

Results of 2023 Handlan Spring Migration Count

The 2023 Spring Migration Count of the Handlan Chapter of the Brooks Bird Club, which was conducted from April 29 through May 14, was a rousing success. Many members spent considerable time in the field and visited a wide variety of habitats, which is what it takes to find a large number of species. Eleven lists were submitted. Three of the individual lists had over 100 species and a few other lists had somewhere in the 70 to 90 range. Most of the lists had at least some birds that others did not have, and that is what drives up the cumulative total.

The total number of species identified during our 2023 count is 169, which is easily a new record. Looking at the list, there are no major gaps. We found a respectable number of waterfowl, even though the duck migration was mostly completed when our count began. Several songbirds that had already left the Kanawha Valley to go north were located in the mountains (junco, red-breasted nuthatch, etc.). We had 34 species of warblers, which is an excellent total.

The complete list follows. I'll put them together in related groups, so the list is easier to look through. I'll use an * to highlight some of the uncommon birds that were found. Two birds that are quite uncommon in our region – Least Bittern and Mississippi Kite – have continued to return as successful nesters in the last few years. The Least Bittern pair nests near the office at Greenbottom WMA and I know some of you have followed online directions to the Kite nest.

*Common Loon, Mute Swan, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser

Great Blue Heron, *Great Egret, Green Heron, *Least Bittern, *Sora, American Coot

Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Osprey, *Bald Eagle, *Mississippi Kite, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, *Peregrine Falcon, Wild Turkey, Great-horned Owl, Barred Owl

Killdeer, *Semipalmated Plover, *Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, *Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Wilson's Snipe, American Woodcock

Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, *Black-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Common Nighthawk, Whip-poor-will, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher

*Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy, Hairy, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker

Eastern Wood-Pewee, Phoebe, Great-crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Acadian Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, *Alder Flycatcher, *Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, *Horned Lark

Chimney Swift, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, *Bank Swallow

Blue Jay, American Crow, Raven, Black-capped Chickadee, Carolina Chickadee, Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, House Wren, Winter Wren, *Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Wood Thrush, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Robin, Eastern Bluebird
Catbird, Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher

White-eyed Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, *Philadelphia Vireo

Warblers: Blue-winged, Tennessee, Nashville, Northern Parula, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Yellow-throated, Pine, Prairie, *Palm, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Cerulean, Black and White, Redstart, *Prothonotary, Worm-eating, *Swainson's, Ovenbird, *Northern Waterthrush, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky, *Mourning, Common Yellowthroat, Hooded, *Wilson's *Canada, Yellow-breasted Chat

Cedar Waxwing, Summer Tanager, Scarlet Tanager, Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Eastern Towhee

Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, *Savannah Sparrow, *Grasshopper Sparrow, Song Sparrow, *Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, House Sparrow

*Bobolink, *Dickcissel, Red-winged Blackbird, Meadowlark, *Rusty Blackbird, Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, *Purple Finch, House Finch, Goldfinch, Starling

Participants in the count include: Sandra McQuain, Joe Jarrell, Sue Westfall, Laura Ceperley, David Wills, Anne Wills, Christy Carr, Barb Koster, Kevin Cade, Jim Waggy, Doren Burrell, Russ Young, Bill Hall, Rick Gregg, Jaime Lewis. I know there are other names I'm missing, people who birded with those who sent in lists (such as those on Russ Young's cemetery walks), but didn't send in their own lists. A big thank you to all who participated, and I hope all of you had as much fun getting out in nature and searching for birds as I did.

Jim Waggy