

The Todd Nuthatch



Indiana, PA

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

August 2015

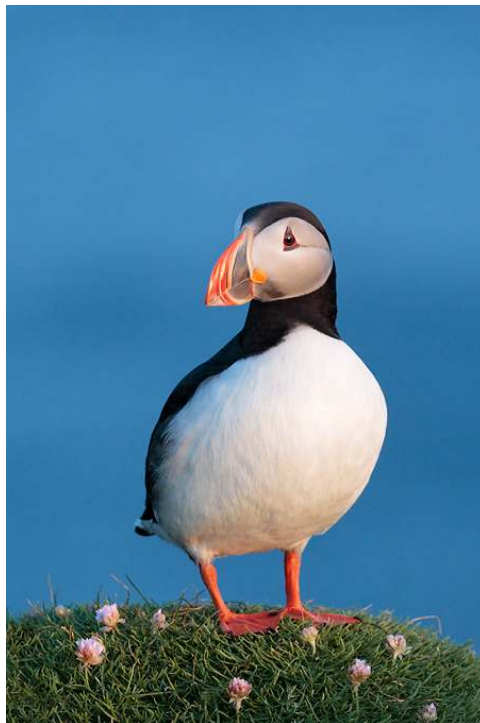
Meetings

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 by 7:00 to socialize and snack. Refreshments are provided at each of our meetings. In May we hold our banquet meeting which starts at 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 1 – Patrick Snickles, Wildlife Education Supervisor, PGC, Southwest Region, will present “Birds of a Lesser Feather.” Enjoy learning about some of our state’s seldom seen and often forgotten feathered friends. Patrick will discuss some of western Pennsylvania’s less common species.

Some of these birds are skulkers, spending much time in high vegetation; some are nocturnal; others, live high in the tree tops and are seldom seen. He’ll include a few biological facts, physiological traits, current status, and other interesting tidbits of information. Don’t miss this interesting program!!!

Tuesday, October 6 – Join Mike Shaffer, Park Naturalist at Moraine and McConnells Mill State Park for



Geoff Malosh photographed this striking Atlantic Puffin at Latrabjarg on July 3, 2013.

an interesting look into the color of autumn. Learn why plants are green and ultimately why they turn the colors they do in the fall.

Tuesday, November 3 – “Journey to the North Atlantic: Iceland” is the title of Geoff Malosh’s presentation. We’ll travel with him across the “Land of Fire and Ice,” with his excellent photos of Atlantic Puffins, Whimbrels, Black-tailed Godwits, Parasitic Jaegers, and more!

Geoff and his wife Kristin spent two weeks during the summer of 2013 touring Iceland, noted for its spectacular beauty and unique culture.

Geoff, a 1997 Michigan State University graduate who majored in physics, started birding just before he turned 8. He

states, “One of my earliest memories is a Red-eyed Vireo just ten feet away outside the bedroom window of my childhood house in Scott Township. Another early formative memory from 1984 was holding a Black-throated Blue Warbler and an American Redstart in my hand at Ron Leberman’s banding station at Presque Isle State Park.”

Geoff serves as the editor of the magazine *Pennsylvania Birds* and is well known for his superb photography.

Outings

Tuesday morning outings at Yellow Creek will continue till deer season. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office located on Rt. 259, just off Rt. 422 east of Indiana. Early comers are invited to meet at the pavilion on the north shore shortly after dawn. Everyone – from beginner to expert birder – is welcome. If you have any questions, contact Lee Carnahan (724-388-4667) or Roger or Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493).

Sunday, August 23 – Annual Todd Bird Club picnic at the home of Dan & Marcy Cunkelman at 1:00 p.m. Please bring a covered dish to share and your own lawn chair. RSVP (724-459-7229 or plant4nature@gmail.com.)

Saturday, August 29 – Conneaut Harbor, Ohio, led by Roger and Margaret Higbee. We will spend a good part of the day at this shorebird mecca then bird our way home. Plans are to leave Indiana at 6:00 a.m. If you plan to attend, contact the Higbees for details (724-354-3493).

Saturday, September 5 – Blue Spruce County Park, led by John Taylor (724-397-2040). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the first large parking lot just past the park office. This is our annual outing for fall warblers and other migrants.

Friday to Monday, September 11 - 14 – Delaware, led by former Todd president, Steve Graff. We'll be based in Dover and bird a variety of locations including Bombay Hook, Port Mahon, Mispillion Point, Slaughter Beach, Prime Hook NWR, and Cape Henlopen. If you plan to attend, contact the Higbees for details (724-354-3493).

Saturday, September 19 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by Sue Dickson (724-388-5000). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office.

Saturday, September 26 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by Tom Glover (tomnglover@comcast.net). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office.

Saturday, October 3 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by Lee Carnahan (724-388-4667). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office.

Saturday, October 10 – Ghost Town Trail, led by Roger and Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493). Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot at Dilltown.

Saturday & Sunday, October 10-11 – *Birdwatcher's Digest's* Big Sit. Create your own 17-foot-diameter circle then count all the birds you see, or find a pre-existing circle to join. Our state has led the whole world with the most circles.

Saturday, October 17 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by Gloria Lamer (724-349-1159). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office

Tuesday, October 20 – Hawk watch trip to the Allegheny Front. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Yellow Creek State Park office to carpool or meet at the hawk watch at 9:15 a.m. For information contact Roger or Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493). Bring your lunch and something to sit on. Dress warmly as it is often cold and windy on the Front.

Saturday, October 24 – Mahoning Shadow Trail, led by Tom Glover (tomnglover@comcast.net). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Valier trailhead parking lot.

Saturday, October 31 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by Lee Carnahan (724-388-4667). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the park office.

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

Would You Like to Lead an Outing? Is There Some Place You'd Like to Bird?

Would you like to lead an outing or schedule one to a new location? Do you have a favorite birding locale that you'd like to share? Just let our Outings Chairpersons know. They are always looking for new ideas and new leaders. Outings co-chairs are Lee Carnahan (724-388-4667) and Tom Glover (tomnglover@comcast.net).

“Johnny Appleseed” of the Late Pleistocene

By Tom Glover

History tells us about “Johnny Appleseed,” John Chapman, an American nurseryman who introduced apple trees to a large part of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and the northern counties of West Virginia. And like Johnny, a bird helped spread nut trees in the same area during the late Pleistocene, the Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*).

During the late Pleistocene the environment south of the Wisconsin glacier, in the same area Johnny plied his trade, was a mix of tundra and taiga ecosystems. Starting about 18,000-20,000 BP, the glacier’s maximum extent, the ice receded north; and as the ice melted, vegetation spread into this new barren landscape. Part of this army of marching vegetation were the nut trees – the oaks, beech, and chestnut. Research into the rate of the migration of these trees created a paradox. The rate of nut trees moving into this landscape left behind as the glacier melted far exceeded the natural dispersal capabilities of the trees. For example, using the distance between the south-north boundaries of Pennsylvania, which is approximately 160 miles, and the unaided rate of natural migration of oaks of about 100 feet every ten years, it would take oaks about 84,500 years to migrate across Pennsylvania. But research shows that oaks took less than 5,000 years to move roughly 1,000 miles from their range in the deep south of the present day US during the last ice age to their modern day northern limit. At that rate, it took the oaks about 735 years. to march across present day Pennsylvania. One of the theories that accounts for this rapid migration of the nut trees is the natural behavior of the Blue Jay.

