

The Todd Nuthatch



Indiana, PA

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

April 2024

Meetings

Tuesday, April 2 – Laura Jackson will present “Birds In My Garden” at our April meeting. Laura, a retired science teacher, enjoys nature photography, birding, native plant gardening, hiking, and kayaking. She and her husband manage their 120-acre wooded property in Bedford County for wildlife and have a conservation easement on it through the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. Laura currently serves as President of Save Our Allegheny Ridges and Vice- President of Juniata Valley Audubon Society. She has volunteered as a Pennsylvania Forest Steward since 2000 and is part of the Steering Committee. She also serves on the Council for the James C. Finley Center for Private Forests at Penn State and is the chairperson of Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology’s Conservation Committee.



This Blackpoll Warbler visited Laura & Mike’s water feature.

Photo by Mike Jackson -1-

Tuesday, May 7 – Nick Liadis, an avian conservation biologist, will be our banquet speaker. Nick’s work takes him across the human landscape gradient into urban, suburban, and rural areas to better understand how birds live alongside humans. With his background in architecture, he’s defined a new approach to design by expanding a strong interest in the natural world, and in particular, birdlife. Central to this cross-disciplinary work is protecting birds from striking the windows of buildings, which occurs when they get tricked into perceiving their habitat reflected in glass.

Nick has expanded his bird banding research with appointments at the Point Reyes Bird Observatory in California and at the Powdermill Avian Research Center in Pennsylvania. His bi-coastal experiences have given him tremendous insight into the struggles birds face when they encounter North American cities. This unique perspective is defined by promoting healthy landscapes across the multitude of environments that birds traverse as they migrate, from forests to cities.

As a research fellow at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Nick leverages his cross-disciplinary background with the depth of resources at the museum, such as the Bird Safe Pittsburgh Program. With his endorsement by the American Bird Conservancy and the American Institute of Architects to teach about bird-safe cities and buildings, he unites architects, planners, policy makers, and scientists around the protection of birds in cities.

Outings

Tuesday morning outings will continue, weather permitting. For all **Yellow Creek Tuesday** outings, meet shortly after dawn at the North Shore gazebo, located off South Harmony Road 1.4 miles from Route 422 east of Indiana. Follow South Harmony, continuing right at the “Stop - Right Turn Keep Moving” sign. Go past McFeaters Cove and turn left at the North Shore sign. Everyone is welcome. If you have any questions or weather concerns, please contact Roger Higbee (412-309-3538).

Saturday, April 6 – Yellow Creek State Park, joint outing with Three Rivers Birding Club, led by Roger and Margaret Higbee. Meet at the park office along Route 259, just off US 422, at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday, April 13 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by Gloria Lamer (724-349-1159). Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the North Shore gazebo, located off South Harmony Road 1.4 miles from Route 422 east of Indiana.

Tuesday, April 16 – **Moraine State Park, led by Mike Shaffer.** Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the South Shore Pleasant Valley Non-motorized Launch Area in the first parking lot by the restrooms.

Come out to enjoy a spring day of birding at Moraine State Park in a joint effort with the Todd Bird Club and Bartramian Audubon Society members. We will search for early season migrants including finches, sparrows, warblers, tanagers, thrushes, kinglets, gulls, terns, loons, grebes, cormorants, and waterfowl. We will bird various locations throughout the park. Interested birders, including all skill levels from beginners to experts, are welcome. Bring binoculars if you have them. If not, we will have binoculars on hand for you to use. So, just bring your enthusiasm, water, snacks, and sharp eyes and ears.

Saturday, April 20 – Muddy Creek Wetland Trail, Moraine State Park, led by Debbie Kalbfleisch (724-651-5426). Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot opposite the trailhead on Burton Road. Please note that the closest restroom facilities are at the 528 boat launch 10 minutes away.

Directions: From Indiana, follow US 422 west and take the exit for PA 8 north. In 7.5 miles turn left on Euclid Road which becomes Muddy Creek Drive. Proceed 1.4 miles. Turn left onto West Liberty Road. In 0.7 mile, turn left onto Burton Road. The parking lot will be about half mile on the right. This is an easy-walking trail through woods, but it may be muddy in spots. Target birds are Sandhill Crane, Great Horned Owl, and Ruffed Grouse.

