.



Indiana Christmas Bird Count Results



29th Annual CBC – December 26, 2011

Snow Goose (CW)		Virginia Rail (1)		Pine Warbler (1)	
Canada Goose (2081)	1058	Am. Coot (811)	79	Eastern Towhee (3)	1
Mute Swan (4)		Killdeer (7)	1	American Tree Sparrow (483)	67
Tundra Swan (200)		Wilson's Snipe (1)		Chipping Sparrow (2)	
Wood Duck (2)		Am. Woodcock (2)		Field Sparrow (13)	4
Gadwall (30)	CW	Bonaparte's Gull (6)	CW	Savannah Sparrow (2)	
American Wigeon (14)	2	Ring-billed Gull (50)	15	Fox Sparrow (3)	
American Black Duck (190)	30	Herring Gull (1)		Song Sparrow (152)	56
Mallard (670)	247	Rock Pigeon (366)	161	Lincoln's Sparrow (1)	
N. Shoveler (2)		Mourning Dove (1117)	632	Swamp Sparrow (14)	
N. Pintail (10)	4	Eastern Screech-Owl (13)	1	White-throated Sparrow (214)	36
*Green-winged Teal (3)	4	Great Horned Owl (10)	4	White-crowned Sparrow (36)	
Canvasback (9)	CW	Barred Owl (5)		Dark-eyed Junco (2272)	636
Redhead (14)	3	Long-eared Owl (1)		Lapland Longspur (6)	
Ring-necked Duck (41)	17	Short-eared Owl (2)		Snow Bunting (225)	
Greater Scaup (2)		Belted Kingfisher (9)	8	Northern Cardinal (584)	162
Lesser Scaup (24)	3	Red-headed Woodpecker (1)		Red-winged Blackbird (3570)	30
White-winged Scoter (1)		Red-bellied Woodpecker (72)	54	Eastern Meadowlark (10)	
Long-tailed Duck (3)	1	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (8)	1	Rusty Blackbird (13)	
Bufflehead (52)	20	Downy Woodpecker (177)	68	Brewer's Blackbird (CW)	
Common Goldeneye (7)	1	Hairy Woodpecker (58)	18	Common Grackle (503)	
*Hooded Merganser (22)	34	Northern Flicker (40)	9	Brown-headed Cowbird (46)	1
Common Merganser (5)		Pileated Woodpecker (25)	14	Pine Grosbeak (1)	
Red-breasted Merganser (2)	1	Northern Shrike (1)		Purple Finch (89)	13
Ruddy Duck (69)	9	Blue Jay (566)	208	House Finch (1563)	361
Ring-necked Pheasant (21)	5	American Crow (3275)	707	Common Redpoll (63)	
Ruffed Grouse (22)	10	Fish Crow (8)	2	White-winged Crossbill (CW)	
Wild Turkey (345)	13	Common Raven (5)	4	Pine Siskin (375)	
N. Bobwhite (1)		Horned Lark (200)		American Goldfinch (637)	261
Red-throated Loon (1)		Black-capped Chickadee (808)	365	Evening Grosbeak (566)	
Common Loon (9)	1	Tufted Titmouse (394)	146	*House Sparrow (746)	809
Pied-billed Grebe (29)	8	Red-breasted Nuthatch (51)	4		
Horned Grebe (4)		White-breasted Nuthatch (201)	113	Total Individuals (18,833)	9,029
Red-necked Grebe (1)		Brown Creeper (25)	14		
Double-crested Cormorant (1)	CW	Carolina Wren (61)	22	71 Species on 12/26/11 + 4 for CW	
Great Blue Heron (8)	4	Winter Wren (4)	1		
Turkey Vulture (2)		Golden-crowned Kinglet (106)	27	CW = Birds Seen During Count	
*Bald Eagle (1)	3	Ruby-crowned Kinglet (4)		Week but Not Count Day	
Northern Harrier (9)		Eastern Bluebird (152)	99	CW = December 24-30	
Sharp-shinned Hawk (14)	5	Hermit Thrush (6)			
Cooper's Hawk (15)	3	Wood Thrush (CW)		* Record-breaking or Equal High	
N. Goshawk (1)		American Robin (1626)	15	Tally (3)	
Red-shouldered Hawk (5)	2	Gray Catbird (2)		**Species New to the Count (none)	
Red-tailed Hawk (70)	47	Northern Mockingbird (12)	10	() Highest No. Seen on Any	
Rough-legged Hawk (3)		Brown Thrasher (1)		Previous Indiana CBC,	
Am. Kestrel (26)	13	European Starling (8656)	2175	1983-2011	
Merlin (2)		Cedar Waxwing (212)	67	127 Species on Count since 1983	
Peregrine Falcon (1)		Yellow-rumped Warbler (18)		(including 4 CW only species)	

Christmas Bird Count Observers

Leonard Anderson	Ed Donley	Tracy Johnston	Marjorie Peterson
Pat Andrascik	Emmy Fairman	Linda Jones	Sara Pulliam
Steve Andrascik	Gary Ferrence	Janet Kuehl	Nancy Robinson
Louise Bem	Betsy Fetterman	Tom Kuehl	Tim Schreckengost
Bill Betts	Tom Fetterman	Gloria Lamer	Jared Smelko
Tom Betts	Elyse Fuller	Mary A. Little	John Somonick
Jean Blair	Tom Fuller	Howard Mandigo	Linda Stormer
Sid Blair	Sue Gatti	Beth Marshall	Luke Stormer
Vernon Blystone	Tom Glover	Ken Marshall	Rodger Stormer
Judy Buggiey	Joyce Griffith	Gib McLaughlin	Garrett Strittmatter
Walter Buggiey	Carol Guba	Bruce Mehus	Mark Strittmatter
Lee Carnahan	Roger Higbee	Helen Mehus	Georgette Syster
Roger Carnahan	Margaret Higbee	Donna Meyer	John Taylor
Dorcas Clark	Pat Johner	Ed Meyer	Cris Williams
Dan Cunkelman	Paul Johner	Richard Nowell	Paula Williams
Marcy Cunkelman	Connie Johnston	Ann Peterson	Ginny Winters

