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The **REDSTART**

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Named in honor of A. B. Brooks, Naturalist

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President Elect	A. R. Buckelew Jr., 111 Logan Ct., Bethany, WV 26032	304-829-4392
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Membership Secretary	Juanita Slater, 57290 Mehlman Rd., Bellaire, OH 43906	740-635-9246
Editor <i>The Redstart</i>	A. R. Buckelew Jr., 111 Logan Ct., Bethany, WV 26032	304-829-4392
Editor <i>The Mail Bag</i>	Ryan Tomazin, 348 Station St., Apt. 7, Bridgeville, PA 15017	412-220-9726

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ADVISORS

Greg E. Eddy, 2301 N. Tracy St., Alexandria, VA 22311	703-980-3751
Robert Rine, 1269 National Rd., Apt. 51, Wheeling, WV 26003	304-243-8766
Jane Whitaker, 3817 Windom Pl. NW, Washington, DC 20016	202-966-6218

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Research	Greg E. Eddy, 2301 N. Tracy St., Alexandria, VA 22311	703-980-3751
Foray	A. R. Buckelew Jr., 111 Logan Ct., Bethany, WV 26032	304-829-4392
Foray Directors	Janice Emrick, 52713 SR 800, Jerusalem, OH 43747	740-472-5212
	Ryan Tomazin, 348 Station St., Apt. 7, Bridgeville, PA 15017	412-220-9726
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Webmaster	Matthew Fox, 3188 Morgantown Rd., Sturgis, MS 39769	662-465-6293
	mfox@brooksbirdclub.org	

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Editor • Albert R. Buckelew Jr., Department of Biology, Bethany College, Bethany, WV 26032
Associate Editor • Marjorie Keatley, Mountwest Community and Technical College, Huntington, WV 25701
Field Notes Editor • Casey Rucker, P.O. Box 2, Seneca Rocks, WV 26884
Advisory Editorial Board • Greg E. Eddy, Joey Herron, Matthew Orsie, James D. Phillips

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18th Report of the West Virginia Bird Records Committee March 2014

The West Virginia Bird Records Committee (WVBRC) held its annual meeting in conjunction with the Brooks Bird Club Early Spring Meeting at North Bend State Park on March 8, 2014, Wil Hershberger, presiding. One record was placed on the West Virginia hypothetical list and three records were placed on the “West Virginia birds with less than five records” list.

Records accepted:

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) (2013-1). The report was submitted by Casey Rucker of a bird he observed as a fly over on April 23, 2013 in Grant County. This is the third Hypothetical Record for the state. The two previous Hypothetical Records for Mississippi Kite in West Virginia. #1- 08/11/03: Princeton, Mercer County, by J. Phillips. #2 - 05/13/12; Hogueland Road, Grant County, by F. Atwood. The lack of other observers or photographs means that this species remains on the hypothetical list.

Say’s Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) (2013-2). This is the first record for the species in West Virginia. Gary Rankin found the bird on November 28, 2013, at Gallipolis Ferry, Mason County. The bird was seen and photographed by many observers until it was last seen on January 2, 2014.

Swainson’s Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) (2013-3). Casey Rucker observed the hawk for a little more than two hours on December 12, 2013, at the Brandywine Recreation Area, Pendleton County. There are two regular records for Swainson’s Hawk in West Virginia. #1 - 09/16/1897: M. M. Collins collected a specimen at White Sulphur Springs, Greenbrier County. #2 - 09/30/12: Hogueland Road, Grant County, reported by F. Atwood.

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) (2013-4). This bird was first seen and reported by Terry Bronson from Cheat Lake, Monongalia County, on December 17, 2013. The bird was wing-tagged and eventually came within a few feet of the observers. There are three previous regular records for Trumpeter Swan in West Virginia. #1 - 11/30/1875: Letart Island on the Ohio River in Mason County. #2 - 02/28/98: Observed by W. Argabrite, M. Griffith, and K. Peters at Greenbottom Wildlife Management Area, Cabell County. #3 - 02/23/08: observed by J. Triplett and B. Williams at Caldwell, Greenbrier County. Intensive reintroduction programs in Canada will no doubt increase the number of sightings of this species in West Virginia.

Other business:

1. Wendell Argabrite has updated the West Virginia State Bird List and the



Say's Phoebe at Gallipolis Ferry, Mason County. Photo by Wendell Argabrite.