The familiar Blue Jay has a number of attributes that strongly support the theory it aided the rapid migration of nut trees during the late Pleistocene. The primary foods of the Blue Jay are nuts and acorns, and the bird caches nuts and acorns in the ground. Blue Jays have been observed caching nuts up to 2.5 miles from the source tree. And they can move enormous quantities of nuts each fall. An estimated 50 Jays were observed moving and caching over 150,000 acorns during a 28-day period. With an expandable throat and esophagus, a jay can transport up to three White Oak acorns, 5 Pin Oak acorns, or 15 Beechnuts. And while transporting nuts and acorns, the bird will also carry an extra in its beak. The cached nuts and acorns are buried and covered with leaf litter, further hiding them from other thieves. Unlike a number of other bird species, the Blue Jay does not have a muscular gizzard that grinds food. Jays have the ability to pick sound viable nuts and acorns, which in turn increase the chance of forgotten cached nuts and acorns germinating.

Fossil remains of Blue Jays from the late Pleistocene and early Holocene have been found from Virginia to Missouri, with one find in Tennessee dated 11,640 BP. And even older Blue Jay remains were found at the Reddick fossil site in Florida dated between 200,000-114,000 BP.

The natural behavior of the Blue Jay and its presence during the late Pleistocene strongly support the theory that it was a primary factor of the rapid migration of nut and acorn bearing trees after the receding glacier of the last ice age.

Give the Gift of Todd Bird Club

Do you know someone who is interested in birds? Do you need a gift for a birder? Dues are \$5 student, \$10 individual, or \$15 family. Send dues to our treasurer:

Gloria Lamer, Treasurer, 515 Laurel Run Road, Penn Run, PA 15765

Amount Paid _____

Name (s) _____

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Address _____

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Stalking the Swainson's Warbler

By Richard Nugent

At 7:30 a.m. on Thursday June 4, 2015, I departed Allison Park for West Virginia. As I drove south on I-79 through West Virginia, the forested hillsides were festooned with numerous Mountain Laurel in full bloom, which looked like pink spheres. I saw many Turkey Vultures and a few American Crows, but none of the Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles, which are so common along Pennsylvania highways.

As soon as I arrived at the New River Gorge, I went to the Endless Wall Trail (Trailhead #1). At 12:31 p.m. I started to explore the trail. Ovenbirds and Hooded Warblers were common, and one female Hooded Warbler put on a distraction display for me. I heard a bird that I did not recognize and then it gave its call note, and I realized that it was a Summer Tanager. Just past the bridge, I heard a Swainson's Warbler, a life bird for me, in a dense rhododendron thicket. I then stood there waiting to see the bird and I got a glimpse of movement. Before I got binoculars on the bird, a runner came by forcing me off the trail and making the bird depart for more peaceful wilderness. There was a sign warning of bears and recommending how to avoid unpleasant encounters with bears. Running through the woods was not on the list. This is a beautiful trail with Blooming Mountain Laurel and lots of rhododendron and Eastern Hemlock. I also enjoyed seeing the leaves of Rattlesnake Plantain (an orchid) and Spotted Wintergreen. On the ground were carpets of Partridge Berry in bloom, and Indian Pipe was just poking through the leaf litter. Other birds of note were:

Red-shouldered Hawk	Blue-headed Vireo
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Scarlet Tanager
Veery	

I made a stop at the visitor's center to get maps. The gentleman behind the desk admitted to knowing nothing about birds, but he was able to supply me with maps of the nearby trails. Bird highlights were a vocal Northern Mockingbird and a Baltimore Oriole.

I went back to the Endless Wall Trail, but this time started at Trailhead #2. As soon as I got out of my car, I could hear a Swainson's Warbler singing. A solid wall of rhododendron leaves prevented me from having any chance of seeing the warbler. I was serenaded again by Ovenbirds and Hooded Warblers as well as singing Wood Thrushes. I considered going off trail to look for the

Swainson's Warbler, but the signs warning of ticks and Lyme disease dissuaded me. I walked to the endless wall, the rock cliffs at the rim of the 800-foot-deep canyon. I followed a few side trails to the rim with excellent views of the gorge. This is where lizards may be found if you are lucky.

I finished birding that day at Fayetteville Municipal Park. This park has a wooded nature trail, a paved walking trail, ballfields, and a skateboard area with deep concrete pits for very daring skateboarders. If I had fallen in, I don't think I could have climbed out. The expected birds were here as well as an Eastern Kingbird, which I was not expecting. Below is my select list of birds:

Eastern Phoebe	Eastern Bluebird
Chimney Swift	Brown-headed Cowbird
Chipping Sparrow	Killdeer (with babies)
Common Grackle (not common)	House Finch

I then checked into the Holliday Lodge and spent a comfortable night. In the morning I enjoyed the complementary hot breakfast and checked out.

I drove straight to parking lot #2 of the Endless Wall Trail, arriving at 7:51 a.m. Again I heard the Swainson's Warbler singing from the parking lot. Because it was early in the morning, a lot more birds were singing, and they were more active. I walked down the trail a couple hundred yards to where another Swainson's Warbler was singing. After waiting about 15 minutes, I finally got a decent look for about one second, but sufficient to be sure. While I stood quietly, I heard a lot of other birds. My list of highlights at this location on the second day follows:

Common Raven	Swainson's Warbler
Louisiana Waterthrush	Ovenbird
Black-and-white Warbler	Worm-eating Warbler
Black-throated Green Warbler	Blue-headed Vireo
Hooded Warbler	Broad-winged Hawk

Returning to parking lot #1 of the Endless Wall Trail, I found lots of bird activity. Walking to the bridge, I found both Rattlesnake Fern and Indian Cucumber Root in bloom. Just before the bridge I heard another Swainson's Warbler singing and got a good look at a Chestnut-sided Warbler. I also added Rose-breasted Grosbeak as a trip bird.

(continued on page 5)

Returning to the visitor's center, I walked the trail to the bridge overlook. This impressive bridge is the longest single arch bridge in the world. There were steps to the bottom of the gorge 600 feet below, which I took a pass on. Near the visitor's center I added Carolina Wren and Yellow Warbler.

I wanted to bird different habitats, so I drove north to Sommersville Lake. A shallow part of the lake near Salmon Run held some waterfowl and a variety of new birds for the trip. I found an azalea almost done blooming and Bowman's Root in full bloom. What really caught my eye was an interesting wildflower that I did not recognize. Using my wildflower guide I determined that it was Large Houstonia, a life flower. My list of new trip birds follows:

Canada Goose (2 adults and 3 babies)	Black Vulture
Wood Duck (1 adult; 7 babies)	Great Blue Heron
Mallard	Indigo Bunting
Acadian Flycatcher	Yellow-throated Vireo
Great Crested Flycatcher	

I then drove home, detouring to bird at Cooper's Rock State Forest. Driving near Morgantown, I saw a pair of Rock Pigeons, the only ones of the trip. At Cooper's Rock the overlook of the Cheat River gorge was just as impressive as I remembered it from many years ago. I heard a Common Yellowthroat here, my last new trip bird. The remaining drive home was uneventful, and I arrived home at 6:20 p.m.. I still can't believe that I birded for two days without seeing a Red-winged Blackbird.

The Big Sit

Do you need an excuse to sit around and do nothing except bird? Well, here's your chance. *Bird Watcher's Digest* hosts the annual Big Sit, scheduled for the weekend of Saturday, October 10, and Sunday, the 11th. It's like a tail-gate party for birders!



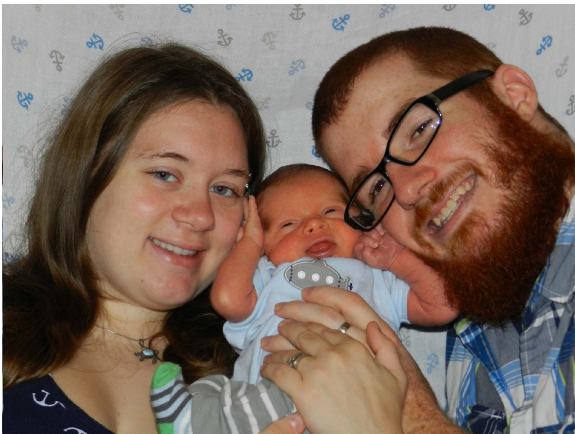
be registered before the event; it's free and participating teams will have the chance to win \$500.

