



THE MAIL BAG

A PUBLICATION OF THE BROOKS BIRD CLUB OF WEST VIRGINIA
P.O. BOX 4077 • WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA 26003

VOL. 73, ISSUE 3

JULY – AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2016

RYAN TOMAZIN - EDITOR

Editor's Note

In June, the BBC enjoyed good speakers and trips, and pretty good weather at the Tucker County Foray. Even better was the number of new members who joined for Foray, a high percentage of the participating group. Each happily brought their own talents to help make the week a success. This also gave the more experienced members the opportunity to teach eager minds all about the great West Virginia Highlands. This was helped by the local nature itself, as there were multiple sightings of black bear, a porcupine, Whip-poor-wills, a Red-headed Woodpecker in camp, a Saw-Whet Owl, families of Screech and Barred Owls, Bald Eagles and much more. 132 species of birds were seen or heard at Foray, breaking our best Tucker County mark by one. Everybody got to see something good, no matter where they turned.



This brings us to next year's Foray, to be centered at Lost River Retreat Center in Hardy County, a gateway to the eastern panhandle. Dates are June 9th to 17th, 2017. This is an location where I personally have no experience, but I look forward to helping others explore this seldom-visited region. If anyone has suggestions for people or organizations to contact for programs or field trips, contact me at wvwarblers@hotmail.com. From what is reported in this area every year, the possibility of Barn Owls, Red-headed Woodpeckers, Blue Grosbeaks and more should interest many in the club.



Marketing the BBC is near the forefront of discussions amongst our Executive Committee and Board. Last year, the Mail Bag contained a survey form, and we received a couple dozen replies. If you haven't sent yours in or emailed your responses, you may do so at any time in the future, as we appreciate your input as to what you want to see in future BBC programs.

Currently, programs are being subsidized to make them more affordable for families and for weekend travelers. The website and Facebook pages, as well as email lists are being utilized to distribute Club information instantly. Mailings, advertising piece, magazines and newspapers are also being explored. All to bring more membership and participation.

And as for what you can do, bring friends and family into the BBC, whether to actively participate or to just be social.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, JAY BUCKELEW

On my drive south to the Tucker County Foray last June by way of Oakland, Maryland on U.S. Rt. 219 to Thomas, West Virginia, I couldn't help but notice the large increase in wind turbines constructed along the ridge tops since the last time I had passed this way. Susan and I saw many hundreds of wind turbines, also, on recent drives out to Colorado and back. Conservation organizations have warned us that construction of "wind farms" pose a severe threat to the lives of birds. We are aware as well of the many thousands of birds killed by collisions with tall buildings and communications towers. We should all be working to limit the proliferation or lessen the effects of these hazards to birds.

Most of us though give little thought to the greatest anthropogenic killer of wildlife – our own house cats. The Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in Washington DC conducted a study in 2013 concluding that domestic cats cause the death of 1.4 billion to 3.7 billion birds per year in the United States. The toll of small mammals is even larger. People who are concerned about shrinking bird populations should keep their cats indoors and urge friends and neighbors to do the same.

Hope to see many of you on our field trips and programs at the BBC Fall Retreat at Tygart Lake State Park, October 14–16.

– *Albert R. Buckelew, Jr., BBC President*

JUNE NORRIS PASSES



June Elizabeth Norris, age 91 of Woodsfield, Ohio passed away Friday July 1, 2016 at her home. She was born in Monroe County Ohio

October 21, 1924 a daughter of the late Ernest & Lura Brown Holland.

She was a member of the Goudy Church of Christ, and was a 4-H advisor for many years. She was also a member of the Sense and Nonsense Book Club, Brooks Bird Club, and the Sweet Adelines.

Preceded in death by one daughter Judy Ann Norris – Sept. 12, 2011, and one sister Pauline Klayko.

She is survived by her husband of 68 years; Ray Norris of Woodsfield; six children, including Janice (Scott) Emrick of Malaga; eleven grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.

NATURE HAPPENINGS AROUND THE STATE

POTOMAC VALLEY AUDUBON

The PVAS has a terrific and busy schedule of bird walks and trips for the fall. We've listed the dates and places, but for more information and directions, go to: www.potomacaudubon.org.

Bird Walk at the historic Claymont Mansion property – Sept. 10, 2016

Bird Walk on the C&O Canal
Sept. 11, Oct. 9 & Nov. 13, 2016

Hawk Watching Trip at the Washington Monument State Park
Sept. 14 & 28; Oct. 5, 12, 19 & 26;
Nov. 2 & 9, 2016

Nature Walk at Stauffer's Marsh
Sept. 17 & Oct. 16, 2016

Cape May Hawk Watching Trip
Sept. 19, 2016

Hawk Watch at Bolivar Heights
Sept. 21, 2016

Bird Walk at Final Attack Trail, Antietam National Battlefield
Sept. 24 & Oct. 22, 2016

Bird Walk at the National Conservation Training Center – Oct. 01, 2016

Bird Walk at Schoolhouse Ridge/Harpers Ferry National Park
Oct. 12, 2016

Bird Walk at Hagerstown's Kiwanis Park
Oct. 15, 2016

CANAAN VALLEY NWR

Sept. 17, 2016 – Early Fall Bird Walk, 7 AM, meeting at the Canaan Valley NWR office.

