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# 2018 - The Brooks Bird Club, Inc.

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## PUBLICATIONS

Webmaster	Larry Helgerman, 1989 Louisa Ave., Wheeling, WV 26003 brooksbirdclubweb@gmail.com	304-242-8562
Editor The Redstart	Casey Rucker, P.O. Box 2, Seneca Rocks, WV 26884	304-866-4004
Editor The Mail Bag	Ryan Tomazin, 348 Station St., Apt. 7, Bridgeville, PA 15017	412-220-9726

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## ADVISORS

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# The REDSTART

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#### **Editorial Staff**

Editor • Casey Rucker, P.O. Box 2, Seneca Rocks, WV 26884 • [autoblock@frontiernet.net](mailto:autoblock@frontiernet.net)

Associate Editor • Ryan Tomazin, 348 Station St., Apt. 7, Bridgeville, PA 15017 • [wwwarblers@hotmail.com](mailto:wwwarblers@hotmail.com)

Field Notes Editor • Casey Rucker, P.O. Box 2, Seneca Rocks, WV 26884 • [autoblock@frontiernet.net](mailto:autoblock@frontiernet.net)

eBird Editor • Michael Slaven, 632 West Virginia Avenue, Morgantown, WV 26591 • [mikeslavenwv@gmail.com](mailto:mikeslavenwv@gmail.com)

Advisory Editorial Board • A. R. Buckelew, Jr., Greg E. Eddy, Joey Herron, Matthew Orsie, James D. Phillips

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## Close Encounters of the Bird Kind

Bill Beatty

As a bird bander I have close encounters with birds unlike the encounters most birders have. My encounters involve not just seeing birds through binoculars, but actually having birds, thousands of them, in my hands each year. Since December, 2010, Jan Runyan (Sub-permittee bander under my Federal Master-personal Bird Banding Permit) and I have been banding birds on our Brooke Co., WV, property. Our banding is done from mid-October through May 1 each year. During the summer months we are too busy teaching classes and leading field trips to be able to band. Each year since 2010, we have had approximately 1,000 encounters with new, unbanded birds and about the same number of encounters with birds which we had previously banded. It is very common for birds we banded earlier that day, week, month or several years ago to return to our mist nets.

The encounters we and the Bird Banding Laboratory are most interested in involve birds we capture that were banded elsewhere by other banders or birds banded by us which are later encountered by other banders or other people. These can give valuable migration and longevity data.

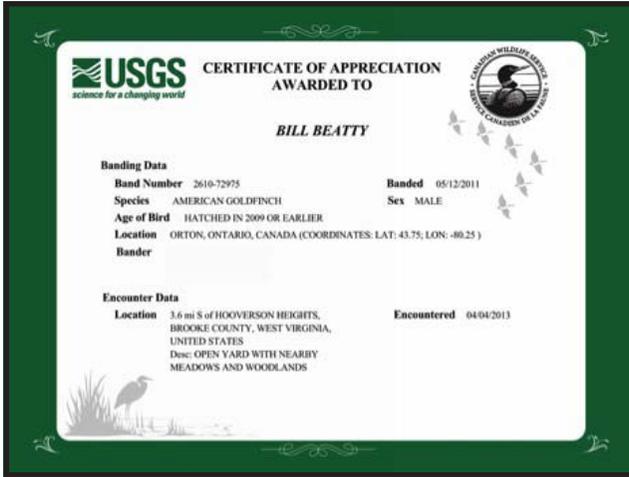
We refer to our home as Goldfinch Ridge. The American Goldfinch (AMGO) is, by far, the most common bird we band. In 2017 we banded 611. Also during that year we re-encountered 427 AMGOs which we had previously banded. Some were re-encountered the same day they were banded, and many of the returnees had been banded that same year. Some were older, still coming back to Goldfinch Ridge each year, and 7 birds returned to our nets after having been banded 4-5 years before.

An AMGO was our first encounter of another bander's bird. On April 4, 2013, we caught, retrieved the band number from, and then released an AMGO which had been banded almost 2 years earlier on May 12, 2011 in Orton, Ontario, Canada. This location is 236.16 miles away, about 6 degrees east of due north from our location (across Long Point peninsula, which will be mentioned later).



Banded American Goldfinch - photo © Bill Beatty

When someone encounters a banded bird and submits the band number to the Bird Banding Laboratory they receive a Certificate of Appreciation with pertinent banding data about that bird. Below is what we received when we turned in the band number of the Orton, Ontario, AMGO.



Our second encounter was quite different. On April 26, 2013, a Carolina Chickadee (CACH) we had banded on December 16, 2010, was encountered by someone who lives only about 200 yards away. Being found nearby over 2 years later is not surprising since CACHs are non-migratory. When reporting an encountered bird to the Bird Banding Laboratory, the person making the report is asked to describe the status of the bird. The comments concerning this CACH were, “I found it under my last deck step. I had just cut the grass so I worry I may have hit it with the lawn mower. It appears to have an injury to its hind end, appears to have intestines hanging out.” Pretty gruesome, but also interesting and valuable as it relates to people and how they interact with birds.



Male Northern Cardinal on ground under feeder - photo © Bill Beatty

On April 28, 2013, another bander encountered a Northern Cardinal we had banded on April 4, 2013, just 24 days before.

The bird was caught, recorded, and then released by a bander at Long Point Bird Observatory, 6.6 miles SE of Port Rowan, Ontario, Canada. This is 161.25 miles and about 7 degrees east of due north from our banding station location. Long Point is on the north shore of Lake Erie, across from Erie, PA.

I was amazed by this encounter. According to The Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s “All About Birds” website, NOCAs are permanent residents, in other words, non-migratory. Yet here was a “non-migratory” NOCA who traveled over 160 miles in 24 days. So, as usual when presented with this kind of conundrum, I called Ralph Bell. Ralph related that he had once banded a NOCA at his farm near Waynesburg, PA, which was later recaptured by another bander in Pittsburgh, PA. That distance of about 40 miles was thought to be amazing.

How could we explain our non-migratory NOCA traveling 4 times the distance of Ralph’s “amazing” bird? I turned to my banding data to create a theory about what was happening. First, I checked the yearly totals of NOCAs we had banded, as shown below.

Winter of:	Number of NOCAs Banded	Number of Banding Days that Winter
2010-11	8	9
2011-12	3	3
2012-13	93	27
2013-14	20	16
2014-15	34	18
2015-16	16	15
2016-17	19	16

Our NOCA that ‘migrated’ was banded in April of 2013, the same winter we had banded 93 NOCAs, by far the highest number in any year since we have been on this property.

Even though the number of days we were able to band (27) was significantly higher that winter, the number of NOCAs caught on some of those days was also unusually high. The list below shows the number of NOCAs caught on each banding day during the month of January, 2013.

January 2013 Banding Dates	Number of NOCAs Banded
Jan. 1	11
Jan. 2	10
Jan. 3	14
Jan. 7	10
Jan. 8	8
Jan. 10	1
Jan. 17	1
Jan. 25	13
Jan. 26	2

On some of those days we banded almost as many NOCAs as we had banded in other full years. The total for just the month of January, 2013, was 70 NOCAs, for an average of 7.78 NOCAs per banding day.

Earlier that same winter (Nov.–Dec. 2012) we had banded a total of 3 NOCAs on 4 banding days, averaging 0.75 NOCAs per day, significantly lower than the average would be for January.

Later that same winter (Feb.–Apr., 2013) we banded 24 NOCAs on 14 banding days, for an average of 1.5 NOCAs per banding day, again significantly lower than the January average had been.

