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*The* **REDSTART**

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# The REDSTART

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# The 2013 West Virginia Christmas Bird Count

Jane Whitaker

Twenty-two counts were conducted during the 2013 Christmas Bird Count. They were undertaken on various days between December 14, 2013, and January 5, 2014. Oak Hill participated this year but was absent from the count in 2012. Seven counts were held the first weekend of the count period, seven the second weekend, four the third weekend, and four during the first five days of January. The weather was cooperative this year. Temperatures were seasonal and there was no extreme weather, only some light rain or snow.

Table 1 is a list of all the species seen and their abundance. The most abundant species, those reported over 1,000 times, are listed in Table 2 in descending order. Seventeen species were observed on only one count. They are listed in Table 3 along with the count on which they were seen. Perhaps the most interesting of these is the Swainson's Hawk found in Brandywine, Pendleton County, by Casey Rucker on December 20. If accepted by the West Virginia Bird Records Committee, this will be only the third record of a Swainson's Hawk in the state. Table 4 lists the species seen on all counts.

Table 1  
Species List

Species	Number
Snow Goose	4
Cackling Goose	1
Canada Goose	9,052
Mute Swan	3
Tundra Swan	8
Wood Duck	14
Gadwall	113
American Wigeon	12
American Black Duck	284
Mallard	2,948
Blue-winged Teal*	11
Northern Shoveler	8
Northern Pintail	13
Green-winged Teal	24

Species	Number
Canvasback*	1
Redhead	21
Ring-necked Duck	110
Greater Scaup	50
Lesser Scaup	30
Bufflehead	92
Common Goldeneye	4
Hooded Merganser	233
Common Merganser	117
Red-breasted Merganser*	1
Ruddy Duck	109
Ring-necked Pheasant	5
Ruffed Grouse	6
Wild Turkey	383
Common Loon	4
Pied-billed Grebe	79
Horned Grebe	18
Double-crested Cormorant	10
Great Blue Heron	168
Black Vulture	568
Turkey Vulture	758
Bald Eagle	67
Northern Harrier	16
Sharp-shinned Hawk	21
Cooper's Hawk	56
Accipiter sp.	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	131
Swainson's Hawk	1
Red-tailed Hawk	382
Rough-legged Hawk	3
Golden Eagle	6
Virginia Rail	1
American Coot	173
Killdeer	92
Wilson's Snipe	16
Bonaparte's Gull	1
Ring-billed Gull	173
Herring Gull	6
Rock Pigeon	4,752

Species	Number
Mourning Dove	3,698
Barn Owl	5
Eastern Screech-Owl	80
Great Horned Owl	27
Barred Owl	22
Long-eared Owl	1
Short-eared Owl	5
Belted Kingfisher	121
Red-headed Woodpecker	13
Red-bellied Woodpecker	774
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	113
Downy Woodpecker	840
Hairy Woodpecker	178
Northern Flicker	434
Pileated Woodpecker	326
American Kestrel	159
Merlin	3
Peregrine Falcon	1
Eastern Phoebe	27
Loggerhead Shrike	1
White-eyed Vireo	1
Blue Jay	1,805
American Crow	50,051
Fish Crow	1
Common Raven	283
Horned Lark	606
Carolina Chickadee	1,804
Black-capped Chickadee	597
Chickadee spp.	146
Tufted Titmouse	1,954
Red-breasted Nuthatch	13
White-breasted Nuthatch	1,077
Brown Creeper	79
House Wren*	5
Winter Wren	46
Carolina Wren	1,486
Golden-crowned Kinglet	624
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	20
Kinglet spp.	5

Species	Number
Eastern Bluebird	1,655
Hermit Thrush	59
American Robin	2,374
Gray Catbird	6
Brown Thrasher	1
Northern Mockingbird	627
European Starling	29,678
American Pipit	40
Cedar Waxwing	894
Lapland Longspur	3
Snow Bunting	1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	593
Eastern Towhee	449
American Tree Sparrow	182
Chipping Sparrow	71
Field Sparrow	148
Savannah Sparrow	3
Fox Sparrow	34
Song Sparrow	1,884
Swamp Sparrow	84
White-throated Sparrow	1,726
White-crowned Sparrow	282
Dark-eyed Junco	5,272
Northern Cardinal	2,807
Indigo Bunting*	1
Red-winged Blackbird	1,606
Eastern Meadowlark	49
Rusty Blackbird	355
Common Grackle	150
Brown-headed Cowbird	52
House Finch	783
Purple Finch	19
Pine Siskin	1
American Goldfinch	1,652
House Sparrow	3,228
Total	145,461

\*denotes species not observed on the 2012 count

Table 2  
Most Abundant Species in Descending Order

American Crow  
 European Starling  
 Canada Goose  
 Rock Pigeon  
 Dark-eyed Junco  
 Mourning Dove  
 Mallard  
 Northern Cardinal  
 Robin  
 Chickadees (Carolina, Black-capped, chickadee sp.)  
 Carolina Wren  
 House Sparrow  
 Song Sparrow  
 White-throated Sparrow  
 Bluejay  
 Tufted Titmouse  
 Bluebird  
 Redwinged Blackbird  
 American Goldfinch  
 White-breasted Nuthatch

Table 3  
Species Observed on One Count Only

Species	Number	Count Location
Snow Goose	4	Canaan
Mute Swan	3	Buffalo Creek
Blue-winged Teal	11	Oak Hill
Canvasback	1 cw	Morgantown
Red-breasted Merganser	1	Morgantown
Swainson's Hawk	1	Pendleton
Virginia Rail	1	Charles Town
Bonaparte's Gull	1	Charles Town
Barn Owl	5	Moorefield
Long-eared Owl	1	Ona
Peregrine Falcon	1	Parkersburg

Species	Number	Count Location
Loggerhead Shrike	1	Lewisburg
White-eyed Vireo	1	Morgantown
Fish Crow	1	Charles Town
Snow Bunting	1	Buffalo Creek
Pine Warbler	1	Lewisburg
Pine Siskin	1	Canaan

Table 4  
Species Observed on All Counts

Rock Pigeon	White-breasted Nuthatch
Mourning Dove	American Robin
Belted Kingfisher	European Starling
Northern Flicker	Song Sparrow
Pileated Woodpecker	White-throated Sparrow
Blue Jay	Northern Cardinal
American Crow	House Finch
Chickadees	American Goldfinch
Tufted Titmouse	House Sparrow

The locations reporting counts, total species seen on the respective count, total number of birds seen, and total participants are listed in Table 5. One can see from Table 5 that there was a wide discrepancy among the counts in regard to total participants and number of species seen.