Oct. 1, 2016 – Seasonal Migration Bird Walk, 7:30 AM & 10 AM, meeting at the Canaan Valley NWR office.

THREE RIVERS AVIAN CENTER

Sept. 24, 2016 – Hanging Rock Observatory. Raptor display. Free and open to the public. Contact the TRAC at 304-466-4683 for more information.

WV STATE PARKS & FORESTS

For more information & events, go to: www.wvstateparks.com/calendar.html

Sept. 16-18, 2016 – Nature Wonder Weekend, North Bend S.P. Enjoy a full weekend of hikes, programs, and a wild foods banquet.

Sept. 22-25, 2016 – Astronomy Weekend, Blackwater Falls S.P. Visit and take advantage of the dark skies shortly after a new moon. The weekend is free and opens to everybody. The weekend includes: daytime workshops, nighttime star parties, guest speakers and more.

Sept. 30 - Oct. 2, 2016 – Fall Bird Banding & Survey Weekend, Tygart Lake S.P. Join Birder Joey Herron as he bands various breeding and migrating birds of West Virginia. Learn to identify birds by both sight and sound!

CONTACT THE EDITOR

Have an interesting story about the nature around your neck of the woods? Want to contribute an article or travelogue? Have a nature-related event that you'd like to tell the Club about? Please contact me by mail, email or phone:

Ryan Tomazin
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Bridgeville, PA 15017
412-220-9726
wwwarblers@hotmail.com



Oct. 1, 2016 – Wild Walks Weekend, Canaan Valley S.P. Join the park naturalist for an 8-mile guided hike between Blackwater Falls S.P. and Canaan Valley S.P., during the early fall season. See the vivid colors of the autumn season. There is a registration fee.

Oct. 2, 2016 – Bird and Wildlife Identification, Wilderness-style, Pipestem Resort S.P. Meet Todd Longanacre at McKeever Lodge to enjoy a walk around the Arboretum, cabin areas, and down to Long Branch Lake to look for and identify birds and other animal species, and also learn how to connect bird song identification to bushcraft survival. Free to the public.

Oct. 16 & Nov. 14, 2016 – Full Moon Hikes, Cass Scenic Railroad S.P. Full Moon hikes designed to encourage visitors to enjoy being outdoors in wintry and spring weather. Meet at the Visitor's Center in Cass, WV, at 7:00pm. There is no charge to participate.

2016 TUCKER COUNTY FORAY DAILY REPORTS

Mon., June 13 – Tue. June 14, 2016

Everyone arrived for the first night of Foray while the sky was clear and the birds were singing. Several members explored the camp and enjoyed a lovely sunset and partial moon. The drive to Camp Kidd was very telling of the rest of the week - windy mountain roads that follow the Cheat River and provided spectacular views.

The first morning there were two BBS runs, two study plots, and a morning bird walk. The first black bear (a mama and two cubs) was spotted during one of the BBS runs and the study plot group saw a red fox! After breakfast the morning was free for exploring. One group went fossil hunting and others went birding. The afternoon was spent birding and hiking. A group went for a hike near Olson Bog and enjoyed the wilderness of Tucker County. The night program was musical, cultural, and educational. We were lucky to have two talented musicians and historians give a program about the folklore of Appalachia. They shared stories about

highlight of the walk was a Pine Warbler singing in the pines near the campfire circle. Highlights of the BBS runs were Mourning and Canada Warblers at Fernow.



A familiar Sods view

At 9 AM, we headed for Dolly Sods. Along the way, we stopped to see Bobolinks in some fields along Rt. 72. Dick Diener was thrilled to find a Lesser Broom Rape and Cheryl Jennings was happy to



Beautiful sundew on the boardwalk

were also seen in and near the road. After dinner, following the bird list, we had an interesting talk by Nick Goodman, a grad student at WVU, on Birds of Puerto Rico. There are 364 species of birds in Puerto Rico, including the Lizard Cuckoo, Green Mango Hummingbird, Puerto Rican Vireo, Adelaide's Warbler and the Puerto Rican Night Jar that was thought to be extinct until the mid 1900's. After the presentation, Chan Robbins and Nick compared notes about their Puerto Rican experiences.