A large number of northern NOCAs appears to have arrived in early January of 2013. A majority of them were netted and banded very soon. Was the February–April average lower because there were fewer birds, or was it because we had already banded most of the visitors in January? If we had also been keeping records of every one of our previously-banded birds that came into the nets again (later that day, week, month, year), we would be able to see if the NOCAs banded in January had stayed for the rest of the winter. This is one reason we have now started keeping records of every time we handle a bird that has been previously banded by us.

Below is a comparison of the average number of NOCAs banded per banding day each winter since 2010 and also a comparison of just the January banding day averages for each year.

Winter of:	Avg. No. of NOCAs per Banding Day	Avg. No. of NOCAs per Banding Day in January each Year
2010-11	1.1	2011 – 1
2011-12	1	2012 - 1
2012-13	3.44	2013 – 7.78
2013-14	1.25	2014 – 2.5
2014-15	1.89	2015 - 2
2015-16	1.06	2016 – 1.33
2016-17	1.19	2017 – 1

In most years, the average number of NOCAs banded in January is about the same as in the rest of the winter. In 2013-14, however, there was a significantly higher influx of birds, especially in January.

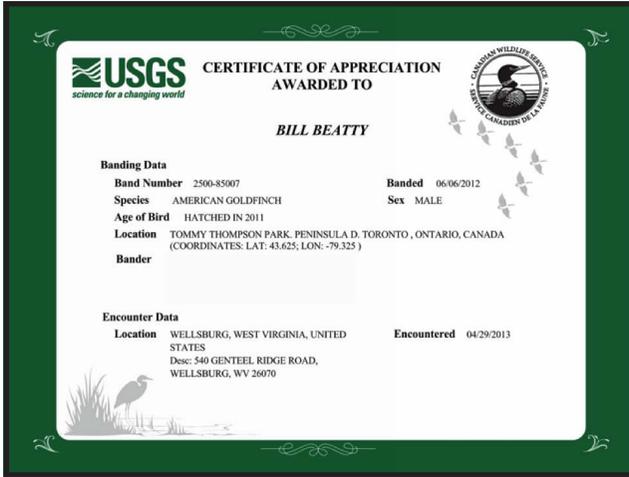
Although NOCAs are not migratory, there can be conditions which cause NOCAs to move south in the fall and back north in the spring. My theory is that the natural foods which allow these birds to survive through the winter in the north had failed and many of the NOCAs were forced to move south to find food.

American Goldfinch (AMGO) populations that breed in Canada and the northern United States are known to migrate longer distances in winter in response to colder weather and lessened food supply.

The next two encounters are not surprising because of their distances, but interesting because the direction of travel is very similar to that of our other encounters.

On April 29, 2013, we encountered an American Goldfinch (AMGO) that had been banded almost a year before on June 6, 2012, in Tommy Thompson Park, Peninsula D,

Toronto, Ontario, Canada. This is about 18 degrees east of due north from our location and 240.05 miles away. The AMGO had been banded as a second-year bird based on its plumage, meaning it had hatched in 2011. The bird was in its third calendar year of life when we encountered it.



On May 14, 2015, an American Goldfinch (AMGO) we had banded almost 2 months earlier on March 21, 2015, was encountered by a bander 13.7 miles ESE of The Cottages, Ontario, Canada. This is about 9 degrees east of due north, 164.79 miles away, at the east end of Long Point peninsula, on the north shore of Lake Erie, across from Erie, PA.

Since the banding we do at Goldfinch Ridge happens during the cold weather months we are more likely to have encounters with birds that are common at our bird feeders. Our mist nets are positioned to take advantage of birds visiting the feeders. From January 1, 2011, through December 31, 2017, we have banded 2,749 AMGOs, by far our most commonly banded bird, making it likely that AMGOs will be our most often encountered bird, but not the only encountered species.

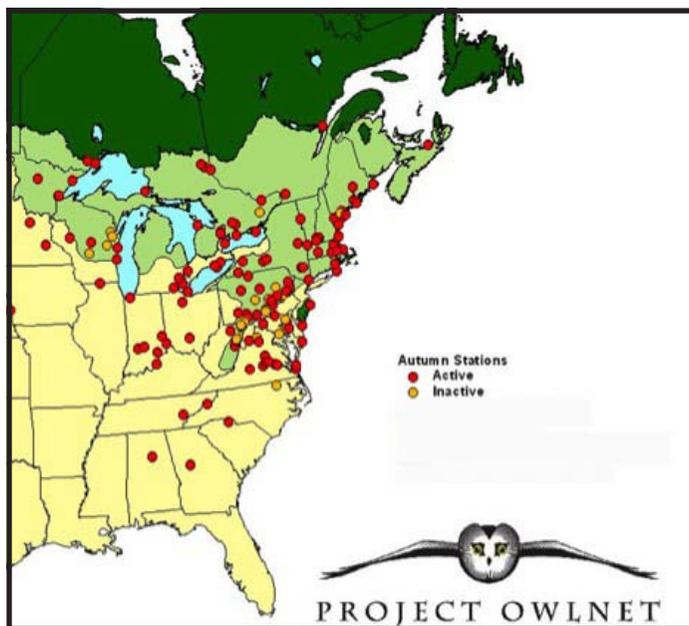


American Goldfinches in mist net - photo © Bill Beatty

Dark-eyed Juncos (Slate-colored race) (SCJU) are our second most commonly banded migratory bird – 760 have been banded from January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2017. On April 14, 2016, another bander encountered a SCJU that we had banded on January 1, 2014, over 2 years earlier. This happened 10 miles west of Lowbanks, Ontario, Canada in Rock Point Provincial Park. This is also just on the north shore of Lake Erie, about halfway between Long Point peninsula and the Niagara River. It is about 18 degrees east of due north from our banding station, 185.39 miles away, along the same route traveled by the AMGO that had been banded in Toronto.

A Mourning Dove (MODO) we banded on March 26, 2016, was encountered (found dead) by a gas pipeline worker on September 1, 2016, three miles south of Avella, in Washington Co., PA. This is 6.06 miles from our house. MODOs are not considered migratory, but like some other permanent residents, they will move around locally so 6 miles is not an unusual distance for them to travel.

In 2015 Jan and I decided to start banding migrating Northern Saw-whet Owls (NSWO). Having worked for 28 years with Eastern Screech-owls (EASO) I already had a great deal of experience working with owls. On the Project OwlNet Fall Banding Station Map I noticed that we seem to be located in a large area with no nearby banding stations. The closest stations to the north are in Canada and to the south, the closest stations are in TN. To the west are stations in northwest and south-central Ohio. Pittsburgh, to our east, and Grafton, WV, to our southeast also have NSWO stations. Our location seemed to be a perfect fit for the NSWO banding station gap.



Project OwlNet Fall Banding Stations - Eastern Region

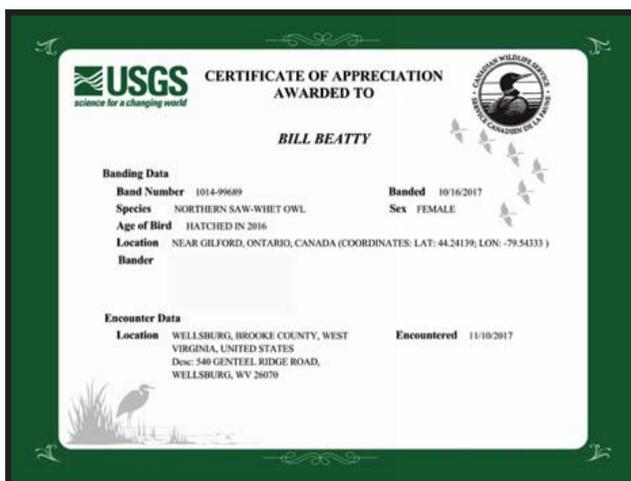
On November 20, 2015, we caught and banded our first and only NSWO for that year. Compared to the EASOs I was used to working with, NSWOs are pretty docile. They seem comfortable being handled and each shows its own personality.



