

The Todd Nuthatch



Indiana, PA

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

January 2014

Meetings

Todd Bird Club meetings are held at 7:30 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. Arrive early to socialize. Refreshments are provided at each of our meetings. In May we hold our banquet meeting which starts at 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 4 – Wildlife Conservation Officer Patrick Snickles will present a program on the life history of the Eastern Meadowlark, which has been designated as a species of Conservation Concern by the PA Game Commission.

The evening's speaker is no stranger to our group. WCO Snickles, a native of Warren, PA, has been the northern Indiana County WCO for the past 18 years. He has presented many interesting and informative programs to our group in the past. You shouldn't miss this one! Come learn about this beautiful member of the blackbird family.

Tuesday, March 4 – Join Pittsburgh native Geoff Malosh for a photographic adventure across four corners of North America – literally. Between April 2011 and April 2012,



Geoff Malosh photographed this Hudsonian Godwit in Churchill, Manitoba.



Cris Hamilton photographed these Common Loons on a kayaking adventure.



The Violet Sabrewing is the largest hummingbird found outside of South America. Cris spotted this one in Costa Rica.

Geoff crisscrossed the continent to visit some of the premiere bird photography sites in the ABA area, hitting all four points on the compass: Churchill, Manitoba, in the north; Barnegat Lighthouse, New Jersey, in the east; Ft. De Soto Park, Florida, and Galveston Island, Texas, in the south; and San Diego, California, in the west. Geoff is the editor of *Pennsylvania Birds*, the journal of record of the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology, and has become well known as one of the top bird photographers in Pennsylvania. He'll share humorous stories and plenty of dazzling images of the birds he photographed on the shores of the Hudson Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, and the Atlantic and the Pacific.

Tuesday, April 1 – We'll travel to the Pacific Northwest then head southeast to Costa Rica with Cris Hamilton, an accomplished photographer from Houston, PA. Cris will share her wonderful photographs and action-packed video clips including the shots on this page of Common Loons from British Columbia and Violet Sabrewings from Costa Rica. Cris retired in 2007 from teaching in the Carmichaels Area School District. The Pacific Northwest is one of her favorite haunts.

Outings

Tuesday morning outings, mostly at Yellow Creek, will continue. 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 (724-388-4667) or Roger or Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493).

Saturday, February 15 – Sandy Ridge Road grasslands in Clearfield County, led by Tom Glover (814-938-5618). Last year on this outing we spotted a Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Harrier, and a Short-eared Owl. Meet at 3:00 p.m. at a small cemetery on Route 36, address 14430 Colonel Drake Hwy, Punxsutawney, about 7 miles south of Punxsutawney.

Friday, March 7, through Monday, March 10 – Coastal New Jersey. This trip will target Barnegat Light, Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, Cape May, and possibly Sandy Hook. Possible species include Brant, Harlequin Duck, King Eider, Great Cormorant, Northern Gannet, Purple Sandpiper, and American Oystercatcher. We'll remain flexible so that we can check the local list serves for possible vagrants. If you are interested in going, please contact Roger or Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493).

Saturday, March 15 – Yellow Creek State Park., led by Lee Carnahan (724-388-4667). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office.

Saturday, March 22 – Yellow Creek State Park., led by Gloria Lamer (724-349-1159). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office for early waterfowl.

Saturday, March 29 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by Roger and Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office for this joint outing with the Friends of the Park.

Saturday, April 5 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by Roger and Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493). This is our semi-annual joint outing with the Three Rivers Birding Club. After the outing we'll head into Indiana for lunch at the Chinese buffet. This will also be our last opportunity to bid our friends from the UK, Ian and Margaret Haigh, farewell as they plan their return home.

Saturday, April 12 – Saylor Park and Ghost Town Trail, led by Lee Carnahan and Tom Glover. Meet at Saylor Park at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday, April 19 – Powdermill Nature Preserve, led by Derek and Emily Clawson. Meet at Powdermill at 8:00 a.m. Cost to enter Powdermill is \$7 per person.

Saturday, April 26 – Eagle Watch on the Mahoning Shadow Trail, led by Tom Glover (814-938-5618). Check on the progress of the resident Bald Eagles and this year's nesting effort as well as birding the trail for migrants. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Valier trailhead parking lot.

Carolina Wren Dilemma

by Richard Nugent

On January 6, 2014, about an hour after dark I discovered a Carolina Wren in our garage. The weather forecast predicted a low of -10° F overnight, and the temperature was already zero; so I had a difficult decision to either evict the wren out into the bitter cold or allow it to stay in the warm garage. I decided to let it stay and put out water and a block of homemade suet dough as Carolina Wrens love it. The next morning the wren was alive and active, but the food was untouched. I was more worried that the bird was thirsty and allowed our hose to drip into another shallow dish. Within seconds the wren flew to the sound of dripping water and almost landed on my head at which point it flew away. A



This Carolina Wren was digiscoped by Margaret Higbee.

very cold day was predicted, so I allowed the wren to stay in the garage for another 24 hours.

The following morning as I entered the garage, I found the bird perched on a window looking out. The noise of opening the garage door scared the wren causing it to hide. I had posted the wren's adventure on the PA Birds listserve and had received many comments and suggestions. Karyn Delaney had suggested playing the Carolina Wren song to lure the bird out

of the garage. This is what I did, and almost immediately it flew out, landed in a nearby tree, and sang a song of freedom. To thank me for my kindness, the wren left a present on the windshield of my van.

Hand-fed Birds

By Tom Glover

The November 23, 2013, Saturday outing at Blue Spruce County Park was led by fellow Todd Bird Club member Ray Winstead. The outing was billed as “feed chickadees in your hand,” and the outing lived up to its billing. We were first introduced to Ray’s bird friends at last January’s monthly meeting. At that time he described how at Blue Spruce Park he conditioned Black-capped Chickadees to take seed from his hand, and on November 23 Ray demonstrated his very entertaining results.



Tom Glover, Sue Dickson, Roger Higbee, and Ray Winstead wait for the chickadees to arrive. One is on Ray’s gloved hand.