– *by Sally Egan*



A nice forest picnic in the wilderness

spot a Pipevine Swallowtail. We stopped at a picnic area for lunch and Michael Jones noted that the big rocks surrounding us were 300 million year old sandstone. Several carloads of people walked a couple of trails on



Northland Loopers

Dolly Sods and others headed for the banding area and Bear Rocks to take in the magnificent views. Tom Fox and others in his group heard a Swamp Sparrow and Alder Flycatcher at the beaver dam. Ruffed Grouse

Thurs., June 16, 2016

Thursday, June 16th started early for me since I went on a breeding bird survey (BBS). The highlight of



Olson Tower still stands

the survey was a Cerulean warbler. After the BBS and breakfast, the group went to Olson bog where many fascinating plants were observed including pitcher plants. Some pitcher plants had spiders trapped in the pitcher part of the plant. The bog was a highlight for many of the botanists in the group, but it also had some good wildlife including a beaver dam, wood ducks, and Twelve-spotted Skimmers. Once everyone returned from the bog, we



A great show by Carrie & Michael Kline

coal mining, the Civil War, and the joys and heartache of Appalachia. The first day of Foray promised a week of wilderness, friendship, and birds!

– *by Lori Petrauski*

Wed., June 15, 2016

Janice Emrick led the morning bird walk. Eight people participated and 30 species were seen or heard. The

ventured up the road past where the singing male censuses are conducted to the Olson observation tower. Some of the braver members of the group climbed the tower and got a beautiful view for their trouble. Lunch was then consumed and we went to the Fernow experimental forest. My favorite part of the trip to Fernow was walking on the zero grade trail. On the trail, four different forest management practices were observed. The trail also gave witness to the beautiful Canada lily and the endangered running buffalo clover. After the field trip, dinner, and the bird list, Mack Frantz and Laura Farwell gave presentations on how fracking is affecting bird populations in the Lewis Wetzel wildlife management area located in Wetzel County, WV. Their talks were so riveting that no one fell asleep until after their talks were finished. Also, earlier in the day, Lori Petrauski observed a porcupine on the Allegheny highlands trail.

– *by Nick Goodman*

Fri., June 17, 2016

The main events of the day began after BBS routes and study plots. We gathered for breakfast and broke into carpooling groups to begin our adventure to go kayaking 8 miles down the Cheat River. Jay Buckelew also lead a group hike on Backbone Mountain near Olson Bog. After arriving at the River Charters office and choosing our boats for the day we headed to the drop off point. We got in the water and set sail for a day full of great bird



Lunch break on the Cheat

sightings and other various interesting findings. As we floated down the river many of us got to see a Bald Eagle soaring over head. Orion Metheny spotted two American Kestrels as they floated past farm land. The river was gentle and easy to navigate, it offered a vastly different perspective on the landscape and an opportunity to view different flora and fauna.



4 1/2-th year Bald Eagle in St. George

We stopped for lunch on a island in the middle of the river. Several green heron and mallards were seen along with multiple Broad-winged Hawks and Baltimore Orioles. As we all loaded back into our boats we noticed the water was starting to rise but this only assisted our progress as some areas in the river were low due to a lack of rain. We head downstream where the group was treated to a Common Merganser with young. An adult Bald Eagle day in a sycamore along the banks as we floated past. Green Heron were plentiful, with one feeding young. As we neared our end some of the group was able to see a Spotted Sandpiper along the river banks. At the St. George bridge where we exited there were cliff swallows. We all received great views of their intricate nests. Once we were all on dry land again the group was treated to yet another bald eagle sighting.

We met back for dinner, the bird list and our evening program The Sounds of Insects by Wil Hershberger. After the program was ended Orion Metheny, Zanon Sines and Ryan

Tomazin went in search of night birds. A Whip poor will and Eastern Screech Owl with young were their first two findings shortly after dusk. Next they were treated to a Northern Saw-Whet which was a life bird for Zanon Sines and all around an awesome bird! They also got to experience three Barred Owl adults calling and two young all in the same area, they raised quite a ruckus and used an array of different vocalizations. It was an exciting day with an amazing night!

– *by Orion Metheny*



Mist in the valley - by Orion Metheny

Sat., June 18, 2016

Our day had an exciting start when we saw a Red-headed Woodpecker perched as the car caravan lined up to leave Camp Kidd. Our first stop was Freeland Road at the boardwalk entrance, where we saw several Bobolink, while a meadowlark sang from the top of a shrub on the opposite side of the road. On the boardwalk, we found both a bright Yellow Warbler at its nest, and a Cedar Waxwing nest. An Alder Flycatcher was heard, and other flycatchers were seen that were difficult to identify without their songs. A kes-



The boardwalk was hopping - by O.M.

triel was seen at a far distance through the scope. A “gray ghost” Northern Harrier flew low over the field as we returned to the cars and was a life bird for both Orion Metheny and his brother, Zanon Sines.