Trumpeter Swan at Cheat Lake, Monongalia Count, December 2013. Photo by Derek Courtney.

“List of birds with less than five records” list to reflect records accepted at this meeting. The lists will be posted to the BBC website as soon as practical.

2. It was recommended that the WVBRC post copies of West Virginia bird records on the Brooks Bird Club website. The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources has copies of all West Virginia rare bird reports that were accepted. Many reports since 1996 have been scanned into a computer by Wendell Argabrite. It was recommended that Ryan Tomazin be contacted for scanning of older reports. The WVBRC wishes to have PDF copies of all accepted historical rare bird reports available on the BBC website.

3. Nominations were opened for new committee members to replace outgoing members. John Boback and Patty Morrison were elected to serve through 2019. Both John Boback and Patty Morrison accepted their election to the committee. The WVBRC thanks them for their dedication to West Virginia birding. The WVBRC thanks departing committee members, Rob Tallman and Matt Orsie, for their years of dedicated service and commitment to West Virginia birding.

4. An election was held for officers. Wil Hershberger was elected to be Chair for 2014 and Joey Herron was elected to be Vice-chair for 2014.

5. The committee restored 10 more species to the Review List. The total list of those now restored to the review list are Eurasian Wigeon, Wood Stork, King Rail, Ruddy Turnstone, Laughing Gull, Least Tern, Western Kingbird, Black-billed Magpie, Bewick’s Wren, Bohemian Waxwing, Bachman’s Sparrow, Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Meadowlark, Brewer’s Blackbird, and Pine Grosbeak.

6. Matt Orsie suggested that the committee seriously explore the possibilities of expanding the Web presence of the committee either on the Brooks Bird Club site or through a new site or blog. Discussions among the committee members strongly favored this idea. There were also discussions regarding suggesting that the Brooks Bird Club website be modernized and become more compelling and interactive to appeal to younger birders. The committee felt strongly that we should be targeting younger birders and creating an online presence that will engage them more strongly in WV birding. Perhaps the most effective way forward with these initiatives is to form a subcommittee that will explore the possibilities and possible costs associated with these projects.

Submitted by Wil Hershberger, Vice-chair, and WVBRC members Matthew Orsie, Bill Tolin, David Patick, Joey Herron, Cynthia Ellis, and Wendell Argabrite, secretary.

Valley Falls State Park Saw-whet Owl Banding Station Report for 2013

Joey Herron

The ninth year of banding Northern Saw-whet Owls (NSWO) at Valley Falls State Park for the second year in a row started out very slow, but ended with a flurry of activity in November.

Banding began on October 18, 2013, and ended on November 30, 2013. Thirty owls were captured in 2013, just about our average. Six previously banded owls were captured this year, the most ever, including a return from this station that was banded in 2011, the first return for this station in nine years of operation, and five foreign recaptures. In addition, the last capture of the year on November 30 marked the latest an owl has been captured at this station.

A six-day period in November appeared to be the height of the migration with 24 owls captured between November 3 and November 10, about a week earlier than last year. The station operated on 19 nights with the nets being opened for 68.75 hours. Eleven nights yielded owls with a peak capture of 13 NSWOs captured on the night of November 3.

Daily captures are shown in Table 1. Of the 30 captures, 25 were adults, 5 were hatch year birds. Females again lead the way in captures in 2013 with 26, with two males and two unknowns. The owl previously banded in 2011 at this station and caught on November 4 indicates that the station is on a legitimate migrating route for this small eastern owl.

After nine years of banding, 273 NSWOs have been captured, including 25 foreign recaptures and one return. The breakdown shows a heavy advantage for females, 75% to 8% for males. The unknown category completes the last 17%. The adult/ hatch year ratio is almost even with 53% adult to 47% hatch year individuals.