Fellow club members Sue Dickson, Margaret and Roger Higbee, Ray, and I met at the parking lot near the park entrance. After our usual greetings, we birded our way down the road to the children’s playground area where Ray started to rattle sunflower seed in a plastic container. He explained that noise was part of his conditioning of the birds, and sure enough as we walked down the hill, we were greeted by a noisy chickadee in a tree about halfway to the trail. At the bottom of the hill we took the first path to our right, where at the trailhead we encountered a noisy flock of mixed species, including two White-breasted Nuthatches, four Tufted Titmice, and five Black-capped Chickadees.

Ray was a bit concerned about the reaction of the birds to a crowd of five people. The birds were used to smaller groups, but they quickly figured out that more people meant more hands with more bird seed. At that time Ray properly introduced us to the chickadees. First there was George I, the dominant bird of the whole flock. George I will chase off the other birds and, as Ray explained, physically at times fly into another bird on his hand knocking it off. George I will even fight with a Tufted Titmouse, locking feet and falling to the ground. Next there was Sharpie, the second chickadee to land on Ray’s hand after George I. Sharpie got its name from the sharp claws felt when the bird landed on a bare hand. The third bird is Hover, which initially had the habit of hovering just before landing on a hand. Hover now just skips this action and flies directly to the hand. Next is Sideburns, which is just a bit hesitant about landing on a hand. Last



Is this George I?
Only Ray knows for sure!

there is George II, the most timid of the five chickadees. Ray explained that George II is not always present. Ray, over time, came to recognize the individual birds among the five chickadees. By observing the coloration of the bib and head patterns of the five birds, he was able to differentiate the individuals.

Ray related that the four Tufted Titmice have the habit of quickly landing on your hand and just as quickly flying off with a seed, thus giving little chance to get to know the individual birds. The two White-breasted Nuthatches were a pair. At the time of the outing, only the female would take seed from a hand. She repeatedly would land on a hand, take a seed, and fly to a nearby tree to cache it, then return for another. She did this repeatedly. The male nuthatch never landed on a hand but stayed nearby watching where the female had stashed

a seed. He then would steal it. The female nuthatch was a quick learner. Ray previously only offered the birds black oil sunflower seeds. On this outing we had a variety to offer the birds. The female nuthatch quickly figured out that whole shelled peanuts were better than sunflower seeds in the shell. In fact, she got so picky, to the point where she rejected the half peanuts and took the whole nuts.

As we made our way down the trail the birds followed up to a point. Apparently their territories have limits, and as we passed from that zone, the birds did not follow. We continued birding, and on our return we birded along the road instead of following the trails. Ray advised that the flock of conditioned birds would reappear as we made our way down the road, and when we entered their territory, there they were looking for handouts.

Thanks to Ray’s patience with these birds we were able to observe them at close range. It was interesting watching the female nuthatch figure out that peanuts were the better

(continued on page 4)

A Weekend in New England Birding Hammonasset Beach

By Derek Clawson

During the weekend of October 19, 2013, my wife Emily and I had made plans to visit a graduate school program in Keene, New Hampshire. However, that was going to take us only one afternoon to accomplish, so we decided the best way to spend the rest of our time in New England was to do a little birding while we were in the area. One quick Google search later showed us that there was an Audubon store in Branford, Connecticut, and where every Saturday that month there would be a birding walk at Hammonasset Beach State Park just down the road. Deciding that would be our best course of action, after packing up our things from our brief stay in beautiful Keene, New Hampshire, at the lovely Antioch University of New England (where we hope to attend for our graduate degree program), we set off for Branford.

Unfortunately for us, the second hotel where we had reservations was quite a roacher and not very pleasant. But we were so tired from driving the last few days that we got what sleep we could manage before setting out the next morning to meet up with fellow birding enthusiasts at the Audubon store. We arrived early, and to our surprise we were the first ones there. We were beginning to worry that we had come on the wrong day and that we would have to fend for ourselves in an area with which we had no familiarity, but to our relief the *piles* of cars began to roll in – and I emphasize *piles*. There were a ton of people who showed up for this, easily showing up the smaller group numbers we were used to back home. For the most part everyone was amicable and hospitable to us out-of-towners.

Our first stop was actually a side outing to Bauer's Farm with the hope of glimpsing a Blue Grosbeak that had been sighted there regularly the week before. When we arrived, it was easy to see why one would wish to rest its wings there. The farm had a menagerie of seeding plants that the

birds would love to eat, and it was a sparrow's paradise. While the grosbeak unfortunately seemed to have skipped town, we were still able to nab some beautiful Palm Warblers, Eastern Bluebirds, Savannah Sparrows, and other species. Because the owners of the farm were setting up for a fall festival of sorts, they needed us to clear out earlier than usual apparently, so we took our leave and followed the conga line of cars to Hammonasset Beach.

Hammonasset would prove to live up to its reputation as a birding hotspot even during the cooler part of October. With a variety of saltmarsh habitats, beaches, and even some grassy low growth areas, it offered many opportunities to spy a variety of species. Our local Captain Raptor (Emily) was having a field day picking out Cooper's Hawks, Red-shoulders, Red-tails, Osprey, and a bold Northern Harrier that came in for a closer look at our group. While those were amazing birds as they always are, the highlights of our trip were the three lifers we snagged at the park. The tour leader managed to call out both a Nelson's Sparrow and a Saltmarsh Sparrow right beside us on of the beach parking lot which bordered a small salt marsh. This excited us quite a bit because we had tried for both of these birds in New Jersey the prior spring but had missed them during our visit. We found our third life bird after the group had left while we birded by ourselves. Deciding to hike down one of the nature paths through the salt marsh, we spotted a Marsh Wren. Shortly after finding the wren, the weather began to turn a little sour, so we decided to quit while we were ahead and start getting ready for our long trip home. All things considered it was a great trip in a beautiful part of the country during autumn. The leaves were all ablaze with the colors of fire, and the mountains were gorgeous. We ended up tallying 43 species with a total of three lifers.