In seven cases birds were seen on all but one count. They were missing from the counts with a limited number of participants. Canada Goose was not observed in McDowell County. Oak Hill, with only three observers, did not find Red-tailed Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, or Eastern Bluebird. The Athens count did not report the Dark-eyed Junco. Four of the above birds were among the most abundant species observed. The other three, Red-tailed Hawk (N = 382), Red-bellied Woodpecker (N = 774), and Downy Woodpecker (N = 840) were undoubtedly present on the previously mentioned areas but not observed, perhaps due to the small number of participants.

Table 5

Location of Participating Counts, Total Species, Number of Birds, and Observers

Count Location	Species	Number	No. of Observers
Athens-Princeton, WV	46	1,532	7
Buffalo Creek, PA/WV	65	7,286	39
Canaan, WV	58	2,280	15
Charles Town, WV	86	14,656	26
Charleston, WV	61	13,658	23
Elkins, WV	54	3,736	15
Hampshire County, WV	60	3,035	39
Huntington, WV	63	7,232	16
Inwood, WV	70	9,076	24
Lewisburg, WV	62	6,668	20
McDowell County, WV	42	759	5
Moorefield, WV	63	3,033	8
Morgantown, WV	81	1,505	32
Oak Hill, WV	24	324	3
Ona, WV	76	7,960	17
Parkersburg, WV	70	10,166	31
Pendleton, WV	69	5,548	11
Pipestem, WV	62	2,108	11
Pocahontas, WV	52	1,976	13
Raleigh County, WV	59	8,064	6
Wheeling, WV	43	32,161	8

Duck species were in numbers comparable to those reported last year; however, 11 Blue-Winged Teals were seen only on the Oak Hill count, and 1 Red-breasted Merganser was seen on the Morgantown Count. These species were not reported in 2012.

Among game birds, Ring-necked Pheasants were reported on two counts, Buffalo Creek and Hampshire. Ruffed Grouse and Wild Turkey numbers were about half of what they were in 2012.

Red-headed Woodpecker numbers were down (N = 13) from 2012 (N = 25). Other woodpecker numbers were fairly constant. Blue Jay numbers were down significantly (N = 1,805) from 2012 (N = 2,688).

Six hundred six Horned Larks were observed in 2013 compared to only 121 last year. Red-breasted Nuthatches were practically absent (N = 13) while last year their numbers were higher (N = 83). Five House Wrens were observed this year. They were absent in 2012. Robins were in abundance this year (N = 2,374) from 1,518 in 2012.

Starling numbers fell (N = 29,678) from last year (N = 61,796). Cedar Waxwing (N = 894) increased over 2012 (N = 263). Yellow-rumped Warblers were also more abundant (N = 593) from the 2012 number of 252.

Two warblers were reported this year. A Pine Warbler in Lewisburg and Palm Warblers were found on the Ona and Pipestem counts. Eastern Towhees numbers were up (N = 449) (2012 N = 184). There were also more Chipping Sparrows reported (N = 71) (2012 N = 29). Savannah Sparrows were scarce (N = 3) (2012 N = 29). White-crowned Sparrow numbers were down as well (N = 282) from 2012 (N = 603).

Red-winged blackbirds (N=1,606), (2012 N=5,980) were down and Eastern Meadowlarks (N = 49) (2012 N = 100) were in short supply. The same can't be said for Rusty Blackbirds (N = 355) compared to 2012 (N = 55). In 2012, 510 Brown-headed Cowbirds were reported but this year only 52.

Our northern invaders did not invade in 2013. Only 19 Purple Finches (2012 N = 40) and 1 Pine Siskin (2012 N = 14) were reported. No Crossbills or Evening Grosbeaks were seen in 2013.

Details of each count can be found on the Audubon Web site using the URL <http://birds.audubon.org/american-birds-annual-summary-christmas-bird-count>.

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## **Banding at Prickett's Fort State Park in Marion County West Virginia, 2008–2013**

Joey Herron

Since 2008 I have been conducting a bird banding class for the Lifelong Learners group of Pierpont Community and Technical College in Fairmont, West Virginia. The spring and fall classes usually consist of one classroom session and three field sessions at Prickett's Fort State Park during early May and early October. Prickett's Fort State Park is located along the Monongahela River in Marion County and has a diverse habitat including a large riparian area and many wooded areas with trails and openings. The various habitats support a wide variety of species and make for many good opportunities for observing and banding birds.

Nets were set above the main trail area next to the trail parking lot, which is located west of the visitor's center. Four to five nets were used along an abandoned railroad bed running next to a power line right of way. The banding has taken place in this same area every spring and fall since starting in 2008.

Two hundred sixty-six birds of 49 species were banded from the spring of 2008 to the fall of 2013. Almost a third of the bandings are made up of three species: Northern Cardinal (31), Carolina Chickadee (22), and White-eyed Vireo (20). The following chart shows numbers and species banded.