Table 1
Banding Summary for 2013

Date	NSWO caught
10/18/13	0
10/22/13	0
10/26/13	0
10/28/13	1
10/29/13	0
11/1/13	1
11/2/12	0
11/3/13	13 (2 foreign)
11/4/13	2 (1 return)
11/5/13	2 (1 foreign)
11/8/13	4
11/9/13	1
11/10/13	2 (1 foreign)
11/14/13	0
11/15/13	0
11/19/13	2 (1 foreign)
11/20/13	0
11/29/13	1
11/30/13	1 (latest capture ever)
Total	30

Age

After hatch year (AHY)	14
Second year (SY)	11 83% (adults)
Hatch year (HY)	5 17%

Sex

Female	26 – 87%
Male	2 – 6.5%
Unknown	2 – 6.5%

The station had a record 240 visitors (doubling last year's total) from five states, including students from the West Virginia University Wildlife Society and various groups and organizations from all over the state. We owe a special thanks to Milu Karp, who graduated from West Virginia University last year and helped with the operation of the station. She also coordinated and ran an experimental project at Cooper's Rock State Forest. The station there captured five owls on a few nights of operation, giving some indication that a project could be located there with some success in the future. Without her help, the station would not have been as successful as reported.

Again, I would like to thank Valley Falls State Park superintendent, Ronald Fawcett, for the use of the park facilities and allowing visitors to experience the fall migration. Without Ron's support, this operation would not be possible.

511 Ohio Ave
Fairmont, WV 26554

Bylaws of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated

As amended March 10, 2014

Article I Membership

1. The general membership of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated shall be divided into the following classes:
 - a. Individual Member
 - b. Family Member
 - c. Sustaining Member
 - d. Life Member
 - e. Student Member
 - f. Honorary Member
 - g. Family Life Member
 - h. Courtesy Member
 - i. Institutional Member
2. Applications for membership shall be made through the Membership Secretary.
3. Upon unanimous recommendation of the Board of Trustees, The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated may confer Honorary Membership by a vote of three-fourths of those attending a general membership meeting.
4. All members in good standing except Courtesy and Institutional Members shall be entitled to vote.
5. All activities and annual dues of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated shall begin with the calendar year. Any member in arrears for dues may be dropped from the roll.

Article II Board of Trustees

1. The eighteen members of the Board of Trustees shall include the Immediate Past President, all elected officers of the club as defined by Article V of the Constitution, three advisors, and nine additional members elected from the general membership.
2. Three of these nine elected members from the general membership shall be elected each year to serve for a term of three years.
3. All members of the Board of Trustees shall have a vote regarding the transaction of business.
4. Eleven members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
5. The presiding officer of the Board of Trustees meetings shall be the President. In the absence of the President, the President Elect shall serve, and in the absence of the President and President Elect, the Vice President shall serve.

Article III
Duties of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees:

1. Shall have the power to make appointments to fill any vacancies in the staff or officers until the next election. It is understood, however, that in the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the President Elect shall assume the duties of President. Also, it is understood that in the event of a vacancy in the office of the President Elect, the Vice President shall assume the duties of President Elect;
2. Shall have the power to create standing committees with the approval of majority vote of those in attendance at a general membership meeting;
3. Shall make recommendations for any changes in the bylaws of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated and refer them to the general membership for approval;
4. Shall set policy; any new policies shall be presented at the next general membership meeting;
5. Shall have the responsibility of overseeing all property, securities, endowment funds, investments, or other assets of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated;
6. Shall hold at least three meetings a year;
7. Shall appoint Foray Directors;
8. Shall appoint three Advisors to be elected by the membership;
9. Shall appoint an Administrator;
10. And shall set the date and place of general membership meetings.
11. The President or five members of the Board of Trustees may call a meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Article IV
Amendments

The bylaws may be amended at any general membership meeting by majority vote, provided that the membership has been notified of the purpose of the amendment at least one month prior to the date of action, the activity when and where the meeting will take place, and that the amendment shall be placed on the agenda. Such notification shall consist of a statement of the bylaws provision as it then exists and as it is proposed to be amended.

Article V
Membership Meetings

1. The voting members present at a regularly scheduled membership meeting of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

2. Notice of all general membership meetings of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated shall be sent to members at least thirty days in advance of the meeting.
3. There shall be at least two general membership meetings each year, one meeting during the first quarter and the Annual Membership Meeting during the fourth quarter.

Article VI Dues

The Board of Trustees shall set annual dues of membership categories, subject to approval by the members at the Annual Meeting of the general membership.

Article VII Elections

1. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of officers and new Board of Trustees members to the Board of Trustees and then to the Annual Membership Meeting for approval.
2. Nominations may be made from the floor by any member in good standing of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated.
3. The Election shall be by majority vote of those attending.