You may either register on line at <http://www.birdwatchersdigest.com/> or send your registration to Bird Watcher's Digest, P.O. Box 110, Marietta, OH 44750.

All you need to do is to find a good spot to sit for 24 hours, find a few birding friends, then count all the birds you see or hear. All observations must be made from within a 17-foot-diameter circle. Circles must

Check the website above for more information.

A Note from the Clawsons



We have wonderful news! Our son Dante Rivers Clawson was born on June 4, at 1:58 am and weighed 6 pounds 10 ounces at birth and was a total of 19 inches long. He is growing like a weed and doing very well. Unfortunately he took after daddy and had his cord wrapped around his neck, which resulted in an emergency c-section for Emily. She is recovering, but is still quite sore....

Attached are a few pictures of our little man, so feel free to share them with the Todd Bird Club and pass along its newest little member.

Miss you all,
Derek, Emily, and Dante

A Maine Vacation

By Sarah and Randi Gerrish



Two Atlantic Puffins landed on the water where we were able to get good views.



Common Eiders and their young were highlights.



There were five pairs of Piping Plovers on the beach.

On June 12 our extended family went on a nine-day vacation to visit Randi's aunt at Kennebunkport, Maine. It was not a birding trip but we were able to see some wonderful birds.

On the day that we arrived, we headed for New Harbor near Boothbay, two hours north of Kennebunkport. Our daughter had booked all six of us on a puffin watch. She knows that we love birding and wanted us to take the puffin trip. With an Audubon guide on board, we started off to Eastern Egg Rock Island, the southernmost nesting place for Atlantic Puffins. After a half-hour ride we approached the island and started

searching for the puffins. Suddenly several flew around our 60-foot Maine-built boat. They looked like tiny flying penguins but kept their distance from the boat. Fairly quickly two landed on the water where we were able to get better views with our binoculars. With all of this flurry of puffins, we counted about 15. The rocky island nearby where the puffins nested also had many Black Guillemots and Common Eiders nesting. Needless to say we were thrilled to see our only life bird of the trip, the Atlantic Puffin.

The next day we arrived at Goose Rocks Beach where we spent the remainder of our vacation. We were pleasantly surprised at the birds we encountered there. Goose Rocks Beach, which is a part of Kennebunkport, encompasses about three miles of lovely scalloped shoreline with a wide sandy beach and a large rocky peninsula at each end. The outer rocks become partially

covered at high tide and then become islands protected from predators. The beach terminates at a small river at each end. These islands (at high tide) must be visited briefly at dead low tide in order not to be stranded there. The tide is about 14 feet. While we explored these areas several times hunting for starfish and sea urchins in the tidal pools, we were pleasantly surprised at the birds we encountered there. Two American Oystercatchers, a female Common Eider, and a Common Tern were nesting on the rocks. We were less than thirty feet from these birds. Our younger grandson had discovered three nests, and we were able to see the eider and the tern on their

nests. The oystercatchers tried to lure us away from the nesting area. We also got close looks at the eggs at one point when the birds were flying overhead. In the water nearby were 36 female and 17 male Common Eiders. The beach has a small protected area for nesting Piping Plovers. There were five pairs of Piping Plovers and one successful nest with four chicks. Several times we were able to view four baby plovers and three adults very closely. Great Black-backed Gulls were also on the beach in small numbers at various times. It was fun to incorporate birding into a family vacation with our two grandsons who are 17 and 10 years old. Our daughter, Tamara Connolly, enjoys nature and took all the photographs pictured with this essay.



Our younger grandson discovered this Common Eider's nest...



and this Common Tern nest.

Birding on Grand Manan Island

By Debbie Kalbfleisch

This past spring, I travelled with four friends from Pittsburgh for a Road Scholar Birding trip to Grand Manan Island in the Bay of Fundy. Along with a dozen other participants from across the country, we stayed at the Marathon Inn, the oldest continuing hotel in Canada; it dates to 1871. Ring-necked Pheasants wandered the grounds, and a wooded trail led to the Swallowtail Lighthouse. We had five full days on the island starting on May 18, as well as two boat trips.

Our official birding guide was Roger Burrows, an Englishman who now makes his home on White Head and who wrote the book *Birding on New Brunswick*. Our other birding guide was the owner of the Marathon Inn, Jim Leslie, who drove us around in an old, bright red school bus and cooked us fabulous meals.

The highlight of our trip was a tour of Fundy Bay on a lobster boat. The day was threatening rain and a bit chilly as we cast off from the dock. We were well bundled up for whatever the weather might bring. The captain and mate were also good birders, so we were always standing close to someone who could identify confusing sea birds! I had eight lifers that day: Common Eider, Northern Gannet, Great Cormorant, Purple Sandpiper (nine perched on algae-covered rocks), Common Murre, Razorbill, Black Guillemot, and Atlantic Puffin. We had great looks at two puffins swimming on the water quite close to us before they skittered across the waves and disappeared. One or two Northern Gannets circled the boat, in among the many Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls. We also spotted Surf Scoter, Common Loon, and Double-crested Cormorant. We returned to Grand Manan just as the first rain drops were beginning to fall.

The Bay of Fundy is known for its dramatic high tides of 20 feet or more. When we boarded the "Island Bound" early that morning, we had to walk carefully down a steep ramp. That afternoon, we stepped onto the same floating ramp that was now level with the dock.

The following day we took the ferry to White Head Island, just south of Grand Manan. I must say that we



This Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, photographed by Debbie's birding buddy Karyn Delaney, was probably the best bird on the island.

were not expecting the number of warblers that we saw on our trip. On White Head alone we noted Black-and-white, Northern Parula, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and Wilson's. A flock of 50 Brant were in one of the inlets, and we watched a Red-throated Loon fly over. We had a number of raptors that day: Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and Merlin. A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher flitted about in the spruce trees and was another lifer for me. In a quiet, secluded little cove, we enjoyed a picnic lunch on the rocks.

We visited Castalia Marsh on Grand Manan a couple of times, searching for Nelson's Sparrow which breeds there. Unfortunately, we were too early in the season and missed it. We did have American Black Duck, Black Scoter, Red-breasted Merganser, Great Blue Heron, Black-bellied Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper, and Savannah Sparrow there.

Boreal Chickadees nest on the island and everyone in the group was thrilled to get good looks at this tiny bird. At Bancroft Point, we were able to study Tree, Bank, Barn, and Cliff Swallows up close and personal on the same telephone wire. Coming back from a walk to the lighthouse, my friends and I ran into a wave of warblers and thought for a moment that we were at Magee Marsh!

On our next-to-last day, we were eating lunch at the inn when we got word that an elusive Yellow-crowned Night-Heron that had overshot its breeding grounds in Maine was hanging out behind a house near the inn. The Pittsburgh Contingent promptly went looking for it. Two other couples from our group also showed up, as well as one of the neighbors, a photographer, who came out of his house to see what the people with binoculars were doing; he joined us in our search. The bird was finally found foraging on the ground and ignored us totally. This was probably our best bird on the island and another lifer for me. It was a fitting end to a wonderful trip. I had a total of 92 species.

PAMC Tidbits

The Todd Bird Club began participating in the PAMC, the Pennsylvania Migration Count, in 1992; this count had previously been known as the NAMC, the North American Migration Count. Pennsylvania is one of the few states that still participate in counting birds on the second Saturday in May.

