



THE MAIL BAG

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

VOL. 79, ISSUE 3

JULY – AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2022

RYAN TOMAZIN - EDITOR

Editor's Note

The BBC is on the cusp of yet another amazing anniversary: 90 years since a dedicated band of birders started the club we see before us now. It seems like moments ago that we were celebrating the 80th at Blackwater Falls, enjoying good birding, fantastic field trips and the best speakers, all with Hurricane Sandy looming on the horizon. And just moments ago, we were at the 85th at Oglebay Park, being serenaded by the late Bill Thompson III and thoroughly appreciating the infinite auditory delights presented to us by Lang Elliott.

Very soon, we'll be congregating at Hawk's Nest State Park in the southern part of the state, bringing the memories of the past into the present yet again. We hope to have a full house to build new memories from. Hope to see you there!



MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, CINDY SLATER

What have you all been doing? Have we heard from you? I am certain Ryan would love to put your correspondence in the mailbag. If you have a more scientific observation that has been going on over a period of time, then Casey would probably love to hear from you. The rest of us would love to read about your research and findings in the Redstart or your fun outings in the Mailbag.

Speaking of fun outings, the plans for the 90th Anniversary are shaping up very nice. Hopefully, you sent in your RSVP because now it is time to send your reservation for the Eastern Shore Trip. We are heading to Chincoteague this year and will end the trip in Rehoboth. You can find your reservation form in the back of this issue of the Mailbag.

Jumping ahead to Christmas, don't forget to buy a Brooks Bird Club Membership for all of those difficult to buy for folks on your shopping list. They make excellent stocking stuffers too!

I am excited to see everyone here shortly at the 90th Anniversary Weekend. It will be great for all of us to spend some time together. Stay safe!

– Your BBC President, Cindy Slater

*(Top) 50th Anniversary,
photographer unknown*

*(Bottom) 75th Anniversary,
photo by Bill Beatty*

TO ALL RECEIVING MAIL BAG/REDSTART

If you have not renewed your dues for 2022 as per your dues reminder of December 2021, please be advised this mailing will be the last you will receive. We appreciate your support of the Club in the past.

*Juanita Slater,
Membership Chairman*

2022 PRESTON COUNTY FORAY DAILY REPORTS - photos by Ryan Tomazin

Fri., June 3 – Sat., June 4, 2022

My son Martin and I arrived at Camp Galilee in Preston Co. about 3pm. It is a beautiful camp set in a valley with a lake. There are cute cabins with front porches nestled under tall oak trees. A couple of shower houses on both sides of camp. The rec. building has a large fireplace, and a few game tables. There is a dining hall and a chapel being built. It was great seeing all the people arriving. We helped Scott Emerick lay out one of the study plots near camp. After dinner we all found out what was happening this week. Who was running the two study plots, and who was running the BBC routes. The morning bird walk would be around camp at 6:30. Saturday We had lots of free time in the morning and after lunch to scout around and find bird, herp., plants, etc. After dinner, the evening program was Kevin Dodge. Night Sounds of the Appalachians. Kevin is a professor at Garrett College in Maryland. He had a very interactive program. He had us all laughing, but learning the sounds of frogs and birds. a wonderful program!

– *by Deb Tingley*



Summer Azure at Rebe WMA

Sun., June 5, 2022

Sunday was a full day of activities. The morning started off with a bird walk led by Janice Emrick along Camp Galilee Road. Following breakfast, thirty-six participants headed for Cranessville Swamp. It was a beautiful day as we headed into the swamp through the pine plantation. The Chestnut-sided warbler was the most prevalent bird of the trip. Seeing the common sundew carnivorous plants and the tamarack trees were a treat. After dinner, Katie Fallon of the Avian Conser-



Male American Kestrel brought by the ACCA

vation Cerner of Appalachia presented an interesting program on Cerulean Warblers, one of the fastest declining neotropical migratory songbirds. Approximately 36% of all Cerulean Warblers breed in WV and prefer to nest in large tracts of mature to old-growth hardwood forests on ridges with gaps in the canopy and understory vegetation. This warbler is declining due to loss of breeding habitat and non-breeding habitat. Habitat loss in the Central American migration corridor is due to development and agriculture, especially coffee. Katie urged us to ask our local stores to carry shade grown coffee from Central or South America, not to cut down White and Chestnut Oaks and support organizations that fund songbird conservation research. Members scurried to buy shade grown coffee that Katie brought with her and to place more orders. A full and fun day for all!