Article VIII Officers

1. All officers shall be elected at the Annual Membership Meeting for a term of one year. The President, President Elect, and Vice President may be reelected so as to serve for two consecutive years, and after a lapse of one year, officers may be eligible for election. The Recording Secretary and Treasurer may be reelected for as long as they fulfill the duties of their respective offices. All terms of office shall begin on January 1 to coincide with the Club year.
2. Members are eligible to hold office after membership of three years in The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated.

Article IX Duties of Officers

The Office of President

The President:

1. Shall preside over all meetings of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated;

2. Shall be a member of the Executive and Budget Committees;
3. Shall call meetings of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated as needed;
4. Shall appoint the following with approval by the Board of Trustees:
 - a. The Membership Secretary, Publicity Chairperson, The Redstart Editor, and Mail Bag Editor;
 - b. Members of the Foray Committee in consultation with the President Elect;
 - c. Committee chairpersons; and
 - d. Nominating Committee at the first general membership meeting of the year; and
5. May appoint a Corresponding Secretary.

The Office of President Elect

The President Elect:

1. Shall assume the duties of the President in the event the office of President becomes vacant, or the President becomes incapacitated;
2. Shall be a member of the Executive and Budget committees, and Chairperson of the Foray Committee;
3. Shall oversee and/or coordinate the activities of those Committees assigned by the President; and
4. Shall be prepared to give a Foray report at official club meetings as requested by the President.

Office of Vice President

The Vice President:

1. Shall assume the office of President Elect, in the event that the office of President Elect becomes vacant. The Board of Trustees shall then appoint a member in good standing of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated to fill the unexpired term of the Vice President.
2. Shall be a member of the Executive Committee and Chairperson of the Budget Committee;
3. Shall oversee and coordinate the activities of those committees assigned by the President;
4. As Chairperson of the Budget Committee, shall:
 - a. Develop a budget for the coming year in consultation with the Executive Committee;
 - b. Present the budget to the Board of Trustees at their fourth quarter meeting for approval;

- c. Present the approved Budget to the general membership at the first official meeting of the Club following the fourth quarter meeting of the Board of Trustees;
- d. Monitor expenditures and alert the Board of Trustees to variance with the Budget; and
- e. Shall appoint a member in good standing from the general membership to serve as chairperson of the Audit Committee (see Article XI, Audit Committee of the bylaws).

Office of Recording Secretary

The Recording Secretary:

1. Shall record the minutes of all Board of Trustees and general membership meetings of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated;
2. Shall read the minutes of previous meetings as requested by the presiding officer at any official meeting;
3. Shall prepare copies of the minutes and send them to all members of the Board of Trustees, following all official meetings; and
4. Shall answer any correspondence as requested by the membership or President.

Office of Treasurer

The Treasurer:

1. Shall be a member of the Executive and Budget committees;
2. Shall be the custodian of all monies received by The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated;
3. Shall secure prior approval of all nonbudgeted disbursements from the Executive Committee;
4. Shall make all disbursements;
5. Shall present a report at all Board of Trustees meetings and at the Annual Membership meeting;
6. Shall hold the key to the safety deposit box at the financial institution that is selected by the Board of Trustees; and
7. Shall be bonded by The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated and the cost of bonding shall be paid out of the treasury of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated.

Article X
Other Positions

Administrator

The Administrator shall supervise all activities of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated as specified by the Board of Trustees or by the Membership as reflected in the budget and all routine business that does not require specific authorization by the Board of Trustees.

Advisors

The Advisors:

1. Shall be elected at the Annual Membership Meeting for a term of one year;
2. May be reelected for as long as they fulfill their duties; and
3. Shall advise the President and the Board of Trustees on all matters regarding his or her long-term experience in the history and functions of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated so as to bring tradition and perspective to the decision making process.

Membership Secretary

The Membership Secretary:

1. Shall process all membership applications;
2. Shall maintain a list of all members and provide labels for all mailings; and
3. Shall give a membership report at the first quarter membership meeting.

Corresponding Secretary

The Corresponding Secretary shall answer any correspondence as requested by the membership or President.

Publicity Chairperson

The Publicity Chairperson shall promote and publicize The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated (see Handbook of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated).