Since 1992 an amazing variety of species have been seen in *Indiana* on the day of the count – a total of 223 species plus two hybrids. I recently typed all of our results into a spread sheet to examine the differences over the years. Over the 23-year period, the following 85 species have occurred on every count.

Canada Goose	American Kestrel	Gray Catbird	Chipping Sparrow
Wood Duck	Eastern Phoebe	Northern Mockingbird	Field Sparrow
Mallard	Great Crested Flycatcher	Brown Thrasher	Savannah Sparrow
Ring-necked Pheasant	Eastern Kingbird	European Starling	Song Sparrow
Wild Turkey	White-eyed Vireo	Ovenbird	White-throated Sparrow
Common Loon	Yellow-throated Vireo	Louisiana Waterthrush	White-crowned Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	Blue-headed Vireo	Blue-winged Warbler	Scarlet Tanager
Green Heron	Red-eyed Vireo	Black-and-white Warbler	Northern Cardinal
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Blue Jay	Kentucky Warbler	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Red-tailed Hawk	American Crow	Common Yellowthroat	Indigo Bunting
Killdeer	Tree Swallow	Hooded Warbler	Bobolink
Spotted Sandpiper	No. Rough-winged Swallow	American Redstart	Red-winged Blackbird
Rock Pigeon	Barn Swallow	Cerulean Warbler	Eastern Meadowlark
Mourning Dove	Black-capped Chickadee	Northern Parula	Common Grackle
Chimney Swift	Tufted Titmouse	Magnolia Warbler	Brown-headed Cowbird
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	White-breasted Nuthatch	Blackburnian Warbler	Orchard Oriole
Belted Kingfisher	Carolina Wren	Yellow Warbler	Baltimore Oriole
Red-bellied Woodpecker	House Wren	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Purple Finch
Downy Woodpecker	Eastern Bluebird	Prairie Warbler	House Finch
Hairy Woodpecker	Wood Thrush	Black-throated Green Warbler	American Goldfinch
Northern Flicker	American Robin	Eastern Towhee	House Sparrow
Pileated Woodpecker			

Eighteen species have been observed only once. The year of the sighting is in parentheses.

Ross's Goose (2000)	Long-tailed Duck (1998)	Golden Eagle (2005)	Marsh Wren (1995)
Gadwall (2002)	Common Goldeneye (1994)	Northern Goshawk (2002)	Prothonotary Warbler (1995)
American Wigeon (1992)	Red-necked Grebe (1994)	Common Gallinule (2006)	Summer Tanager (1996)
American Black Duck (2002)	Least Bittern (1997)	Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird (2008)	Red Crossbill (1998)
Surf Scoter (2004)	Black-crowned Night-Heron (1999)		
Black Scoter (1998)			

Another 14 have been observed only twice:

Northern Pintail (1993, 1994)	Virginia Rail (1996, 2005)	Short-eared Owl (2001, 2005)
Red-throated Loon (2008, 2009)	Willet (1996, 1999)	Merlin (2005, 2007)
American Bittern (1992, 2006)	Ruddy Turnstone (1999, 2001)	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (2001, 2013)
Little Blue Heron (2001, 2006)	Semipalmated Sandpiper (2000, 2005)	Evening Grosbeak (1994, 1996)
Black Vulture (1999, 2009)	Herring Gull (1998, 2000)	Gray-cheeked Thrush (1996, 1999)

The number of species seen on the counts have varied from 135, seen in 1992, the count's first year, to 161 in 2005. The average number of species seen prior to 2015 was 148. This year we tied the low of only 135 species. Total numbers of individuals have ranged from the 2014 low of 9092 to the 2001 high of 17,263. The average number of individuals, prior to this year's count, was 12,638. This year we tallied the third lowest number ever, 9750.

One factor influencing the fluctuations in the species seen is the date. The count is always the second Saturday in May, which means it can range between May 8 and May 14. The earlier the count, the better the chance for lingering waterfowl. The later counts are better for passage migrants. Participant effort and weather, too, are determining factors.

Thanks to all who have participated to make our counts successful!

Indiana - Armstrong - Cambria – Spring 2015

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

Locations: Allegheny River (AR), Armstrong Trail (AT), Blue Spruce County Park (BS), Conemaugh Dam (CD), Crooked Creek (CC), Creek Road (CR), Cochran's Mill (CM), Elderton (ELD), Ghost Town Trail (GTT), Indiana (IN), Keystone Reservoir (KR), Kittanning (KT), Leechburg (LB), Lewisville (LV), Lock & Dam (L&D), Parks Industrial Park (PIP), Polka Hollow (PH), Prince Gallitzin (PG), Rosston (RT), Shelocta (SH), Two Lick Reservoir (TL), Waterworks Conservation Area (WCA), Worthington (WT), Yellow Creek State Park (YC).

Area lakes remained pretty much frozen through March with only an estimated 3 percent thawed at YC on March 21; plans to clean the Wood Duck boxes via pontoon on 4/7 were canceled as the lake was still iced over in places; by 4/14 YC was completely thawed.

Tundra Swans moved through the region between 3/12 (MVT) and 4/6 (PF) with the high counts at CC of 14 on 3/20 (TR), at YC of 510 on 3/24 (LC, TG, RN), and at PG 210 on 4/1 (JS).

First 4 **Wood Ducks** were noted 3/14 (LC, MH, RH) in a steady, drenching rain at YC while PG's first 8 appeared 3/19 (JS); high tallies included 75 along the AT n. of L&D 8 on 3/29 (TR), 71 at PG 4/1 (JS), and 17 at YC on 3/31 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH, TM). YC harbored 18 **Gadwalls** 3/17 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) and KR, 14 on 4/7 (MH, RH) while last spotted were 5 at YC 5/5 (LC, SD, PF, TG, MH, RH, DK, GL, JS). Five **American Wigeons** arrived at RT 3/11 (TR). In the early hours of 3/17 (DL), three flocks of American Wigeons flew over Oakland Cemetery in IN, but only one flock of 15 was actually seen; 7 were on the lake at YC 3/17 (LC, TG et al); 11 visited PG 3/26 (JS); last report of 2 occurred 5/5 (LC, SD et al) at YC; all other reports involved flocks of single digits. **American Black Duck** high of 13 occurred 3/21 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH, GL) at YC. Top **Mallard** counts were 40 at KT 3/7 (TR) and 58 at YC 3/24 (LC, TG, RN); 4 Mallard ducklings were first seen 5/2 (JT) at IUP; by 5/4 (JT) 10 had hatched. Two **Blue-winged Teal** on the AR n. of L&D 8 on 3/29 (TR) and one at KR 4/17 (LC) were the only ones noted in Armstrong; YC's first 7 arrived 3/31 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH, TM), but this was the highest count all spring; PG hosted at least one on 4/2 (TA); 2 lingered at YC through 5/19 (LC, MH, RH, JK, MS). **Northern Shovelers** migrated through between 3/17 (JB) and 5/5 (LC, SD, PF et al) with the top counts of 13 at KR 4/7 (MH, RH) and 8 at YC 4/14 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, MS). With all reports in *Indiana*, 10 **Northern Pintails** were spotted along Newport Road 3/17 (DC), the same day (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) 17 were noted at YC; pintails peaked at 30 at YC 3/21 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH, GL). YC's high **Green-winged Teal** count was 21 on 3/21 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH, GL); 4 arrived at CC 3/24 (MVT); the AT n. of L&D 8 harbored one on 3/29 (TR) and 2 on 4/2 (MH, RH); at least one was at PG 4/2 (TA).