Saturday, April 27 – Blue Spruce County Park, led by Roger and Margaret Higbee (412-309-3538; 724-354-3493). Meet in the first large parking lot near the park office at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday, May 4 – Yellow Creek State Park, led by John Taylor (724-397-2040). Meet at 8:00 a.m. on the north shore by the gazebo.

Saturday, May 11 – Indiana County Migration Count. This count, unlike the Christmas Bird Count that includes just a portion of the county, is open to everyone anywhere in the county. Please let Greg Tomb know that you are participating and eBird your data or send Greg your list.

Saturday, May 18 – Waterworks Conservation Area (WCA) and more, led by Sue Dickson (724-388-5000). Meet at the WCA at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday, May 25 – Special Atlas outing. Meet at the coal car at Rexas and we'll bird the Rexas branch of the Ghost Town Trail using Atlas protocols.

Congratulations and Farewell, Court!

Congratulations and best wishes to Court Harding and Warren Hancock who married on March 12 in Indiana! Congratulations, too, on Court's new job in Northumberland County! Shortly thereafter Court and Warren moved east to Northumberland after Court's taking a job with Pheasants Forever, a conservation organization whose mission is to conserve pheasants, quail, and other wildlife through habitat improvement, public access, education, and conservation advocacy. Court will be working with landowners on a one-on-one basis to assure best farming practices that allow adequate habitat for wildlife. Her office is located in the USDA building. We wish them both all the best!

But...it's with great sadness that we bid Court farewell. Court has been a true asset to our bird club for the past few years. She presented programs, led outings, and has been present for most of our Tuesday mornings at Yellow Creek. She was a great leader and willingly shared her knowledge with all participants. We also thank her for spending her valuable time with us! We truly miss you, Court!!!

– Margaret Higbee (for the Tuesday YC Group)

Yellow Creek State Park Bird Outing Revisited

By Trent Millum

The morning of Saturday March 23, 2024, at the North Shore of Yellow Creek State Park brought temperatures around 40 degrees, with light rain, and an otherwise fairly calm day for the start. Not the most comfortable conditions for bird-watching, but it did not seem to put a damper on the waterfowl that were present in the park, or the five Todd Bird Club members who decided to make the journey out for the morning.

As Monica Lee and I arrived at the North Shore, we walked toward the boat ramp and the pavilion to look at the water. Another birder Shirley Van Dyke joined us shortly thereafter. Directly to our left were two smaller shapes floating quietly in the water underneath an overhanging tree. We got our binoculars on them and saw that they were Horned Grebes, one in near-breeding plumage, and the other in more non-breeding colors. It has been neat to see Horned Grebes at Yellow Creek in the last couple of weeks that are in various stages of their breeding plumage while being in the same location. Just a week earlier, John Taylor, Ed Donley, Debbie Kalbfleisch, Monica Lee, and I saw three Horned Grebes on the South Shore where one was in full breeding plumage, one in non-breeding colors, and the other one was in between! The two here at the North Shore swam right toward us as if showing off without a care that we were standing there, before eventually flying off once they either finally noticed us, or became somewhat bothered by our being so close.

Shortly after, a flock of 12 ducks flew in from the east and landed on the water a ways off in front of us. We quickly became excited as we could tell some of these ducks had a lot of bright white to them, but unlike Buffleheads, also had pronounced tails. Unfortunately, the magnification on my binoculars makes it challenging to identify waterfowl that are not much closer to me than these individuals were. As we were silently and simultaneously vocally hoping for someone with a scope to show up, sure enough Margaret and Roger, fresh off their trip to Costa Rica, arrived and opened the back of their van to grab their spotting scopes. I greeted Margaret and told her that we think we have something exciting here on the water but need a scope to confirm our suspicions. As she grounded the scope, adjusted it, and looked through, it was a matter of seconds before she said, "Oh my!" Our aspirations were confirmed, these 12 ducks were Long-tailed Ducks, much more visible and seemingly closer to look at through the scope. We would end up seeing this same group a couple hours later after they flew again and landed near the South Shore.