Jan with our first Northern Saw-whet Owl - photo © Bill Beatty

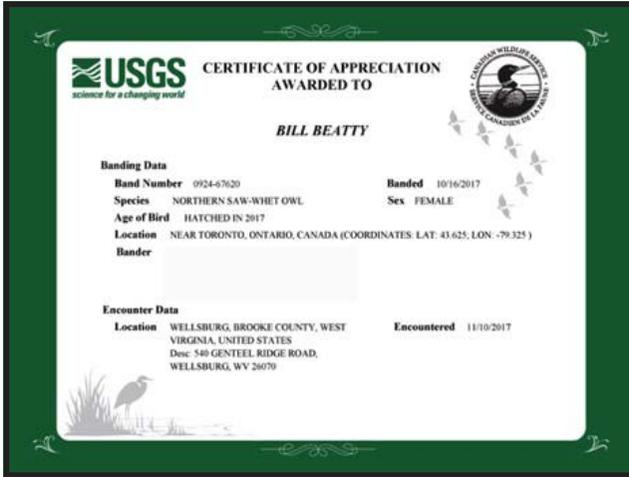
In 2016 we banded five NSWOs and in 2017 we banded three. 2017 turned out to be a special NSWO year for us due to three encounters.

Checking the nets about 11 pm on the night of November 10, 2017, I found two NSWOs. We were quite excited when we noticed that the first bird we were handling was already banded. After the band number was submitted, we found that this NSWO had been banded 3 weeks before on October 18, 2017, near Gilford, Ontario, Canada, north of Toronto, about 12 degrees east of due north from our location. This NSWO had traveled 277.91 miles in 25 days to our Goldfinch Ridge banding station.



After the first NSWO was released, we were even more surprised to discover that the other NSWO also had a band. The band number of the second bird, however, was very different from that of our first encounter, indicating that the second bird had been banded at a different location. It was just a coincidence that they both arrived in our nets at the same time. The second NSWO had been banded in Tommy Thompson Park, Peninsula D, Toronto,

Ontario, Canada, the same place as our 2013 AMGO. This is about 18 degrees east of due north from our location and 240.05 miles away. It had been banded on October 16, 2017 and we encountered it 25 days later on November 10. The bander in Canada identified the owl as a hatchling year female.



Jan removing a Northern Saw-whet Owl from a mist net - photo © Bill Beatty

Our third 2017 NSWOW encounter was when an owl we had banded on November 6, 2016, was recaptured almost a year later on October 21, 2017, by a bander at the James McLean Oliver Ecological Centre in Bobcaygeon, Ontario, Canada. This station is northeast of Toronto, Canada, about 20 degrees east of due north from our location, 314.47 miles away.



A Northern Saw-whet Owl captured and banded at Goldfinch Ridge -  
photo © Jan Runyan

It is interesting to note that all of the migratory birds encountered, whether banded by us or banded at another station, whether during fall or spring migration, had traveled the same general direction relative to our banding station. Mapping those routes, it is possible to get an idea of how the large lakes and bays of Canada might affect migration routes. Or perhaps there are just more banders operating in that direction which would allow more chances for encounters. With every new piece of information come new questions.



Locations of bird banding encounters 2013-17

There are many late, cold October/November nights involved in banding NSWOs and cold early mornings in winter working with AMGOS, SCJUs and others. However, Jan and I have an interest in learning about, preserving and protecting wild creatures. We use our expertise and time to do what we can on our two acres called Goldfinch Ridge.

Special thanks to Jan Runyan for her editing and plotting the encounter locations on the Canada map as well as figuring the degrees east of due north for reference for each Canadian encounter.

540 Genteel Ridge Road  
Wellsburg, WV 26070

## Snowy Owl Invasion in West Virginia Winter 2017–18

Joey Herron

In my forty-five-plus years of birding in West Virginia, I have never experienced such a winter as this one. It seemed as if Snowy Owls were being seen weekly in various locations throughout the state. The following information is from accounts shared with me from other individuals and from my own personal encounters. I have learned of other birds seen but never photographed or reported until long after the birds had left the area. I would conclude that there were many other Snowy Owls in our state that went undetected or noticed, and others too that were seen and never reported.

It all started in November with a sighting from my good birding friend Joe Hildreth as he went to work early one morning. By chance a Snowy Owl flew across the road just in front of him as he drove up the hill at University Town Center in Morgantown, WV, on the morning of November 17, 2017. After work he later relocated the owl perched quietly on a light pole up the hill behind Morgantown Mall. Joe contacted me and some other local birders and we had the pleasure of observing the bird all afternoon. Later it was learned that the bird had landed on the roof of a truck of a local worker there the night before. The next day the bird was not relocated. There were other reports by people seeing a “white owl” along the interstate and in the parking lot of Wal-Mart, but nothing confirmed by local birders.



Snowy Owl, Morgantown, WV - Photo by Joey Herron

The Snowy Owl that received the most attention was discovered near Parkersburg, WV, along I-77 near exit 179 early in December, 2017. The bird was noticed by several birders and later ended up near the Grand Central mall in Vienna, WV. Unfortunately it was later learned that the owl had been hit by a car and injured. Upon concern from many local birders, a plan was devised to capture the owl and examine it for injuries and relocate it away from traffic and people. There were numerous reports of the owl being

harassed and chased by people trying to get photographs. I witnessed this spectacle myself on December 17, 2017 after making the trip to the area to see the owl. I located the bird at approximately 9 a.m. resting on a metal box behind Ruby Tuesdays restaurant. The bird flew across a small stream that ran between the Grand Central Mall parking lot and the restaurant to the ground, and then flew up and landed on the top of a small cedar tree. From previous reports, evidently the bird had been hunting the area for a while and had caught a few rodents. As I observed the owl for over an hour no fewer than a dozen people stopped to take photographs and on one instance I had to get out of my car and stop people from approaching the owl too closely and disturbing it.



Snowy Owl, Vienna, WV - Photo by Joey Herron



Vince Slabe (left) and Dr. Jesse Fallon (right) examining the captured Snowy Owl. - Photo by Joey Herron

Although it appeared the owl could fly, the right wing drooped somewhat as it perched, indicating there might be some kind of problem with the wing. This was the concern and prompted the plan for capturing the bird. (Much thanks to Jon Benedetti for checking on the owl daily and keeping local birders up to date on its location.) State Ornithologist Richard Bailey, along with West Virginia University graduate student Vince Slabe and veterinarian Jesse Fallon, spearheaded the plan for capturing the owl.

The plan came together on December 21 with the plan to trap the bird and examine it. The bird was successfully trapped after hours of waiting and watching and it was confirmed that the bird had a shoulder injury, as well as some mouth lesions and parasites according to Dr. Fallon. The owl was also well underweight by some 400 grams and probably starving. The bird was transported to Morgantown, WV, and kept for observation and care at the Avian Conservation Center of Appalachia.