Species	Number Banded	No. of Years Banded
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2 (not banded)	2
Downy Woodpecker	2	1
White-eyed Vireo	20	5
Red-eyed Vireo	8	3
Warbling Vireo	4	2
Blue Jay	1	1
Carolina Chickadee	22	5
Black-capped Chickadee	1	1
Tufted Titmouse	3	2
House Wren	1	1
Carolina Wren	15	4
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	6	4
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2	2
Wood Thrush	5	3
American Robin	3	3

Species	Number Banded	No. of Years Banded
Swainson's Thrush	1	1
Gray Catbird	19	4
Brown Thrasher	1	1
Northern Mockingbird	6	3
Cedar Waxwing	1	1
Blue-winged Warbler	2	2
Swainson's Warbler	1	1
Orange-crowned Warbler	1	1
Nashville Warbler	2	1
Connecticut Warbler	1	1
Common Yellowthroat	6	4
American Redstart	3	3
Northern Parula	1	1
Magnolia Warbler	10	3
Yellow Warbler	7	3
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1	1
Blackpoll Warbler	1	1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	13	3
Prairie Warbler	1	1
Black-throated Green Warbler	2	1
Wilson's warbler	2	2
Yellow-breasted Chat	4	2
Eastern Towhee	11	4
Chipping Sparrow	4	3
Field Sparrow	2	2
Song Sparrow	11	5
Swamp Sparrow	1	1
White-throated Sparrow	4	2
White-crowned Sparrow	1	1
Northern Cardinal	31	5
Indigo Bunting	7	3
Orchard Oriole	5	2
Baltimore Oriole	7	3
American Goldfinch	6	3

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## A.O.U. Taxonomic Changes for 2013

Albert R. Buckelew Jr.

Changes for 2013 in the American Ornithologists' Union nomenclature and taxonomy of birds are discussed here. The Brooks Bird Club's checklist keeps the same order and English names as the A.O.U. list; therefore, *The Redstart* uses the same nomenclature and taxonomic arrangement of birds as does the A.O.U.

This year there were no changes of the English common names of birds found in West Virginia. There were changes in the taxonomic arrangement of families and of birds within families affecting the West Virginia checklist. Birders will find the discussion of changes made for all of North America in 2013 of interest (Chesser et al., 2013).

The families in the order Charadriiformes were rearranged as follows: Recurvirostridae (stilts and avocets), Charadriidae (plovers), Scolopacidae (sandpipers), Stercorariidae (jaegers), Laridae (gulls and terns). Within the family Scolopacidae, the Buff-breasted Sandpiper was moved to the genus *Calidris*, and the members of this genus were rearranged to establish a new order for our West Virginia *Calidris* sandpipers to be inserted in the checklist, below the Ruddy Turnstone, as follows: Great Knot, Red Knot, Stilt Sandpiper, Sanderling, Dunlin, Baird's Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper.

In the family Mimidae, the species were rearranged as follows: Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird. The Purple Finch and the House Finch switch places with each other in the family Fringillidae, and the House Finch now comes before the Purple Finch on our checklist.

### Reference

Chesser, R. T., Banks, R. C., Barker, F. K., Cicero, C., Dunn, J. L., Kratter, A. W., Lovette, I. J., Rasmussen, P. C., Remsen, J. V., Jr., Rising, J. D., Stotz, D. R., & Winker, K. (2013). Fifty-fourth supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American birds. *The Auk*, 130(3), 558-571.

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## 2013 Floyd Bartley Memorial Award Announced

Albert R. Buckelew Jr. announced the 2013 Floyd Bartley Award at the BBC early spring meeting at North Bend State Park on March 8, 2014. Douglas McClure Wood and Cynthis D. Ellis shared the award for their article, “Return of the Common Raven, Revisited,” which appeared in the October 2013 issue of *The Redstart*, Vol. 43, No. 4, pp. 116–123.

The Floyd Bartley Award was established by an anonymous donor to honor the memory of Floyd Bartley. (See *The Redstart*, 43(2), p. 68, 1976). Previous winners of the Award are listed below.

1976	Ray and Jo Ashworth
1979	Harry Slack
1980	James D. Phillips
1981	J. Lawrence Smith
1982	Eugene E. Hutton
1983	Linnie Coon
1984	Patricia Temple
1985	Melvin Hooker
1987	Jonathan Minear
1988	Julie Beatty
1989	Lorraine Rollefson
1993	Ralph K. Bell
1994	Wendell Argabrite
1995	Greg Eddy
1997	Ann Pyle
1998	John Northeimer
1999	Joey Herron
2000	Anna M. McRae
2001	Gary Felton
2002	William Beatty
2003	Matthew Orsie
2004	George E. Hall
2005	Jane J. Whitaker
2006	Matthew Orsie
2008	Rosie Campbell
2009	Jane Whitaker and Reba Hutton
2010	James Triplett and Beverly Triplett
2011	Joey Herron
2012	Scott Pendleton

## Book Review

**Looking for the Goshawk** by Conor Mark Jameson. 2013. London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 368 pages, including a bibliography for further reading, index, and 20 line drawings. Hard covers, EPUB eBook price \$11.99, online price \$26.06. EISBN 9781408187029

Oh, to have the time and freedom to roam over the world searching for one's favorite bird as has done Conor Mark Jameson in his search for Goshawks. As it has in eastern North America, the Goshawk is increasing in Great Britain, the author's home, and elsewhere in Europe and in Asia. Woven into the story of Jameson's search for the bird is the story of its disappearance and near extirpation in Great Britain and much of Europe and how falconers' escaped and released Goshawks has led to its reestablishment as a breeding bird in more remote parts of Britain. After centuries of valued use in falconry, the Goshawk was hunted to extinction by gamekeepers and others in Great Britain. As in North America, education and law enforcement has lent protection to the bird, and since the 1970s it is returning to places where it had been extirpated.

Along the way, Jameson discusses the Goshawk's habits and interaction with other species. The story is interwoven with quotations and interesting history from and about T. H. White's work with Goshawks. T. H. White is the renowned author of *The Sword and the Stone* and wrote the only British book published in the twentieth century on the Goshawk. The author celebrates the 50th anniversary of White's death in Athens, Greece, where he is entombed. Many other naturalists are included in Jameson's discussions. There is a page and a half quotation from our own George M. Sutton's experience with angry Goshawks protecting their nest. Jameson's brief visit to North America took him to Central Park in New York City, Pennsylvania's Hawk Mountain, New York's Catskills, and Connecticut. Unlike Europe and Asia, where Goshawks are now breeding in and near large cities, the Goshawk is found in North America mainly in remote wilderness areas. Jameson discusses possible reasons for this interesting difference in range between North America and the rest of the bird's northern hemisphere range.

All birders will enjoy Jameson's journeys and philosophical musings, while learning much about, in his words, "the most raptorial of raptors."

Albert R. Buckelew Jr.