We ended up staying on the North Shore for the better part of another hour as we had lots of waterfowl and other birds that continued to show up. We spotted Buffleheads, Gadwalls, Ruddy Ducks, American Black Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, a Wood Duck, an American Wigeon, and one Common Loon. The loon was in its breeding plumage and was quite enjoyable to view. Additionally, a few gulls flew in from the east and landed on the water. The dark, overcast sky made one of them look like a Lesser Black-backed Gull at first, but a closer look through the scope revealed both an adult and an immature Herring Gull as well as one Ring-billed Gull. Not long after that, two smaller gulls with white wingtips flew over from east to west and we determined that they were Bonaparte's Gulls. The Gray Catbird that has been at the North Shore all winter was calling behind us, in addition to many other winter birds that we were listening to while watching the water. All in all, it was a great start to the morning, despite the drizzle and increasing wind.

We made a quick stop at McFeaters Cove where we saw more Wood Ducks and a Pied-billed Grebe, before starting on our way toward the South Shore. I could not resist a stop along South Harmony Road where it intersects with College Lodge Road to look at the ponds. The same Lesser Scaup, Greater Scaup, Hooded Mergansers, Bufflehead, and Ring-necked Ducks from the previous Saturday were still there. While watching the pond, an active, long-legged shorebird flew into view of my binoculars. The others had also stopped their cars behind me and were watching the pond. As soon as I identified what the bird was, I could hear Margaret calling behind me, "Greater Yellowlegs!" That was a good cherry on top before officially arriving at the South Shore.

Between Dragonfly Pond, the South Shore boat launches, and the wetland walkway, we added more waterfowl and songbird species to our list for the day. From the South Shore boat launch just past Dragonfly Pond, we had some great looks at a mixed group of ducks that included American Wigeon, Gadwall, and Redheads. Just behind them and closer to the shore were Ring-necked Ducks and Ruddy Ducks. And tucked into the wetland area were more Gadwalls and some Green-winged Teal. The wigeons especially were in great view with many in breeding plumage showing the beautiful white streak on their foreheads. There were still about 20 Tree Swallows dipping and swooping over the water close to the Ring-necked Ducks, in addition to a Red-tailed Hawk that Margaret saw driving in, and a Brown Creeper singing behind us in the pine trees once we got to the Day Use

Area. As we began hiking the observatory trail (only planning to go to the wetland walkway as everyone was quite chilled, wet, and the wind had picked up), we ran into the Westmoreland Bird and Nature group with 15 or so members leaving the wetland path. They told us they saw Northern Shovelers and Northern Pintails on the boardwalk. We quickly made our way out the path and got to see the shovelers right near the peninsula dipping their large, spoon-shaped bills into the water. After scanning for a while, we could not find the pintails and decided to call it a day and head back to the cars, everyone in need of some heat and a hot shower to warm up.

All in all, it was a cold, wet, somewhat dreary, but fun and exciting day of birdwatching at Yellow Creek! I love this time of year when waterfowl are migrating through the park and each week brings something new and exciting that had not been there the week before. This state park, from which I am quite lucky to live only 15 minutes away, continues to be a mysteriously fantastic bird-watching hotspot that is continuously worth going back to bird again and again...even when the sky is greeting you with a cold winter drizzle.

Until next time, Yellow Creek!

PA Bird Atlas 2024 - 2028

Thanks to everyone who has signed up for the Pennsylvania Bird Atlas. We are happy to announce that seven atlasers have signed up to take responsibility for completing a total of 13 of our 88 blocks. Thanks to the following atlasers:

Sue Dickson
Roger & Marg Higbee
John Keener

Joe Saxfield
*Greg Tomb
*Mike Weible

The asterisked atlasers have signed up for four or more blocks.

In addition, several others have been actively atlasing in a variety of blocks and submitting data to the Atlas portal:

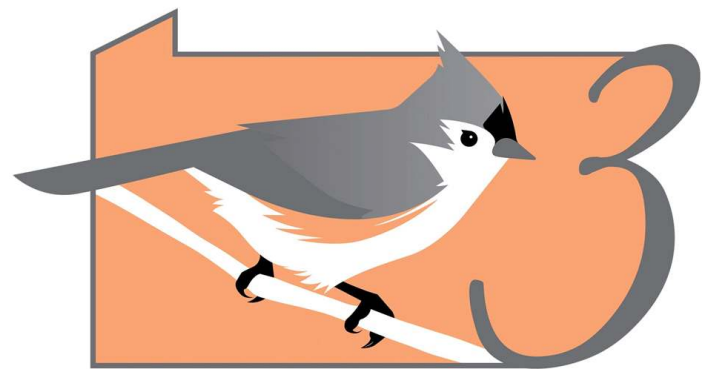
Tom Betts
Tiffany Chan
Sue Dickson
Kathy Dinsmore
Ed Donley
Peyton Eckard
Patience Fisher
Roana Fuller
Deb Grove
Carol Guba
Court Harding
Tyler Hodges