Hand-fed Birds (continued from page 4)

choice over the sunflower seeds, and it was neat watching the chickadees take a sunflower seed from your hand, fly to a nearby branch, hold the seed down with both feet and shell it to get the heart. Ray has conditioned these birds to respond to people. In fact this winter there have been reports of birds in Blue Spruce Park landing on startled people's hands for no reason at all.

So before the winter is over, make it a point to grab a handful of seed, dump the seed in a plastic container; drive to Blue Spruce Park; park next to the children's playground area. As you walk down over the hill, rattle your seed, and take the first trail on your right; hold out your hand with seed in it, and I bet you will experience "hand-fed birds."



Indiana Christmas Bird Count Results



31st Annual CBC – December 26, 2013

Snow Goose (CW)		Wilson's Snipe (3)		Yellow-rumped Warbler (18)	2
Canada Goose (2081)	1575	Am. Woodcock (2)		Pine Warbler (1)	
Mute Swan (4)		Bonaparte's Gull (6)	CW	Eastern Towhee (3)	2
Tundra Swan (533)	99	Ring-billed Gull (50)		American Tree Sparrow (483)	106
Wood Duck (2)		Herring Gull (1)		*Chipping Sparrow (2)	4
Gadwall (30)	1	Rock Pigeon (392)	229	Field Sparrow (13)	
American Wigeon (14)		Mourning Dove (1117)	599	Savannah Sparrow (2)	
American Black Duck (190)	10	Eastern Screech-Owl (13)	2	Fox Sparrow (3)	
Mallard (670)	109	Great Horned Owl (10)	3	Song Sparrow (152)	92
N. Shoveler (2)		Barred Owl (5)		Lincoln's Sparrow (1)	
N. Pintail (10)		Long-eared Owl (1)		Swamp Sparrow (14)	2
Green-winged Teal (4)		Short-eared Owl (2)		White-throated Sparrow (214)	81
Canvasback (15)	CW	Belted Kingfisher (9)	1	White-crowned Sparrow (36)	
Redhead (14)		Red-headed Woodpecker (1)		Dark-eyed Junco (2272)	1055
Ring-necked Duck (41)	7	Red-bellied Woodpecker (72)	46	Northern Cardinal (584)	332
Greater Scaup (2)	CW	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (8)	1	Red-winged Blackbird (3570)	3
Lesser Scaup (32)	11	Downy Woodpecker (177)	85	Eastern Meadowlark (10)	
Surf Scoter (CW)		Hairy Woodpecker (58)	16	Rusty Blackbird (13)	
White-winged Scoter (1)		Northern Flicker (40)	3	Brewer's Blackbird (CW)	
Long-tailed Duck (3)		Pileated Woodpecker (31)	17	Common Grackle (503)	
Bufflehead (52)	CW	Am. Kestrel (26)	9	Brown-headed Cowbird (46)	
Common Goldeneye (7)	CW	Merlin (2)	1	Pine Grosbeak (1)	
Hooded Merganser (34)		Peregrine Falcon (1)		Purple Finch (89)	12
*Common Merganser (5)	10	Northern Shrike (1)		House Finch (1563)	234
Red-breasted Merganser (2)		Blue Jay (566)	197	White-winged Crossbill (62)	
Ruddy Duck (223)	3	American Crow (3275)	789	Common Redpoll (63)	
Ring-necked Pheasant (21)	4	Fish Crow (8)		Pine Siskin (375)	
Ruffed Grouse (22)	3	Common Raven (5)	3	American Goldfinch (637)	114
Wild Turkey (345)	100	*Horned Lark (200)	225	Evening Grosbeak (566)	
N. Bobwhite (1)		Black-capped Chickadee (808)	325	House Sparrow (809)	379
Red-throated Loon (1)		Tufted Titmouse (394)	198		
Common Loon (9)		Red-breasted Nuthatch (51)	1	Total Individuals (18,833)	8,843
Pied-billed Grebe (29)	2	White-breasted Nuthatch (201)	115		
Horned Grebe (7)	CW	Brown Creeper (25)	5	67 Species on 12/26/12 + 6 for CW	
Red-necked Grebe (1)		Carolina Wren (61)	34		
Double-crested Cormorant (1)		Winter Wren (4)	1	CW = Birds Seen During Count	
Great Blue Heron (8)	1	Golden-crowned Kinglet (106)	56	Week but Not Count Day	
Turkey Vulture (2)		Ruby-crowned Kinglet (4)		CW = December 23-29	
*Bald Eagle (3)	4	Eastern Bluebird (152)	45		
Northern Harrier (9)	1	Hermit Thrush (6)		* Record-breaking or Equal High	
Sharp-shinned Hawk (14)	4	Wood Thrush (CW)		Tally (4)	
Cooper's Hawk (15)	5	American Robin (1626)	9		
N. Goshawk (1)		Gray Catbird (2)		**Species New to the Count (none)	
Red-shouldered Hawk (5)	1	Northern Mockingbird (13)	12		
Red-tailed Hawk (70)	43	Brown Thrasher (1)		() Highest No. Seen on Any	
Rough-legged Hawk (3)		European Starling (8656)	1343	Previous Indiana CBC, 1983-2012	
Virginia Rail (1)		Cedar Waxwing (212)	53		
Am. Coot (811)		Lapland Longspur (6)	3	128 Species on Count since 1983	
Killdeer (7)	5	Snow Bunting (225)	1	(including 4 CW only species)	