The Redstart Editor

The Redstart Editor:

1. Shall oversee the publication of The Redstart (see Handbook of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated); and

2. Shall appoint and supervise an advisory editorial board.

Mail Bag Editor

The Mail Bag Editor shall oversee the publication of the Mail Bag (see Handbook of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated).

Article XI Committees

Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Immediate Past President, President, President Elect, Vice President, and Treasurer.
2. The Executive Committee:
 - a. Shall have the authority to make decisions concerning the welfare of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated when scheduling a Board of Trustees meeting is not possible.
 - b. All decisions, including nonbudgeted disbursements, made by the Executive Committee shall be presented at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall offer nominations of officers, staff, and other positions to serve The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated during the ensuing year (See the Handbook of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated).

Budget Committee

1. The Budget Committee shall be composed of the President, President Elect, Treasurer, Administrator, and the Vice President who shall be the Chairperson of the Budget Committee.
2. The Budget Committee:
 - a. Shall plan the activities of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated and present them to the Board of Trustees for suggestions and approval;
 - b. Shall prepare a budget for the coming year; and
 - c. Shall present the budget at the fourth quarter meeting of the Board of Trustees for advice and approval.

Audit Committee

1. The Audit Committee shall be composed of three members in good standing in The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated who are not members of the Board of Trustees.
2. The Vice President shall appoint one member from the general membership to serve as chairperson of the Audit Committee.
3. The chairperson shall seek two volunteers from the general membership to serve on the Audit Committee.
4. The Audit Committee:
 - a. Shall annually audit the books of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated; and
 - b. Shall report the audit of the committee at the first general membership meeting of the year.
5. The Board of Trustees may employ an outside auditor and the fee shall be paid from the treasury of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated.

Foray Committee

The Foray Committee shall oversee all aspects of the yearly Foray so that it successfully meets the purposes of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated (see Handbook of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated).

Article XII Publications

The official publications of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated shall be:

1. The Redstart for reporting the scientifically oriented activities and materials of the Club.
2. The Mail Bag for membership informational materials.
3. Other publications that the Board of Trustees approves.

Article XIII Club Functions

1. The official club functions of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated will be those activities that are sanctioned at the fourth quarter Board of Trustees meeting. All money taken in from these functions, or any losses that occur, shall be done through the treasury of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated.
2. Special Club functions, those that are organized by a club member or an organization that The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated is not financially respon-

sible for (such as national or international nature trips), are the fiscal responsibility of the organizers and the participants.

Article XIV
Club Chapters and Affiliates

The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated recognizes and encourages club chapters and affiliates. The existing chapters and affiliates shall continue as previously formed and functioning at the time of the adoption of this bylaw (10/19/2003). Prospective allied groups shall be incorporated according to terms developed by a committee of representatives of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated and the petitioning group. These terms will state how the petitioning club subscribes to the mission statement of The Brooks Bird Club, Incorporated and what quota of its members shall also be members of this club.

Book Reviews

The following two reviews are of books long in print that I love to read.

Winter Brothers: A Season at the Edge of America by Ivan Doig. 1980. Orlando, Florida: Harcourt Brace and Co. 293 pages.

Doig writes a diary of life and nature while he and his wife camp out or stay in cabins along the west coast of British Columbia. As the days pass, they consult the diary of James Gilchrist Swan, who wrote about this area 139 years ago. Swan wrote for himself; for some newspapers and magazines; and mostly for the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. His accounts of the customs, speech, art, and lives of the natives along these waterways are still the most authentic, reliable sources known, particularly about the Haida Indians. He describes, in detail, with measurements, the size of their huge war canoes, made from the split trunks of massive Sitka spruce; also the heraldic symbols we now call totem poles. He writes with humor and tolerance of their sometimes unusual beliefs, customs, and foods. He was able to admire the natives while still being appalled at some of their more bloody notions of revenge and constant war with the Spirits. Items he purchased for the Smithsonian are still on exhibit there, showing the degree of artistry and skill they had. He said they “were not inhibited by rules of things not being able to occupy the same space at the same time,” and were able to portray dream creatures entwined as they could only be in dreams. In their carvings on the poles, some of which were hollow, flat-sided on the back and nearly 90 feet tall, and on the prows of war canoes, the Haida were able to combine a pride of ancestry, a threat of war, and the beauty of nature.