After about four weeks of care the bird had gained 700 grams and was ready to be released. It was decided to transport the owl north to be released closer to its normal winter range and get it away from being harassed and disturbed. I was privileged to be a part of this trip to Erie, PA, to take part in the release at Presque Isle State Park on Lake Erie in northern Pennsylvania. We selected an area in the middle of the park away from busy trail areas to release the bird. I had the honor of holding the bird before its release and then photographing and witnessing its return to the wild! After Dr. Fallon released the owl it never looked back and powerfully flapped away without any hesitation or struggle, showing no sign of injury. What a testimony to the combined effort of the many people involved in making this happen bringing a happy ending to this story.



Dr. Fallon releasing the owl at Presque Isle State Park - Photo by Joey Herron

Many other Snowy Owls were reported around the state through late February. Steven Wilson received a report from Shawn Bland of an owl at Huttonsville State Farm in Randolph County on November 30. A number of birders saw the bird and took photos. Additionally, I received a photo from Eric Frederick of an owl seen near Jayenne School in Fairmont, WV on December 8. I looked for that bird on numerous occasions and never found it. I also later found a dead Snowy Owl on I-79 near exit 133 in the median after

traveling to Clarksburg on December 20<sup>th</sup> to look for another reported owl by Susan Olcott, Wildlife Resources Biologist for the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. That owl had been seen in the North View area and reported to Sue later. The dead owl I found is presumed to be the Fairmont owl that had been seen earlier in the month.



Dead Snowy Owl found on I-79 near Fairmont, WV on December 20, 2018

On New Year's Day, 2018, David Patick, Michael Griffith, Gary Rankin, and Janet Keating found a Snowy Owl in Mason County. Carol Del-Colle reported a Snowy Owl in Jefferson County on Curry Road, Ranson WV in early February, 2018. There was a report of a Snowy Owl near the prison in Preston County, but I could not find the date or origin. Lastly, Hardy County had a report near Moorefield, WV, on February 28, 2018, by Paula Hallberg. As stated at the beginning of this report, there were probably many more owls in the state that went unreported or seen. This is by no means a complete list and I apologize if I missed a report. By far the winter of 2017–18 in West Virginia was a Snowy one!

511 Ohio Ave  
Fairmont, WV

## Strange Brood

Mary Grey

On a warm, early summer day in June 2015, I was riding my bike on the rail-trail that runs beside Big Wheeling Creek, just outside of Wheeling, West Virginia. I wasn't the only one out that day; there were many others walking or biking the trail. As any birder would do, I glanced towards the creek now and then to check for ducks or other birds such as Great Blue Herons or Belted Kingfishers. I was hoping to see Wood Ducks, that beautiful duck that breeds in our area this time of year. On this creek though, I mostly see Mallards; but they are fun to watch as they ride the small ripples in the creek, traveling downstream.

As I passed some wider ripples, I did see a duck, and gasped when I realized it was a female Common Merganser. I pulled my bike off the trail and stopped to get a closer look. I was delighted to see this duck, as it was the first time I had seen one on Big Wheeling Creek. The female was paddling, but facing upstream, and basically staying in the same spot in the rapids. Then something else caught my attention; the water around her seemed to be moving; bubbling. I didn't have my binoculars, but I was close enough to see that it was ducklings popping up in the small rapids all around her. After they popped up, they would put their tiny heads down flat against the water, and torpedo through it; diving under the small waves. They seemed very young; still with downy feathers. It was as if they were discovering the fact that they could dive for the first time. They seemed to be having a blast, and I was enthralled! It was one of those "take your breath away" moments that for me, nature can provide

As I watched, I realized that there were a LOT of ducklings. I tried to count them, but it was impossible as they were popping up and diving down in constant motion. Then, something spooked the hen merganser, and it shot toward the shore where I was standing; straddling my bike. Of course, the ducklings followed their mother, and it was then I was able to do a quick count. I came up with 24 ducklings! As the mother and her amazing brood headed downstream and out of sight, I stood there in awe of what I had just witnessed. I was actually tingling with excitement! I looked to see if anyone else shared the experience with me, but although there were others within sight of this amazing spectacle, no one was watching. What a shame that others were so unaware of the amazing nature moment going on right in front of them, and how lucky I felt to be able to have this moment, and a memory that would last a lifetime. After I let the experience sink in, I got back on my bike and started to ride back to my car; replaying it in my mind. Then it hit me; I have never seen that many ducklings with one mother, ever. I went home and headed for the computer, and our bird books.

I wondered what the normal brood size was for Common Mergansers, and I checked several sources. The number for brood size varied, but the highest number I saw was 16. I was sure there were more than that in this brood. I wished I had had my camera with me, or even my phone. I told Larry Helgerman about my sighting, and as anyone who knows him will attest, he was skeptical. I knew I had to try to get a picture, not just to prove it to him, but for others who might not believe it either. And I also wanted to have a record of this unusual sighting. After realizing I had seen something out of the ordinary, I made plans to ride the creek trail again the next day.

The weather was good the following day, and I started my ride with my binoculars

and iPhone stowed in my bike pouch; wishing I had a better camera. When I got to the rapids where I had seen the family the day before, I was disappointed to find that they weren't there. It's funny how you always look to where you have seen a bird before, on the chance that it might be there again. They never are for me. I continued to ride on downstream, knowing there were some flat rocks further down the creek. Sure enough, I found the super-sized merganser family on a large, flat rock in the middle of the creek. They were all resting, so I could get an accurate count. Carefully and quietly, I got off my bike and got my binoculars and phone. I was on the creek bank about 12 feet above the water, so I wasn't that close, but I didn't spook them either. I started counting. Some of the ducklings were very close together, and it was hard to tell if it was one duckling or several, but after counting several times, I realized there weren't 24, there were at least 26! I got my phone, pulled up the camera, and zoomed it in as far as I could. I took several pictures and a short video of the ducks. They weren't great, but you could tell there were more ducklings than normal with the hen merganser. Wow! Another amazing nature moment.

This time, as I was riding my bike back to my car, I started to wonder why. This wasn't normal, so what was going on here? Back to the bird books and the computer searches.

There could be several reasons for this large of a brood with one mother. One reason could be brood amalgamation, or crèche formation. This behavior is well-known for Common Mergansers; there are few definitive studies. Amalgamation is not common when ducklings are fewer than 7 days old, but occurs frequently after that. Some authors suggest aggressive females "kidnap" young from less-aggressive females (Pearce et al. 2015). No study has documented this, and it may simply represent confused young joining the wrong mother. (I wonder if it could possibly be from death of the other mother.)

The second possible reason is brood parasitism. Intraspecific parasitism (also called egg-dumping) occurs when females of the same species lay their eggs in the nests of other females, resulting in higher-than-average clutch numbers. Here's the really interesting thing; in my research, the maximum reported clutch size (in parasitized nests) was 19 in Ontario clutches and 18 in Finland clutches (Pearce et al. 2015). My clutch size was 26!

While I will never know for sure why this female Common Merganser had so many ducklings with her, I do know that it provided a truly unique experience I will never forget!



Common Merganser female with ducklings - Photo by Mary Grey

Footnote: Since this experience in 2015, Common Mergansers have continued to breed on Big Wheeling Creek, and have also been seen on the smaller Middle Wheeling Creek nearby. The expansion of the species has been truly amazing.

### Reference

Pearce, J., M. L. Mallory, and K. Metz. 2015. Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*), version 2.0. Birds of North America (A. F. Poole, Ed.). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY. <https://doi.org/102173/bna442>.