Christmas Bird Count Observers

Pat Andrascik	Emmy Fairman	Janet Kuehl	Nancy Smeltzer
Tom Betts	Gary Ferrence	Tom Kuehl	John Somonick
Nathan Birch	Elise Fuller	Gloria Lamer	Linda Stormer
Sid Blair	Tom Fuller	Dennis Lauffer	Luke Stormer
Vernon Blystone	Sue Gatti	Mary A. Little	Rodger Stormer
Ken Byerly	Tom Glover	Howard Mandigo	Georgette Syster
Lee Carnahan	Carol Guba	Beth Marshall	John Taylor
Roger Carnahan	Margaret Higbee	Ken Marshall	Ila Tuorinsky
Dorcas Clark	Roger Higbee	Donna Meyer	Steve Tuorinsky
Dan Cunkelman	Dory Jacobs	Sara Pulliam	Chris Williams
Marcy Cunkelman	Pat Johner	Cindy Rogers	Paula Williams
Ed Donley	Linda Jones	Tim Schreckengost	Daniel Winstead

CBCs Past

Year	Total Species	Count Week	Individuals	Year	Total Species	Count Week	Individuals
1983	56	3	4188	1999	73	2	18827
1984	57	5	9540	2000	64	2	12397
1985	51	2	4468	2001	77	2	14365
1986	54	2	7453	2002	62	2	9739
1987	60	3	5676	2003	72	4	9687
1988	48	3	6670	2004	72	5	8788
1989	52	4	4309	2005	62	7	12130
1990	65	6	8502	2006	64	5	8762
1991	60	5	6004	2007	82	3	14344
1992	67	8	6435	2008	71	8	14329
1993	70	9	13490	2009	56	5	8472
1994	67	4	10759	2010	55	2	7174
1995	71	5	8637	2011	71	4	9029
1996	65	7	9994	2012	80	3	9094
1997	74	3	10180	2013	68	6	8843
1998	82	7	10873				

Christmas Bird Count Highlights

The Indiana CBC was held once again this year on our traditional date, December 26, and we met at 6:00 at Hoss's to compile the list. There were three nominations for the "bird of the count," now known as the James Dearing Award. Those were the Lapland Longspurs seen by Ken and Beth Marshall and Chris and Paula Williams and the Snow Bunting and Merlin, both found by Gloria Lamer and Georgette Syster. The award was given to the Marshall-Williams crew. Two Lick Reservoir hosted the only Gadwall, seen by Lee Carnahan. Yellow Creek and Two Lick provided the bulk of the waterfowl reports. In addition, Ed Donley, Mark Strittmatter, and John Taylor listed the lone Red-shouldered Hawk. Dan and Marcy

Cunkelman had found the count's one Belted Kingfisher. When we left the dinner, the species count had reached 60.

Subsequently, more data arrived. Gary Ferrence, Ken Byerly, and Tom and Janet Kuehl added the count's lone Northern Harrier and three Red-winged Blackbirds seen on Gary's farm. Sara Pulliam in Homer City added both Eastern Screech-Owls and one of the three Great Horned Owls; the other two were heard hooting by Rodger and Linda Stormer, who also spotted the only Red-breasted Nuthatch. Nathan Birch in Indiana and Ila and Steve Tuorinsky near Penn Run added the two Eastern Towhees at their feeders. Thanks to everyone who participated!!!

Great Backyard Bird Count

The 2014 GBBC is scheduled for Friday, February 14, through Monday, February 17. Please join us for the 17th annual count!

This annual four-day event engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are.

GBBC checklists can be accepted from anywhere in the world!

Everyone is welcome to participate – beginning bird watchers to experts. You may spend as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you may count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.



You might find a Northern Mockingbird on the GBBC like this one photographed by Marcy Cunkelman.

Participants tally the number of individual birds of each species they see during their count periods. They enter these numbers on the GBBC website.

New participants must set up a free GBBC account to submit their checklists or use login information from an existing account for any other Cornell Lab citizen-science project. You'll only need to do this once to participate in all future GBBC events. Click "Submit Your Bird Checklist" at the top of this page or see "How to Participate" for more details.

As the count progresses, anyone with Internet access can explore what is being reported.

Participants may also submit photos of the birds they see for the GBBC photo contest. A selection of images is posted in the online photo gallery at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/gallery>.

A Note from Kristi

Todd secretary Georgette Syster recently received a note from Kristi Dearing who has moved to Largo, Florida. Kristi, a former regular participant of the Indiana CBC and widow of the late Jim Dearing, writes:

"I wanted to add my 'list' for the bird count, Dec. 26, 2013. Two highlights –

1. Three Wood Storks – they are here from app. October to May or so – right across the street!

2. A gang of Black Vultures (11 or 12), sitting in a tree ogling an opossum – it was 'playing dead.' I got out of my car and they just wouldn't budge. Grrrrr.

Lots of beautiful egrets, herons, Brown Pelicans, and the occasional Bald Eagle!

Greetings to you & the Todd Bird Club – Kristi Dearing"

Plant It and They Will Come!



Marcy Cunkelman photographed this beautiful American Robin feeding on Red Chokeberry

Indiana - Armstrong - Cambria County

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

Locations: Armstrong Trail (AT), Blue Spruce County Park (BS), Blacklick Valley Natural Area (BVNA), Crooked Creek Park (CC), Keystone Reservoir, Lewisville (LV), Prince Gallitzin State Park (PG), Reservoir Hill in Indiana (RH), Rosston (RT), Shelocta (SH), Yellow Creek State Park (YC).

Canada Goose maxima at CC included 243 on 11/12 (TR) and 300 on 11/16 (TR); the YC flock had built to 470 by 11/28 (LC). Two **Mute Swans** were spotted at Chest Springs 11/6 (DG, JS). The first flock of 218 **Tundra Swans** flew over Indiana 11/7 (GL); 22 visited KR 11/8 (MH, RH); high counts at YC were 137 on 11/9 (LC, MH, RH) and 116 on 11/12 (LC, SD, MH, RH); PG hosted 30 on 11/11 (JS) and 52 on 11/15 (JS); 25 were found along the AT, n. of Dam 8 on 11/23 (TR).