CBCs Past

Year	Total Species	CW	No. of Individuals
1983	56	3	4188
1984	57	5	9540
1985	51	2	4468
1986	54	2	7453
1987	60	3	5676
1988	48	3	6670
1989	52	4	4309
1990	65	6	8502
1991	60	5	6004
1992	67	8	6435
1993	70	9	13490
1994	67	4	10759
1995	71	5	8637
1996	65	7	9994
1997	74	3	10180
1998	82	7	10873
1999	73	2	18827
2000	64	2	12397
2001	77	2	14365
2002	62	2	9739
2003	72	4	9687
2004	72	5	8788
2005	62	7	12130
2006	64	5	8762
2007	82	3	14344
2008	71	8	14329
2009	56	5	8472
2010	55	2	7174

Christmas Bird Count Revisited

This year's CBC tallied the highest number of species and the highest number of individuals since 2008 when we also had 71 species and more than 14,000 individuals. The total species count is highly dependent upon the weather as waterfowl comprise the bulk of species missing when freeze-up occurs before our count. This year all still water was completely open, so we counted more water birds than we have the past two years.

Previous counts have yielded as few as 48 species and highs of 82. The previous average number of species seen on count day is 64.6 while the mean is 64.5, so this year's count is well above both the average and the mean. However, our total number of individuals is almost 500 below the previous average of 9507 birds but just 135 shy of the mean.

Field birders complained that they walked for long distances without seeing any birds. This is pretty normal as the birds tend to join in winter feeding flocks. When we finally found the flock, there were birds to count. Feeder watchers, too, commented on the lack of birds at their feeders. The abundance of available natural food kept many species in the fields and woods.

We couldn't complain about the weather this year. Temperatures ranged from 27° F in the morning to a balmy 43° F in the afternoon. Skies were completely overcast for most of the day, and there was no snow cover or precipitation.

Thirty-five field birders spent 50.3 hours hiking 45.5 miles and drove 692 miles in 60¼ hours. Twenty-nine feeder watchers at 22 feeders invested 73¼ hours in the count.

Twenty-two attended the count dinner at Hoss's at 6:00 the evening of the count. The James Dearing Award was given to John Taylor representing the north shore crew for finding a drake Common Goldeneye. Year after year the group has hiked all the way to the dam, and year after year the hike has been non-productive. This year it yielded the count's only goldeneye. Nice find!

Field birders reported various highlights. Gary Ferrence, accompanied by PSO president Tom Kuehl and his wife Jan, spotted two American Wigeons and two Bald Eagles on Two Lick. A stop late in the day yielded four Northern Pintails at Musser's Pond for Bill and Tom Betts. At Yellow Creek among numerous waterfowl, Gloria Lamer and Georgette Syster added a Long-tailed Duck to the list; in addition they watched 15 Ring-billed Gulls circling high overhead for most of the day. Highlights for Lee and Roger Carnahan were 10 American Black Ducks and 9 Buffleheads on their section of the count. In the northern part of the circle, Tom Glover and Tom and

Elyse Fuller added a Bufflehead and a good tally of 24 Hooded Mergansers. Bald Eagles reached an all-time high on the count with a third adult bird spotted at Yellow Creek by John Taylor, Ed Donley, Mark Strittmatter, and Garrett Strittmatter on the north shore and by Roger and Margaret Higbee and Louise Bem on the south shore. Ken and Beth Marshall and Cris and Paula Williams found the lone Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. The 67 Cedar Waxwings on the list were all in one flock noted by Gloria and Georgette. An Eastern Towhee in a yard near Shelocta was a good find for Tim Schreckengost.

Feeder watchers, too, reported a few highlights. The Stormer Family – Rodger, Linda, and Luke – listed two hooting Great Horned Owls in Armstrong Twp. Richard Nowell reported two Red-breasted Nuthatches at his feeder. Five was a good count of Purple Finches for Howard Mandigo in White Twp. The count's only Brown-headed Cowbird was spotted by feeder watcher Joyce Griffith near Creekside.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the count. All the data contribute to the success of our count. We appreciate your help!.

Outings Revisited

Saturday, October 8 – Three other Todd members, Lee Carnahan, Tom Glover, and Margaret Higbee, attended our outing to Prince Gallitzin State Park, led by Dave Gobert and me. We started at the park office where we watched a migrant flock of Yellow-rumped Warblers including one Palm Warbler. At the Mudlick gazebo overlooking the lake we spotted three Great Egrets lining the water's edge. There were shorebirds here, too, but distance created an ID problem. We were able to see Wilson's Snipe, Dunlin, and Greater Yellowlegs. Here, too, we watched a Red-shouldered Hawk overhead.

Next we hiked the trail from the swimming area to the south shoreline of Slatelick Branch. This walk through the woods produced Blackpoll Warbler, Brown Creepers, and Common Raven.

At the sailboat launch area on the west side of Lake Glendale off Long Road we added Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Semipalmated Plover, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, Ruddy Duck, and Killdeer. Some of us were able to hear a warbler chip. We patiently waited for the bird to appear, and to our amazement it was a very late Yellow Warbler.

– John Salvetti



Dan Cunkelman seated, Margaret and Roger Higbee, and Gloria Lamer scan the skies at the Allegheny Front.

Photo by Marcy Cunkelman

Saturday, October 22 – Extremely windy weather with gusts to 47 mph at the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch on October 15 gave us good reason to reschedule our trip. Unfortunately, the following Saturday was not open for many of those who had planned to attend. Gloria Lamer, Roger, and I met at the Yellow Creek State Park office at 8:00. Activity around the office included Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Black-capped

Chickadees, 2 White-breasted Nuthatches, Brown Creeper, 2 Golden-crowned Kinglets, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and 2 Am. Robins.

Along Rt. 422 near Ebensburg we spotted a flock of about 150 Common Grackles. In Somerset County we added about 80 Canada Geese.