Debbie Kalbfleisch
Jim Kellam
Tom & Janet Kuehl
Gloria Lamer
Avi Marshall
Trent Millum
Joseph Pumford
Debra Rittlemann
Nancy Smeltzer
Mark Strittmatter
Shirley Van Dyke
Mike Weible

As of April 1, the following species are assumed to be breeding:

Rock Pigeon
Great Horned Owl
Red Crossbill

Barred Owl
House Sparrow



PA BIRD ATLAS

Ruffed Grouse

Hairy Woodpecker

Mourning Dove

Pileated Woodpecker

Am. Woodcock

Carolina Chickadee

Eastern Screech-Owl

Tufted Titmouse

Common Raven

Carolina Wren

Red-bellied Woodpecker

Eur. Starling

Downy Woodpecker

Northern Cardinal

After April 15, these species will be added to the list of probable breeders:

Northern Bobwhite

Belted Kingfisher

Wild Turkey

Am. Crow

Ring-necked Pheasant

Black-capped Chickadee

Killdeer

Horned Lark

Am. Goshawk

House Finch

Barn Owl

La. Waterthrush

N. Saw-whet Owl



Indiana - Armstrong - Cambria Winter 2023-24 Bird Report

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

Abbreviations: Armstrong Trail (AT), Crooked Creek (CC), Hemlock Lake (HL), Indiana University of PA (IUP), Keystone Reservoir (KR), Kittanning (KT), Lock & Dam(L&D), Manorville (MV), Margus Lake (ML), Prince Gallitzin State Park (PG), Rosston (RT), West Lebanon (WL), Yellow Creek State Park (YC).

Precipitation for December in *Armstrong* was fairly evenly distributed throughout the month. Even though it was evenly distributed, there was a deficit of 0.68" below the normal average of 3.26". Precipitation continued to be nearly evenly distributed throughout the month of January and ended the month 2.80" above the normal of 3.12". The first three weeks of February were very dry with only 0.17" of precipitation falling during the period. Precipitation increased in the last week of the month but fell short of the normal average of 2.79" by 0.84". Temperatures ranged from a low of 20° F to a high of 61° F for the month of December. The temperatures averaged 7.3° F above normal for the month. January's temperatures ranged from a low of 7° F to a high of 63° F and averaged 3.2° F above normal. February continued the trend of above normal temperatures which were 7.5° F higher than normal. Temperatures ranged from a low of 18° F to a high of 63° F.

Precipitation for December in *Indiana* was fairly evenly distributed throughout the month. Even though it was evenly distributed, there was a deficit of 0.8" below the normal average of 3.64". Precipitation continued to be nearly evenly distributed throughout the month of January and ended the month 2.02" above the normal of 3.64". The first half of February was somewhat dry with only slightly more than 0.25" of precipitation falling during the period. Precipitation increased in the second half of the month but fell short of the normal average of 2.95" by 0.68". Temperatures in Indiana ranged from a low of 15° F to a high of 61° F for the month of December. The temperatures averaged 6.1° F above normal for the month. January's temperatures ranged from a low of 1° F to a high of 61° F and averaged 2.9° F above normal. February continued the trend of above normal temperatures which were 7.0° higher than normal. Temperatures ranged from a low of 14° F to a high of 63° F.

Precipitation in *Cambria* for December was fairly evenly distributed throughout the month. Even though it was evenly distributed, there was a deficit of 1.18" below the normal average of 4.02". Precipitation continued to be nearly evenly distributed throughout the month of January and ended the month 1.17" above the normal of 3.85". The first half of February in Cambria was somewhat dry

with only slightly more than 0.30" of precipitation falling during the period. Precipitation increased in the second half of the month but fell well short of the normal average of 3.21" by 1.11". Cambria's temperatures ranged from a low of 11° F to a high of 58° F for the month of December. The temperatures averaged 6.2° F above normal for the month. January's temperatures ranged from a low of -2° F to a high of 59° F and averaged 2.1° F above normal. February continued the trend of above normal temperatures which were 6.5° F higher than normal. Temperatures ranged from a low of 9° F to a high of 60° F.