The Merlin that frequents Canaan Lodge perched long enough for everyone to see before being flushed by cannon fire from a Civil War reenactment being held in the park. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and a Ruby-throated Hummingbird were feeding from sap on a tree in the parking lot.

We ate lunch at the Canaan Wildlife Refuge headquarters picnic tables. Some people left to go in different directions and pursue different interests. Much of the group listened intently on Cortland and Beall Tract Roads and heard Savannah, Henslow's and Grasshopper Sparrows, along with an Alder Flycatcher. A bluebird family was on an electric line, and active Tree Swallow boxes were nearby. I missed two Great Blue Herons, but did see the third flying over.

Scott and Janice Emrick, John Fichtner, Wilma and I drove on Canaan Loop Road and observed black tadpoles and a small mystery critter in water beside the road. Tom Fox, Dick Diener, Bob Pickett and Natalie Diener were botanizing in the same area. A terrific, sunshiny day.

Silent auction closed out and over \$400 was raised for scholarships. After dinner, a group picture was taken by Jay Buckelew.

I received a book on fungus for being a winner in the t-shirt contest. An enjoyable evening program was presented by Wil Hershberger on bird songs – wonderful sounds and beautiful photos.
– *by Alma Lowry*

Sun., June 19, 2016

Ryan and Carol led the Breeding Bird Surveys. Ryan reported about 52 breeding bird species identified and a black bear sighting. Carol's trip was

highlighted by a Louisiana Waterthrush, bobolinks and a winter wren song. Jay's Singing Male Census was somewhat slow that morning.

Lori Petruski treated us to a preview of her WVU Master's thesis regarding changes in the timing of song bird migration over the last almost century based on her painstaking review of journal entries of professional and amateur birders. Her conclusion is that on average, over the last several decades, song birds are migrating in the spring about 1 day earlier per decade. Mike Jones presented a 2017 Solar Eclipse Program and led a Marine Fossil Field trip. And after dinner, Will Hershberger presented his extensive recordings of insect sounds, especially regarding crickets, grasshoppers, katydids and



Wil Hershberger's insect program

cicadas. His website, songsofinsects.com, is a wealth of information and well worth considerable time and study.

The food was great, the weather was perfect and the company was fantastic!

– *by Mark Elliott*

Mon., June 20 – Tue. June 21, 2016

Today is the final full day of Foray. The BBS went out at 5:00 am and stayed out until lunch to maximize their collection time. The SMBBS also left early to make one final collection in their grids and removed their flags as they left. The 6:30 bird walk was a drive along Holly Meadows Rd. After breakfast a group went on a fern drive/walk along 'Pennsylvania Ave' along the Cheat River Black Fork just outside

of parsons. Tom led the walk and we learned how to identify 28 ferns and fern allies. The fishing spider was also impressive. What a busy morning.

After lunch was free time and everyone spent it in their special way. Some were just tourists at Black Water Falls and the Canaan Valley Freeland RD Boardwalk, some visited a special place that is threatened, some caught up on work, some went swimming, and some read a book and napped.

Sadly, we sang the goodbye song at every meal as the numbers dwindled. At the bird list report on our final evening, we celebrated the setting of a new record for the Foray: 2016 broke the old record of 131 birds set in 2006. The 2016 Foray's new record of 132 was set when a Red-shouldered Hawk was added to the list.

The final program was given by Darrin Kelly on Forest Service Programs especially the efforts to restore the Red Spruce to the WV Forests. Dick declared the botanizing for the Foray a success. The final activity of the day was Bird Charades. Everyone was a winner.

There was a loud and flashy storm in the night so there was no morning bird walk on Tuesday morning June 21, 2016. We sang the goodbye song one last time after breakfast to thank the crew that cooked for us.

We can all look forward to the 2017 Foray at The Lost River Retreat Center. As the Newbies, we want to thank you all for making us feel welcome and part of the group.

– *by Sara and Don Creamer*

Photos by Ryan Tomazin, unless otherwise noted



CORRESPONDENCE

It was such a pleasure to reconnect with the good folks at foray; some old friends and new ones. Particularly refreshing was the vision of more young folks than I recall seeing in Hardy Co. 9 years ago. Of course what's 'young' to me is a moving target. Obviously they are the future of the BBC.

The work that is done at foray is a great statement for citizen science. The continuity of the point counts and BBS routes is unparalleled and a significant contribution to the knowledge of breeding birds in WV. I would like to applaud all of you who have given so generously of your time for so many years, and say that it was a beautiful sight to behold once again.

Looking forward to Hardy County next year.

– Bob Dean

Fellow birders and friends,

That day I've hinted at to many of you--my departure from WV--will likely occur by the end of October this year. My wife and I over the 4th of July weekend finally found a retirement location--Hendersonville, NC, which is about 25 miles south of Asheville, NC. We may have our house on the market by the end of August, and hopefully will move before the snows arrive in October or November.