When we arrived, we were pleased to find that the day's counters were Gene and Nancy Flament, who used to come on our Yellow Creek outings. We had not seen them for quite a while. The first raptor we observed at the hawk watch was the first of the day's two Merlins. It was a tad chilly sitting on the wooden platform, but a good supply of snacks kept us busy between birds. Red-tailed Hawks and Turkey Vultures were moving. Around 10:00 Dan and Marcy Cunkelman arrived. The sighting of a Peregrine got our adrenalin going. A silent Common Raven passed by overhead. Suddenly we heard the double chip of a Winter Wren in the shrubbery to our right. We approached the shrubs and spotted the wren as he alternately fed and called. Other raptors sighted while we were there included Cooper's Hawk, 2 Northern Harriers, and 3 Am. Kestrels. A probable Ring-billed Gull and a flock of 13 Double-crested Cormorants were additional migrants. Other birds listed at the hawk watch included Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwings, and Yellow-rumped Warblers. We ended the day with a list of 30 species and a stop at the Main Moon in Johnstown for dinner.

–Margaret Higbee

Tuesday, November 1 – On Tuesday, the 1st of November, along with fellow club members Donna Meyer, Margaret Higbee, and Lee Carnahan, I was treated to a rare event, the struggle between prey and predator. The actors in this drama were American Coots and an adult Bald Eagle, and the stage was the lake at Yellow Creek State Park. We first saw the birds from the south shore in Yellow Creek cove. Numerous coots were spread



The Bald Eagle perched on a snag in Little Yellow Cove.

over the Lake, and the adult eagle was spotted in a tree on the north shore overlooking the lake.

The morning was cold with thick banks of fog rolling over the water, but by the time we reached the boat launch area on the south shore, the fog had lifted. Here we checked the lake, and of course there were hundreds of coots to be counted. A Hermit Thrush was a nice surprise. Also as a bonus we were treated to a mixed flock of Song, White-throated, and Fox Sparrows. As we were viewing the sparrows, we were startled by the roar of hundreds of coots taking off. We immediately discovered the reason – the Bald Eagle we had spotted earlier was flying low over the lake's surface and flushing the coots. As we watched the eagle gliding

along toward the shore near the boat rental area, it flew up and dived at a small group of coots. To our amazement as the eagle was about to make a kill, the coots disappeared in a shower of water spray as they dived. The eagle made a few more attempts, but the coots were quicker. The eagle landed in a tree near the boat rental office. After a while the eagle made another attempt at the coots with the same results, and again it landed in a tree overlooking the lake. A third time the eagle tried for a coot breakfast, and after this attempt we watched as the bird flew off cootless toward the dam end of the lake.

It was fascinating to watch the eagle and the coots interact. It appeared that the coots were very aware of the eagle. We observed two basic forms of escape, first they flew off in a confusing mass of birds, and secondly, if the coots were not quick enough to fly off, they dived to avoid the eagle's talons.

One other note, the coots can tell which large birds are predators. Later that day we saw a large Great Blue Heron fly low over the coots without a response.

What we viewed was as good as any wildlife film you see on TV. Just goes to show what may happen on any given Tuesday outing at Yellow Creek.

– Tom Glover

Can You Believe It's Been 10 Years?

The Three Rivers Birding Club is now 10 years old. The group celebrated their anniversary at their annual outing and picnic at Moraine State Park on October 23. Sherron Lynch provided the cake decorated with a Great Horned Owl. Congratulations, 3RBC!

Great Backyard Bird Count Perfect for New Birders!

15th annual count takes place Feb. 17-20, 2012

As movie-goers watched the stars of *The Big Year* in their quest to count birds, some may have been motivated to try the hobby for the first time. The annual Great Backyard Bird Count is the perfect opportunity. The event is hosted by Audubon, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Canadian partner Bird Studies Canada. The results provide a snapshot of the whereabouts of more than 600 bird species.



The appearance of a flock of Common Redpolls at the feeder is always cause for excitement.

Photo by Frank and Sandra Horvath

The 2011 GBBC brought in more than 92,000 bird checklists submitted by participants from across the United States and Canada. Altogether, bird watchers identified 596 species with 11.4 million bird observations. Results from the 2011 GBBC included:

- Increased reports of Evening Grosbeaks, a species that has been declining;

Anyone can participate in this free event and no registration is needed. Watch and count birds for at least 15 minutes on any day of the count, February 17-20, 2012. Enter your results at www.birdcount.org, where you can watch as the tallies grow across the continent. The four-day count typically records more than 10 million observations.

"When thousands of people all tell us what they're seeing, we can detect patterns in how birds are faring from year to year," said Janis Dickinson, director of Citizen Science at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. "

The Great Backyard Bird Count is a perfect example of Citizen Science," says Audubon Chief Scientist, Gary Langham. "Like Audubon's Christmas Bird Count, volunteers help us with data year after year, providing scientific support that is the envy of many institutions. It's also a lot of fun."

"We're finding that more people are taking part in our bird count programs every year – and the more that take part, the better it is for the birds," says Richard Cannings, Senior Projects Officer for Bird Studies Canada.



Purple Finch is another possible feeder bird.

- A modest seasonal movement of winter finches farther south in their search for food;

- The Eurasian Collared-Dove was reported from Alaska for the first time, more evidence of an introduced species rapidly expanding its range.

Although it's called the Great "Backyard" Bird Count, the count extends well beyond backyards. Lots of participants choose to head for national parks, nature centers, urban parks, nature trails, or nearby sanctuaries. For more information, including bird-ID tips, instructions, and past results, visit www.birdcount.org.

The count also includes a photo contest and a prize drawing for participants who enter their bird checklists online.

Make sure our local birds are represented in the upcoming Great Backyard Bird Count—they won't count unless **you** do! Save the dates. The 15th annual GBBC takes place February 17-20.

It's fun, it's easy, and it's important. Let's see how many Todd members will participate. If you are unable to enter your own data, please contact either Donna Meyer (724-349-2787) or Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493).