This was the winter for Snow, Ross's, and Greater White-fronted Geese which are usually difficult to find in *Indiana*. A single **Snow Goose** appeared first at IUP 12/9 (JT); the following day (MS), an adult and an immature, were noted at the old VFW pond; the adult continued moving around from the VFW 12/28 (JT) through 1/2 (CH, MS), to McCreary's Pond on 1/1 (MD, MH, RH, MU), to IUP's South Campus where it was last noted 1/12 (JT). On 2/8 (AM, HR, MW) 7 Snow Geese appeared on ML, accompanied by a **Ross's Goose**, and all were subsequently seen later that day (CH, MS) and the following day (MS, JT) at ML. On 2/10 (MS, JT) the flock appeared at YC; by 2/13 (GL) the 7 Snow and the Ross's Goose were relocated on Timber Lake and seen by more birders the following two days before the lake finally froze; last sighting was 2/17 (TH) at Timber Lake. This was the third county record for Ross's Goose with the first and second occurring on a farm pond near Saltsburg 11/27/1999 (MAD, MH, RH *et al*) and 2/29/2004 (DD, MAD, DL). The VFW Pond hosted a **Greater White-fronted Goose** for a very limited time on 2/29 (JT) but it was refound 3/1 (SD, CH, MS) at the same location; this was the seventh county record.

Two **Mute Swans** were found along the AT n. of L&D 8 on 2/5 (TR); only one was still present 2/12, 19 (TR). A single **Tundra Swan** lingered at YC 12/19 (CH, MH, RH) with the next report of 5 occurring 1/5 (AM, HR); best counts of northward bound birds was 104, noted 2/24 (TM), over YC; 87 at PG 2/26 (JG), and 29 over W. KT 2/22 (SG).

YC Lake froze for very short periods of time between 1/14 and 2/6. Last **Wood Duck** was observed 12/23 (HR) at White's Woods while first Wood Duck returnees were at

MV 2/3 (TR) and at YC 2/8 (TC). Three **Northern Shovelers** were first arrivals at PG 2/23 (JG, MK, CS). Two **Gadwalls** remained along the AT n. of L&D 8 on 12/8 (TR) while first returnees included 3 at KT 1/24 (NS); 7 appeared at IUP 2/16 (JT) while first arrival at PG was a single Gadwall 2/18 (TA); 3 were south of Ford City 2/19 (JB); 8 arrived at PG 2/23 (JG, MK, CS), the same day (AK, JK) 6 were at HL. Six **American Wigeons** lingered at PG 12/26 (TA) while 8 were at Margaret Treatment Ponds 1/5 (MH, RH); 2/6 (ED, PF, CH, MH, RH, DK) marked the first date for American Wigeon at YC; 2/23 (AK, JK) for 2 at HL and 2/23 (JG, MK, SC) for 13 at PG. A **Northern Pintail** was found at YC 1/13 (CH) while top "spring" counts were 62 at YC 2/27 (AM, HR) and 28 at PG 2/23 (JG, MK, CS). Three **Green-winged Teal** were last listed at YC 1/10 (CH) with next YC report of 5 on 2/13 (PF, CH, MH, RH); a single Green-winged Teal was spotted at KT 1/23 (DF, BG); 5 arrived at PG 2/23 (PI).