I'll make a final announcement when the moving date is settled. In the meantime, I'll be making arrangements to transfer some of my birding duties to others, though I'll retain some that can be done anywhere online.

I've enjoyed immensely my time in WV, and I think I've made a significant contribution to the state's birding life and records. I'll be sorry to go.

– Terry Bronson, Morgantown, WV

Some years ago, I would bring trays of ginkgo and mossy cup oak seedlings to forays and other BBC events for interested members to take home and plant. Now these many years later, they should be mature trees. I would appreciate it if any recipients would send me pictures and comments by email (kenhanderson@icloud.com). Jane and I miss you all, but age tends to creep up on one.

– Ken Anderson

UPDATED WV LICENSE PLATES FOR SALE

(Excerpts from an article by John McCoy, Staff Writer, Charleston Gazette, July 10, 2016)

West Virginia motorists now have two new wildlife license plates to put on their vehicles.

The plates, which became available July 1, feature the images of two of the state's iconic wildlife species — the eastern bluebird, one of the state's most popular birds; and the brook trout, one of the state's most popular game fish.

The new tags are the fourth and fifth in a series that dates back to the late 1990s. The first wildlife plate, which featured a rose-breasted grosbeak, came out in 1998. The second, which featured a white-tailed deer, followed in 2001. The third, which featured black bears, was first issued in 2014.

The new plates cost \$55 for the first year and can be renewed for \$45 in subsequent years. Personalized “vanity” tags cost an additional \$15. Fifteen dollars of each purchase or renewal goes toward the Division of Natural Resources' Wildlife Diversity Program, which manages the state's non-game animal species and rare plants.

Money from sales and renewals of the plates makes up a large chunk of the Wildlife Diversity Program's operating budget. Warner said the DNR's share of the fees amounts to about \$350,000 a year. Rather than lose that important source of funding, agency officials decided to offer the public some fresh, new choices.



West Virginia's official state fish, the brook trout, features prominently on one of two new wildlife-themed license plates recently made available to motorists. The license's image is from a painting by the late Tom Allen, a wildlife biologist for the DNR. Credit: Image courtesy WV Division of Natural Resources.



The state's newest non-game wildlife tag features the eastern bluebird, one of the state's most colorful and familiar songbirds. The bird is featured in the habitat it favors, open fields with nearby forests. The license's image is from a painting by the late Tom Allen. Credit: Image courtesy WV Division of Natural Resource.

CHANGES IN CONTACT INFORMATION

CHANGE OF ADDRESSES

Shannon Burner
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(Phone & Email remain same.)

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Jim Waggy
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CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

BIBBEE CHAPTER

*Contact Mindy for information at
mwaldron@suddenlink.net*

Sept. 17, 2016 – 10:00 to 3:00 PM,
Hawk watch on East River Mountain.
East River Mountain, off of Rt. 460
near Bluefield, WV.

Oct. 1, 2016 – 5:00 – 8:00 PM, An-
nual Dinner and planning meeting. US
Forest Service Lab near Athens, WV.

Oct. 8, 2016 – Date may change. BIG
SIT! An all-day birding event. We be-
gin at daylight and go until dark. We
can use people to sit with us. Moun-
tain Valley Lake in Summers Co.

Nov. 12, 2016 – 9:00 AM, Water-
fowl around Hinton and the New
River. Meet at pull-off along Rt. 20.

HEADQUARTERS CHAPTER

Sept. 17, 2016 – Fall Migration Walk/
Field Trip – begins at 9 AM. Meet at
the Barkcamp State Park Office. Host-
ed by Scott Pendleton. Bring your own
lunch, drink and lawn chairs

Oct. 18, 2016 – Dr. Jim Butler, Ogle-
bay Schrader Center. The Elusive
Wood Warblers: Their Glamorous
and Mysterious World

Nov. 15, 2016 – Daniel Caron, Ogle-
bay Schrader Center. Backyard Ad-
ventures with My Camera

MOUNTWOOD CHAPTER

Sept. – Jeanie Hilton 304-428-8641

Sept. 22, 2016 – Ohio River Islands
NWR, 8:00 am, ORINWR Parking
lot.

Sept. 29, 2016 – McDonough Wild-
life Refuge, 8:00 am, McDonough
parking lot.

**October – Barb Hobman 740-374-
5548**

Oct. 8, 2016 – Big Sit, Ohio River.
Sunrise to sunset, ORINWR Parking
Lot, Islands National Wildlife Ref-
uge. Come anytime.

Oct. 13, 2016 – Kroger Wetlands
& Broughton, 8:00 am, Kroger wet-
lands parking lot.