Birding: Powerful Medicine for Someone in Need

by Tom Fuller

Last November, I was stricken with a nasty case of pneumonia. Let me preface this by acknowledging that as a male, my sense of suffering and woe are magnified many-fold by a strong penchant for self-pity. Nonetheless, my lung capacity was reduced by half, and for a few miserable days I allowed myself to question whether I'd even make it.

Out of commission for a wretched couple of weeks, I was capable of little more than lying on my back, staring at the ceiling, and wheezing. A few good books and some strong antibiotics helped me to get through the achy days, but it wasn't until I dragged myself to the window overlooking the backyard that my condition started to improve. There, watching birds brought a sense of comfort, pleasure, and peace as it never had before.

Sitting in the brightness and warmth of the slanting afternoon sun in my less-than-lucid state, these shining creatures seemed to appear out of the light. As they emerged from the trees and shadows, I felt both flattered and awed at their presence. What's more, each bird brought with it reassuring feelings of familiarity. A Northern Cardinal landing on the hopper feeder brought me back to a glistening childhood morning. My brother and I had slept in the bay window to watch the snow fall beneath the street light, hoping and praying that the storm would cancel school the next day. I opened my eyes to a dazzling winter scene. Before I could rouse my brother, a brilliant male cardinal alighted on a snow-laden branch, just inches from the window. In the innocence of this fresh, bright dawn, our eyes transfixed for a few, breathless seconds.

Other birds brought their own reminiscences. A raucous Blue Jay clearing the feeders with an alarm cry evoked the tale my grandmother told of how the jay got its harsh call. Although I was upset almost to the point of tears at how they scattered the smaller birds, her calming story made me appreciate the jays for their colorful character.

A Carolina Wren sifting through peanut shells triggered a camping trip to the Texas coast. We kept an amused distance as a frantic male placed leaves and twigs beneath the fly of our tent to convince a nearby female to nest there.

Even the House Sparrows, scratching through fallen seed, recalled a quirky ornithology professor and his many idiosyncrasies. As his trusty lab assistant, I was charged with shaking the hedges so he could accurately count the flushed sparrows on our walks across campus.

As this wave of memories poured over me, I realized what a gift birding has been through the years. Beyond the many joys and pleasures found in the act of watching birds, it is a pursuit that both lends itself to and is heightened by the connections we so easily make to the past. We not only delight in the birds at hand, but in all of the moments forever linked in association.

And at that particularly lousy moment, when I was stiffly hunched in a blanket before the window, being transported back to these times made all the difference. Before I knew it, the sun was setting and I felt somewhat restored. Just maybe, tomorrow I might summon the energy to venture out and top off the thistle feeders.

[This article, by Todd member Tom Fuller, first appeared in *The Observer*, the newsletter for the Rockland Audubon Society based in New City, NY.]

2nd Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas Sent to Publisher

The manuscript for the Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania has been submitted to the publisher, Penn State University Press.

The resulting hardbound book will be more than 500 pages in length, full color throughout, containing 2nd Atlas distribution and change (from the 1st Atlas) maps for 190 species (and two hybrids), and density map results from point counts for about 102 species, analysis, and so much more!

This has been a monumental project, with many years of effort, including planning, fieldwork, and manuscript preparation – to which so many of you contributed.

Publication is expected in early winter 2012, but pre-publication sales (at a discount), will begin probably in the fall.

– Daniel Brauning

Clash of the Talons

by Daniel Winstead

During a Todd Bird Club trip to the Niagara Falls, Canada area, right after Thanksgiving with Margaret and Roger Higbee, my dad and I got a chance to see thousands upon thousands of gulls hovering over the river and lakes at Niagara. One of the hotspots was right in front of the Sir Adam Beck Hydroelectric Station where we saw some great gulls; among them were Glaucous Gulls, Iceland Gulls, California Gull, and a Franklin's Gull.

Near the end of our third or fourth visit to the hydro plant, some even more unexpected birds came into view. To my left from downstream came a Pomerine Jaeger, flying rapidly along the U.S.A/Canada border through the middle of the river above all the rest of the gulls. Then to

my upper right, on the other side of the river I spotted a Peregrine Falcon from the U.S., coming in faster than the jaeger. We watched as they kept getting closer and closer. Then I heard the screech of the Peregrine and saw it plummet right towards the jaeger. Then both clashed together in mid-air. The jaeger, of course, started to retreat in the direction from which it had come, but the Peregrine still pursued the jaeger. The Peregrine cried out again and the falcon attacked the Jaeger once more. The Jaeger sped off downstream while the Peregrine turned the other direction and departed the way it had come. That was definitely one of the highlights of the trip and something that I will always remember.

Whooping Crane Update

If you are a Todd Bird Club member who saw the alert about the plight of the nine stranded Whooping Cranes at the Russellville Airport in Alabama and signed the petition, you were not alone. In two days the petition received 1,500 signatures, and former President Jimmy Carter put in a call to lend a hand as did Gov. Scott Walker and a few congressmen.

The birds had left their nesting grounds at White River Marsh State Wildlife Area in Wisconsin and were two-thirds of their way to their wintering grounds in Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge in Florida – a trip of 1285 miles when the FAA grounded the ultra-light aircraft that serves as their guide. The problem? The FAA claims that under FAA rules, pilots who fly these ultra-light aircraft are not allowed to receive compensation. Pilots of this type of plane are considered sport pilots and are prohibited from flying commercially.

The annual trip, run by Operation Migration, began in 2001 and costs about \$650,000. The FAA had always

granted the group a waiver, but this year decided to ground the aircraft. The young cranes are captive raised and because of that are taught to follow the ultra-light aircraft and learn their migration route. As long as the weather stayed warm, the group wasn't concerned about the young cranes flying off on their own, but were not certain if they could keep these birds on the ground if temperatures would drop. The situation was resolved on January 9 when the FAA gave the group, since the flight was mid-migration, a one-time exemption that allows pilots to continue leading the cranes from their departure point in Wisconsin to refuges in Florida. However, at the present time, the birds are not able to fly due to bad weather and are being housed in top-netted pens until the weather improves. Today there are 103 Whooping Cranes in the eastern U.S., and many of them nest in Wisconsin. The flight problem has been solved for now, but all parties realize a solution must be found before next year's migration.