Last **Canvasback** appeared at YC 1/13 (CH) with one new arrival there on 2/6 (ED, PF, CH, MH, RH, DK). In *Armstrong*, KR and MV respectively harbored single birds 1/11 (MS, JT) and 1/23 (TR); PG's last 4 occurred 12/31 (TA) with first 6 arriving 2/18 (TA). On 1/18 (TR) 4 **Redheads** were spotted at KT's Water St. while 3 were sighted at L&D 7 (TR); 3 lingered at YC through 1/13 (CH) while first returnees were sighted 2/11 (MD, MU) at ML; PG's first 6 occurred 2/3 (TA) but numbers had built to 60 by 2/26 (KK). Last **Ring-necked Ducks** were singletons found at YC 12/12 (DR) and at RT 12/14 (TR), with first spring sightings occurring 2/11 at both ML (MD, MU) and at YC (GT); high tallies were 40 at PG 2/23 (JG, MK, CS) and 60 at YC 2/27 (AM, HR). A single **Greater Scaup** appeared at YC 12/19 (CH, MH, RH) while small numbers of one to 6 passed through YC between 2/13-27 (v.o.); MV hosted one 2/3 (TR) while L&D 7 yielded a single Greater Scaup between 1/20 (MD) and 1/27 (DF); PG yielded the high tally of 10 on 2/25 (TA). Small numbers of **Lesser Scaup** stopped at YC between 2/9 (JT) and 2/27 (CH, MH, RH), when the high of 13 was tallied; 2/23 (JG, MK, CS) produced the PG high of 75. Nine observers eBirded a **Surf Scoter** at L&D 7 between 1/18 (TR) and 1/27 (DF, BW). Six **Long-tailed Ducks** on 2/4 (RL, GT) were nice finds at YC. Top **Bufflehead** counts of 28 occurred 1/13 (CH) before freeze-up at YC, 3 at KT 1/20 (AP), and 27 on 2/23 (JG, MK, CS) at PG. Small numbers of **Common Goldeneyes** stopped at YC pre and post freeze-up (v.o.); PG's high of 4 occurred 12/24, 26 (TA); KR hosted a singleton on 1/11 (MS, JT) and 2/9 (MS, JT); single goldeneyes were sighted at L&D 7 on 1/18 (TR) and at Water Street, KT, 1/23 (JB) .

YC harbored 75 **Hooded Mergansers** on 12/16 (JT) while Musser Lake hosted 21 on 12/19 (JT); 9 visited a private pond near Marion Center on both 1/30, 2/9 (SN). High tallies of 20 at PG occurred 12/26 (TA) and 2/26 (KK). The AR at KT yielded counts of 2 to 4 between 1/20 (MD, AP) and 1/24 (NS). Rafts of **Common Mergansers** on YC numbered 40 on 1/30 (TR), 30 on 2/6 (ED, PF, CH, MH, RH, DK), and 26 on 2/8 (AM, HR); PG hosted 105 on 2/19

(CS); the L&D 7 at KT harbored 24 on 1/22 (DB). High count of **Red-breasted Mergansers** was a mere 7 at YC on 2/20 (PF, CH, MH, RH, DK); PG yielded only one on 2/23 (JG, MK, CS) while none were reported in *Armstrong*. Two **Ruddy Ducks** were listed 12/6 (SR) at PG; 16 were spotted at YC 2/10 (MS, JT) while the AT n. of L&D 8 produced 3 on 2/19 (TR).

Three **Ruffed Grouse** were noted only in *Indiana* this season – one on 2/4 (MW) at SGL 174 and 2 on 2/23 (MS) at SGL 273 drumming back and forth 12 or more times.

High tally of **Pied-billed Grebes** was 13 at YC 12/16 (JT); the AR yielded single Pied-bills 12/14 (TR) at RT, 12/16 (TR) at Clinton, and 1/18 (TR) at L&D 7, where 2 were noted a month later 2/18 (TR); KR also harbored one 2/9 (MS, JT).

Best tally of **Horned Grebes** was 9 along the Jim Mayer Riverswalk Trail 1/16 (LG) while one was sighted at YC on five days bracketed by 12/12 (ED CH, DK, TR, JT) and 2/26 (DG, RF). **American Coot** high was 37 at PG 12/2 (PI, WI); YC reports were limited to Dec. with 3 individuals on 12/2 (CH) and a singleton on 12/19 (CH, MH, RH); 2 were at MV 1/23 (TR).

YC yielded a flyover **Sandhill Crane** 1/2 (CH, MH, RH, DK), photographed by CH.