Doig experiences the weather, the wild beauty, and the majesty of the Hoh Rain Forest as Swan had years before. While this is not a bird book, birds, particularly ravens are often mentioned as part of nature or as omens in the natives’ beliefs. I found this book an informative and interesting read.

Roger Caras’ A Treasury of Classic Nature Tales compiled by Rodger A. Caras. 1992. New York: Penguin Books. 509 pages.

This book is a fascinating compilation of stories by famous nature writers—some factual, some works of fiction. In the first part of the book, Caras takes us to the forest with Henry David Thoreau; down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon with John Wesley Powell; and on a descriptive hike through Yosemite with John Muir. The second part of the book, “Creatures Great and Small,” is from Twentieth Century naturalists Ann Haymond Zwinger, Rachel Carson, Jack Rudloe, Loren Eiseley, Edward Abbey, and others.

All of these writings, either fact or fiction, show a great love and appreciation of the natural world. We see the wild creatures in their daily struggles for survival and on their epic migrations across barren landscapes, treacherous open seas, and

sometimes from pole to pole, as they search for food, habitat, or mates. Animals here range from the one-of-a-kind pronghorn to the Antarctic penguin or even prehistoric creatures like the first reptilian-like birds and the Irish Elk. The book covers such a wide range of subjects, there is certain to be something for everyone. Some of the later stories were wordy and tediously detailed, but generally, I enjoyed them very much.

Rosemary M. Campbell

Field Notes Winter Season

December 1, 2013 – February 28, 2014

Casey Rucker

December was slightly warmer than usual in West Virginia, but frigid weather gripped the state during January and February, according to the Northeast Regional Climate Center at Cornell University. January was 8.2 degrees below normal statewide, with every location in the state experiencing below-zero temperatures. February was not much warmer, at 4.1 degrees below normal. December and February were wetter than normal statewide, while January was relatively dry.

These notes were gathered from the National Audubon Society sponsored West Virginia Bird Listserv, from Christmas Bird Count (CBC) results, and from 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 may be found at <http://netapp.audubon.org/CBCObservation/CurrentYear/ResultsByCount.aspx>.

Sad to say, these notes include the last contributions made by Gary Felton, one of our state's great birders, who passed away on February 1. He will be missed!

This winter the Great Lakes froze, and **waterfowl** and **seabirds** came south. **White-winged Scoters** visited 16 West Virginia counties, and seven species of **gulls** and **terns** appeared in our state. An unusual number of rarities graced birders' reports, including a **Harlequin Duck**, a **Swainson's Hawk**, at least one **Iceland Gull**, **Lesser Black-backed Gulls**, **Snowy Owls**, a reappearing **Say's Phoebe**, and a **Harris's Sparrow**. Overall, West Virginia birders reported 152 species in the state during the winter, with reports from 39 of West Virginia's 55 counties.

Ducks, Swans, Geese—Terry Bronson saw a wing-tagged **Trumpeter Swan** at Cheat Lake, Monongalia County, on December 17, the fourth state record for this species. Derek Courtney and John Boback also saw the **Trumpeter Swan** at Cheat Lake, and on January 19 Todd Schnopp and Frederick Atwood saw the same bird near Petersburg, Grant County. On February 2, Richard and Jeannette Esker found three **Greater White-fronted Geese** at Washington Bottom in Wood County. Michael Griffith and Wendell Argabrite saw six **Greater White-fronted Geese** at Point Pleasant, Mason County, on February 21, and on the next day James Phillips spotted a **Greater White-fronted Goose** in Hinton, Summers County. **Snow Geese** made appearances in Harrison County (JH, RBr), Jefferson County (JF, JBz), Mason County (JHu, GR), and Tucker County (CBC). Mindy Waldron saw a **Ross's Goose** in Beckley, Raleigh County, on January 8. **Cackling Geese** inspired reports from