Oct. 20, 2016 – McDonough Wild-
life Refuge, 8:00 am, McDonough
parking lot.

Oct. 27, 2016 – Sandy Creek Back-
water & area, 9:00 am Boat ramp,
Northwest Pipe Drive.

Nov. – Sandy Albrecht 740-373-8994

Nov. 3, 2016 – Program, 6:30 pm,
Vienna Public Library Meeting
Room. Bring finger food.

Nov. 10, 2016 – Ohio River, Little
Hocking area, 9:00 am, Park & Ride,
OH Rt. 339 / Rt. 7; bring lunch.

(Cont. on Page 9)

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS AROUND THE STATE

Had numerous sighting of two Willets all day. I assumed they were the same two and flying back and forth. Willets are not common in Kanawha County.

– Richard Gregg, Belle, WV, 5/1/2016

Yesterday, five of us conducted a Century Count in Cabell, Mason and Wayne Counties. This year we started at 4 am at Green Bottom WMA and ended about 8:30 pm at Beech Fork State Park. In between we made stops at McClintic WMA, Gallipolis Ferry, Robert C. Byrd Locks & Dam, Shady Waters Campground, Long Ridge Rd., Hannan Trace, Rd., Union Ridge Rd., and Ashton Upland Rd. We had a wonderful day of birding in spite of afternoon and evening showers. Our total for the day was 133 species, our second best for this count. There were many highlights, but 27 warbler species was one of the highest totals we have had on this count! The main surprises were a Canada Warbler and a Northern Waterthrush found at McClintic WMA and a Swainson's Warbler at Beech Fork State Park. We didn't find anything particularly rare, but the N. Waterthrush was a lifer for two of us, and the Red-headed Woodpecker was a second lifer for one of us. We also saw two different Barred Owls.

– Gary Rankin, Lavalette, WV, 5/3/2016

Mike Griffith, Matt Orsie, Gary Rankin and I participated in the WV Big Day birding on May 7th. We succeeded in breaking our 2014 record and accumulated 150 species. We traveled 441 miles and walked at least 6 miles. We started out at 3:30 am and finished up at 10:30 PM with our last species being the Northern Saw-whet Owl on the Scenic Highway. The temperature started out at 40 degrees and rose to 73 in the afternoon. When we arrived in Pocahontas County, we experienced waves of showers and it looked bleak, but we got some respite between the rain showers and were able to get several high mountain species. We saw 30 warblers. Our route included Cabell and Mason County and then on to Pocahontas County. Some of the highlights included the following: a Common Gallinule seen at Greenbottom WMA; a Chuck-wills-widow heard at Mt. Zion Cemetery; a blue form Snow Goose at RCB Locks; Sora; Virginia Rail; and Swainson's Warbler.

– David Patick, Huntington, WV, 5/8/2016

Four of us had an exciting post-Wildflower Pilgrimage Sunday in Canaan Valley. The highlight was watching three adult American Avocets in breeding plumage bobbing in the waves under the watchful eye of an adult Bald Eagle while an unsuccessful Osprey kept plummeting into the water. It's not often that seeing three Ruddy Ducks, several very handsome Wood Ducks, a Green Heron, two yellowlegs and several Spotted Sandpipers were not the highlight of the day. After years of staring at an avocet in one of my bird books, the real thing is amazing, especially with those long, recurved bills.

– Laura Ceperley, Charleston, WV, 5/9/2016

On behalf of eBird, I'd like to thank everyone who birded on Saturday, May 14, despite often rainy and windy conditions, and submitted their sightings to eBird. All checklists were counted for eBird's Global Big Day. Internationally, so far 5,624 species have been reported, but that number will continue to grow as additional checklists are submitted.

In West Virginia, data indicates 62 birders submitted 136 checklists from 23 counties, including 158 species.

– Terry Bronson, Morgantown, WV, 5/15/2016

The weather wasn't the best to do a birdathon on Sunday, May 15, but my team member, Chuck Parker, and I weren't available on Saturday. The wind blew hard most of the day, and the temperatures were chilly for this time of year, or so it seemed. It was fun just to get outside and enjoy nature and our beloved birds.

We started at 4:00 AM and ended at 8:00 PM. We drove 156 miles in a Prius in Jefferson and Berkeley Counties. We found 103 different species, which was not team White-eyed Weary-O's highest number ever, but it was the best we could do considering the wind.

Highlights included 18 warbler species; a few Horned Lark adults with juveniles and 3 American Pipits; a Red-shouldered Hawk at ground zero range, coming at me; a stunning Blue Grosbeak sitting in the sun on Norman Silver Road, Berkeley County; a gorgeous Vesper Sparrow; and an unfledged Eastern Screech-Owlet in my backyard nest box. We missed the White-throated Sparrows who left the night before, and we never could find us a Red-tailed Hawk anywhere.