Top **Ring-billed Gull** counts were 75 on 12/19 (CH, MH, RH) at YC, 14 on 2/12 (TR) at L&D 7, and 50 on 2/23 (JG, MK, CS) at PG. The nesting pair of **Herring Gulls** turned up at L&D 7 on 2/19 (TR). A **Red-throated Loon** was a nice find at YC on 1/2 (CH, MH, RH, DK); it remained on the lake through 1/5 (IR, MR, PR). **Common Loon** sightings at PG included 3 on 12/2 (PI, WI), one 12/26 (TA), and another 1/2 (AnM); a singleton was also present 1/2 (CH, MH, RH, DK) and 1/3 (AV, HR) at YC. A **Double-crested Cormorant**, the only noted in the region, was present along the AR north of L&D 6 on 12/18, 20 (JB).

Single **Black Vultures** were spotted southwest of Carrolltown 2/6 (MK), at IUP South Campus 2/18 (JT), and at Heshbon 2/21 (MH, RH).

A migrating adult **Golden Eagle** was a great sighting at SGL 273 on 2/11 (MW) as it headed east from a n.e. position; the entire time the eagle was in view, it was being harassed by a Red-tailed Hawk. **Northern Harriers** were widespread throughout the region this winter. Three **Rough-legged Hawks** were sighted in both *Cambria* and *Indiana* this season and one in *Armstrong*. *Cambria*'s included a dark morph west of Elmora 2/3 (CG, MH, RH, GL), one in Colver 2/6 (MK), and a light morph at Conemaugh Gap 2/20 (GT). *Indiana*'s were one n.w. of Marion Center 12/19 (GS, MS), one light morph at WL 1/22 (PC, PF), and another light morph along the WPT 1/26 (GT). A dark morph was seen in *Armstrong* near Worthington 1/22 (DB).

A **Long-eared Owl** was found at an undisclosed location in the region on an undisclosed date by an unnamed observer. As many as 3 **Short-eared Owls** wintered near WL, seen from 12/8 (CH) through 2/24 (TC, GT); another was observed northwest of KT 2/3, 27 (ABu). A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard at SGL 332 on 2/21 (MS).

Merlins were noted at YC and in the Indiana area since the CBC 12/26 (ED, TM, JT) respectively through 2/26 (RF, DG) and 2/27 (TH). A **Peregrine** was sighted n.w. of Marion Center 12/31 (JT); 2 Peregrines were listed 1/23 (TR) at MV.

An **Eastern Phoebe** lingered at PG 1/2 (AnM).

First 2 **Fish Crows** returned after their winter absence to IUP on 2/27 (TH).

A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** found north of L&D 8 was a nice find on 2/5 (TR). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were difficult to find this winter; 2 were observed in *Armstrong*, one on 1/28 (SW) in Freeport and the other on 2/3 (MeC) at CC. In *Indiana* only 2 were reported; one was n. of Nolo 12/17 (CH) while the other was found at SGL 332 on 2/4 (MW). *Cambria's* reports included one at Colver Reservoir 12/17 (TA) and 2 at Wilmore 2/7 (LS). **Winter Wrens** were more numerous this winter than usual with multiple reports from *Armstrong* and *Indiana*, but only two from *Cambria*.

One to 2 **Gray Catbirds** wintered at YC this year, and one was still present through 2/20 (PF, CH, MH, RH, DK). Another was seen 12/1 (JC) north of Johnstown. A **Brown Thrasher** was observed and photographed at YC 1/16 (ED, MH, RH). **Hermit Thrushes** exhibited a strong presence in *Indiana* with reports at 10 locations between 12/2 (CH) and 2/24 (KH); *Armstrong*, too, boasted Hermits at 7 locales with 2 individuals at two of the sites. Two **American Pipits** stopped at YC 1/14 (MG, RG) while 3 were sighted near WT 1/17 (DBr).

Purple Finches were widespread in *Indiana* with reports from 16 locations, ranging from one to 6 individuals between 12/8 (JT) and 2/25 (GT). SGL 247 in *Armstrong* yielded 3 on 12/3 (TR), one 2/9 (TR), and at another SGL 247 location, one on 2/26 (TR). In *Cambria*, five locations yielded one to 3 purples with 3 at PG 12/24 (TA) and 3 also northwest of Johnstown 1/18 (DBY). First **Pine Siskin**, also a widespread species, appeared 12/12 (ED, CH, DK, TR, JT) at YC; 27 were at a Brush Valley feeder 2/3 (MSC) and 4 were still present near Lewisville 2/29 (MC).