Berkeley (JBz, MO, EK), Mason (JHu, GR, MG, WA), Monongalia (TB, JH), and Pleasants (DJE) Counties. Reports of **Canada Geese** were as usual widespread throughout the state. Birders reported **Mute Swans** in Kanawha County (HG), Mason County (WA, MG, CE), Monongalia County (JH, TB), Pendleton County (MWi), Pleasants County (JB), Taylor County (JH), and Wetzel County (WJ). John Boback and Herb Myers saw a pair of **Trumpeter Swans** that appeared quite tame at Cheat Lake, Monongalia County, on February 23. **Tundra Swans** appeared widely throughout the state. On December 17, Gary Felton saw 40 **Tundra Swans** headed northeast over his home in Kingwood, Preston County. **Waterfowl** invaded West Virginia this winter in great numbers and with wide distribution. The following species made appearances in at least 15 counties: **Gadwalls, American Black Ducks, Mallards, Redheads, Ring-necked Ducks, Lesser Scaup, White-winged Scoters, Buffleheads, Hooded, Common, and Red-breasted Mergansers, and Ruddy Ducks**. Birders in at least seven counties each found **Wood Ducks, American Wigeons, Northern Shovelers, Northern Pintails, Green-winged Teal, Canvasbacks, Greater Scaup, Long-tailed Ducks, and Common Goldeneyes**. Rennie and Amy Talbert spotted a **Blue-winged Teal** at Gallipolis Park, Mason County, on December 15. Derek Courtney and Terry Bronson discovered a **Harlequin Duck** near Parkersburg, Wood County, on January 26, and by the next day David Patick, Michael Griffith, Beth Mankin, Jeanette Esker, and Jon Benedetti had all seen the bird. If accepted, the **Harlequin Duck** sightings would be the third West Virginia record for the species. Joseph Hildreth found a male **Surf Scoter** at the Morgantown Dam, Monongalia County, on January 26, and Terry Bronson, Joey Herron, John Boback, Michael Slaven, and Derek Courtney saw the bird through February 13. On December 7, Joseph Hildreth saw four **Black Scoters** at the Tygart Lake marina, Taylor County. James Phillips witnessed a fallout of **waterfowl** on December 9 in Mercer and Summers Counties, finding 19 species and more than 600 individuals.

Pheasants, Grouse, Turkeys—There were reports of **Ruffed Grouse** from McDowell County (CBC), Pocahontas County (GF, CBC), and Tucker County (CBC). Birders found **Wild Turkeys** in many counties throughout the state, including many on the tallies of Christmas Bird Counts. On December 20, Wil Hershberger hosted 27 **Wild Turkeys** in his yard in Hedgesville, Berkeley County.

Loons, Grebes—Michael Slaven and David Daniels saw a **Red-throated Loon** in Morgantown, Monongalia County, on January 2, and John Boback and Joe Hildreth saw the bird as late as January 7. Joette Borzik and Carol Del-Colle found a **Red-throated Loon** on the Shenandoah River, Jefferson County, on February 15, and by the end of the month Matthew Orsie, Deborah Hale, Nancy and Elliot Kirschbaum, and James Farley all enjoyed views of the bird. It was another good winter for **Common Loons** in our state, with numerous reports of the bird from Braxton (GR), Jefferson (JBz, MO, JF), Lewis (GR, HC), Mason (MG, WA, GR), Monongalia (TB, LeJ, DCo, KA), Pendleton (MWi), Raleigh (MAW), Summers (JP), and Taylor (JH, TB, RBr) Coun-



Long-tailed Duck on the Ohio River, March 9, 2014. Photo by James Triplett.

ties. Terry Bronson saw 33 **Common Loons** on Cheat Lake, Monongalia County, on December 17. It was also another good winter for grebes, with plentiful reports of **Pied-billed** and **Horned Grebes** throughout the state. There were also many reports of **Red-necked Grebe**, from December 9, when James Phillips found a **Red-necked Grebe** at Bluestone Lake, Summers County, through February 26, when Joette Borzik

and Jean Neely saw one on the Shendandoah River, Jefferson County. **Red-necked Grebe** reports came from Jefferson (JBz, MO, EK, JF), Marion (JBo, TB, JoH, HMy), Monongalia (JBo, TB, MSi, DCo), Pendleton (MWi), Summers (JP), and Taylor (RBr) Counties. On February 21, James Farley found six **Red-necked Grebes** on the Shenandoah River in Jefferson County.

Cormorants, Herons, Egrets—Reports of **Double-crested Cormorants** came from Cabell County (GR), Jefferson County (JF, DHa, JBz), Mason County (GR, MG, JHu, DP, WA, CE), Monongalia County (DCo, JBo, TB, JH), Pleasants County (JB), Putnam County (KK), and Wetzel County (WJ). **Great Blue Herons** appeared throughout the state. Gary Rankin watched eight **Great Blue Herons** fly past Beech Fork Lake in Wayne County on Christmas Eve.