– Donna Meyer

Did You Know...

Norman Smith cautions birders not to try to age and sex Snowy Owls by the degree of barring. Recent research in Russia, he said, suggests that birth order may have more to do with pigmentation than gender or age. The first-hatched owlets are dark while those hatched later are progressively less heavily marked. In addition, there also seem to be regional differences as well.

Photo Quiz

This bird was photographed in Indiana County by Marcy Cunkelman. We'll even make it easier by enlarging the shot. The answer will be in the April *Nuthatch*.



Your Dues Are Now Due

January 1 started a new year for Todd Bird Club. Please remit your \$5 student, \$10 individual, \$15 family dues to our treasurer ASAP:

Gloria Lamer
515 Laurel Run Road
Penn Run, PA 15765

Amount Paid _____

Name (s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____



Tom Fetterman photographed this Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in his yard on November 10. Note how camouflaged it appears on the tree trunk.



This is the same Yellow-bellied Sapsucker later that same day at the Fetterman's feeder.

Indiana, Armstrong, Cambria Fall Report

Fall – August 1 to November 30, 2011

Please submit your reports at the end of each month to Margaret Higbee, 3119 Creekside Road, Indiana, PA 15701-7934 or e-mail to bcoriole@windstream.net.

Abbreviations: Beaverdam Run Dam (BR), Blue Spruce County Park (BS), Crooked Creek (CC), Indiana (IN), Keystone Reservoir (KR), Lewisville (LV), Prince Gallitzin (PG), Rosston (RT), Shelocta (SH), Yellow Creek State Park (YC).

This fall produced a nice assortment of interesting species. Highlights included 2 Eared Grebes and a great variety of shorebirds at PG as well as a Red-necked Phalarope at YC.

Canada Goose maxima included 210 at YC 8/16 (LC,TG,MH,GL,DM), 104 at KR 10/8 (NB,KB) and 175 at CC 11/5 (TR,MVT). A **Mute Swan** was found on Redbank Creek at New Bethlehem 9/6 (AK), the lone report. First 12 **Tundra Swans** were sighted 11/1 (JW) at YC; 450 over Lewisville was the high count 11/10 (MC); 75 visited BR while 54 at YC 11/22 (LC,TG,MH,DM) and one at RT 11/29 (DV,JV) were last. Best **Wood Duck** count was 72 at YC on 8/23 (LC,TG,MH,ML); 10 were counted at PG 8/31 (DG,JS); 5 were noted at CC 9/26 (MH,JV). First 2 **Gadwalls** arrived 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT) at YC where top count was a mere 6 on 11/23 (LC). Three **American Wigeons** were first arrivals 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT) and 7 were counted from the pontoon 10/18 (LC,TG,MH,GL,MS,MVT), all reports at YC. PG hosted 2 **Am. Black Ducks** 9/8 (CD); 2 visiting a pond near SH 9/8 (ED) were noteworthy while Two Lick Reservoir boasted the high tally of 8 on 11/22 (LC). **Mallards**, which were unusually hard to find at YC this past summer, continued to remain in low numbers at YC with best count of only 11 on 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT); last year's high YC count was 89; Musser's Pond yielded 15 Mallards 10/15 (TS) while twice that number were at Manorville 11/23 (DV,JV); 35 were counted at Manorville 11/29 (DV, JV). *Cambria's* best Mallard counts were 12 at PG 9/8 (CD) and 16 at BR 11/17 (JJ). August 23 marked the arrival of the first **Blue-winged Teal** at YC where numbers reached 17 on 10/4 (LC,MH,DM, RN,MVT). PG yielded 8 on 9/7 (LC,DG,MH,GL,JS) and 7 on 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS); one still lingered at YC 10/25 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT). Three **Northern Shovelers** 8/23 (LC,TG,MH,ML) at YC comprised the entire report for this species. A farm pond near Penn Run yielded the season's only 2 **Northern Pintails** 11/23 (GL). Two **Green-winged Teal** arrived 8/31 (LC) at YC; 7 were noted at PG 10/8

(LC,TG,DG,MH,JS); top count of 10 occurred at YC 11/23 (LC).

Two **Canvasbacks** appeared 11/27 (LC) at YC where a single **Redhead** arrived 11/15 (LC,TG,MH); 20 was the high Redhead count 11/23 (LC). First 16 **Ring-necked Ducks** landed at YC 10/4 (LC,MH,DM, RN,MVT) with the peak number of 187 on 11/23 (LC). **Lesser Scaup** were seen in single digits on only four dates this season beginning 11/5 (3RBC, TBC). A **Surf Scoter** 11/21 (LC) and a **White-winged Scoter** 11/25 (GF) were great finds; the White-winged was still present 11/27 (LC). First **Long-tailed Duck** appeared at BR 10/30 (JJ); YC yielded 14 on 11/22 (LC,TG,MH,DM); these were the only two reports for this species. Four **Buffleheads** 11/8 (LC,TG,MH,MVT) at YC and 10 on 11/10 (JJ) at BR were first; *Armstrong's* lone report described 3 at CC 11/17 (MVT); several high Bufflehead tallies occurred at YC including 1406 on 11/21 (LC), 400 the following day (LC TG,MH,DM), and 453 on 11/23 (LC). **Common Goldeneye** reports at YC included 2 on 11/21 (LC) and 5 the following day (LC,TG,MH, DM). High **Hooded Merganser** count was 43 at YC on 11/23 (LC). Two **Common Mergansers** were listed at BS 9/6 (MH,RH); 17 were counted at CC 11/2 (MVT), but by 11/24 (TR) only one remained. **Red-breasted Mergansers**, present on only two days, numbered 26 (LC,TG,MH,DM) at YC on 11/22 and 67 (LC) at YC and 12 at CC (DV,JV), the last two reports the next day. First **Ruddy Duck** arrived at YC 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT); 3 visited PG 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS); high counts at YC of 109 and 131 respectively occurred 11/8 (LC,TG,MH,MVT) and 11/23 (LC). Thirteen was the count of Ruddies at CC both 10/29 (TR) and 11/17 (MVT).