– BIRDMOM, Jefferson County, WV, 5/16/2016

Bev Wright and I spend the evening looking for nighthawks at the Kanawha Mall in Kanawha City -- nothing like a little "mall birding" to end a hot sticky day. No nighthawks, but an inspiring encounter with a female Cedar Waxwing. We realized it was tethered to the grass and fortunately, we were able to carefully catch it and untangle the nylon thread that was wrapped around its neck and one leg. Happily it flew off to the nearby plane tree to join it's buddies. Most touching was that a male watched the whole operation from the wire above us, staying close, and flying off with the released bird.



*A rare Willet, on the wing
– photo by Rick Gregg*

INTERESTING SIGHTINGS (con.)

We also watched about 4-8 Purple Martins feeding above the parking areas, landing on the "t" and "r's" in Dollar Tree, and the "r" and "o" in Kroger. They seem to be nesting in the underbelly of a parked semi-trailer behind Elder Berman. Such city-fied birds.

– Laura Ceperley, Charleston, WV, 5/29/2016

What a beautiful morning for a bird walk - the birds were enjoying it, too. Virginus Island and the adjacent wetlands are Oriole country. Orchard and Baltimore Orioles serenaded us and flashed across the sky and river. We watched a couple in the process of nest-building, and another at an established nest. We caught decent glimpses of the local Prothonotary Warbler, and heard Yellow, Yellow-throated, Louisiana Waterthrush and Northern Parula (one of whom we found).

The area is hopping with babies at the moment. We saw baby Tree Swallow, bluebird, robin, cardinal and Red-shouldered Hawk. And we found 2 small rafts of wood ducklings (a total of 15 wee ones) on the old canal, with a pair of mothers on a nearby log preening each other thoroughly (their morning at the spa). There were a few goslings among the adult Canada Geese.

It is a sweet spot, and the birds know it as much as we do.

– Deb Hale, Harpers Ferry/Bolivar, WV, 6/1/2016

I was heartsick to find three nest boxes predated this morning. The worst was that of the Tree Swallows where one of the fledglings remained alive in the box. When I called the Wildlife Rehab Center in nearby Virginia they told me they no longer take animals from out of state. Guess I don't have to worry about donating to them any more since my donation would be from "out of state" as well.

These particular boxes have are on poles and have been predated before but I was thrilled to have them used again. Short-lived happiness indeed. Baffles are on order and I can't wait to have them installed. The predation of House Sparrows or House Wrens I can't do anything about, but I'm hoping to eliminate some threat. Decided to check on a box that the House Wrens were using, only to find a little snake and one wren egg in there.

This is definitely a weird year. Even the deer are worse than they have been for a number of years. The deterrents that normally work don't seem to be very effective. Thankfully there are still good things going on such as the pileated still visiting the food tray and catbirds carrying off suet so they must have young. We also found two very pretty female Box Turtles on our dog walk. Yesterday we surprised the female turkey in the yard. So nice to have her.

A few days ago I had a baby bluebird, chickadee and titmouse taking sun baths on the food tray. It is always startling when you first see them because they look injured until you remember that this is normal behavior.

Will set two Havahart traps tonight. Maybe I'll get lucky.

– Bruni Haydl, Charles Town, WV, 6/5/2016

I spent 4 hours and 20 minutes this morning birding Cathedral State Park in Preston County. This wonderful park is located along Route 50 just a few miles west of the Maryland state line and about 25-30 miles north of Canaan Valley Resort. It contains some remnant old-growth hemlock, as well as many tall deciduous trees, edge habitat, and a meadow. On its east edge there is a large farm.

The following were the highlights. Still a lot of birds singing: Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush; Kentucky, Magnolia, Chestnut-sided (including 2 juvenile female types), Black-throated Blue, and Black-throated Green Warblers.

– Terry Bronson, Morgantown, WV, 7/30/2016

I made a visit to Cranberry Glades yesterday morning around 7:30 am. The area had some valley fog in spots but the Glades had very little fog. As I walked the boardwalk, I flushed a pair of Ruffed Grouse and could hear the Olive-sided Flycatcher calling from the edge of the woods to the north. After rounding the turn at the end, I saw the Alder Flycatcher working

bushes and small trees for insects. As I continued along the boardwalk, I was greeted by a couple of Canada Warblers that sang their beautiful song. From the woods near the parking lot, the flute-like call of a Hermit Thrush was truly music to my ears. With the morning light and a hint of fog, it was a wonderful time to be at The Glades.

– Gary Rankin, Lavalette, WV, 7/31/2016

– **Sightings taken from
WVBird ListServ**

CHAPTER HAPPENINGS CONT.

Nov. 17, 2016 – Middle Island area, 9:00 am, Burger King, Rt. 68 & I-77, bring lunch.