– *by Sally Egan*



Yellow Poplar flower

Mon., June 6, 2022

We started out the day with beautiful, sunny weather that continued all day long. After the daily singing male and breeding bird surveys were conducted by Ryan Tomazin, Scott Emerick and Martin Tingley with help from a few campers, some participated in a fern walk with Tom and Dawn Fox leading the way.

Fern types were somewhat limited in the area of the “walk,” but ferns such as interrupted, Christmas, cinnamon, and hay-scented were found along with other interesting plants such as Indian cucumber, ground pine and the endangered American chestnut tree.

The camp directors challenged everyone to participate in teams on a scavenger hunt that included finding various birds, plants, fossils, insects, reptiles and even types of flags, statuary and art work. The winning team included Karin Tanquist (competitor extraordinaire), Pat Coy, Mimi Kibbler and Mary Murin. It was great fun and a good way to get campers to look at a wide variety of flora and fauna within Preston county.

Later in the day, John Burkhart gave a presentation and gave us some insight into his efforts as an expert botanist with WV’s Natural Heritage Program. He serves as a technical expert for rare, threatened and endangered species. It’s good to know there are people like John out there helping to develop conservation priorities for the flora of WV.

All in all, Monday was another great day and evening at Camp Galilee.

– *by Mary Murin*



An adorable Red Squirrel at camp

Tue., June 7, 2022

Today we visited Old Hemlock, the estate of George Bird Evans and his wife Kay. 232 acres were preserved by their foundation. LeJay Graffious, the manager of the estate, is a bird bander and friend of many. We learned about the historic house and the habitat restoration project with forest management.

Three declining birds are researched:
(continued on Page 4)

Wood Thrush, Cerulean and Golden-winged warblers. When we hiked there, we clearly heard a cerulean sing.

On arriving back at camp, several attendees discovered a large female snapping turtle laying eggs in a hole near the beach.



Phoebe - Old Hemlock

These same 3 birds mentioned earlier were further discussed by WVU ornithologist Chris Lituma after dinner for our evening program. His bird research was

extensive and collaborative with many organizations.

The silent auction ended the evening.
– *by Johanna Sholder*

Tue., June 7, 2022

Report was not available at press time and will appear in the next issue.

Thur., June 9, 2022

Thursday the 9th started as all other days with plot studies, the early morning bird walk and a delicious breakfast.

Carpools were quickly made after breakfast to head out to Cathedral State Park. If I've been to the park before I can't remember it, but I'd definitely recommend it. There is a little something for all nature lovers at Cathedral. For the birders 35+ species were either heard or seen. The trees, ferns, creeks, and natural beauty of the park is a site to behold. BBC members made their way through



*Snapping Turtle laying eggs
by Terra Alta Lake*

the park enjoying good company and the joy of being in the woods.

The group met after the hike at the pavilion for a packed lunch before smaller groups took off for their own mini adventures. My group went to a privately owned home that sits on the top of a hill and takes just a tad bit of driving skill to get up to. The hospitality of the owners to share their beautiful home and land was much appreciated. The views and mountains were breathtaking and lived up to West Virginia being almost heaven.

The day ended with a great dinner prepared by our fabulous cooks and our evening program.

– *by Kelly Schetselaar*

Fri., June 10, 2022

At approximately 0500 on Friday, to temperatures in the low 50's, Ryan, Scott and Martin set out to continue their survey activities. Scott Emrick and Lee Miller conducted the straight line



A Northern Pearly-Eye along Beech Run Rd.

singing male census. Martin Tingly and Keith Schilstra conducted the serpentine singing male census. Ryan Tomazin conducted the ten mile driving breeding bird census, listing 58 species of birds and a very exciting mammal sighting, one Black bear.