Ruffed Grouse, still hard to find in the region, were listed at four locations this fall (v.o.). The high **Wild Turkey** tally was 25 n. of IN 11/20 (SB).

October 8 produced 5 **Common Loons** at KR (NB, KB) and 2 at PG (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS), the first of the

season; one stopped at CC 11/17 (MVT); BR harbored 3 on 11/20 (JJ), the high *Cambria* tally; top count of 55 was reached 11/22 (LC,TG,MH,DM) at YC; 2 visited RT 11/23 (DV,JV). The season's first **Pied-billed Grebe** appeared 8/9 (LC,TG,MH,DM, MVT) at YC; 3 were observed at PG 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS) while BR yielded one 10/10 (JJ); by 10/25 (LC,MH) 63 were present at YC; 2 were at RT 11/28 (DV,JV). First **Horned Grebes** were found 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS) at PG and 10/18 (GL,GS) at YC; best counts included 22 at TL 11/22 (LC) and 51 at YC 11/23 (LC). Highlight of the season were 2 **Eared Grebes** photographed (MH) at PG 9/7 (LC,DG,MH,GL, JS); they were relocated the next day (CD,DG) and were still present 9/9 (DG). Top **Double-crested Cormorant** tallies were 38 at PG 9/8 (CD) and 29 at YC 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT).

Eleven was the high number of **Great Blue Herons** at PG 9/8 (CD) and 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS); an outing on 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS) at PG also produced the only 3 **Great Egrets** reported this fall. **Green Heron** could not be found at YC after 9/27 (LC,MH,DM) while PG's last were recorded 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT).

Turkey Vulture maxima included 64 at TL 9/19 (PJ), 18 passing over SH 10/19 (MH), and 10 at BR 10/30 (JJ); last were one near Elderton 10/23 (MH,RH) and one over Penn Run 11/17 (GL). Last **Osprey** were a singleton at CC 10/22 (TR) and 3 at YC 11/4 (CG). **Bald Eagle** reports were numerous with one at Strongstown 8/25 (DS,GS), 6 at PG 9/7 (LC,DG,MH, GL,JS), one over IN 9/16 (MC), 2 along Buffalo Creek 10/22 (ZG), at least 3 individuals at YC 11/4 (CG), and one at CC and 2 at RT 11/23 (DV,JV), and 2 adults at CC 11/25 (SG). The only **Northern Harriers** reported, all singletons, occurred 8/24 (CL) at Nolo, 10/6 (JJ) at Dunlo strips, 10/11 (LC,TG,MH, GL,ML) at YC, 10/31 (MC) at Clarksburg, and 11/5 (IH) at YC. **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were noted at 5 locations (v.o.) and **Cooper's Hawks**, at 6 (v.o.). Migrating over YC 9/17 (MC) were 150 **Broad-winged Hawks**; 25 were also spotted near LV 9/25 (MC), the last report. A **Merlin** was a nice find at YC 8/23 (LC,TG,MH,ML). October 4 (LC,MH,DM,RN, MVT) yielded both a **Merlin** and a **Peregrine** at YC.

Another **Peregrine** was sighted at PG 9/16 (DG). [See details in box below.]

Two **Virginia Rails** were nice finds at PG 8/19 (JS). A **Sora** was found in Little Yellow Cove at YC 8/30 (LC,TG,MH,GL,MVT). The first **American Coots** arrived at YC 10/4 (LC,MH, DM,RN,MVT); KR harbored 12 on 10/23 (MH,RH); by 11/8 (LC,TG,MH,MVT) at least 1,681 were present at YC.



Two Eared Grebes at PG were one of the fall's highlights. Photo by Margaret Higbee

High water levels yielded few shorebirds at YC this season; however, PG was the hotspot for shorebirds as the park lowered water levels to make needed repairs. This provided the best shorebirding in years in our region. Single **Black-bellied Plovers** visited PG 9/6 (JS) through 9/21 (DG). An

Am. Golden-Plover was noted at PG 9/13 (LC,TG, MH,MVT) and again 10/5 (DG). Three **Semipalmated Plovers** were listed 9/6 (LC,TG,MH,GL) at YC while 2 were at PG the same day (JS); high PG count was 15 on 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT); last was a singleton at PG 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS). Peak **Killdeer** numbers included 33 on 8/31 (LC) at YC; 16 on 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT) at PG; and 25 on 11/5 (TR,MVT) at CC. Last **Spotted Sandpipers** were found 9/8 (GL) at YC, 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT) at PG, and 10/8 (NB,KB) at KR. Two **Solitary Sandpipers** were spotted 8/30 (LC,TG,MH,GL,MVT) at YC. Ten **Greater Yellowlegs** flew over YC 9/6 (LC,TG,MH, GL), apparently looking unsuccessfully for a suitable place to land; last noted were 4 at PG 10/27 (DG) and 9 on 11/8 (LC,TG,MH,MVT) at YC. **Lesser Yellowlegs** moved through our region between 8/31 (LC) when one was spotted at YC and 9/16 (DG) when last singleton was noted; top count of 7 occurred 9/7 (LC,DG,MH,GL,JS) at PG. A **Whimbrel** was a great find at PG 9/6 (DG); 9/6 (JS) also yielded 4 **Ruddy Turnstones** at PG; 3 turnstones were still present 9/8 (CD), but by 9/13 (LC,

DG spotted a **Peregrine Falcon** while fishing at Prince Gallitzin SP. Dave writes:

"I soon found out that it was diving after a **Lesser Yellowlegs** that had ended up on the water. After about five tries it gave up. The **Yellowlegs** then swam to shore, shook itself off, made a couple of calls, and flew away. One lucky bird!"