After large flocks of diving ducks last spring at YC, this year's high tallies of 20 **Canvasbacks** on 4/4 (SR) and 61 **Redheads** on 4/10 (LC) were disappointing. Away from the AR in *Armstrong*, the only Canvasback report in the county noted 2 at CC 3/28 (TR); 6 were at PG 4/21 (LG). A drake Canvasback still present at YC 5/5 (LC, SD, PF et al) was unusual. The AR at L&D 5 yielded 14 **Redheads** on 3/8 (MK, GK); 2 visited CC 4/1 (TR); 8 were listed at PG 4/21 (LG). March 4 yielded the high **Ring-necked Duck** count of 314 (MH, RH, 3RBC) at YC; in *Armstrong* RT hosted the first returning Ring-necked Duck 3/11 (TR) while PIP harbored one on 3/20 (MVT); PG's best tally was 250 on 4/1 (JS); at least one drake remained at YC through the end of the quarter (LC). More than the usual number of **Greater Scaup** were reported including counts of 12 at KT 3/5 (MH, RH), 31 at L&D 5 on 3/8 (MK, GK), 4 at PG 4/21 (LG), and 24 at YC 4/25 (PF). **Lesser Scaup** continued on the AR with 2 found at KT 3/5 (MH, RH); Lesser Scaup were found regularly at YC between 3/17 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) and 5/5 (LC, SD et al); unusual was the late appearance of one again at YC on 5/26 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH, JS, KT, EY); the previous late date had been 5/22/1990 (BB, GC, MH, GL). High tallies included 14 at CC 4/1 (TR), 44 at KR 4/7 (MH, RH), 4 at PG 4/21 (LG), and 24 at YC 4/25 (PF). Single **White-winged Scoters** appeared at KT 3/5 (MH, RH) and at KR both 4/10 (MH, RH) and 4/17 (LC); 5 arrived at YC 4/14 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, MS); 2 were seen on five other dates through 5/7 (DJ). At YC 6 **Long-tailed Ducks** were spotted on 3/24 (LC, TG, RN) and 11 on 4/14 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, MS). A high tally of 84 Long-tailed Ducks at KR 4/7 (MH, RH) was the highest *Armstrong* count on record since 3/26/2003 (MH, RH) when 168 were noted at KR; 2 were present at KR 4/17 (LC). KR produced *Armstrong's* best **Bufflehead** tallies with counts of 66 on 4/7 (MH, RH) and 63 on 4/17 (LC); at YC numbers peaked at 174 on 4/14 (LC); PG harbored a high of 24 on 4/1 (JS); 2 lingered on the AR n. of L&D 8 on 5/2 (TR). A **Common Goldeneye** on Crooked Creek near SH was unexpected 3/5 (MH, RH) as Crooked Creek has a below-neutral pH, contains lots of solids, and is high in iron; goldeneyes continued on the AR through 3/8 (MK, GK) when 12 were listed at L&D 5; 6 stopped at CC 3/24 (MVT) while one visited YC 4/4 (m.ob.); 2 were at KR 4/7 (MH, RH).

L&D 7 produced the first 4 **Hooded Mergansers** 3/7 (TR);

7 were found at the WCA 3/14 (SD); 3/19 (JS) marked the first 8 at PG; 3/20 produced PIP's (MVT) first 4 arrivals; top counts were 12 on 3/26 (JS) at PG, 8 on 4/1 (TR) at CC, and 25 at YC 4/14 (LC, TG). One to 3 **Common Mergansers** were sighted at YC between 3/14 (LC, MH, RH) and 4/17 (JKa) and at PG between 3/25 (LG) and 4/21 (LG); this species continue to be widespread across *Armstrong* with a high of 60 at CC 4/1 (TR); the WCA yielded one 4/29 (LC, VG, TG, MH, RH, DM). **Red-breasted Mergansers** arrived at YC 3/22 (DJ); peak numbers included 12 at CC 4/3 (MVT), 43 at KR 4/8 (LC), 64 at YC 4/10 (LC), and 39 at PG 4/21 (LG); last sighted was one at YC 5/19 (LC, MH, RH, JK, GL, MS). The high **Ruddy Duck** counts were 141 at YC 4/14 (LC) and 39 at KR 4/17 (LC); last noted was one at YC 5/9 (CG, CL, GL).

Eighteen **Ruffed Grouse** were reported this season (v.o.). Only four **Wild Turkey** flocks numbered more than 10 individuals – a lock of 25 at Nolo 3/24-31 (AB, DB), one near IN with 27 individuals 4/4 (MH, RH), one at Penn Run numbering 12 on 4/18 (GL), and one with 11 on 4/15 (MH, RH) w. of Rochester Mills.

YC hosted a single **Red-throated Loon** 4/7 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK). Three **Common Loons** flew over a yard near SH 3/31 (MH, RH); 4 arrived 4/4 (MH, RH, 3RBC) at YC where one remained into June (v.o.); one first appeared at CC 4/1 (TR); YC's top count was 16 on 4/10 (LC); PG hosted one 4/21 (LG) and 2 on both 5/2 (TA) and 5/9 (JS); 12 remained at KR 5/17 (LC).

Pied-billed Grebes did not arrive at YC in large numbers this spring with a high of only 7 on 4/10,17 (LC); singletons first appeared at CC 4/1, 3, 10 (TR), at Altmeyer's Pond 4/2 (MH, RH), and at KR 4/8 (LC); KR numbers built to 6 on 4/17 (LC).

Horned Grebes moved through YC between 3/17 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) and 5/3 (GL) with the high count of 28 on 4/14 (LC); first 2 arrived at RT 4/2 (TR); KR hosted 27 on 4/7 (MH, RH); 2 also visited a pond on Auen Road 4/12 (MH, RH) while 3 stopped at PG 4/21 (LG). Seven **Red-necked Grebes**, an all-time *Indiana* high, were at YC 4/28 (TB, LC, TG, MH, RH, DK, GL, DM, JS, MVT); 2 remained the following day (LC, VG, et al).

Double-crested Cormorants moved through the region between 3/27 (TR) when first was sighted at RT and 5/28 (LC, TG, MH, RH, GL, DM, KT) with 14 still present at YC; 28 at KR on 4/8 (LC) was *Armstrong's* highest tally with most reports single digits. Cormorants arrived at YC 4/4 (SG) and were reported on 17 dates this spring; YC's high count was 96 on 5/5 (LC, SD et al); 37 of those 96, however, were overhead migrants that did not stop. Ninety 4/21 (LG) was PG's best report.

Twelve nests and 15 **Great Blue Herons** were visible at the Crooked Creek herony 4/7 (MH, RH). Single **Great Egrets** popped up at PG 4/11 (SS) and at IUP 5/4 (JT); 3 stopped at YC on 5/16 (SG). Earliest **Green Heron**

appeared at YC 4/14 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, MS); both *Armstrong* and *Cambria* had few reports: one near LB 5/9 (MVT), one at PG 5/2 (TA), and 3 at PG 5/4 (JS). A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was a great find at PG 5/14 (JS).

Indiana's first **Turkey Vulture** was spotted at Clymer 3/2 (DB); *Armstrong's* were 2 near WT 3/16 (MVT). March 17 marked the arrival of the first migrant **Osprey** at YC (LC, TG, RN); this is the earliest date on record by a week, with the previous first date 3/24/2011 (GL); in *Cambria* at least one had returned to PG by 4/2 (TA); 4/3 was the date of return for Osprey, both at CC (TR) and on Ice Pond Road (MVT); a pair was noted at Hemlock Lake 4/15 (MH, RH) and again 4/30 (VG, MH, RH).

An amazing 10 **Bald Eagles** at CC 3/16 (MVT) included only one adult; an adult was on nest 4/10 (MH, RH) at KR. An adult eagle was also on nest 4/11 (MSy) at PG, where an immature bird was noted 4/21 (LG). The *Indiana* nest failed again this year because it was discovered on 4/12 (RM) that it had actually fallen to the ground; there was no evidence of either egg shells or chicks; the observer commented that it appeared "that the adults stayed with the nest for a while on the ground."