1989 Louisa Avenue  
Wheeling, WV 26003

## A.O.S. Taxonomic Changes for 2018

Casey Rucker

The Committee on Classification and Nomenclature of the American Ornithological Society (AOS) published the fifty-ninth supplement to the AOS Check-list on June 27, 2018, and made the article publicly available immediately (Chesser et al. 2018). Among the notable changes extralimital to West Virginia were the restoration of “Canada Jay” as the official name of the former Gray Jay, now the national bird of Canada, and the split of the South American Chivi Vireo from Red-eyed Vireo. As was the case last year, no species was added to or deleted from the West Virginia bird list, and this year the overall changes to our list were minimal. The taxonomic order of the hawks that follow Osprey was changed, as were scientific names for two species of woodpecker and three species of sparrow.

**New Genera.** Two woodpecker species, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, are now placed in a new genus, *Dryobates*. One sparrow species, Henslow’s Sparrow, is now in a new genus, *Centronyx*, and two sparrow species, LeConte’s and Nelson’s Sparrows, are in a new genus, *Ammospiza*.

**New Scientific Names.** The following species have new scientific names:

Downy Woodpecker: *Picoides pubescens* has been changed to *Dryobates pubescens*;

Hairy Woodpecker: *Picoides villosus* has been changed to *Dryobates villosus*;

Henslow’s Sparrow: *Ammodramus henslowii* has been changed to *Centronyx henslowii*;

LeConte’s Sparrow: *Ammodramus leconteii* has been changed to *Ammospiza leconteii*;

and Nelson’s Sparrow: *Ammodramus nelsoni* has been changed to *Ammospiza nelsoni*.

**Changes in taxonomic order.** The order of species in the family *Accipitridae* has been reshuffled, and they are now in the following order:

Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*

Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonius*

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus*

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii*  
Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*  
Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*  
Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis*  
Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus*  
Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus*  
Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*  
Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*  
Rough-legged Hawk *Buteo lagopus*

Wil Hershberger has revised the state lists for the West Virginia Bird Records Committee, and the revised lists are available online at links located at the bottom of the page on <http://www.brooksbirdclub.org/west-virginia-bird-records-committee.html>

### Reference

R. T. Chesser, K. J. Burns, C. Cicero, J. L. Dunn, A. W. Kratter, I. J. Lovette, P. C. Rasmussen, J. V. Remsen, Jr., D. F. Stotz, B. M. Winger, and K. Winker. 2018. Fifty-ninth supplement to the American Ornithological Society's Check-list of North American Birds. *Auk* 135:798–813. [http://americanornithologypubs.org/doi/full/10.1642/AUK-18-62.1? =](http://americanornithologypubs.org/doi/full/10.1642/AUK-18-62.1?=) .

# eBird Report

## November 2017–January 2018

Michael Slaven

### Hits and Misses

The last two months of 2017 and January 2018 give evidence of changing trends in the frequency of some expected winter species of waterfowl in West Virginia. **Snow Goose** (*Anser caerulescens*) and **Ross's Goose** (*Anser rossii*) observations fared pretty well, with both species being spotted in many areas scattered around the state from November to January. Similarly, the **Greater White-fronted Goose** (*Anser albifrons*) was a fairly-regular bird in eBird reports during this period. A noteworthy bright spot this winter was the presence of **Cackling Geese** (*Branta hutchinsii*) at Silver Lake in Preston County. These were observed and photographed by at least eleven observers from November 29 to December 7.

Other winter visitors included **Surf Scoters** (*Melanitta perspicillata*), which were reported several times in November, with a smaller number of reports also being made in January. Other scoter species were noticeably scarce.

A few **Long-tailed Ducks** (*Clangula hyemalis*) were seen by winter birders, but the numbers were few and the number of sites were limited. They appeared in only approximately one percent of eBird lists in the two-week period from November 1 to 15 at their peak, with another tiny spike in the last week of 2017 and the first week of 2018, with the species showing up in 0.15% of lists. Reports of **Red-throated Loon** (*Gavia stellata*) were almost entirely absent this past winter, probably due to weather patterns.

Gulls were likewise sparse in both reports and numbers of individuals per report. Gulls generally are most common in cold winters and much less frequent in warmer winters. This is probably because of less icing on the Great Lakes than typically occurs, with warmer average temperatures keeping the northern waters relatively ice-free, stopping southward movement of the Laridae species.

Of course, the birds I have discussed are only a few of the expected winter species of birds that regularly dot rivers and reservoirs during the winter, but they do seem indicators of at least a short-term pattern of milder winters that keep some birds away from our waters. It is too soon to say whether or not this is a harbinger of greater change to come, but it certainly does not seem premature to be concerned about possible long-lasting effects of climate change.

### Location, Location, Location

In other eBird news, there have been several changes made to the review process that might affect the way you use eBird. The most important change is probably to location reporting. You may find yourself asked to change a location name if it is also a popular birding hotspot under a different name. This change is to help the aggregation of reports for an area to make more sense of the data. As eBird reporting becomes more ubiquitous, it records more data and uses birding hotspots to help birders explore regions through the recorded data.

Another notable change regards the increasing scrutiny that eBird is using concerning the distance traveled in reports. To make the collected reports more useful, there is a

general agreement among the reviewers and the eBird savants that there must be attention paid to making sure that locations are correct and that distances traveled not be so great that they make using the collected records problematic.

Although there is no single rule, in a geographically-complex state such as West Virginia, any route of more than five miles would probably include one of two problems for interpretation of results by researchers and birders. First, a long list may include far too many of a certain species to be truly representative of what a field birder would generally encounter. If Birder X reported 250 Chestnut-sided Warblers over a twelve-mile route and the list were accepted, the filters for eBird might be inadvertently set up to a number that would fail to alert reviewers and researchers to the fact that this would be a truly-exceptional number. Therefore, in the future, this entirely-hypothetical list might be withheld from public view in order to preserve the integrity of the information. The second situation also applies to West Virginia. Since our topography can change radically over short distances, a very long route is likely to contain several distinct habitats, which could lead those studying a long list to conclude that birds that are defined by certain types of habitat (forests, high elevations, marshes) exist in a hodgepodge in the state. I can tell you that this conclusion simply is not borne out by the evidence.

The new policy actually need not be burdensome for a birder in the field. If you are on a long day trip and want to make a day list, by all means do so. But remember it may not be visible for public view. Of course, it remains in your personal records. My advice is to simply submit reports with shorter distances. If, for example, you are on a twelve-mile float trip, it would make sense to break your list into three segments, which should not overcomplicate your reporting. By doing so, you will make the numbers more useful. The report might be divided between the upper, middle, and lower sections of the float. If you are birding Route 2, try to use the available eBird Hotspots when you can.

And lastly, get out in the field—that's where the fun is!

632 West Virginia Avenue  
Morgantown, WV 26591  
mslavenwv@gmail.com

## Field Notes Winter Season

December 1, 2017 – February 28, 2018

Casey Rucker

After West Virginia's eighth-driest December, January was drier than normal and February was the second-wettest since 1895, according to the Northeast Regional Climate Center at Cornell University. February was the also the second warmest, after a cooler-than-usual December and January.