After breakfast, a large group consisting of Martin and Deb Tingly, Kelly Schetelaar, Patty Arington and Mary and Keith Schilstra left for an adventure. They stopped at an old mill site where they spotted a molting Northern Water snake. Later the group proceeded to the cool shade of the Virgin Hemlock forest before proceeding to Cooper's Rock State Forest for some hiking. Their day



Hobomok Skipper on planted irises at camp culminated at the Screech Owl Brewery for delicious pizza.

Don and Sarah Creamer took a trip to Swallow Falls in Pennsylvania. They spotted some Black Vultures on a carcass, but it's unclear if they were in Preston county.

Ryan and Yan Tomazin continued their adventures birding several areas of the county and adding to their list of bird sightings. In addition, they added to their mammal sightings by finding two pairs of Red fox kits!

– *by Peter & Nanette McDonald*



Janice Emrick on the big chair in Rowlesburg



INTERESTING SIGHTINGS AROUND THE STATE

(There were very few 'story' postings to the WV LISTSERV this summer. - Ed.)

Our mature mulberry tree, loaded with fruit this year, is proving an irresistible attractant for loads of birds. For the first time since we moved here 13 years ago, we have a mating pair of Scarlet Tanagers busily wolfing down mulberries before flying off to their nest. We also have a pair of Baltimore Orioles doing the same; we've seen orioles passing through in the past, but this is the first time we've had them stay around to nest. A pair of Eastern Phoebes was busy flycatching and feeding a pair of fledglings perched on the power line that crosses our main pond and front yard. Other mulberry fans include a juvenile Red-bellied Woodpecker, mockingbirds, and cardinals.

– Caroline and John Snyder, Nicholas County, WV, 7/3/22

Heard something calling outside, so went to investigate. A screech-owl was calling close by then two more farther away in different directions answered it. A Barred Owl called once farther away. Saw one meteor while I was out, too.

– Wilma Jarrell, Wetzel County, WV, 8/19/22

I was in my bathroom and heard what I at first thought was a probably a Red-bellied Woodpecker. But the next call was clearer and out the door I went. Sure enough, in a very large dead tree out back was a juvenile red-headed. After watching it for a few minutes I saw an adult in the same dead tree. And after a minute, low and behold, I see two juveniles and the adult at the same time. Yes!

This was about a quarter mile from the one(s) my friend told me about a couple weeks ago. I think these are "locals."

– Sam Chapman, Romney, WV, 8/19/22

In March and April of this year, we began working on improving habitat for Golden-winged Warblers. This morning two friends and I opened five 12m mists nets for three hours. We caught and banded six species of birds. While banding, I identified 32 species in the recent cut. It is surprising the number of species and quantity of birds utilizing the area. Prior to cutting here on Old Hemlock the logger cut a neighbor's timber. This breeding season it had a whip-poor-will. The folks who live near said it is first one they have heard in nearly 30 years.

– LeJay Graffious, Bruceton Mills, WV, 8/27/22

This past Monday I met Joey Heron, Clo Simard and Cindy Mullens at the Little Indian Creek WMA near Morgantown, WV. It is basically a reclaimed strip mine with the usual planted junk like the "Chinese Bushclover". But, there is also a lot native plants including wild cherry trees. You have probably read that during fall migration the Connecticut Warblers likes this area. In the past, I have traveled to several places trying to capture a decent photos. I have a few images from Magee but, "terrible"! Bev and I spent a week in UP of Michigan at Trout Lake where they are suppose to breed, but no luck.

With the help of our very own West Virginia "bird whisper", Joey Heron, I finally was able to get a great image (below).

I would still like to get an image of this "sneaky" character on its breeding grounds?

– Jim Triplett, 9/22/22

I have seen more Rose-breasted Grosbeaks lately than I have ever seen before - 8 of them in the past three days. I filled my feeders for the first time in months (bears keep me from year-around feeding) and had one at the feeder the very next day!