TG,MH,MVT) only one could be located. A **Sanderling** flew past the YC beach 9/6 (LC,TG,MH, GL) while PG's high of 12 was achieved 9/6 (JS) and 9/8 (CD); last 7 were spotted at PG 9/13 (LC,TG, MH,MVT). Eight **Semipalmated Sandpipers** arrived 9/6 (JS) at PG, the only location to host this species this fall; numbers peaked at 15 by 9/8 (CD); last listed were 10 on 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT). Six **Least Sandpipers** arrived both on the limited mud in Little Yellow Cove at YC (LC,TG,MH,GL) and at PG (JS). **White-rumped Sandpiper** reports, all at PG, included a singleton 9/7 (LC,DG,MH,GL,JS), 2 on 9/8 (CD), and 7 on 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT), the same day that 3 **Pectoral Sandpipers** were also recorded. **Dunlin** moved through PG between 9/9 (DG) and 10/27 (DG) when 300 were estimated to be present. Two **Short-billed Dowitchers** were identified at PG 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT) and 3 were also listed 10/27 (DG). Two **Wilson's Snipe** were feeding on the mud at PG 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS); the YC pontoon ride 10/18 (LC,TG,MH,GL MS,MVT) flushed 7 snipe from Little Yellow Cove; a single snipe was located 11/5 (IH) at YC, the only other report this season. The shorebird highlight at YC this fall was a **Red-necked Phalarope** feeding on a small area of exposed mud below the maintenance building 9/6 (LC,TG,MH,GL).

First **Bonaparte's Gulls** were reported at PG 10/27 (DG), at CC 11/17 (MVT), and at YC 11/22 (LC,TG, MH,DM); 9 were at YC the following day (LC). **Ring-billed Gulls** were found in only low numbers this season with the only double-digit counts of 12 on 11/21 (LC) and 25 on 11/22 (LC,TG,MH,DM), both at YC. The fall's only **Herring Gulls** were singletons 11/22 (LC,TG,MH,DM) and 11/27 (LC) both at YC. A **Caspian Tern** stopped at YC 9/6 (LC,TG,MH,GL); 7 were counted at PG the following day (LC,DG,MH, GL,JS) while 2 remained at PG 9/8 (CD); YC on 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT) hosted 2. A **Black Tern** 8/18 (TS) was a great find at YC; PG harbored an amazing 12 on 9/6 (JS) with 9 remaining through 9/8 (CD). **Forster's Terns** at PG numbered 2 on 9/7 (LC,DG,MH,GL,JS) and increased to 4 the following day (CD).

Eastern Screech-Owl was listed at eight locations, **Great Horned**, at only 2, and **Barred Owl** at 4 (v.o.).

Last **Chimney Swifts** were 6 both at Creekside and near SH 10/5 (MH) and one rather late bird at PG 10/27 (DG). A **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** lingered n. of IN through 10/1 (SB).

First **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** arrived 10/4 (LC, MH,DM,RN,MVT) at YC where one was observed sporadically through 11/1 (LC,TG,MH,DM); single birds visited CC 10/22 (TR) and 11/5 (TR,MVT) and yards near SH 11/6 (MH,RH) and near McIntyre 11/20 (MC).

Single **Olive-sided Flycatchers** stopped at PG 9/8 (CD) and at BS 9/12 (MH). An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** lingered at the Waterworks Conservation Area through 10/18 (SD). Last dates include: 9/12 (MH) for **Acadian Flycatcher** at BS; 9/7 (LC,MH, GL,JS) for **Willow Flycatcher** at PG; 10/7 (SB) for **Least Flycatcher** near IN; 11/2 (MVT) for **Eastern Phoebe** at CC; 8/24 (TR) for **Great Crested Flycatcher** at YC; and 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT) for **Eastern Kingbird** at PG.

Last vireo dates included 9/20 (LC,TG,MH,GL,DM) at YC for **White-eyed**; 9/18 (TR) at CC for **Yellow-throated Vireo**; 10/11 (LC,MH,GL,ML) at YC for **Blue-headed**; 8/30 (LC,TG,MH,GL,DM) at YC for **Warbling Vireo**; and 9/24 (LC,MH,RH) at Blacklick Valley Natural Area for **Red-eyed Vireo**. A **Fish Crow** flew over a yard near IN calling 10/18 (DM). Sixteen **Common Raven** reports were received from seven locations this period (v.o.). Four **Horned Larks** near LV 11/6 (MC) were the only ones noted this season.

YC hosted a single **Purple Martin** 8/18 (TS) and 2 on 9/5 (LC,TG,MH,GL); 10 remained at PG 9/8 (CD). Last dates included 10/27 (DG) at PG for 50 **Tree Swallows**, 9/8 (CD) at PG for 15 **Northern Rough-winged Swallows**, 9/20 (LC,TG,MH,GL,DM) at YC for one **Bank**; 9/7 (LC,DG,MH,GL,JS) for 2 **Cliff Swallows**; and 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT) at YC for one **Barn Swallow**.

One **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was present near SH throughout the period (MH,RH); 2 were at PG 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT); another was found n. of IN 11/20 (SB). Top count of **Brown Creepers** was 4 at YC 11/8 (LC,TG,MH,MVT). Last **House Wrens** were one at YC 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT) and one at Dunlo 10/9 (JJ). The only **Winter Wren** noted was one at YC 10/25 (LC,TG,MH,GL,RN). A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** lingered at YC 8/30 (LC,TG,MH,GL, MVT). **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were found in the region between 9/24 (MH,RH) and 11/25 (TS) with 20 reports of 1-5 birds.

A **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was a nice find at YC 10/11 (LC,TG,MH,GL,ML). **Swainson's Thrushes**

noted included 2 at BS 9/17 (LC,SD,TG,MH,RH, DW,RW) and 2 at YC 10/11 (LC,TG,MH,GL,ML).