These notes were gathered from (a) the West Virginia Birds Listserv, sponsored by the National Audubon Society, (b) Christmas Bird Count (CBC) results, and (c) field notes submitted to the editor by e-mail and regular mail. The full content of the submitted notes by the contributors of the WV Listserv may be viewed by visiting the archives at the following web site: <http://list.audubon.org/archives/wv-bird.html>, and the results of the Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) may be found at <http://netapp.audubon.org/CBCObservation/CurrentYear/ResultsByCount.aspx>.

**Snowy Owls** were the big story this winter, with appearances in at least six counties including the lengthy saga of an individual in Parkersburg, Wood County, as described by Joey Herron on pages 86–88 of this issue. Overall, bird diversity continued the pattern of the last few years this winter in the Mountain State, with 137 species reported in the state during the winter, from 37 of West Virginia's 55 counties.

**Ducks, Swans, and Geese** – It was another good winter for **geese** in West Virginia. **Snow Geese** and **Ross's Geese** appeared in nine counties each, while **Greater White-fronted Geese** were reported in a surprising ten counties. A **Cackling Goose** was seen once again in the Morgantown Christmas Bird Count, Monongalia County, on December 16, and **Cackling Geese** were also seen in Kanawha County (RG), Mason County (MG, JK, DP, GR, TB, ReT), and Randolph County (RBo). Reports of **Canada Geese** were as usual widespread throughout the state. On January 22 Matthew Orsie saw a **Snow Goose**, a **Ross's Goose**, twenty-one **Greater White-fronted Geese**, and hundreds of **Canada Geese** at a pond near Martinsburg, Berkeley County. This season birders reported **Mute Swans** only in Cabell County (DP, JK, MG, GR) and Mason County (DP, MG, JK, GR). **Tundra Swans** were reported in Cabell (DP, GR, MG, JK), Kanawha (JBT), Mason (DP, GR, MG, JK, TB, ReT), Monongalia (JBo, TB), Ohio (RTo, CBC), Preston (LM), and Summers (JJP) Counties.

**Waterfowl** numbers were strong for the second year in a row. The following species made appearances in at least ten West Virginia counties: **Wood Ducks**, **Gadwalls**, **American Black Ducks**, **Mallards**, **Northern Pintails**, **Green-winged Teal**, **Redheads**, **Ring-necked Ducks**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Buffleheads**, **Common Goldeneyes**, **Hooded** and **Common Mergansers**, and **Ruddy Ducks**. Birders in at least seven counties each found **Canvasbacks**, **Greater Scaup**, and **Red-breasted Mergansers**. The following birds inspired reports from the counties listed: **Blue-winged Teal** in Mercer (JP); **Northern Shovelers** in Cabell (BBo, ReT), Hardy (CBC), Mason (DP, GR, MG, JK), Mercer (JP), Monongalia (CBC), and Wood (CBC); **American Wigeons** in Jefferson (JBz), Mason (DP, JK, MG, GR), Nicholas (SWi), and Summers (JP); **White-winged Scoters** in Mason (DP, JK, MG) and Taylor (JH); and **Long-tailed Ducks** in Cabell (MG, JK), Mason (DP, GR,

MG, JK, ReT), Taylor (KCr), Wetzel (WJ), and Wood (JB, TB). On January 6, during a record-breaking cold spell in Canaan Valley, Tucker County, Herb Myers saw three **Mallards** and seven **Hooded Mergansers** occupying rapidly-dwindling open water on the mostly-frozen Blackwater River.

**Pheasants, Grouse, and Turkeys – Ring-necked Pheasants** of uncertain origin were found in Berkeley (PS) and Jefferson (BT) Counties. There were **Ruffed Grouse** reports from Christmas Bird Counts in Greenbrier, Pendleton, Raleigh, and Summers Counties, and other reports from Pocahontas (DP) and Summers (JP) Counties. Birders found **Wild Turkeys** in many counties throughout the state, including many on the tallies of Christmas Bird Counts.

**Grebes** – It was a good winter for **Pied-billed** and **Horned Grebe** reports, which came from throughout the state.

**Pigeons and Doves – Rock Pigeons and Mourning Doves** continue to reside throughout the state, as reported primarily in Christmas Bird Counts. David Patick spotted two of the resident **Eurasian Collared-Doves** in Union, Monroe County, on January 28.

**Coots – American Coots** appeared in only seven counties this winter.

**Cranes** – On December 14, Ryan Tomazin counted approximately 59 **Sandhill Cranes** flying through Triadelphia and Elm Grove during the Wheeling Christmas Bird Count, Ohio County. Beverly and James Triplett saw a **Sandhill Crane** flying over Bluestone Dam in Summers County on January 7, and James Phillips watched a **Sandhill Crane** flying over Bluestone State Park in the same county on January 11.

**Plovers** – Reports of **Killdeer** were widespread again this mild winter, with records from thirteen counties.

**Sandpipers** – A **Dunlin** appeared in at Cheat Lake Park for the Morgantown Christmas Bird Count, Monongalia County, on December 16, where it remained for at least two days (TB). **American Woodcocks** showed up in Cabell (MG, DP, JK), Hampshire (CBC), Monongalia (TB), Nicholas (SWi), Randolph (RBi), and Summers (JJP) Counties, mostly in late February. Birders in six West Virginia counties reported **Wilson's Snipe**: Berkeley (CBC), Greenbrier (CBC), Hardy (CBC), Mason (DP, MG, GR, JK), Pocahontas (CBC), and Tucker (HMy, CBC).

**Gulls** – It was a relatively-sparse season for winter **gulls** in West Virginia once again. **Bonaparte's Gulls** made appearances in Mason (DP, JK, MG), Monongalia (JBo, TB), Nicholas (SWi), Wayne (GR), and Wood (CBC) Counties. Birders reported **Ring-billed Gulls** in eighteen West Virginia counties, while **Herring Gulls** appeared in reports only from Cabell (MG, JK), Mason (DP, JK, MG, GR, TB), Ohio (TB, JBo), Pleasants (TB), Summers (CBC), Wetzel (WJ, TB), and Wood (JB) Counties. Wilma Jarrell spotted a **Great Black-backed Gull** at Hannibal Dam, Wetzel County, on January 7, and Terry Bronson saw another **Great Black-backed Gull** at Apple Grove Fish Hatchery, Mason County, on January 25. On January 4, John Boback reported that Michael Dietrich had seen approximately 800 **Ring-billed** and **Herring Gulls** at Pike Island Dam, Ohio County. Michael Slaven saw more than 100 **Ring-billed Gulls** at the West Virginia University Animal Sciences Farm in Morgantown, Monongalia County, on February 22.

**Loons – Common Loon** reports were sparse in our state once again this winter, with reports only from Mason (MG), Monongalia (TB, CBC), Wayne (DP), and Wood (CBC) Counties.

**Cormorants and Herons** – Reports of **Double-crested Cormorants** and **Great Blue Herons** were widespread throughout the state.

**Vultures** – Reports of **Black Vultures** and **Turkey Vultures** came from fourteen and seventeen counties, respectively.