– Jack O'Connell, 9/28/22

Last Tuesday, Sept 20, 10 of us lounged in our chairs to watch our club's swift tower at Forks of Coal Natural Area 7-7.45pm. We were excited when 8 Chimney Swifts zipped by, but disappointed when none went into the chimney. We had a nice evening anyway, especially after seeing and hearing a several species in the restored meadow area. (I understand that none of the swift towers built around the state in the last few years by the Brooks Bird Club are being used).

Last night several of us watched a chimney in S.Charleston that has been used in past years. Again, several swifts flew by and one almost went in, but none actual went in the chimney. A very nice state trooper stopped to find out why three of us were standing in their parking lot with binocs spying on their office, and he explained that two weeks ago, one of the new troopers called him very alarmed about "thousands of bats that were buzzing over the building." Ha ha. From that report, we figure most of the swifts have gone south and only a few remain in the area. Safe travels to them, especially over the hurricane. And mark your 2023 calendars to check the swifts around Sept 6th.

– Laura Ceperley, Handlan Chapter, 9/27/22



A rare Red-necked Phalarope at Valley Falls SP in May - photo by Cynthia Mullens



Connecticut Warbler - photo by Jim Triplett

HOW WE SPENT OUR SUMMERS—2002 AND 2003

Contributed by Marjorie Keatley and John Northeimer

At 4:30 a.m. it was all hands on deck to gulp a bite, grab gear, and head for the first point count station. Each one was a challenge: swamps that unexpectedly sucked boots off; rhododendron thickets with slippery roots; spirea thickets with crossed stems creating trip hazards; waist- to chest-high vegetation with mosquitoes whining near your birding ears; wobbly beaver dams that could give way any second; steep sides of Canaan Mountain, struggling to hear the birds over the pounding of your heart; a count in a gentle woods near the park lodge, gentle until deer flies found tender ears and got busy—these were just a few of the fun moments of our breeding bird surveys during the summers of 2002 and 2003.

Sometimes head nets were necessary to deal with mosquitoes, gnats, and deer flies but they weren't easy to use and made it harder to hear so we used them only if the bug pests were unbearable. Though I (MK) lost it on the deer fly point and ended up with red, swollen, itchy ears, the hardest counts for me were the ones requiring an ascent. John scaled the slopes without breaking stride while I hauled myself to the point. For a gal who does not like dirt on her gear, I had a baptism by dirt. Slips and falls were inevitable; slick and slimy rhododendron branches and roots added smears; hidden wet spots sloped mud and muck all over; but the best was the swamp mud—bubbly, stinky, primordial ooze that captured boots but released feet. There was no way to know how deep one would sink but no way to bypass the mud. By the end I viewed dirt with a whole new respect. It was a rite of passage.

On a couple of occasions, rain canceled the count. That ceased to be a time of jubilation once we realized it just extended the count process another day.

As one point was too remote to reach quickly, we received permission to camp on Canaan Mountain the night before. A hermit thrush serenaded us from a log behind the tent and a magnolia warbler sang in a bush nearby until after dark.

As we made our way through a swamp one morning, we heard a baby cry. Ok, it was a fawn but it sure sounded like a human baby. We were heading to a count station another morning when we noticed two small bear cubs playing on a log. There was no sign of the mother bear but we picked up our pace to get away fast. We saw bears from time to time but usually at a distance.

Each morning after ending the count, we would find a place to sit and have a snack and coffee and discuss the morning's finds. We completed a point count in a remote area on a Canaan Mountain hillside one morning, found a log to sit on, and pulled out the coffee thermos and snack. It was our favorite part of doing a point count survey and this day we were rewarded with the sudden trill of a winter wren perched in the open not far away. We kept an eye on him and watched as he flew to the base of a mossy stump and disappeared. We looked carefully but never found the nest entrance.

Every day there were difficulties in getting to and conducting counts but the in-between and just-after experiences made the hard things worth it. In the beginning it was all exciting and novel. As the weeks progressed, and especially in the second year, it became work but always there were the winter wren moments that made it all worthwhile.