Three **Northern Harriers** were sighted at PG 3/20 (LG); on 3/26 (MVT) one was observed south of Dayton; on 4/30 (VG, MH, RH) one was near the Urey cemetery; and on 5/7 (MH, RH) another was listed in n.w. *Indiana* on Allen Flats Road. Earliest **Broad-winged Hawk** was sighted near Forest Manor 4/11 (SD); the following day was the date of return at five other areas of *Indiana* (v.o.). A light-morph **Rough-legged Hawk** flew across Rt. 422 near IN on 3/7 (MH, RH) while a gorgeous dark-morph bird was photographed near WT 3/12 (MVT); it was last sighted near WT 3/16 (MVT).

A **Virginia Rail** called from the marsh at YC on 4/29 (LC, VG, TG, MH, RH, GL, DM) and one was also noted at PG 5/14 (JS). **American Coots** moved through YC between 3/17 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) and 5/8 (DJ) with the highest tally of only 60 on 4/17 (LC), another low spring maximum. Only three *Armstrong* and one *Cambria* coot reports were received – one at KR 4/8 (LC), 2 at PG 4/11 (MSy), 2 at PIP 4/12 (MVT), and one at the latter location 4/24 (MVT).

Semipalmated Plover reports included one on 5/16 (SG), 2 on 5/19 (LC, MH, RH, JK, GL, MS), and 3 on 5/26 (LC, SD, et al). First **Killdeer** was spotted w. of Coral on 3/8 (DC); the next day (DL) 3 were observed in IN. Other first arrivals included 4 near WT 3/12 (MVT) and 2 in Croyle Twp. 3/20 (MHu). **Spotted Sandpiper** appeared at CC 4/17 (TR) and at PG 4/21 (LG); one was displaying at WCA on 4/29 (LC, VG, TG, MH, RH, DM) where 2 others were present. First 5 **Solitary Sandpipers** stopped at YC 4/29 (LC, VG et al); one arrived s. of New Bethlehem 4/30 (MM); 2 were present 5/5 (LC, SD et al) and 5/16 (LC, MH, RH, JT) at YC; 5/9 yielded 3 near West Lebanon (DC, MC), one at Elders Ridge, one at a small pond along

Dobbs Hill Road (JG, TG), and one at PG (JS); 6 was a good count at Chestnut Flats Pond 5/22 (MB, IM). One to 4 **Greater Yellowlegs** were seen at YC between 4/7 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) and 5/5 (LC, SD et al); last was one on the PAMC near Elders Ridge (DC, MC). Single **Lesser Yellowlegs** were found at YC 5/8 (DJ) and 5/12 (LC, TG, DK). **Least Sandpipers** were noted on four dates at YC bracketed by 5/8 (DJ) and 5/29 (CG, MH, RH, LW); best count was 6 on 5/26 (LC, SD, et al); a singleton was at Chestnut Flats Pond 5/22 (MB, IM). Two **Pectoral Sandpipers** were observed at YC 5/12 (LC, TG, DK). **Semipalmated Sandpiper** sightings included 4 at YC 5/26 (LC, SD, et al) and one on both 5/29 (CG, MH, RH, LW) and 5/31 (LC). Seventeen **Wilson's Snipe** were feeding in a wet field along Hoffman Road near YC 3/31 (MH, RH); YC yielded 4 on 4/2 (DJ) and one 4/28 (TB, LC et al) and 4/29 (LC, VG et al); 2 were at IUP 4/27 (JT). Four **American Woodcocks** were calling near Creekside 3/10 (DL); one was near LV 3/14 (MC); 1-2 appeared at Nolo between 3/18-20 (AB, DB); one was found 3/18 (TR) near SGL 247; 4 were listed at YC 3/23 (MD); the *Indiana* PAMC produced 17 (v.o.); one was n. of IN 5/11 (SB); 4 were still displaying near ELD 5/9 (MH, RH).

Bonaparte's Gulls migrated through the region between 3/24 (LC, TG, RN) and 5/7 (DJ) with peak numbers of 156 at CC 4/3 (MVT), 81 at YC 4/14 (LC, TG), and 8 at PG 5/7 (JS). **Ring-billed Gull** maxima included 30 at RT 3/12 (TR), 20 at CC 3/15 (TR), 53 at YC 4/4 (MH, RH, 3RBC), and 35 at PG 5/7 (JS). Twelve at RT 3/11 (TR) was the best count of **Herring Gulls** this season; 2 were noted only at YC on 3/23 (MD) and 4/4 (MH, RH, 3RBC); one visited PG 5/2 (TA). Three **Caspian Terns** put in their appearances at YC on 4/29 (LC, VG et al) and 5/19 (LC, MH, RH, JK, GL, MS); singletons stopped at PG 4/21 (LG) and at YC 5/26 (LC, SD, et al). A **Black Tern** was a nice find at YC 5/5 (LC, MH, RH). **Forster's Terns** were present at YC on nine dates, starting 4/14 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, MS) through 5/19 (LC, MH, RH, JK, GL, MS); 4 was the best count on 5/5 (LC, SD et al) and 5/12 (LC, TG, DK); 2 visited KR 4/7 (MH, RH).

First **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** arrived at BS 5/6 (MH, RH, FM, JM) and at various other locations 5/9 (v.o.); **Black-billed Cuckoo** was first heard 5/9 at 14 locations for the *Indiana* PAMC (v.o.).

One **Eastern Screech-Owl** at Getty Heights Park 3/14 (DL) and one at Nolo 3/26 (DB) were the only 2 noted. A **Great Horned Owl** was heard only near SH on 3/2 (MH, RH); there were no other reports. **Barred Owl** was found in a tree cavity near SH 3/12 (MH, RH) and was probably incubating eggs; but unfortunately on 4/17 (MH, RH), the nest had been predated and the broken egg shells were beneath the tree; Barred Owls were also listed at five other locations.

A **Common Nighthawk** was a nice find at YC 5/9 (CL, GL). Four **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were heard at West

Lebanon 5/9 (DC, MC). First 21 **Chimney Swifts** returned 4/21 (JT) at IUP. First **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** were spotted near LV (MC) and in IN (JP) 5/1 and near LB 5/5 (MVT).

A adult **Red-headed Woodpecker** was observed flying over YC Lake 5/7 (DJ). Most **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** moved through our area with sightings between 4/4 (MH, RH, 3RBC) and 4/12 (MSy), but one was at Nolo 3/2 (GL) and 5/9-31 (GL), excavating a cavity; another was sighted in White's Woods 5/9 (MSy). **Pileated Woodpecker** was discovered on nest 4/17 (JT) at IUP.

Single **Merlins**, one near WT 3/19 (MVT) and one at YC 3/31 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH), observed capturing a Song Sparrow, were the only ones reported. A **Peregrine** was heard at KT 5/19 (TM) and subsequently heard and seen by v.o.; on 5/27 (DV) a pair was observed.

Fifteen **Eastern Wood-Pewees**, 17 **Acadian Flycatchers**, and 12 **Willow Flycatchers** had returned to various parts of *Indiana* and *Armstrong* 5/9 (v.o.). One **Alder Flycatcher**, both heard and seen at YC 5/19 (LC, MH, RH, JK, GL, MS), was the only one noted. First **Least Flycatcher** arrived at IUP 5/4 (JT); 2 were noted 5/6 (MH, RH, FM, JM) at BS. **Eastern Phoebe** arrived first at RT 3/28 (TR), at YC 3/31 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH, TM), and both at Nolo (CL, GL) and at IUP (JT) the following day. **Great Crested Flycatcher** arrived first near LV 5/6 (MC); the PAMC 5/9 (v.o.) produced the next 6 Great Crested Flycatchers in various parts of *Indiana*. First **Eastern Kingbirds** appeared s.w. of Ernest 4/29 (VG, TG, MH, RH), at PG 5/2 (TA), and near ELD 5/9 (MH, RH).