## Field Notes Fall Season

September 1 – November 30, 2013

Casey Rucker

September was about average in temperature, October was warmer than average, and November was much cooler than average in West Virginia, according to the Northeast Regional Climate Center at Cornell University. All three months of the fall season were drier than average, and by the end of November the territory designated “abnormally dry” in West Virginia had risen from 0 to 49 percent. Dry conditions enabled a fire in the Monongahela National Forest, Pendleton County, to burn 2.5 square miles of forest over 12 days in mid November.

These notes were gathered from the National Audubon Society sponsored West Virginia Bird Listserv, and from field notes submitted to the author by e-mail, at [autobock@frontiernet.net](mailto:autobock@frontiernet.net), and by 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>. Birders from 35 of the 55 West Virginia counties reported sightings on the WV Listserv during the fall season.

Gary Rankin spotted a **Say’s Phoebe** at Gallipolis Ferry, Mason County, on November 28. The bird was photographed and seen by many other West Virginia birders, including David Patick, Wendell Argabrite, Cynthia Ellis, Susan Aaron, and Matthew Orsie. The **Say’s Phoebe** is a new species for our state list. On the same day Joseph Hildreth reported a **Snowy Owl** near Rowlesburg, and on November 30 a **Snowy Owl** was photographed in Clifton Mills, both in Preston County, as reported by Gary Felton. Overall, there were 221 species reported in the state during the fall months.

**Ducks, Swans, Geese**—On November 12, Derek Courtney spotted 6 **Greater White-fronted Geese** and 12 **Snow Geese** on the Cheat River, and 7 **Snow Geese** on Cheat Lake, all in Monongalia County. Diane Holsinger saw four **Snow Geese** near Franklin, Pendleton County, on September 17 and again on October 15. **Canada Geese** were as usual widespread throughout the state. Gary Rankin found a pair of **Mute Swans** at McClintic Wildlife Management Area, Mason County, on October 27, and James and Beverly Triplett saw the birds at the same location on November 3. Four days later, John Boback counted 391 **Tundra Swans** flying over Cheat Lake, Monongalia County, where he estimated there were 150 more sitting on the water. Other reports of **Tundra Swans** came from Berkeley (RB), Cabell (DP, MG, CE, BW, LC, RU), Jefferson (DHa), Mason (DP, MG), Monongalia (JBo, TB, GN, DCo), Preston (DCo, GF), and Wetzel (WJ) Counties.

This fall West Virginia birders reported 24 species of waterfowl, including all three **scoters**. There were reports in at least eight counties of **Wood Ducks**, **Gadwalls**, **American Wigeons**, **American Black Ducks**, **Mallards**, **Blue-winged Teal**, **Northern Shovelers**, **Green-winged Teal**, **Ring-necked Ducks**, **Buffleheads**, **Hooded Mergansers**, **Common Mergansers**, and **Ruddy Ducks** this fall. Reports of the following species came from fewer than eight counties, as noted: **Northern Pintails** – Jefferson (DHa), Monongalia (DCo), Taylor (JH), and Wood (JB) Counties; **Canvasbacks** – Monongalia County (DCo); **Redheads** – Monongalia County (DCo); **Greater Scaup** – Monongalia (DCo) and Tucker (CR) Counties; **Lesser Scaup** – Mason (DP, MG), Monongalia (TB, DCo), Summers (JP), and Taylor (JH, HMy) Counties; **Surf Scoters** – Monongalia (DCo, JBo) and Taylor (JH) Counties; **White-winged Scoter** (Tucker County (HMy)); **Black Scoters** (Hardy (DC), Jefferson (MO), Monongalia (DCo), and Taylor (JH) Counties); **Long-tailed Ducks** – Monongalia County (TB, DCo); **Common Goldeneye** (Monongalia (TB, DCo) and Taylor (HMy) Counties); and **Red-breasted Mergansers** – Cabell (DP, WA) and Monongalia (GN, TB, DCo) Counties.

**Quail**—On October 30, Rodney Bartgis encountered a male **Northern Bobwhite** at his Tygart Valley farm in Randolph County.

**Grouse, Turkeys**—Reports of **Ruffed Grouse** came from Hardy County (KKi), Marion County (TB), Pendleton County (DH), Pocahontas County (DP), Preston County (TB), and Taylor County (TB). **Wild Turkeys** appeared widely, with reports from 10 counties. Wil Hershberger found 10 **Wild Turkeys** at his home in Hedgesville, Berkeley County, on October 30.

**Loons, Grebes**—There were reports of **Common Loons** from only three counties this fall: Lewis (DSa), Monongalia (TB, JBo, DCo), and Taylor (JH, DCo, JoH, AW). John Boback watched 56 **Common Loons**, some of them yodeling, fly by Cheat Lake, Monongalia County, on November 7. **Pied-billed Grebes** appeared widely throughout the state, and birders found **Horned Grebes** in five counties: Jefferson (DHa), Mason (DP, MG), Monongalia (TB, DCo, JBo, AW), Preston (DCo), and Taylor (HMy, AW).

**Cormorants**—Reports of **Double-crested Cormorants** came from nine counties. On October 13, an overflight of five **Double-crested Cormorants** added a species to Kim Kazmierski's yard list in Hurricane, Putnam County.

**Hérons, Egrets**—**Great Blue Herons** and **Green Herons** appeared throughout much of the state. **Great Egrets** were reported in Cabell (DP, WA, MG, GR, TH), Grant (FA, HMy), Marion (JBo, TB), Monongalia (JBo), and Wetzel (WJ) Counties. John Boback discovered a **Black-crowned Night-Heron** in Star City, Monongalia County, on November 28.

**Vultures**—Reports of **Black Vultures** came from 11 counties, while 14 counties had reports of **Turkey Vultures**. On November 7, near Cheat Lake, Monongalia County, Gretchen Nareff watched a swirling kettle of **Turkey Vultures** that she estimated at 110 individuals.