We found big, beautiful trees tucked away in woodlands; pristine streams with moss-covered banks strewn with baby balsam firs; orchids in bloom in sometimes remote, sometimes trail-side locations; areas that seemed never to have had visitors; deep and shady ravines filled with silence or bird song; serene vistas over fields and valleys.

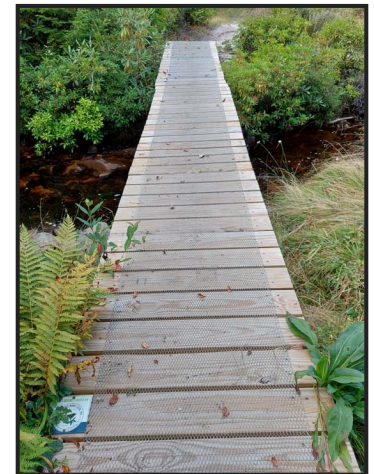
One day we were returning to the lodge to eat our usual hearty, post-count breakfast as we discussed the morning's findings and wonders. As we walked along a trail we heard, then saw a hermit thrush on a slim branch about head height. We stopped to watch and listen. Suddenly we realized that we were hearing the usual

song, which would end, but the thrush was clearly still singing—but out of our range of hearing! We watched and listened until the thrush flew. Over and over, the sound of the song would stop (to our hearing) but the thrush would still be singing, mouth open, tongue vibrating. It was a revelation but also a reminder that there is much to learn about nature. Spending time looking can reveal all sorts of treasures.

CORRESPONDENCE

I just wanted to send this little note and picture of our new bridge. I had a day off and happened to be in Davis, so I went for a hike at Yellow Creek, the WV Land Trust property off camp 70 Road. I had heard the bridge was finished so I thought I would check out the finished project. I think it looks pretty great!

- Cindy Slater



CHANGES IN CONTACT INFORMATION

NEW MEMBERS

Kristen King
2043 Miller Rd.
Huntington, WV 25701
Email: kriskingmillen@gmail.com
Tel: 304-521-9895

Tom & Debbie Long
207 Academy St.
Ronceverte, WV 24970
Email: dlong5210@yahoo.com
longtom1951@hotmail.com
Tel: 304-647-5210

Tommy Zeitz
314 Manor Rd.
Davis, WV 26260
Email: tezeit@aol.com
Tel: 304-866-7418

CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

BIBBEE CHAPTER

Nothing planned for Oct. & Nov.

HANDLAN CHAPTER

Oct. 17, 2022 – 6.30 pm. Monthly chapter meeting, South Charleston Library. Pollinators with Becky Linger.

Oct. 20, 2022 – 8.30 am. Western Kanawha County (Wine Cellar Park, Ridenour Lake, Winfield Locks and Dam) with Bill Hall and Rick Gregg. Meet at the parking area just inside Wine Cellar Park on the left (near Dunbar).

Oct. 29, 2022 – 8:00 am. Ward Hollow with Laura Ceperley and Chuck Wirts.

Nov. 5, 2022 – 8:00 am. Meadowood Park near St. Albans with Laura Ceperley.

Nov. 14, 2022 – 6.30 pm (Tentative). Monthly chapter meeting, South Charleston Library. eBird and other nature apps/websites with Laura Ceperley.

Nov. 17, 2022 – 9:00 am. Ohio River (RC Byrd Locks and Dam, Greenbottom WMA) with Bill Hall and Rick Gregg. Meet at the parking lot/picnic area over-

looking the river and the dam at RC Byrd L&D. Don't go down to the river.

Dec. 12, 2022 – 6.00 pm. Christmas dinner and Bird Count prep. Tentatively at Hardings Restaurant near Mink Shoals.

Dec. 15, 2022 – 8.30 am. Kanawha River (Capitol Building to Patrick Street Bridge) with Bill Hall and Rick Gregg. Meet at the Veterans Memorial Statue near the Culture Center on the Capital Grounds.

HEADQUARTERS CHAPTER

Nothing planned for Oct. & Nov.

MOUNTWOOD CHAPTER

October Coordinator – Barbara Hobman 740-374-5548

Oct. 20, 2022 – Sandy Creek Backwater & area, 9:00am Boat ramp, Northwest Pipe Drive.