The majority of high counts for waterfowl were much lower than last year's maxima. PG harbored a high of 45 **Wood Ducks** 9/30 (JS) while YC on 10/4 (TR) yielded the high **Wood Duck** count of 50; 12 remained at PG 11/11 (JS), and 5 still lingered at YC the next day (LC, SD, MH, RH). First **Gadwall** arrived 10/15 (TG) at YC; 6 appeared at PG 10/30 (JS) where the best count was 8 on 11/15 (JS); *Armstrong's* first 2 were noted 11/3 (LC) at KR; best YC tallies included 70 on 11/5 (LC, TG, MH, RH) and 52 on 11/7 (LC); 2 were present at CC 11/29 (TR). Arrival date for **American Wigeon** was 10/4 (LC, TG, MH, RH, GL) at YC where numbers peaked at 69 on 10/22 (TG) and 52 on 11/7 (LC); PG's first 7 arrived 10/21 (JS), and 2 were still present 11/11 (JS). First **American Black Duck** was sighted 9/17 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH) at YC; 5 appeared at CC 10/26 (SG); high tallies included 12 at KR 11/3 (LC), 7 at PG 10/21,30 (JS), and 5 at Two Lick Reservoir 11/4 (LC), 10 at CC 11/16 (TR), and 20 along the AT, n. of Dam 8 on 11/23 (TR). **Mallard** maxima were 20 on 8/25 (JB) along the Kiski near Roaring Run, 66 at YC 10/22 (TG), and 18 at RT 11/30 (TR). First **Blue-winged Teal** arrived 8/23 (MVT) at CC and 8/25 (LC) at YC where numbers had spiked to only 38 by 9/28 (LC, MH, RH, GL); 4 were at KR 9/13 (MH, RH); last observed was a singleton at YC 11/5 (LC, TG, MH, RH). September 17 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH) marked the arrival of the first **Northern Shoveler** at YC where the high count of 8 was noted both 10/27 (LC) and 11/12 (LC, SD, MH, RH). A single **Northern Pintail** appeared at YC 9/24 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML); 2 visited KR 9/27 (MH, RH); a flock of 8 was sighted at YC 10/27 (LC). YC hosted the first 4 **Green-winged Teal** 9/17 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH); 37 was YC's high 10/15 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH).

KR hosted a single **Canvasback** 10/30 (MH, RH) that remained through 11/3 (LC); one on 11/9 (LC, MH, RH) was YC's first; 4 counted 11/28 (LC) at YC was the high. Two **Redheads** were spotted at YC 11/3 (DJM) while the

best tally of 26 was noted there 11/28 (LC). Twenty-four **Ring-necked Ducks** were listed 11/3 (LC) at KR, where by 11/8 (MH, RH) numbers had peaked at 45; maxima included 191 at PG 11/11 (JS) and 161 at YC 11/12 (LC, SD, MH, RH); 15 stopped at CC 11/13 (MVT) while KR's last were 2 on 11/24 (LC); Ring-necks continued into the winter season at YC. Seven **Lesser Scaup** arrived 10/25 (AF) at Duman Dam; 4, at YC on 10/29 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, KT) while peak counts were only 40 at PG 11/11 (JS) and 24 at YC 11/28 (LC). Single **Surf Scoters** landed on YC lake 10/15 (TG) and were noted on four other dates through 11/7 (LC). PG's high Bufflehead tally was 45 on 11/11 (JS); fallouts of Buffleheads occurred 11/12 with counts of 1172 at YC (LC, SD, MH, RH), 270 at KR (LC), 132 at RT (TR), and 24 at CC (TR); 2 were found 11/23 (TR) along the AT, north of Dam 8. Eight **Common Goldeneyes** listed 11/12 (LC, SD, MH, RH) and 2 a week later (LC, TG, MH, RH), all at YC, were the only ones reported. **Hooded Merganser** highs occurred 11/11 (JS) with 25 counted at PG and 11/12 with tallies of 33 at YC (LC, SD, MH, RH) and 13 at CC (TR); KR yielded 10 on 11/24 (LC). **Common Mergansers** were widespread in *Armstrong* with reports of 16 on 9/20 (MVT) on Creek Road, an equal number 9/25 (MVT) at the Climax Bridge, 18 on the Kiski between Apollo and Leechburg 10/23 (MVT), and 34 at CC 11/29 (TR); 2 at Conemaugh Dam 11/23 (MP) were the only ones reported in *Indiana*. First 5 **Ruddy Ducks** arrived 10/4 (LC) at YC; KR harbored 23 on 10/20 (LC) while PG's high of 45 occurred the following day (JS); on 11/5 (LC, TG, MH, RH) YC numbers peaked at 613, less than one-third of last year's high.

A family group of 10 **Ring-necked Pheasants** was observed near Penn Run 8/21 (CL, GL). Only 5 **Ruffed Grouse** were reported in *Indiana* this season, one at YC on two dates (v.o.) and 4 along the Ghost Town Trail 10/2 (MH, RH); *Cambria* yielded 11 (PJF), and *Armstrong*, none.



Marge Van Tassel found this flock of Common Mergansers along the Kiski near her home.

Single **Red-throated Loons** were listed 10/30 (JS) at PG and 11/19 (LC, TG, MH, RH) at YC. First **Common Loon** arrived at PG 10/21 (JS); 5 appeared at YC 10/25 (LC) while 2 spotted there 11/28 (LC) were last. September 27 (MH, RH) marked the arrival of the first **Pied-billed Grebe** at KR where 14 was the count 11/8 (MH, RH); one was found at RT 11/30 (TR). YC's Pied-billed Grebe numbers spiked at 119 on 10/29 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, KT), but 10 still lingered at YC 11/27 (LC) with reports bleeding into the next period. YC harbored the first **Horned Grebe** 10/15 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH); high YC count was 6 on 10/18 (LC); the only ones noted in *Armstrong* were 2 at KR 11/8 (MH, RH) and one at RT 11/20 (TR); 2 stopped at PG 11/17 (RL).

A **Double-crested Cormorant** resting at CC 8/5 (MVT) was first; top tally at YC 10/11 (LC) was 10, but PG yielded 120 on 10/15 (JS).