**Hawks, Eagles—Osprey, Bald Eagles, Northern Harriers, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Cooper’s Hawks, Red-shouldered Hawks, Broad-winged Hawks, and Red-tailed Hawks** were all well-represented in reports throughout the state during the fall season. Hanging Rock Observation Tower in Monroe County had another excellent year, where watchers clocked 5,893 **raptors** this season, including two records: 207 **Bald Eagles** and 534 **Red-tailed Hawks**. On November 4, Wendy Perrone found the resident pair of **Bald Eagles** near their nest on Brooks Island, Raleigh County. On November 30, Matthew Orsie saw 2 **Northern Harriers**, a **Cooper’s Hawk**, and 14 **Red-tailed Hawks** in Hardy County. **Golden Eagles** made appearances in Hardy (DH), Monroe (JP, HRT), Randolph (CR), and Tucker (CR, HMy) Counties.

**Rails, Coots**—On October 31, Joette Borzik found a **Virginia Rail** at Altona Marsh, Jefferson County. Gary Rankin spotted a **Sora** at Greenbottom Wildlife Management Area, Cabell County, on September 29. Joseph Hildreth found two **Soras** at Pleasant Creek Wildlife Management Area, Barbour County, on October 16, and on the next day Joey Herron, Joseph Hildreth, and Randy Bodkins saw one **Sora** in the same location. **American Coots** appeared in birders’ reports from numerous counties.

**Avocets**—Wendell Argabrite saw two **American Avocets** at Apple Grove Fish Hatchery, Mason County, on October 3.

**Plovers**—It was another poor season for migratory **plovers**. On September 10, Wendell Argabrite found the season’s only **American Golden-Plover** at Robert C. Byrd Locks and Dam, Mason County, and Michael Griffith joined him there two days later, when they saw the season’s only **Semipalmated Plover**. In contrast to other **plover** species, **Killdeer** were well-represented with reports from 18 counties. On October 30, Jeffrey Del Col saw numerous **Killdeer** flying around Alderson Broadus University in Philippi, Barbour County.

**Sandpipers**—**Sandpiper** reports were once again relatively few this fall. West Virginia birders found members of only 11 **sandpiper** species. Reports of the following **shorebirds** came from the counties listed: **Spotted Sandpiper**: Marion (JBo, JoH, TB), Mason (WA), Monongalia (JBo, TB), and Pocahontas (DP); **Solitary Sandpiper**: Barbour (TB), Jefferson (JBz), Marion (MSI, JBo, JoH, TB), Taylor (TB), and Tucker (HMy); **Greater Yellowlegs**: Mason (MG), Monongalia (DCo), Preston (TB), and Taylor (TB); **Lesser Yellowlegs**: Jefferson (JBz, MO), Marion (JBo), and Mason (WA); **Sanderling**: Mason (WA, MG); **Dunlin**: Mason (MG) and Preston (TB); **Baird’s Sandpiper**: Mason (WA, MG); **Least Sandpiper**: Jefferson (JBz) and Mason (WA, MG); **Pectoral Sandpiper**: Marion (JBo, JoH, TB, HMy) and Mason (MG, WA); **Wilson’s Snipe**: Cabell (DP, MG, CE), Grant (FA), Hardy (FA, DC), Marion (TB), Mason (DP, MG), and Pocahontas (DP); and **American Woodcock**: Wood (KC).

**Gulls, Terns**—It was a relatively slow season once again for inland seabirds, which were only observed in very small numbers. **Bonaparte’s Gulls** were sighted in Mason (DP, MG), Monongalia (DCo), Preston (TB, DCo), and Taylor (JH) Coun-

ties; reports of **Ring-billed Gulls** came from Jefferson (MO), Mason (DP, MG), Monongalia (DCo, TB), Taylor (JoH), and Tucker (LC) Counties; and **Herring Gulls** were reported in Mason (DP, MG, JBT), and Monongalia (DCo) Counties. Wendell Argabrite and Michael Griffith saw a **Black Tern** at Robert C. Byrd Locks and Dam on September 12, and another **Black Tern** at Apple Grove Fish Hatchery on October 3, both in Mason County. On October 23, Terry Bronson saw a **Common Tern** at Cheat Lake, Monongalia County.

**Pigeons, Doves**—**Rock Pigeons** and **Mourning Doves** continue to reside throughout the state. On November 24, Jean Neely saw a **Mourning Dove** that had just freed its legs from thin ice on a drainage pond in Jefferson County.

**Cuckoos**—**Yellow-billed Cuckoos** appeared to linger longer than usual in West Virginia this fall, with reports as late as October 9. Birders reported **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** from Cabell County (MG), Jefferson County (JBz, CD, DHa, JF), Monongalia County (TB), Raleigh County (NM), and Wood County (JB).

**Owls**—West Virginia birders submitted more **owl** reports than usual this fall. The **owl** of the season was the **Snowy Owl** in Preston County, described near the beginning of these notes. Ryan Tomazin was taking a walk under the full moon during the first night of the Brooks Bird Club meeting at Canaan Valley State Park, Tucker County, on October 18, when a **Barn Owl** circled above his head for a stunning five minutes. On October 24, the author of these notes saw perhaps the same **Barn Owl** fly across Route 32 in Canaan Valley, Tucker County. Twelve counties reported **Eastern Screech-Owls**: Barbour (JD), Cabell (GR), Grant (FA), Greenbrier (RBi), Jefferson (MO, JBz, CD), Marion (JBo, JoH), Monongalia (JBo, TB, SO), Pendleton (FA), Preston (GF), Randolph (HMy), Summers (MK), and Wood (KCa); there were reports of **Great Horned Owls** in six counties: Grant (FA), Jefferson (CD, WS, MWt), Kanawha (HG), Putnam (CE), Wayne (GR), and Wetzel (WJ); and observers reported **Barred Owls** in six counties: Grant (FA), Jefferson (JBz, DHa), Kanawha (HG), Marion (JBo), Monongalia (HMy), and Summers (JJP, MK). On the evening of September 4, N. Wade Snyder listened to two **Great Horned Owls** hooting contrapuntally near his home in Shenandoah Junction, Jefferson County. On October 29, Richard Bailey flushed a **Short-eared Owl** from two feet away in a pasture in southern Pocahontas County.