Oct. 27, 2022 – Middle Island Area Burger King, Rt. 68 & I-77, bring lunch.

November Coordinator – Sandy Albrecht 740-373-8994

Nov. 3, 2022 – Devol's Dam to Civitan Park, 8:00am, Big Sandy in Parkersburg, or 8:30am at Warren's IGA parking lot.

Nov. 10, 2022 – Ohio River north, 9:00am, Burger King, Rt. 68 & I-77, bring lunch.

Nov. 17, 2022 – Seneca Lake, Ohio, 8:00am, WV Welcome Center, Williamstown, WV, bring lunch.

December Coordinator – Lucine Wright 740-373-6230

Dec. 1, 2022 – Ohio River south, 9:00am, Park & Ride, OH Rt. 339/Rt. 7; bring lunch.

Dec. 8, 2022 – Christmas Luncheon, details later.

Dec. 15, 2022 – Middle Island area, 9:00am, Burger King, Rt. 68 & I-77, bring lunch.



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
348 Station Street, Apt. 7
Bridgeville, PA 15017
412-220-9726
wwwarblers@hotmail.com



CORRESPONDENCE

We would love to hear from members of the BBC. What have you been doing? Have you taken recent trips? What interesting birds or plants have you seen in your locality or backyard?

The Club looks forward to little notes on Christmas cards and dues notices, but feel free to get in touch with us at other times of the year too. Even just a line or two would be of interest to our readers, especially if we haven't seen or heard from you in a while.

Correspondence may be mailed to: Juanita Slater, Corresponding Secretary, c/o BBC, PO Box 4077, Wheeling, WV 26003.

For those of you who prefer email, correspondences may be sent to: jslater1120@yahoo.com

EASTERN SHORE TRIP 2022

NOVEMBER 9th-13th

Eastern Shore, here we come! You will all be on your own getting to my favorite destination Chincoteague which is where we will start our avian observations. Your room will be awaiting you when you arrive any time after 3pm Wednesday. Thursday and Friday mornings Continental Breakfast is included. You may eat in the limited seating dining facility or pick up and take to your room or eat on the observation deck and watch birds. As usual dinner will be on your own. Another change is lunch. We can provide lunch for you at your request or if you feel more comfortable you may choose to bring your own. Friday morning we will check out of our hotel and head north eventually ending in Rehoboth Beach at our ocean front hotel. Sunday morning we will go over the bird list, say our good-byes and drive safely home remembering all the fun we have had with each other.

Price includes Wed., Thurs., Fri., and Sat. night's lodging (2 per room); Thurs., Fri., Sat., and Sun. Morning Breakfast; Lunch can be provided if you request one in advance at the additional cost. A full itinerary will be sent to everyone who signs up.

I regret to say there will not be a van option for the shore this year.

DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS – OCTOBER 28, 2022

**Make Checks payable to Cindy Slater and send along with your reservation to
Juanita Slater, 56249 Hospital Road Bellaire, Ohio 43906**

=====please cut here and return=====

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL. NO. _____ Name of person sharing room _____

(2 people per room, I will assign roommates this year so you will need to let me know if you already have a roommate in mind and whom that person will be, otherwise a single room supplement rate may apply)

Are you interested in Lunch or will you be bringing your own? _____

_____ Per Person Rate with roommate \$400.00 \$ _____

_____ Per Person Rate with No Roommate \$600.00 \$ _____

_____ Per Person Lunches add \$75.00 \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____



...

The old campstead

*In June, we spent a week
in Preston County for Foray,
residing at Camp Galilee again.
Read all about our
adventures inside!*

WHAT'S INSIDE

Editor's Message	1
Message From Our President.....	1
2022 Preston County Foray Daily Reports	2-3
Interesting Sightings Around The State.....	4
How We Spent Our Summers - 2002 and 2003	5
Correspondence	5
Changes In Contact Information.....	6
Chapter Happenings/Nature Happenings.....	6
2022 Eastern Shore Trip Registration Form.....	7