A **Great Egret** found at YC 9/8 (SG) remained through 9/10 (m.ob). Last **Green Heron** was found 9/22 (MH, RH) near SH, where as many as 3 individuals had been roosting in a row of blue spruce since 8/26 (MH, RH); a calling individual flying over downtown Indiana after dark on 10/28 (DL) was late. A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was a great find at YC 10/5 (TG).

Last **Turkey Vultures** included one over KR 10/24 (LC), 3 at YC 11/2 (3RBC, TBC), and 20 on RH 11/6 (PJ).

Migrating **Osprey** included one at Colver Reservoir 8/13 (AF), 1-3 birds at YC between 8/18 (MHu) and 9/28 (LC, MH, RH, GL), and individuals at PG between 9/7 (DG, GG) and 9/29 (RL).

One to 2 **Bald Eagles** were listed both at YC (v.o.) on eight dates between 8/18 (MHu) and 11/19 (LC, TG, MH, RH) and at PG on five dates between 8/11 (RL) and 11/11 (JS) with sightings of both adult and immature birds; an immature eagle flew over BS 9/14 (MH, RH); an adult was seen at the Smicksburg Cheese Factory 10/26 (LC, MH, RH). Single **Northern Harriers** visited YC 10/1, 22 and 11/5 (v.o.) and PG 11/11 (JS) while both a male and a female were sighted at YC 11/12 (LC, SD, MH, RH). **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were noted at five locations this quarter; **Cooper's Hawks**, at eleven (v.o.). Last **Broad-winged Hawks** were listed 9/15 (MD, PL, ST) at PG and 9/18 (MH, RH) at BS.

The first 35 **American Coots** arrived 10/1 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM) at YC; top counts were 95 at PG (JS) and 101 at KR (MH, RH), both on 10/30, and 814 on 11/12 (LC, SD, MH, RH) at YC.

PG hosted **American Avocets** on three dates this fall: 3 on 8/11 (RL), 7 on 8/16 (DG), and 2 on 8/26 (JS). An **American Golden-Plover** was sighted 9/17 (LC, TG, MH, RH) on the beach at YC. A **Black-bellied Plover** was found at PG 9/24-30 (JS). The season's first **Semipalmated Plover** appeared 8/23 (SG, MVT) at CC where it remained through 8/29 (MVT); YC's reports included one on 10/11 (LC) and 10/15 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH, DH) in Little Yellow Cove. CC's high **Killdeer** tallies were 30 on 10/5 (TR) and 42 ten days later (MVT); YC's maxima included 26 on 10/22 (LC, TG, MH, RH) and 32 on 11/2 (3RBC, TBC); one lingered at YC till 11/12 (LC, SD, MH, RH).

Last **Spotted Sandpiper** and **Solitary Sandpiper** were respectively found at YC 8/27 (LC, TG, MH, RH, LW) and 10/5 (LC, TG, MH, RH); 2 Solitaires were listed at KR 9/13 (MH, RH). One to 3 **Greater Yellowlegs** were noted on eight dates bracketed by 9/3 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML) and

11/9 (LC, MH, RH). A **Lesser Yellowlegs** was first seen at CC 8/5 (MVT); 2 appeared on 8/9 (LC) at YC where 4 late birds were noted 11/3 (DJM). A **Ruddy Turnstone** that appeared in Little Yellow Cove 9/3 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML) was unexpected. Seven **Dunlin** arrived 10/22 (LC, TG, MH, RH) at YC; 2 were heard nocturnally in Indiana 10/29 (DL); high counts included 22 on 11/1 (LC) and 18 on 11/5 (LC, TG, MH, RH); last were 16 on 11/7 (LC). A **Baird's Sandpiper** arrived right in front of the observers as they



Marge Van Tassel photographed this pair of Bald Eagles at Crooked Creek 11/17.

were studying an American Golden-Plover on the YC beach 9/17 (LC, TG, MH, RH). Five **Least Sandpipers** visited YC 8/6 (LC, MH, RH); 7 was the high tally 8/27 (LC, TG, MH, RH, LW) at YC; one also stopped at CC 8/29 (MVT) while last seen was a single bird 10/15 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH) at YC. One to 3 **Pectoral Sandpipers** were sighted at YC on 12 dates between 8/25 (LC) and 11/5 (LC, TG, MH, RH); in *Armstrong* 2 Pectorals at KR 10/30 (MH, RH) were the only ones noted. **Semipalmated Sandpiper** reports, both at YC, included only 2 on 8/27 (LC, TG, MH, RH, LW) and one 9/5 (DJM). A **Short-billed Dowitcher** feeding in Little Yellow Cove 8/27 (LC, TG, MH, RH, LW) remained through 9/3 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML). Two **Wilson's Snipe** were found 9/21 (ST) at YC where 5 were counted 10/25 (LC); PG yielded one 9/30 (PJ); the last report of 3 occurred 11/5 (LC, TG, MH, RH) at YC. An **American Woodcock** was flushed near Kingbird Point at YC 9/24 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML).

Four **Bonaparte's Gulls** arrived 11/12 (LC, SD, MH, RH) at YC; the only other report involved one individual, also at YC, 11/19 (LC, TG, MH, RH). **Ring-billed Gulls** were reported at YC on only six dates with 11/23 (LC) yielding

the best tally of 114; 30 at RT 11/12 (TR) comprised *Armstrong's* entire gull report. Two **Common Terns** stopped at YC 9/8 (SG), the lone report. Four **Forster's Terns**, 8/9 (AF) at YC and one photographed at CC 8/19 (MVT) were the only ones listed.

BS yielded the last **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** 9/26 (MH, RH) and the last **Black-billed Cuckoo** 9/14 (MH, RH); the same date yielded *Armstrong's* last Black-billed at CC (MVT).

Eastern Screech-Owls were noted at Colver Reservoir 8/13 (AF), at CC 8/23 (MVT), and near SH between 8/23-9/3 (MH, RH), a prime time for their calling; Oct. yielded screech-owls at four additional *Armstrong* locations (v.o.). Two **Great Horned Owls** were hooting near SH 8/23 (MH, RH). **Barred Owls** were calling near Nolo 8/20-26 (AB, DB), near SH 8/24, 9/26 (MH, RH), and at YC 10/5 (LC, TG, MH, RH); Oct. also yielded four reports of Barred Owl at CC (v.o.).