**Goatsuckers, Swifts**—Robert Dean counted more than 60 **Common Nighthawks** in 35 minutes flying by his home in Hedgesville, Berkeley County, on September 1. **Common Nighthawks** were reported in eight other counties this September: Grant (FA), Jefferson (CD), Marion (JoH), Monongalia (BEJ), Nicholas (JCS), Putnam (CE, KK), Raleigh (MAW), and Summers (JJP). Kevin Campbell last heard an **Eastern Whip-Poor-Will** singing near his home in Dallison, Wood County, on September 29. There were 13 counties with reports of **Chimney Swifts**, all before October 9. Larry and Martha Schwab counted 3,760 **Chimney Swifts** at the Seneca Center in Morgantown, Monongalia County, on September 12.

**Hummingbirds**—Birders in only 11 counties reported sightings of **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds**, primarily in September. Bruni Haydl saw the last-reported **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** of the season on October 13 at her home in Charles Town, Jefferson County. William Beatty hosted an adult male **Rufous Hummingbird** at his home near Wellsburg in Brooke County from at least October 6 through November 29. Another **Rufous Hummingbird** was banded at a private home in Fort Ashby, Mineral County, in late November.

**Kingfishers**—There were reports of **Belted Kingfisher** in 20 counties.

**Woodpeckers**—Our state's seven species of **woodpeckers**, **Red-headed**, **Red-bellied**, **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, **Downy**, **Hairy**, **Northern Flicker**, and **Pileated**, were all widely reported, with sightings of **Red-headed Woodpeckers** in seven counties: Hardy (DH), Mercer (JJP), Monongalia (TB), Monroe (JP), Pendleton (DH), Ritchie (JBo, TB), and Summers (JJP). **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were reported in an unusually high 18 counties. Terry Bronson found all of West Virginia's species of **woodpecker** except **Red-headed** in Harrison County on October 29.

**Falcons**—**American Kestrels** continued to appear widely throughout the state during the fall season. Matthew Orsie reported seeing 17 on November 30 in Hardy County. It was a good season for **Merlins**, with reports from Kanawha County (JWa), Marion County (JoH), Monongalia County (JBo), Monroe County (HRT, JP), and Tucker County (FA, CR, SE). There were reports of **Peregrine Falcons** from seven counties: Grant (FA), Hardy (DH), Monongalia (JBo, ADe), Monroe (JP), Pendleton (DH), Pleasants (JB), and Wetzel (WJ).

**Flycatchers**—It was an unusually good fall for **flycatchers**. The **Say's Phoebe** first reported by Gary Rankin on November 28 is described near the beginning of these notes. James Phillips spotted an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at Pipestem State Park, Summers County, on September 8. Reports of **Eastern Wood-Pewees** came from eight counties, and Gary Felton found a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** in the Upper Deckers Creek area of Preston County on September 15. Joette Borzik and the Potomac Valley Audubon Society saw three **Acadian Flycatchers** at Claymont, Jefferson County, on September 10. Gary Rankin saw a **Willow Flycatcher** at Greenbottom WMA, Cabell County, on September 29. On September 15, Jon Benedetti found two **Least Flycatchers** at McDonough Wildlife Refuge in Wood County, but this year his wasn't the only report. John Boback also found a pair of **Least Flycatchers** in Morgantown, Monongalia County, on September 9. **Eastern Phoebes** were reported widely in the state, with the latest report from Deborah Hale in the Harpers Ferry vicinity, Jefferson County, on November 25. **Great Crested Flycatchers** appeared only in reports from Jefferson County (JBz, JN, DHa), and **Eastern Kingbirds** made appearances in Jefferson (JBz), Marion (MSI), and Randolph (RB) Counties.

**Shrikes**—Richard Bailey reported **Loggerhead Shrikes** to be present at previously known locations in the Greenbrier Valley, Greenbrier and Pocahontas Counties, on September 24 and October 30.

**Vireos**—**White-eyed**, **Yellow-throated**, **Blue-headed**, and **Red-eyed Vireos** appeared in counties throughout the state during September and early October, and **Blue-headed Vireos** were seen through late October. Reporting birders observed **Warbling Vireos** in Jefferson (JBz, JF) and Monongalia (TB) Counties during September. Rodney Bartgis heard a **Philadelphia Vireo** and a **Yellow-throated Vireo** singing at his home in Valley Bend, Randolph County, on September 8. Other reports of **Philadelphia Vireos** came from Cabell (DP, MG, GR), Mason (MG, WA), Monongalia (TB), and Preston (GF, TB) Counties.

**Crows, Jays, Ravens**—**Blue Jays**, **American Crows**, and **Common Ravens** prompted many reports throughout the state. Carol Del-Colle observed three **Common Ravens** calling and playing near her home in Summit Point, Jefferson County, on November 22. Birders observed **Fish Crows** in Grant County (FA) and Jefferson County (DH, JBz, WS) during September.

**Larks**—**Horned Larks** appeared occasionally this fall in Jefferson (DH) and Mason (DP, MG) Counties.

**Swallows**—On September 21, Frederick Atwood saw a **Purple Martin** on Hogueland Lane, Grant County. **Tree Swallows** lingered in 11 counties during September and October. Other **swallows** appeared more rarely: **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** in Cabell (TH), Hardy (FA), and Jefferson (JBz) Counties; **Bank Swallows** in Cabell (DP, WA, MG) and Grant (FA) Counties; **Cliff Swallows** in Grant (FA) and Hardy (FA) Counties; and **Barn Swallows** in Hardy (FA), Jefferson (JF), and Marion (TB) Counties. Sharyn Ogden estimated that she saw between 5,000 and 10,000 **swallows** covering a 35-acre farm near Bozoo, Summers County, on September 2. John Snyder saw thousands of **swallows** and **swifts** flying over his home near Summersville, Nicholas County, on September 10.

**Chickadees, Titmice**—**Black-capped** and **Carolina Chickadees** made their usual appearances in their bifurcated territories in West Virginia. **Tufted Titmice** were widely reported throughout the state as well.

**Nuthatches**—After a big showing a year ago, **Red-breasted Nuthatches** appeared in only six West Virginia counties this season: Cabell (DP, MG, GR), Grant (DH, FA), Monongalia (DCo), Pocahontas (DP), Preston (TB), and Tucker (CR). **White-breasted Nuthatches** occupied their usual spots in reports from throughout the state.