A lone **Chipping Sparrow** popped up at a ground feeder near Shelocta 2/16 (MH, RH) then made a second appearance 2/26 (MH, RH). Single **Fox Sparrows** were listed at two locations – near Shelocta 12/4 (MH, RH) and 1/6-7 (MH, RH) and at SGL 273 on 12/16, 26 (GT). YC hosted 2 Fox Sparrows 2/27 (CH, MH, RH). **White-crowned Sparrows**, noted at 10 locations, included 1-3

individuals at each site; all sightings occurred between 1/6 (MS) and 2/9 (MW). A late **Savannah Sparrow** was photographed near YC with a flock of Horned Larks 12/19 (CH, MH, RH). YC was the hotspot for wintering **Eastern Towhees** this year with as many as 6 towhees noted on the north shore 12/12 (ED, CH, DK, TR, JT); 4 were first counted 12/2 (CH); 5 continued through 1/2 (CH, MH, RH, DK) and at least 2 lingered through 2/27 (AM); in addition, there were two outliers – single towhees n.w. of Blacklick 1/20 (CG, MH, RH, GL) and along the Ghost Town Trail 2/25 (GT). We have no other records of wintering towhee flocks.

WL yielded multiple reports of wintering **Eastern Meadowlarks** between 1/22 (PC, PF) and 2/16 (PC, PF, DH) with top count of 6 on 2/3 (MeC). Top **Rusty Blackbird** counts were 21 n. of Plumville 12/30 (JT) and 9 at YC 12/8 (JT). The southern Indiana WRS 1/20 (CG, MH, RH, GL) yielded 13 Rusties at three nearby locations.

A well-described **Orange-crowned Warbler** popped up at RT on 2/23 (SG). Three **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were listed at YC on the IN CBC 12/26 (ED, TM, GS, MS, JT); YC also produced 2 on 2/26 (RF, DG). The river/stream valleys in *Armstrong* yielded reports at 9 locations with highs of 7 on 12/28 (TR) n. of L&D 8, and 6 in a 0.5 stretch between Logansport and RT 2/29 (JB).



Observers: Tina Alianiello, John Boback, Dave Brooke, Alan Buriak (ABu), Deborah Byington (DBY), Meredith Cellitti (MeC), Tiffany Chan, Jessica Crumlasko, Marcy Cunkelman, Michael David, Sue Dickson, Ed Donley, David Dunmire, Mary Ann Dunmire (MAD), Devich Farbotnik, Patience Fisher, Donna Foyle, Roana Fuller, Melissa Gallardy, Ross Gallardy, Joseph Glass, Barb Griffith, Deb Grove, Carol Guba, Steve Guthrie, Dennis Haezebrouck, Kyle Hamrick, Court Harding, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, Tyler Hodges, Pam Illig, Debbie Kalbfleisch, Avis Keener, John Keener, Michael Kensinger, Karen Kottowski, Gloria Lamer, Dennis Lauffer, Andrew Mack (AnM), Avi Marshall, Trent Millum, Sandra Newell, Amber Pertz, Suzann Rensel, Debra Rittlemann, Isaac Rogers, Micah Rogers, Phillip Rogers, Henry Rummel, Matt St Clair (MSC), Connor Schmitt, Lori Schrift, Sherry Shank, Garrett Strittmatter, Mark Strittmatter, Nickolus Stahlman, John Taylor, Greg Tomb, Molly Uptegrove, Sierra Waltenbaugh, Billy Weber, Mike Weible.

This newsletter is produced four times a year by the Todd Bird Club.

Congratulations, Matt!

Congratulations to member Matt St Clair who applied for a student scholarship to attend the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology meeting in Washington County on May 31- June 2. He won one of the scholarships and will be attending the meeting with one of his parents.

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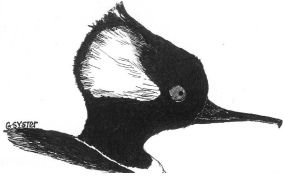
Matt St Clair photographed this Ross's Goose on Timber Lake on 2/15/2024.

Dues Reminder

Todd Bird Club dues are due January 1 unless you just joined in November or December.

Please remit your \$5 student, \$10 individual, or \$15 family membership dues to:

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



Todd Bird Club

c/o Roger V. Higbee
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