Dates of return for vireos included 4/28 (TB, LC et al) at YC and 5/1 (MVT) at CC for **White-eyed Vireo**; 4/29 (VG, MH, RH) near CD and 5/2 (SG), both at CC and along CR for **Yellow-throated Vireo**; 4/29 (late) (LC, VG et al) at YC and 5/2 both at PH (SG) and at the *Cambria* section of Laurel Ridge S.P. (LG) for **Blue-headed**; 4/28 (TB, LC et al) at YC and 5/2 (SG) along CR for **Warbling**; and 5/7, both at YC. (LC, TG, DK, GL) and along Roaring Run (JB) for **Red-eyed Vireo**. One **Fish Crow** was present in IN 3/9, 21, 24; 5/4 (JT) and 3/13 (DL), and 2 were found in Oakland Cemetery 5/2 (MH, RH).

At least 300 **Horned Larks** were still present near WT 3/5 (MH, RH).

Only 2 **Purple Martins** were noted at the Wood's Pond colony 4/10 (MH, RH), but by 5/9 (MH, RH), at least 16 were present; one to 2 were listed at YC on four dates 4/21 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK, GL, JS) through 5/28 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DM, KT); one was seen at PG 5/9 (JS). YC yielded the first 2 **Tree Swallows** 3/17 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK); 5 had returned n. of L&D 8 (MH, RH) and one stopped at PG (JS) 4/1; PG yielded 200 by 4/11 (MSy). Five **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were first found at YC 4/7 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) and near the intersection

of Rts, 128 and 28 on 4/18 (MVT). One to 2 **Bank Swallows** were listed at YC between 5/2 (LC, TG, MH, RH, JT, RW) and 5/19 (LC, MH, RH, JK, GL, MS); 3 were at PG 5/14 (JS). **Cliff Swallows** moved through YC between 4/21 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK, GL, JS) and 4/28 (TB, LC et al); 4/21 (LG) was also the date of return at PG where numbers peaked at 21 on 5/14 (JS); 5 were at Two Lick 5/9 (MH, RH). Dates of return for **Barn Swallows** were 4/5 (Mhu) in Croyle Twp., 4/7 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) at YC, and 4/15 (MVT) near ELD.

One to 2 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were seen sporadically near SH between 3/7 (MH, RH) and 4/11 (MH, RH), after which they disappeared; in *Armstrong*, last was reported near LB 3/2 (MVT), but single migrants were spotted at CC 5/2 (SG) and at Yatesboro 5/9 (ED, CH, SL). The first **House Wrens** were roughly ten days late with the earliest date of 4/28 (TB, LC et al) at YC. First **Winter Wren** popped up at YC 4/4 (SR); 3 singing males seemed to be on territory along the Rexis Branch of the Ghost Town Trail 5/24 (MH, RH). First **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** arrived at YC 4/9 (Msy) and at CC 4/10 (TR). **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** moved through the region between 4/11 (MSy) and 5/6 (JP).

First **Veeries** noted this spring were one at BS 5/6 (MH, RH, FM, JM) and one at YC 5/6 (DJ); by 5/31 (TR) 4 were noted at SGL 247. The season's only **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was spotted on Fire Tower Road in *Cambria* 5/19 (MB). **Swainson's Thrush** reports included 2 on the PAMC (v.o.), 2 at BS 5/15 (MH, RH), one at KR 5/17 (LC), and one 5/21-23 (GF) on a farm near Spring Church. Single **Hermit Thrushes** were at PG 4/11 (JSy) and in IN 4/16, 5/20 (JP); 3 were present 4/30 (VG, MH, RH) at SGL 174 where they breed; 2 were noted on the PAMC (MH, RH), one at Hemlock Lake and the other at SGL 174. First **Wood Thrushes** arrived 5/1, at CC (MVT), near LV (MC), and at YC (LC, MH, RH). IUP yielded the first **Gray Catbird** 4/22 (JT) while one appeared n. of L&D 8 on 5/2 (TR). YC hosted the first **Brown Thrasher** 4/5 (Msy) while *Armstrong's* first was found at CC 4/14 (MVT).

CC harbored an **American Pipit** 3/20 (TR) and 3 on 3/28 (TR). Sixty-five **Snow Buntings** remained near WT 3/5 (MH, RH), but by 3/7 (TR) only 14 could be found.; 24 buntings accompanied by about 75 Horned Larks were a nice find in a field w. of Coral 3/7 (MH, RH).

First **Ovenbird** was heard singing at YC 4/29 (LC, VG et al); 5/2 was the date of return for Ovenbirds, both at PH (SG) and at CC (DJ). A **Worm-eating Warbler** was a nice find at CC 5/23 (DG, GG) and was relocated 5/25 (MVT). **Louisiana Waterthrush** returned to a feeder stream along Laurel Run at YC 4/7 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK) and to the Ghost Town Trail near Vintondale 4/11 (LC, SD, MH, RH, JK, FM, JM). Single **Northern Waterthrushes** were heard only at YC on three dates between 5/16 (LC, MH, RH, JT) and 5/26 (LC, SD, et al); one was at CC 5/23

(DG, GG); another was singing incessantly along the Rexis Branch of the GTT near Red Mill 5/24 (MH, RH).

First dates included 4/26 (Msy) for **Blue-winged Warbler** and 4/29 (DJ) for **Black-and-white Warbler**, both at YC. **Tennessee Warblers** moved through the region between 5/9 (v.o.), when the PAMC yielded 11 individuals, and 5/22 (GF), when one was noted near Spring Church. **Nashville Warblers** visited *Indiana* between 5/5-18 (MC) with 5 counted on the PAMC (v.o.); *Armstrong's* lone report was one 5/9 (TR) at CC. **Kentucky Warblers** continue in low numbers with few reports at only one *Armstrong* and three *Indiana* locations – one near LV 5/9-10, 18 (MC), one near Two Lick Reservoir 5/9 (PJ), one at YC 5/16 (MH, RH), and one near Spring Church 5/24 (GF). Other first dates included 4/28 (TB, LC et al) at YC and 5/2 (SG) at CC and CR for **Common Yellowthroat**; 4/29 (VG, MH, RH) at CD and 5/2 (TR) n. of L&D 8 for **Hooded Warbler**; and 5/2 n. of L&D 8 (TR), at CR (SG), at YC (LC, TG, MH, RH, JT, RW) and at the *Cambria* section of Laurel Ridge S.P. (LG) for **American Redstart**. Single **Cape May Warblers** 5/7, 9 at PG (JS) and 5/15 (MH, RH) at BS comprised the entire report for this species. Besides the 13 **Cerulean Warblers** found on the 2 PAMCs (v.o.), the only other ones noted were along CR 5/2 (SG) and 5/9 (MVT), at CC 5/2 (TR), and at BS 5/15 (MH, RH). First **Northern Parulas** were



This is one of the few Bay-breasted Warblers noted this season; Marcy Cunkelman photographed it near Lewisville.

listed at YC 5/1 (LC, MH, RH), at CR 5/2 (SG), and in Johnstown 5/10 (TS). A yard in IN produced the first **Magnolia Warbler** 5/6 (JP) while 5/9 yielded *Armstrong's* only 2 reported **Magnolia Warblers**, one at CC (TR) and one at CR (MVT). One to 2 **Bay-breasted Warblers** were listed only near LV 5/4, 6 (MC) and at YC 5/7 (DJ) and 5/16 (SG). Dates of return included 5/5 (LC, SD et al) at YC and 5/9 (TR) at CC for **Blackburnian Warbler**; 4/21 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK, GL, JS) at YC, 5/1 (MVT) along CR, and