**Creepers**—Birders in seven counties reported **Brown Creeper**: Cabell (GR, MG), Jefferson (JF, JBz, WS, LW, CD, BH, DH, MWt), Monongalia (DCo), Preston (GF), Putnam (MW), Tucker (CR), and Wood (JB). Bruni Haydl saw her first **Brown Creeper** of the season in her yard in Charles Town, Jefferson County, on October 16.

**Wrens**—**House Wrens**, **Winter Wrens**, and **Carolina Wrens** appeared in good numbers in reports from many parts of the state. **Marsh Wrens** occasioned reports from Cabell (DP, WA, MG, GR), Mason (MG, WA), and Preston (TB) Counties.

**Gnatcatchers**—Birders in Grant (FA), Jefferson (BH, DH), and Marion (JoH)

Counties reported **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers**, with Deborah Hale reporting the latest one in Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, on October 18.

**Kinglets**—Birders reported **Golden-crowned** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** throughout the state this fall. James Farley and the Potomac Valley Audubon Society found both **kinglets** at Stauffer's Marsh, Jefferson County, on November 18.

**Thrushes**—It was a good fall for **thrush** sightings in West Virginia. **Eastern Bluebirds**, **Gray-cheeked Thrushes**, **Swainson's Thrushes**, **Hermit Thrushes**, **Wood Thrushes**, and **American Robins** were all seen widely in reporting counties. Reports of **Veery**, on the other hand, were even scarcer than usual, coming only from Grant (FA) and Preston (GF) Counties. Gary Felton listened to a good **thrush** flight on the morning of September 22 at his home in Kingwood, Preston County. He heard mostly **Swainson's Thrushes**, and lower numbers of **Gray-cheeked**, **Wood**, and **Hermit Thrushes**.

**Mockingbirds and Thrashers**—There were reports of **Gray Catbirds**, **Brown Thrashers**, and **Northern Mockingbirds** from counties throughout the state this fall.

**Starlings**—**European Starlings** continued to occupy widespread habitats throughout our state, though they only interested birders in five counties.

**Pipits**—**American Pipits** made a good showing in West Virginia this fall, mostly in November. Observers reported **American Pipits** in Cabell (MG, DP), Grant (FA), Hardy (FA, MO), Jefferson (WS, MO, DHa), Monongalia (TB), and Summers (JP) Counties. On November 7, Michael Griffith found a flock of approximately 30 **American Pipits** at Greenbottom WMA, Cabell County.

**Waxwings**—**Cedar Waxwings** were present in most parts of the state. Holly Canfield saw more than 50 **Cedar Waxwings** at Spruce Knob Lake, Randolph County, on September 14.

**Buntings**—On November 16, David Carr found two **Snow Buntings** at Kimsey Run Lake, Hardy County. It was the second year in a row that he found the only **Snow Buntings** in West Virginia during the fall. The **Snow Buntings** were present the next day, as observed by Frederick Atwood.

**Warblers**—Birders in West Virginia found 32 species of **warbler** this fall. **Warbler** species reported in six or fewer counties are listed below with the counties and contributors. Species listed without contributors were reported in at least seven counties. **Warblers** reported this fall included **Ovenbird**; **Worm-eating**—Cabell (MG, WA), Mason (DP, WA, MG, GR), and Pendleton (MO) Counties; **Louisiana Waterthrush** — Summers County (MW); **Northern Waterthrush** — Barbour (TB) and Pendleton (DH) Counties; **Blue-winged**; **Black-and-white**; **Prothonotary**: Kanawha (HG); **Tennessee**; **Nashville**; **Connecticut** — Marion (JoH) and Monongalia (JH) Counties; **Mourning**—Grant County (FA); **Common Yellowthroat**; **Hooded**; **American Redstart**; **Cape May**; **Northern Parula**; **Magnolia**; **Bay-breasted**; **Blackburnian**; **Yellow**—Jefferson (BH), Mason (DP, WA, MG, GR), and Wood (JB) Counties; **Chestnut-sided**; **Blackpoll**; **Black-throated Blue**; **Palm**; **Pine**; **Yellow-**

**rumped; Yellow-throated; Prairie**—Cabell (MG, WA), Grant (FA), Marion (JBo, TB), Monongalia (DCo, TB), and Wayne (GR) Counties; **Black-throated Green; Canada**—Marion County (JoH); **Wilson's**—Jefferson (DHa), Marion (JBo, JoH), Mason (DP, WA, MG), Putnam (CE), and Randolph (RBi) Counties; and **Yellow-breasted Chat**—Mason (DP, WA, MG, GR) and Monongalia (JBo, GN) Counties. On September 24, Cynthia Ellis added **Wilson's Warbler** to her cumulative list at Winfield Locks, Putnam County.

**Towhees, Sparrows, Juncos**—For the second year in a row, **Nelson's Sparrow** was West Virginia's **emberizid** of the fall season, with sightings in Mason County at Robert C. Byrd Locks and Dam on September 28 (DP, WA, MG, GR) and on October 19 (MG, WA). In addition, a **Nelson's Sparrow** appeared at Pleasant Creek Wildlife Management Area, Barbour County, on October 16 and 17 (JH, JoH, RBo). Frederick Atwood spotted a **LeConte's Sparrow** at South Mill Creek Lake in Grant County on October 27. The most-frequently reported species of **emberizid** this fall were **Eastern Towhee, Chipping, Field, Savannah, Fox, Song, Lincoln's, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows**, as well as **Dark-eyed Junco**. The following were reported only in the counties listed: **American Tree Sparrows** in Berkeley (JF), Grant (FA), Lewis (DSa), Mason (DP, MG), and Pleasants (JB) Counties; **Vesper Sparrows** in Harrison (TB, JBT), Jefferson (DHa), Kanawha (HG), and Mason (MG) Counties; and **Grasshopper Sparrows** in Hardy (DH, KKi), Jefferson (DHa), and Mason (GR, DP, WA, MG) Counties. Herb Myers saw, heard, and photographed a very early **Fox Sparrow** in Fairmont, Marion County, on September 23. Wilma Jarrell saw her first **Lincoln's** and **White-crowned Sparrows** of the season at her home in Wileyville, Wetzel County, on September 24.