Hermit Thrush was listed only at CC 10/29 (TR) and at YC 11/1 (LC,TG,MH,DM).

YC harbored the last **Wood Thrush** 9/20 (LC,TG,MH,GL, DM), the last **Gray Catbird** 10/11 (LC,TG,MH,GL,ML), and the last **Brown Thrasher** 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT).

This fall's warbler migration was better than last year's, but there were no major fallouts. CC produced the last **Ovenbird** 9/18 (TR) and YC, the last **Black-and-white Warbler** 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN, MVT). **Tennessee Warblers**

moved through *Indiana* between 9/17 (LC,SD,TG, MH,RH,DW,RW) and 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT). Single **Nashville Warblers** were listed on 5 dates between 9/10 (LC,SD,TG,MH,RH,RW) and 10/24 (MH). A skulking **Connecticut Warbler** was a good find at BS 9/17 (LC,SD,TG,MH,RH,DW,RW). A **Common Yellowthroat** 10/11 (MH) and both a **Hooded Warbler** and **Am. Redstart** 10/4 (LC,MH, DM,RN,MVT), all at YC, were last. Eighteen **Cape May Warbler** reports with counts of 1-10 spanned the period 8/23 (LC,TG,MH,ML) through 10/9 (JJ). The last **Northern Parula** was sighted at YC 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT). CC harbored the last **Magnolia Warbler** 9/26 (MH,MVT). One to 2 **Bay-breasted Warblers** were listed between 8/30 (LC,TG,MH,GL) and 9/26 (MH,MVT). The last **Blackburnian Warbler** visited a yard near SH 9/21 (MH). A very late **Yellow Warbler** was well studied at close range 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS) at PG. YC produced the last **Chestnut-sided Warbler** 9/27 (LC,MH,DM). **Blackpoll Warblers** passed through our region between 9/10 (LC,SD,TG,MH,RH,RW) and 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS) with all reports detailing only 1-2 individuals. **Black-throated Blue Warbler** reports mentioned one 9/12 (MH) at BS, 2 on 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT) at PG, and one 9/24 (LC,MH,RH) at Blacklick Valley Natural Area. Single **Palm Warblers** occurred 9/13 (LC,TG,MH,MVT) at PG, 10/22 (TR) at CC, and 10/8 (LC,TG,DG,MH,JS) at PG; 3 visited YC 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT) while last 4 were found at Dunlo 10/22 (JJ). **Pine Warblers** were last found 9/27 (LC,MH,DM) at YC and 10/5 (MH) near SH. Two very early **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were listed 8/2 (LC,TG) at YC, where numbers peaked at 88 on 10/4 (LC,MH,DM, RN,MVT); other good counts included 18 at Dunlo



This Hermit Thrush perched near the boat launch at Yellow Creek on 11/1.

strips 10/2, 10/22 (JJ) and 29 at PG 10/8 (LC,TG, DG,MH,JS); a singleton 11/25 (SG) at CC was last.

Five **Black-throated Green Warblers** were last sighted at CC 10/23 (TR). YC yielded the season's only **Canada Warbler** 8/30 (LC,TG, MH,GL,MVT) while Reservoir Hill produced the season's only **Wilson's Warbler** 9/11 (PJ).

An **Eastern Towhee** continued at LV through the end of the period (MC). Arrival date for **American Tree Sparrow** was 11/5 (3RBC,TBC) at YC, but numbers remained low through the end of the fall. **Chipping Sparrows** appeared last near Sistersville 10/29 (TR) and at YC

11/1 (LC,TG,MH,DM). Last dates included 10/29 (TR) for **Vesper Sparrow** at CC and 10/6 for **Grasshopper Sparrow** at the Dunlo strips. **Fox Sparrows** migrated through the regions between 10/29 (TR) when the first was spied at CC and 11/23 (CL,GL) when the last 3 were noted at Nolo. Single **Lincoln's Sparrows** at YC 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN, MVT) and near SH 10/5 (MH) were the only ones reported. **Swamp Sparrow** remained at YC into the winter season (v.o.). First **White-throated Sparrow** appeared 10/5 (MH) near SH. Rochester Mills yielded the first 3 **White-crowned Sparrows** 10/6 (TS); one at CC 11/5 (TR) was last. First migrant **Dark-eyed Junco** arrived at Nolo 10/13 (GL). **Scarlet Tanagers** were last found at SGL 247 9/25 (TR) and at YC 9/27 (LC,MH,DM).

Last respective dates for **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** and **Indigo Bunting** were 10/5 (MH) near Creekside and 10/15 (MH) near SH. **Rusty Blackbirds** were noted at YC between 10/4 (LC,MH,DM,RN,MVT) and 11/27 (LC) with the high count of 28 on 10/25 (LC, TG, MH,GL,RN); 22 was a good count near McIntyre 11/20 (MC). Lingered **Common Grackles** included 30 near Strongstown and 150 near Ebensburg 10/22 (MH,RH,GL). The last **Brown-headed Cowbird** mentioned was at YC 8/9 (LC,TG,MH,DM,MVT). A **Baltimore Oriole** at YC 9/13 (RN) was last. Two **White-winged Crossbills** stopped to feed on hemlocks near IN 11/25 (GF). A single **Pine Siskin** in a flock of goldfinches at YC 10/4 (MH) and one at CC 11/25 (SG) comprised the siskin report.

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Georgette Syster, John Taylor, David Valasek, Josie Valasek, Marjorie Van Tassel (MVT), John Walker, Daniel Winstead, Ray Winstead, Three Rivers Birding Club (3RBC), Todd Bird Club (TBC).

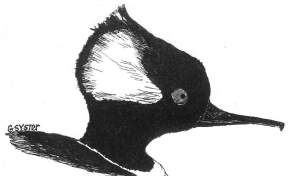
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Be on the lookout! Marcy Cunkelman spotted a Common Redpoll at her feeder on January 5 this year.

Photo by Frank and Sandra Horvath



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