**Hawks and Eagles** – **Golden Eagles** inspired reports from Grant (RBo), Hampshire (CBC), Hardy (CBC), Monroe (RD, JP), Pendleton (CBC), Randolph (RB), Summers (JJP), and Tucker (CBC) Counties. **Northern Harriers**, **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, and **Cooper's Hawks** appeared widely throughout West Virginia during the winter season. Thomas Doherty saw a **Northern Goshawk** in Martinsburg, Berkeley County, on February 5. **Bald Eagles** were reported from nineteen counties this winter. **Red-shouldered** and **Red-tailed Hawks** were observed in many parts of the state. **Rough-legged Hawks** appeared more widely than usual this winter, inspiring reports from Cabell (ReT), Grant (HMy, SAn, FA, SWi), Hampshire (SWi), Mason (DP, MG, JK, GR, LC, TB), Randolph (RB), and Summers (SOg) Counties this winter. On January 6 and 7, in their thirteenth annual Winter Eagle Survey, as reported by James Phillips, participants found fifty **Bald Eagles** as well as a two **Golden Eagles** at sites on Indian Creek and along the Bluestone, Greenbrier, and New Rivers. Frederick Atwood counted 68 **Bald Eagles** along River Road in Hardy County on February 19. Cynthia Burkhart watched a **Northern Harrier** and four **Red-shouldered Hawks** on her farm in Ritchie County on January 28.

**Owls** – **Snowy Owls** once again invaded West Virginia this winter, with reports beginning on December 1, when Rodney Bartgis saw the **Snowy Owl** which had already appeared in Huttonsville, Randolph County. Individual **Snowy Owls** also inspired many reports in Hardy County (PH), Harrison County (SO), Jefferson County (HMc, BD, SK), Mason County (DP, MG, JK, GR), and Wood County (JB, PMD, BM, CB, JoH, JHu, CBC). The only winter reports of **Barn Owls** came from the Hardy County and Pocahontas County Christmas Bird Counts. Reports of **Eastern Screech-Owls** came from eight counties and **Great Horned Owl** sightings inspired birders in six counties. Birders in ten counties reported **Barred Owls**. **Short-eared Owl** sightings were up, with reports from Hardy County (CBC), Mason County (DP, JK, MG, ReT), Monongalia County (CBC), Preston County (TB), and Tucker County (JH, CBC). Rennie and Amy Talbert watched a pair of **Short-eared Owls** chasing **Northern Harriers** near Apple Grove, Mason County, on January 20. The discovery of **Northern Saw-whet Owls** brightened the Christmas Bird Counts of Morgantown, Monongalia County, on December 16, of Pendleton County on December 19, and of Canaan Valley, Tucker County, on January 3.

**Kingfishers** – West Virginia birders reported **Belted Kingfishers** in sixteen counties.

**Woodpeckers** – **Red-headed Woodpeckers** made appearances in reports from Berkeley (CBC), Cabell (DP, JK, MG, GR, ReT), Hampshire (SWi), Hardy (CBC), Jefferson (JBz), Kanawha (DG), Pendleton (CBC), Ritchie (CB), and Wood (CBC) Counties. **Red-bellied Woodpeckers**, **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, **Downy** and **Hairy Woodpeckers**, **Northern Flickers**, and **Pileated Woodpeckers** were all subjects of widespread reports in West Virginia over the winter.

**Falcons** – **American Kestrels** and **Peregrine Falcons** were represented in Christmas Bird Counts and other reports in most parts of the state. Birders spotted **Merlins** in Berkeley (CBC), Cabell (MG), Kanawha (DP, GR, JWa, HG), Monongalia (TB), Summers (JJP, CBC), and Wood (CBC) Counties.

**Flycatchers** – Reports of **Eastern Phoebe** came from fourteen counties this generally-warm winter.



Northern Shrike -  
Photo by Joseph Hildreth

**Shrikes** – Joseph Hildreth spotted and photographed a **Northern Shrike** during the Canaan Valley Christmas Bird Count in Tucker County on January 3.

**Vireos** – Terry Bronson was surprised by a **White-eyed Vireo** during the Morgantown Christmas Bird Count on December 16 in Monongalia County. Beverly and James Triplett found a **Blue-headed Vireo** during the Charleston Christmas Bird Count in Kanawha County on the same day. Three days later, the editor of these notes found at least two **Blue-headed Vireos** during the Pendleton County Christmas Bird Count.

**Crows, Jays, and Ravens** – **Blue Jays, American Crows, and Common Ravens** appeared in their usual haunts throughout the state. Joette Borzick reported the only **Fish Crow** of the season, heard in her yard in Jefferson County on February 4.

**Larks** – Reports of **Horned Larks** came from Grant County (FA, SWi, HMy), Hardy County (CBC), Jefferson County (JBL, AIB, JBz, LW, CD), Mason

County (DP, JK, MG, GR, LC), Monongalia County (CBC), and Preston County (TB).

**Swallows** – The first **Tree Swallows** of the year appeared on February 19, as seen by Michael Griffith and Janet Keating at Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area, Cabell County, and by James Phillips at two locations in Summers County.

**Chickadees and Titmice** – **Carolina** and **Black-capped Chickadees** appeared in reports from their overlapping territories throughout West Virginia. **Tufted Titmice** occupied their usual spots in reports from throughout the state.

**Nuthatches** – **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were scarce in West Virginia this winter, with reports coming only from Marion (DCo), Monongalia (CBC), Pendleton (CBC), Pocahontas (CBC), Randolph (CBC), and Tucker (HMy, CBC) Counties. **White-breasted Nuthatches** were well-reported as usual throughout the state.

**Creepers** – Birders in nineteen West Virginia counties reported **Brown Creepers**.

**Wrens** – Judy Phillips had a life bird in her yard on December 4, when she and James Phillips were serenaded by a **Sedge Wren** at their home in Pipestem, Summers County. West Virginia birders reported **Winter** and **Carolina Wrens** in good numbers statewide. A **Winter Wren** was a life bird for Richard Gregg on February 13 at Marmet Locks, Kanawha County.

**Kinglets** – This winter **Golden-crowned** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were both familiar sights in most parts of the state. A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** visited Hullet Good's suet feeder beginning on December 31 through February 19, for the fourth straight winter appearance after a 40-year absence.

**Thrushes** – **Eastern Bluebirds, Hermit Thrushes, and American Robins** appeared in good numbers in our state this winter, mostly in lower elevations.

**Mockingbirds and Thrashers** – **Gray Catbird** reports appeared regularly through the season, coming from Berkeley County (CBC), Cabell County (MG), Fayette County (CBC), Harrison County (JoS), Jefferson County (CD), Monongalia County (CBC), and Randolph County (HMy). **Brown Thrashers** were spotted on December 20 in Fayette



Gray Catbird at bird bath - Photo by Herb Myers

County (CBC) and on February 11 in Charleston, Kanawha County (DP, JK, MG). West Virginians reported **Northern Mockingbirds** widely over the winter season.

**Starlings – European Starlings** continued their widespread occupation of habitats throughout our state.

**Waxwings – Cedar Waxwings** appeared widely this winter, with sightings in nineteen counties. Bruni Haydl hosted a large flock of **Cedar Waxwings** at her home in Charles Town, Jefferson County, from January 29 to February 5.

**Weaver Finches** – Thanks to Christmas Bird Counts, we have been assured that the **House Sparrow** continues throughout the state, primarily in urban and farm settings.

**Pipits** – It was a good season for **American Pipit** sightings, with reports from Berkeley County (CBC), Grant County (FA), Hardy County (DH), Jefferson County (JBL, CD), Kanawha County (JBT, CBC), Mason County (DP, JK, MG, GR), Monongalia County (TB, JBo), and Nicholas County (SWi). On January 15, Carol Del-Colle spotted a flock of 35 **American Pipits** in a corn field near Kabletown Road in Jefferson County.