**Tanagers, Cardinals, Grosbeaks, Buntings**—**Summer Tanagers** appeared in Jefferson (JBz), Kanawha (HG), Mason (DP, WA, MG, GR), Ritchie (JBo), and Wood (JB) Counties. **Scarlet Tanagers, Northern Cardinals, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and Indigo Buntings** prompted numerous reports from birders in most parts of the state. On September 1, Frederick Atwood saw a singing **Blue Grosbeak** on Hogueland Lane in Grant County. Deborah Hale found a family of **Blue Grosbeaks** in Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, on October 2, and continued to find **Blue Grosbeaks** in the area until October 14.

**Blackbirds, Allies**—Hullet Good hosted a **Brewer's Blackbird** at his feeders near Milliken, Kanawha County, in late September. **Bobolinks** prompted reports in September from Grant (FA), Jefferson (WS), and Mason (DP, WA, MG, GR) Counties. West Virginia birders reported **Red-winged Blackbirds** in 15 counties, **Eastern Meadowlarks** in 7 counties, and **Rusty Blackbirds** and **Common Grackles** in 8 counties each. **Brown-headed Cowbirds** reports came from Grant (FA), Jefferson (JBz), and Wetzel (WJ) Counties, and **Baltimore Orioles** appeared in reports from Jefferson (BH, JF) and Mason (DP, WA, MG, GR) Counties.

**Finches, Allies**—**Finches** showed no sign of an irruption year in West Virginia

birders' reports this fall. Reports of **House Finches**, **Purple Finches**, and **American Goldfinches** were widespread as usual in the state, occurring in at least nine counties each. **Red Crossbills** appeared in their familiar Pocahontas County location of Cranberry Glades (DP), and also in a command performance at Canaan Valley State Park in Tucker County for many members of the Brooks Bird Club on October 19 (RBI, AB, RTo, CR plus many others). **Pine Siskins** were almost nonexistent in West Virginia compared with a year ago, prompting reports only in Tucker (CR) and Wetzel (WJ) Counties.

**Weaver Finches**—The **House Sparrow** prompted reports from only five counties. In spite of this lack of attention, the species no doubt continues throughout the state, primarily in urban settings.

Contributors to the Fall Field Notes: Wendell Argabrite (WA), Frederick Atwood (FA), Richard Bailey (RBI), Rodney Bartgis (RB), Jon Benedetti (JB), John Boback (JBo), Randy Bodkins (RBo), Joette Borzik (JBz), Terry Bronson (TB), Albert R. Buckelew Jr. (AB), Kevin Campbell (KCa), David Carr (DC), Laura Ceperley (LC), Derek Courtney (DCo), Robert Dean (BD), Jeffrey Del Col (JD), Carol Del-Colle (CD), Andrew Dennhardt (ADe), Sally Egan (SE), Cynthia Ellis (CE), James Farley (JF), Gary Felton (GF), Hullet Good (HG), Michael Griffith (MG), Deborah Hale (DH<sub>a</sub>), Hanging Rock Raptor Observatory (HRT), Terry Harmon (TH), Bruni Haydl (BH), Joey Herron (JoH), Joseph Hildreth (JH), Teri Holland (TH), Diane Holsinger (DH), Wilma Jarrell (WJ), Bill and Emilie Johnson (BEJ), Kim Kazmierski (KK), Marjorie Keatley (MK), Kathy King (KKi), Nancy Moran (NM), Herb Myers (HMy), Gretchen Nareff (GN), Jean Neely (JN), Susan Olcott (SO), Matthew Orsie (MO), David Patick (DP), James Phillips (JP), James and Judy Phillips (JJP), Gary Rankin (GR), Casey Rucker (CR), Davette Saeler (DSa), Michael Slaven (MSl), John and Caroline Snyder (JCS), N. Wade Snyder (WS), Ryan Tomazin (RTo), James and Beverly Triplett (JBT), Randy Urian (RU), Andy Weeks (AW), James Waggy (JWa), Mindy Waldron (MW), Mindy and Allen Waldron (MAW), Mike Wiltshire (MWt), Lynn Wiseman (LW), and Beverly Wright (BW).

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## 2014 Calendar of Events The Brooks Bird Club, Inc.

Date	Activity	Place
January	BBC Membership Month .....	Wheeling, WV
February	Write an article for the <i>Mail Bag</i> or <i>The Redstart</i> .....	mail to editors
February 5-7	Trip to Killdeer Plains (Contact Gene Hilton 304-428-8641)	
March 13-14	Early Spring Meeting (Contact Dick Esker) .....	North Bend State Park
March 16	Waterfowl Field Trip (day trip) (Contact Carl Slater) .....	Seneca Lake, OH
April 26	Three Rivers Bird Club (day trip) (Contact Ryan Tomazin)	Raccoon Creek State Park, PA
May 10	International Migratory Bird Day, N. American Migration Count .....	local chapters
May 8-11	Wildflower Pilgrimage, Blackwater Falls State Park .....	Davis, WV
May 30-June 6	Sortie (Contact Dawn Fox) R. D. Bailey WMA .....	Mingo Co., WV
June 13-20	Foray - Camp Pioneer, Randolph County .....	Beverly, WV
July 25-27	Terra Alta Bonus Bird Weekend (Contact Carl Slater) .....	Terra Alta, WV
August 16-Oct. 4	Bird Banding .....	Dolly Sods, WV
September 13	Board of Trustees Meeting, Oglebay Pk (Contact Carl Slater) ....	Wheeling, WV
October 17-19	BBC Reunion/Annual Meeting, Blackwater Falls State Park .....	Davis, WV
November 12-16	Eastern Shore (Contact Carl Slater)	
Dec. 14-Jan. 5, '15	Christmas Bird Counts (Send reports to Jane Whitaker) .....	local groups

### BBC FORAYS (dates and places tentative)

2014	Camp Pioneer, Randolph County	Beverly, WV
2015	Camp Galilee, Preston County	Terra Alta, WV
2016	Camp Kidd, Tucker County	Parsons, WV

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The dates for the 2014 BBC program may be changed if necessary. Changes will be announced on the Web page or in *The Mail Bag*.

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