Four rather late **Common Nighthawks** flew over N. Apollo 10/12 (SS), the same date and location of the last reported 25 **Chimney Swifts**.

Last **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** included one near SH 9/13 (MH, RH) and another near Lewisville 9/30 (MC). September 26 (PJF) produced the first migrant **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** sighting at Patton while YC's first was sighted two days later (LC, MH, RH, GL); on 10/2 there were 4 at BS (MH, RH) and one near LV (DC, MC); Saylor Park yielded 3 on 11/16 (TG, MH, RH, IG, DN).



This Merlin visited Crooked Creek Park 8/9 and was photographed by Marge Van Tassel.

A **Merlin**, photographed at CC 8/29 (MVT), was a nice find; another flew over a yard near SH 9/9 (MH); a juvenile was observed feeding "on the wing" in midair at PG 9/15 (MD, PL, ST); the observer surmised the prey was a dragonfly. A singleton was seen at YC 9/17 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH), 9/28 (LC, MH, RH, GL), and 11/12 (LC, SD, MH, RH). A **Peregrine Falcon** visited YC 10/1 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM), and another was

found perched along the Ghost Town Trail two days later (MH, RH); one was also sighted near N. Apollo 10/12 (SS).

Last **Eastern Wood-Pewees** included birds along Crooked Creek 9/20 (MVT), at YC 9/21 (ST), and at PG 9/29 (PJF). BS produced the season's only 2 **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** sightings 9/11, 18 (MH, RH) as well as the last calling **Acadian Flycatcher** 9/26 (MH, RH).



Steve Gosser photographed the Barred Owl at Crooked Creek.

Single **Willow Flycatchers** were last observed at PG 8/26 (JS) and at YC 8/27 (LC, TG, MH, RH, LW). The last **Least Flycatcher** was spotted at SGL 137 on 9/6 (TR). Lingered **Eastern Phoebes** included 4 at YC 10/15 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH) and one at KR 10/20 (LC). YC hosted the last **Great Crested Flycatcher** 9/8 (SG), and the last **Eastern Kingbird** 9/5 (DJM).

Last vireo dates included 9/26 (MH, RH) at BS for **Yellow-throated Vireo**, **Warbling Vireo**, and **Red-eyed Vireo** and 10/22 (LC, TG) at YC for **Blue-headed Vireo**. Reports included five **Philadelphia Vireo** sightings – one at BS 9/18 (MH, RH), one near SH 9/19 (MH), one at PG 9/21 (ST), and 2 at BS (MH, RH) and one at Patton (PJF), the latter two sightings 9/26.

Chest Springs was the location of 11 **Horned Lark** 11/6 (DG, JS); the count near YC 11/12, 26 (MH, RH) was 13.

A **Purple Martin** appeared at YC 8/6 (LC, MH, RH). Last swallow dates were 9/10 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK, RN) for 2 **Tree Swallows** at YC, 8/20 (TG) for 3 **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** at YC, 9/3 (LC, MH, DM) for one **Cliff Swallow** also at YC, 9/9 (JS) for 22 **Bank Swallows** at PG, and 9/21 (ST) for 5 **Barn Swallows** at PG. Also of note was the count of more than 100 Barn Swallows at PG 9/9 (JS).

PG hosted one **Red-breasted Nuthatch** 9/6 (DG, GG) and 9/15 (MD, PL, ST); one to 2 were noted near SH 9/19-25 (MH, RH); Patton produced one 9/26 (PJF); one spotted at CC 10/15 (MVT) was the last reported. Last **House Wrens** were found 9/19 (MH) near SH and 9/26 (PJF) at Patton. **Winter Wren** reports included one at BS 9/26 (MH, RH) and 10/2 (MH, RH), 2 at BVNA 10/12 (LC, MH, RH), one on RH 10/16 (PJ), 2 at YC 10/19 (SG), and one along the AT n. of Dam 8 on 11/23 (TR). Last **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** were one at CC 9/5 (MH, JV, MVT) and 4 found at YC 9/7 (DJM). First migrant **Golden-crowned Kinglets** arrived at KR 9/27 (MH, RH), at Patton 9/28 (PJF), and at BS 9/30 (MH, RH). PG yielded the first **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** 9/21 (ST) while a yard near SH produced the first for *Indiana* 9/22 (MH, RH); the last 2 seen were one at YC 10/27 (LC) and one at PG 10/30 (JS).

A **Veery** at YC 9/7 (DJM) and a **Gray-cheeked Thrush** at BS 9/18 (MH, RH) were the only ones reported. BS also yielded single **Swainson's Thrushes** 9/14, 18 (MH, RH) while PG produced one 9/29 (PJF). Two **Hermit Thrushes** were spotted at BS 10/25 (MH, RH), and a singleton stopped at YC 10/29 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, KT); on the evening after dark on 10/29 (DL) at least 10 passed over Indiana. The last reported **Wood Thrushes** were at BS 9/26 (MH, RH) and at PG 9/29 (PJF). Lingered **Gray Catbirds** were noted 11/11 (JS) at PG and 11/19 (LC, TG, MH, RH) at YC. The last **Brown Thrashers** were individuals at PG 9/29 (PJF) and at YC 10/1 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM). Twenty-six **American Pipits** visited an area near Bakerton Reservoir 10/9 (MM); a farm near YC yielded 8 pipits 11/12 (MH, RH); the latter location yielded one on 11/26 (MH, RH).