**Finches and Allies** – Although there were no rarities among our winter **finches**, there were many reports of the usual suspects. Feeders in most parts of the state hosted **House Finches**, **Purple Finches**, **Pine Siskins**, and **American Goldfinches**. On February 20, Randy Bodkins saw three **Red Crossbills** picking grit on Cheat Mountain as well as the remains of six more, victims of vehicle mortality. **Red Crossbills** also made appearances in Pendleton (CBC) and Pocahontas (CBC) Counties.

**Longspurs and Buntings** – On December 30, Allen Bryan found a **Lapland Longspur** and a **Snow Bunting** in a large flock of **Horned Larks** on Meyerstown Road, Jefferson County, and on January 22 Steven Wilson found a **Lapland Longspur** at the familiar area on Hogueland Lane, Grant County.

**Towhees, Sparrows, and Juncos** – **Eastern Towhees** made their usual appearances at lower elevations in many parts of the state. **American Tree, Field, Fox, Song, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows**, as well as **Dark-eyed Juncos**, appeared widely. **Chipping Sparrows** were observed in Grant (FA), Monongalia (CBC), Pendleton (CBC), Pocahontas (CBC), Randolph (CBC), and Wood (CBC) Counties, and

**Savannah Sparrows** were noted in Grant County (FA, SWi), Jefferson County (JBz), Mason County (DP, JK, MG, GR), Pendleton County (CBC), and Wood County (CBC).

**Blackbirds** and **Allies** – Reports of **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Eastern Meadowlarks**, **Rusty Blackbirds**, **Common Grackles**, and **Brown-headed Cowbirds** came from areas all over the state. A **Rusty Blackbird** was a new yard bird for Laura Ceperley on December 15 in Charleston, Kanawha County.

**Warblers** – **Palm Warblers** appeared on December 16 in both the Charleston Christmas Bird Count, Kanawha County, and the Parkersburg Christmas Bird Count, Wood County, and on the next day in the Ona Christmas Bird Count in Cabell, Mason, and Putnam Counties. **Pine Warblers** arrived in Cabell County (MG), Putnam County (KC), and Ritchie County (CB) in late February. Birders in lower elevations saw Myrtle-race **Yellow-rumped Warblers** at locations throughout the state.

**Cardinals** – Birders throughout the state reported **Northern Cardinals** in good numbers.

Contributors to the Winter Field Notes: Sarah Anderson (SAn), Frederick Atwood (FA), Richard Bailey (RBi), Rodney Bartgis (RB), Jon Benedetti (JB), John Boback (JBo), Randy Bodkins (RBo), Ben Borda (BBo), Joette Borzik (JBz), Terry Bronson (TB), Allen Bryan (AlB), Cynthia Burkhart (CB), Kevin Cade (KC), Kyle Carlsen (KCr), Laura Ceperley (LC), Derek Courtney (DCo), Rodney Davis (RD), Robert Dean (BD), Carol Del-Colle (CD), Donny Good (DG), Hullet Good (HG), Richard Gregg (RG), Michael Griffith (MG), Paula Hallberg (PH), Joey Herron (JoH), Joseph Hildreth (JH), Diane Holsinger (DH), John Hubbard (JHu); Wilma Jarrell (WJ), Sharon Kearns (SK), Janet Keating (JK), Jon and B.J. Little (JBL), Beth Mankins (BM), Paul McDonald (PMD), Heather McSharry (HMc), Larry Metheny (LM), Herb Myers (HMy), Susan Ogden (SOg), Susan Olcott (SO), David Patick (DP), James Phillips (JP), James and Judy Phillips (JJP), Gary Rankin (GR), Paul Saffold (PS), Jodie Sylvester (JoS), Rennie Talbert (ReT), William Telfair (BT), Ryan Tomazin (RTo), James and Beverly Triplett (JBT), James Waggy (JWa), Steven Wilson (SWi), and Lynn Wiseman (LW).

P.O. Box 2  
Seneca Rocks, WV 26884  
autoblock@frontiernet.net

## ERRATUM

In *The Redstart* 85(2), the photograph of a Cinnamon Teal that appeared on page 53 was taken by David Patick. It was mistakenly attributed to John Boback.

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Original papers in the field of natural history are published in The Redstart. Papers are judged on the basis of their contributions to original data, ideas, or interpretations. Scientific accuracy and clarity are most important, and to this end, an advisory board, selected by the editorial staff, will review submitted papers as needed. Papers should be submitted in Word, by e-mail if possible, to [autoblock@frontiernet.net](mailto:autoblock@frontiernet.net) or on a CD and sent to the editor; otherwise, papers should be typewritten, double-spaced on one side of the paper only, and sent to the editor at P.O. Box 2, Seneca Rocks, WV 26884.

### BROOKS BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP

The Brooks Bird Club, Inc. is a nonprofit organization whose objective is to encourage the study and conservation of birds and other phases of natural history. Membership includes subscriptions to The Redstart and Mail Bag and entitles one to all the privileges offered by the Club. Classes of membership are Student, \$10; Individual, \$25; Family, \$30; Sustaining, \$50; Life, \$500; Family Life, \$650. Checks should be written payable to The Brooks Bird Club and mailed to P.O. Box 4077, Wheeling, WV 26003.

## 2018 Calendar of Events The Brooks Bird Club, Inc.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Place</b>
January	BBC Membership Month .....	Wheeling, WV
February	Write an article for the Mail Bag or The Redstart .....	mail to editors
Jan. 31-Feb. 2	Trip to Killdeer Plains (Contact Dick Esker)	
March 1-2	Funk/Killbuck Marsh (overnight trip — contact Dick Esker)	
March 9-11	Early Spring Meeting (Contact Dick Esker) .....	North Bend State Park Harrisville, WV
March 18	Waterfowl Field Trip (day trip) (Contact Carl Slater) ....	Seneca Lake, OH
April 21	Three Rivers Bird Club (day trip) .....	Raccoon Creek State Park, PA (Contact Ryan Tomazin)
May 10-13	Wildflower Pilgrimage, Blackwater Falls State Park .....	Davis, WV
May 12	International Migratory Bird Day/ N. American Migration Count .....	local chapters
June 3-10	Foray – Camp Pocahontas .....	Thornwood, WV (contact Janice Emrick or Ryan Tomazin)
August-October	Bird Banding .....	Dolly Sods, WV
October	BBC Fall Reunion & Meeting, Date and time TBD Check Mail Bag and website	
November 7-11	Eastern Shore (Contact Carl Slater)	
Dec. 14-Jan. 5, '18	Christmas Bird Counts .....	local chapters

### BBC FORAYS (dates and places tentative)

2018 Thornwood 4-H Camp, Pocahontas County Thornwood, WV

### SEASONAL FIELD NOTES DUE

Winter: March 15      Spring: June 15      Summer: September 15      Fall: December 15  
MAIL TO: Casey Rucker, P.O. Box 2, Seneca Rocks, WV 26884, autoblock@frontiernet.net

### ARTICLES FOR THE MAIL BAG DUE

February 15      May 15      August 15      November 15  
MAIL TO: Ryan Tomazin, 348 Station St., Apt. 7, Bridgeville, PA 15017, wwwarblers@hotmail.com

<http://brooksbirdclub.org>

The dates for the 2018 BBC program may be changed if necessary. Changes will be announced on the web page or in The Mail Bag.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Dick Esker, eskerrb@frontier.com  
Carl & Juanita Slater, gusind@stratuswave.net  
Janice Emrick, emrick@gmn4u.com

Dawn Fox, dafox210@gmail.com  
Ryan Tomazin, wwwarblers@hotmail.com

**The Brooks Bird Club**  
P.O. Box 4077  
Wheeling, WV 26003

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