Dec. – Lucine Wright 740-373-6230

Dec. 1, 2016 – Seneca Lake, Ohio, 8:00 am, WV Welcome Center, Williamstown, WV; bring lunch

Dec. 8, 2016 – Christmas Luncheon. Details later.

HANDLAN CHAPTER

September 19, 2016 – Annual Ice Cream Social at the South Charleston Library, 6:30pm. A program of socializing and discussion of bird sightings and news.

October 17, 2016 – October Meeting at South Charleston Library, 6:30pm. Program to be announced.

November 21, 2016 – November Meeting at South Charleston Library, 6:30pm. Program to be announced.



2016 EASTERN SHORE TRIP

NOVEMBER 9th-13th

Here we go again on one of our favorite sorties to the east coast! Ocean breezes, good food, beautiful accommodations, good friends and, oh yes, great birding. We haven't been to the southern Assateague/Chincoteague part of the trip for two years and so that's where we'll begin. I have researched the wildlife refuges and found them to be all in good shape and waiting for us.

We will begin at Chincoteague where we'll arrive on Wednesday, check into our nice motel, have dinner at one of the many good restaurants and perhaps try out the indoor pool or health spa before heading to bed. Thursday, after a full breakfast at the hotel while we check out the marsh from our private deck, and picking up your bag lunch, we'll bird the south end of Assateague Island and surrounding areas. Dinner at one of Chincoteague's fine eateries and a quick dip in the pool and bed. Friday we'll do the breakfast-lunch thing again then check out of the hotel and head north, ending in Rehoboth Beach and our ultra plush, ocean front hotel. Many birding spots along the way and maybe a walk along the beach before or after dinner and we'll be ready for bed.

Saturday morning's breakfast buffet and box lunch pick up will get us started up the Delaware Bay Coast with stops at various refuges and birding areas ending, of course, at Bombay Hook and all those beautiful Snow Geese. After we get all seventy-nine thousand, four hundred and seventy-one geese settled down for the night, we'll head back to the motel for our banquet dinner and final bird count of one hundred and thirty-two species before bed. Sunday morning after breakfast, we'll say our good-byes and head for home under a beautiful blue sky. We will again have vans leaving Wheeling and making pick up stops along the way for anyone not wishing to drive themselves.

Price includes Wed., Thurs., Fri., and Sat. night's lodging (2 per room); Thurs., Fri., Sat., and Sun. morning breakfast; Thurs, Fri., and Sat. lunch; Sat. banquet dinner; and all the fun you can stand. A full itinerary complete with phone numbers, addresses and maps of where we'll be staying and birding will be sent to everyone who signs up.

DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS – OCTOBER 25th

**Make checks payable to Carl Slater and send along with your reservation to
56249 Hospital Road, Bellaire, Ohio 43906**

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL. NO. _____ Name of person sharing room _____

(2 people per room) If you need a roommate, we'll get you one

_____ people @ \$370.00 each \$ _____

Single room supplement, additional \$220.00 \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Are you interested in traveling in the van? Yes _____ No _____



BROOKS BIRD CLUB FALL RETREAT & MEMBERSHIP MEETING

TYGART LAKE STATE PARK, WV – October 14-16, 2016

It's been eight years since we visited Tygart Lake and I am sure we will enjoy not only the facility, but also the beautiful fall colors. Friday we'll check into the Lodge mid afternoon, get settled and spend some time seeing some old friends and new ones. Dinner will be at 6:30 p.m.

After dinner Bill Beatty and Jan Runyan will do a program on "Rainbows, Bluebirds and Buffleheads."

On Saturday after breakfast, we'll pick up our box lunch and see what we might find flying around chipping at us. Joey Herron will lead us on a field trip to Pricketts Fork and Valley Falls where he has his Saw-Whet Owl banding station. We will return to the Lodge in time to clean up for our banquet dinner at 6:30 p.m. Before dinner we will have a short Board of Trustees meeting. Joey will give us a program on his work with Saw-Whet Owl banding after dinner.

On Sunday morning after breakfast, we will have our Annual Membership Meeting. There will be some interesting topics on the agenda which we'll be discussing.

BBC Fall Retreat reservation deadline September 30, 2016. Make checks payable to the **Brooks Bird Club, Inc.** and send with your reservation to:

Mary Jacobs
1027 Stony Run Road
Independence, WV 26374
Phone 304-864-6460
Email: nomejj@gmail.com

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL. NO. _____ EMAIL _____

persons _____

Cost (full time – all meals, lodging and registration included)

Double occupancy @ \$145.00/person \$ _____

Name of person sharing room _____
(Roommate will be assigned if no preference given)



Total cost \$ _____



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Just floatin' the day away

– New member, Johanna Sholder of Pittsburgh, takes a post-lunch siesta on our Foray canoe trip on the Cheat River

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