Ovenbirds remained both on RH (PJ) and at CC (SG) 9/29 and at BS 10/4 (TR). The SH area produced the last **Blue-winged Warbler** 9/18 (MH, RH). A **Northern Waterthrush** lingered at Patton 9/26 (PJF). September 30 (MH, RH) was the last date for **Black-and-white Warbler** at BS while one was still found at PG 10/6 (RL). Two **Tennessee Warblers** and 2 **Nashville Warblers** lingered 10/2 (MH, RH) at BS. A **Connecticut Warbler** was a great find at PG 9/27 (PJF). Four **Common Yellowthroats** were listed at KR 9/27 (MH, RH), at SGL 108 on 9/30 (PJF), and at BS 10/2 (MH, RH). Last **Hooded Warblers** were noted 9/26 (MH, RH) at BS and 9/27 (PJF) at PG. An **American Redstart** at BS 10/2 (MH, RH) was last. **Cape May Warblers** moved through the region between 8/27 (LC, TG, MH, RH, LW) and 10/1 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM); high count of 10 occurred at YC 9/6 (DJM).

Last **Northern Parulas** appeared at PG 9/15 (MD, PL, ST) and at BS 9/26 (MH, RH). The last **Magnolia Warbler** was found on RH 10/5 (PJ). **Bay-breasted Warblers** visited the region between 9/3 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML) and 9/26 (MH, RH); 3 were counted at PG 9/15 (MD, PL, ST). Last **Blackburnian Warbler** was noted 9/26 (MH, RH) at BS while the last **Yellow Warbler** was found 9/7 (DJM) at YC. A **Chestnut-sided Warbler** lingered at YC 10/1 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM), but 2 rather late ones were seen on RH 10/14 (PJ). **Blackpoll Warblers** stopped at YC 9/3 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML) through 10/1 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM); at PG 9/15 (MD, PL, ST) through 9/27 (PJF); and were last seen at BS 10/2 (MH, RH); high count was only 6 at BS 9/30 (MH, RH). An immature female **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was found at YC 8/24 (DJM); BS harbored 2 blues on 9/26 (MH, RH) and PG, 4 on 9/27 (PJF); last was one at BS 10/2 (MH, RH). Single **Palm Warblers** passed through the region between 9/6 (DJM), when one was spotted at YC, and 10/13 (RL), when the last was found at PG. Last **Pine Warblers** were 3 at Wilmore Dam 10/1 (JS) and 2 at YC 10/4 (TG, MH, RH, ML). First **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was sighted at YC 8/27 (LC, TG, MH, RH, LW); numbers peaked 10/4, both at BS (TR) where 12 were tallied and at YC (LC, TG, MH, RH, GL) where

the count was 10; 10 was also the count the following day at CC (TR). PG yielded the last **Prairie Warbler** 9/21 (ST). The last **Black-throated Green Warblers** appeared at BVNA 10/12 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH) and on RH 10/14 (PJ). A **Canada Warbler** at BS 9/11 (MH, RH) was the only one seen this fall. BS produced single **Wilson's Warblers** 9/11, 26 and 10/2 (MH, RH) while one was observed at PG 9/15 (MD, PL, ST).

The last 2 **Eastern Towhees** were listed at YC 10/22 (LC, TG, MH, RH) while CC's last occurred 10/26 (SG). Arrival date for **American Tree Sparrows** was 11/5 (LC, TG, MH, RH) at YC. Last **Chipping Sparrow** was at YC 10/29 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, KT). A **Savannah Sparrow** put in an appearance at YC 10/22 (LC, TG, MH, RH). **Fox Sparrows** were in short supply with only two reports, both at YC, single birds 10/29 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM) and 11/5 (LC, TG, MH, RH). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was a nice find at BS 9/30 (MH, RH). **White-throated Sparrows** arrived both 9/26 near SH (MH, RH) and at Patton (PJF). The first **White-crowned Sparrow** was sighted 9/24 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML) at YC where 5 was a good White-crowned count 10/19 (SG). **Dark-eyed Juncos** first appeared at BVNA 10/12 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH).

BS yielded the last **Scarlet Tanager** 9/30 (MH, RH). The last **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were listed 9/24 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML) at YC and 9/29 (SG) at CC. One **Indigo Bunting** lingered at YC 10/4 (TR).

An **Eastern Meadowlark** remained at PG 10/30 (JS). **Rusty Blackbirds** moved through YC between 9/24 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML) and 11/12 (LC, SD, MH, RH) with the best count of 164 on 11/2 (3RBC, TBC). Last **Common Grackle** was a single bird at BS 10/25 (MH, RH). **Brown-headed Cowbirds** were unreported after 8/6 (LC, MH, RH) when one was listed at YC. Last **Baltimore Orioles** were noted at YC 9/3 (LC, TG, MH, RH, ML) and at CC through 9/5 (MH, JV, MVT).

Observers: Alice Beatty, Dave Beatty, Norman Bond, Jessica Botzan, Ken Byerly, Lee Carnahan, Dan Cunkelman, Marcy Cunkelman, Michael David, Sue Dickson, PJ Falatek (PJF), Ann Fasioli, Betsy Fetterman, Ingrid Gehle, Tom Glover, Dave Gobert, Steve Gosser, Deb Grove, Greg Grove, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, Daniel Hinnebusch, Matthew Hunt (MHu), Pat Johnner, Debbie Kalbfleisch, Clayton Lamer, Gloria Lamer, Dennis Lauffer, Melissa Little, Patrick Lister, Renee Lubert, Mark McConaughy, DJ McNeil (DJM), Donna Meyer, David Narins, Richard Nugent, Morgan Pfeiffer, Theo Rickert, John Salvetti, Steve Shipman, John Taylor, Shannon Thompson, Ken Truitt, Josie Valasek, Marge Van Tassel, Linda Wagner, Three Rivers Birding Club (3RBC), Todd Bird Club (TBC).



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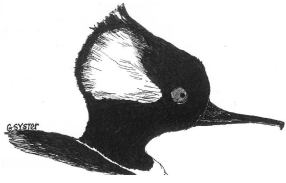
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The Eastern Meadowlark, the subject of our February 4 presentation, has undergone a dramatic decrease in population between the first and second PA Breeding Bird Atlases. Don't miss this meeting!!!

Photo by Cris Hamilton





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