5/4, both at PG (JS) and at Jim Mayer Riverswalk Trail (LG) for **Yellow Warbler**; and 5/5 (LC, SD et al) at YC, 5/9 (GM, TR, MVT) at three *Armstrong* locations, and 5/10 (BL) n. of Ebensburg for **Chestnut-sided Warbler**. All **Blackpoll Warblers** moved through *Indiana* between 5/16 (MH, RH) and 5/29 (MC); there were no *Armstrong* or

Cambria reports. Two **Black-throated Blue Warblers** were first sighted at BS 5/6 (MH, RH, FM, JM), one at LV 5/9 (DC, MC), and one in Rayne Twp. 5/9 (TB), the latter three reports of migrants; the Rexis Branch of the GTT yielded 4 on 4/24 (MH, RH) while 3 were along the Fire Tower Road in *Cambria* 5/19 (MB) and 4 at SGL 184 on 5/25 (IM), probably all breeding birds. One to 2 **Palm Warblers** stopped at YC on five dates between 4/26 (MSy) and 5/7 (DJ) while the PAMC produced only one on 5/9 (ED, JT); 3 Palms on 5/2 (TR) n. of L&D 8 were the only *Armstrong* birds recorded. **Pine Warblers** were found at four locations this year; first returned to YC 3/28 (MH, RH, FOP) then to a yard near SH 3/31 (MH, RH); one was at CR 4/21 (MVT); another was singing near Hillsdale 5/9 (MH, RH). Usually a common spring migrant, **Yellow-rumped Warbler** reports were sparse in *Armstrong* and *Cambria*; one was in Croyle Twp. 4/22 (MHu) and 2 at PG



Marcy Cunkelman photographed this Yellow-breasted Chat on the PAMC.

5/7 (JS); 2 were sighted at CR 5/1 (MVT) while 15 were along the AT n. of L&D 8 on 5/2 (TR). A non-breeder in *Indiana*, Yellow-rumps moved through between 3/1 (MC) and 5/8 (MC, DJ) with the top count of 20 on 4/21 (LC, TG, MH, RH,

DK, GL, JS). Two **Yellow-throated Warblers** were in the midst of a territorial dispute at CD 4/12 (MH, RH); one was at CR 4/19 (MVT), another was near LV 4/30 (MC); one was found at CC 5/2 (SG); one of the CD individuals was seen again 5/9 (DC, MC); another was observed at CM both 5/9 (MVT) and 5/23 (DG, GG). **Prairie Warbler** counts on 4/30 (VG, MH, RH) were one at the Gipsy strips and 3 near Hillsdale; 16 was the PAMC (v.o.) tally. First **Black-throated Green Warbler** appeared 4/21 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK, GL, JS) at YC and 5/2 at four locations – at PH (SG), along the AT n. of L&D 8 (TR), at PG (TA), and at the *Cambria* section of Laurel Ridge S.P. (LG). Single **Canada Warblers** at PG 5/9 (JS) and along the Rexis Branch of the GTT 5/24 (MH, RH) were the lone reports. Single **Wilson's Warblers** were listed at CF 5/9 (LC, DL), at YC 5/16 (SG), in IN 5/17 (JP), and back at YC 5/19 (LC, MH, RH, JK, GL, MS). Five **Yellow-breasted Chats** was the PAMC total (v.o.); one was at SGL 247 on 5/31 (TR).

By 4/20 (JT) **Eastern Towhees** were nest building at IUP. Lingering **American Tree Sparrows** included 2 along the AT n. of L&D 8 on 4/2 (MH, RH) and 2 near LV through 4/7 (MC). First **Chipping Sparrows** arrived 3/24 (LC, TG, RN) at YC and 4/2, both at PG (TA) and along the AT n. of L&D 8 (MH, RH).

Field Sparrows first appeared near SGL 247 on 3/29 (TR), at PG 4/2 (TA), and at YC 4/4 (TR). **Vesper**,

Savannah, and **Grasshopper Sparrows** are all becoming increasingly harder to find in the region; the only Vespers listed were one near YC 4/29 (LC, VG, TG, MH, RH, DM) and another near Smicksburg 5/9 (MM, NS). A Savannah Sparrow was spotted at IUP 5/4 (JT) while the two PAMCs (v.o.) produced the only other 6 Savannahs and 7 Grasshoppers; the only other Grasshopper was found 5/19 (MB) along Fire Tower Road in *Cambria*. The wintering **Fox Sparrow** near SH began singing 3/8 (MH, RH) then disappeared after that day; migrants moved through *Indiana* between 3/14 (LC, MH, RH) and 4/16 (LC) with the best count of 4 on 4/4 (TR); the only *Armstrong* bird noted was along the AT n. of L&D 8 on 3/29 (TR). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** at YC 5/5 (LC, SD et al) was the only one reported. First **Swamp Sparrow** reappeared at YC 4/7 (LC, TG, MH, RH, DK). Rather late **White-throated Sparrows** were seen 5/9 near SH (MH, RH) and at SGL 247 (TR). March records of **White-crowned Sparrows** included one near LV 3/5 (MC) and 2 near Homer City 3/22 (CC); migrants moved through *Indiana* between 5/2 (JT) and 5/16 (MH, RH).

Scarlet Tanager appeared first at CC 5/2 (SG) and at YC 5/5 (LC, MH, RH) while **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** made their season's debut 4/27 (MH) near SH and 5/4 both along the Jim Mayer Riverswalk Trail (LG) and near LB (MVT). First **Indigo Bunting** appeared near LV 4/26 (MC) and along the Roaring Run Trail 5/7 (JB).

First **Bobolink** and first **Eastern Meadowlark** were respectively observed 4/29 (VG, TG, MH, RH, DM) near YC and 3/19 both at PG (JS) and near WT (MVT). YC and CC were the hotspots for **Rusty Blackbirds** which moved through the region between 3/10 (LC, TG, MH, RH) and 5/2 (DJ, TR); maxima included 54 at YC 3/14 (LC, MH, RH), 39 at YC 3/21 (LC, SD, TG, MH, RH, GL), and 75 at CC 4/5 (KSJ). **Common Grackles** were regular near LV after 3/10 (MC); RT yielded its first 3/12 (TR); 15 were counted at PG 3/20 (LG).

One **Orchard Oriole** w. of W. Kittanning 5/1 (RM) and 2 at YC on 5/4 (DJ) were first while the first **Baltimore Orioles** had shown up 4/29, both n. of IN (SB) and a few miles from YC (VG, TG, MH, RH, DM); 5/2 (SG) yielded *Armstrong's* first at three locations; 5/4 (LG) produced *Cambria's* first report of 2 along the Jim Mayer Riverswalk Trail.

Two **Common Redpoll** stopped at BS 3/29 (MH, RH), and one visited a Nolo feeder 4/16-17 (CL, GL). **Pine Siskins** peaked at 87 at a feeder n. of IN 3/17 (SB) and at 44 at an Ebsenburg feeder 3/28 (JS); on 4/26 (JS) as the observer was filling the feeder a siskin landed on his hand and fed there for several minutes; 2 lingered both at Cresson 5/28 (TA) and through the end of the season (MC) near LV. High **American Goldfinch** tally was 105 n. of IN 4/29 (SB).

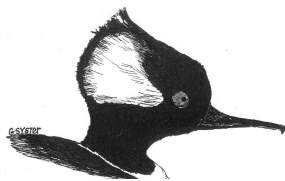
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Marge Van Tassel photographed this strikingly beautiful dark-morph Rough-legged Hawk near Worthington on March 12, 2015.



Todd Bird Club

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