Vultures—Reports of **Black Vultures** came from 12 counties, and **Turkey Vultures** were mentioned in reports from 14 counties.

Hawks, Eagles—The author of these notes arrived at Brandywine Lake, Pendleton County, for the Christmas Bird Count on December 20, and saw a **Swainson's Hawk** fly out of a tree and pose nearby for more than two hours. It was the third state record for this species. **Bald Eagles** were reported from 24 counties this winter. On January 12, in their eighth annual Winter Eagle Survey, as reported by James Phillips, 33 volunteers found 14 **Bald Eagles** and three **Golden Eagles** at eight sites along the New and Greenbrier Rivers, and on Indian Creek. **Northern Harriers, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Cooper's Hawks, Red-shouldered Hawks, and Red-tailed Hawks** appeared in good numbers throughout West Virginia. Beverly Delidow had a rare yard visit from a **Cooper's Hawk** on the morning of December 29 in Huntington, Wayne County. **Rough-legged Hawks** appeared widely, in Grant (RB, FA, GR, RBi), Hardy (JBL, MO, JBz), Jefferson (WS), Kanawha (GR), Mason (MG), Mercer (JP), Monongalia (JBo), Pleasants (JB), and Tucker (HMy, GF, DSa, CBC, DM, SAn) Counties. In addition to those found by the Winter Eagle Survey, **Golden Eagles** appeared in nine counties: Berkeley (CBC), Grant (DM, FA), Hampshire (WS), Hardy (MO, CBC, GR), Monongalia (BEJ), Monroe (JJP), Pendleton (GR, CBC, RB), Randolph (CBC), and Summers (JP, JJP). Rodney Bartgis saw one each of juvenile and adult **Bald** and **Golden Eagles** near Onego, Pendleton County, on February 22.

Rails, Coots—Matthew Orsie found a **Virginia Rail** at Altona Marsh, Jefferson County on January 1. **American Coots** appeared in 13 counties this winter.

Cranes—On December 7, Joseph Hildreth saw four **Sandhill Cranes** fly overhead in southern Monongalia County.

Plovers—There were reports of **Killdeer** from 13 counties.

Sandpipers—Joseph Hildreth found a **Dunlin** at Tygart Lake, Taylor County, on January 3, where he last saw the bird on the 6th. Birders in nine West Virginia counties reported **Wilson's Snipes**, and during the second half of February **American Woodcocks** reappeared in six counties.

Gulls, Terns—It was a very good winter for **seabirds**. Wilma Jarrell discovered

an **Iceland Gull** above Hannibal Dam, Wetzel County, on January 31 re-finding an **Iceland Gull** February 14, and during the interim David Patick and Michael Griffith found perhaps the same **Iceland Gull** at Robert C. Byrd Locks and Dam, Mason County, on February 1. Prior to these sightings, there is only one prior West Virginia record of **Iceland Gull**. Small numbers of **Bonaparte's Gulls** brightened reports from Hardy County (DH), Jefferson County (DH, MO, JF), Lewis County (DSa), Mercer County (JP), Monongalia County (DCo, TB, JBo), and Taylor County (JH, RBr). Birders reported **Ring-billed Gulls** and **Herring Gulls** in many West Virginia counties. On December 7, Gary Felton saw approximately 150 **Ring-billed Gulls** along Route 219 in southern Randolph County. **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** appeared in Hancock (TJL) and Ohio (JBo, MDi) Counties. If accepted, these sightings would be the fourth and fifth records of **Lesser Black-backed Gull** in our state. **Great Black-backed Gulls** were seen in Mason (WA), Ohio (JBo, TB, DCo), and Wetzel (WJ) Counties. On February 8, Hullet Good saw three **Common Terns** flying down the Elk River in Kanawha County.

Pigeons, Doves—**Rock Pigeons** and **Mourning Doves** continue to reside throughout the state, as reported primarily in Christmas Bird Counts. **Eurasian Collared-Doves** appear to have settled in Union, Monroe County, as reported this season by Matthew Orsie on January 26 and Diane Holsinger on February 21.

Owls—The widespread **Snowy Owl** irruption this winter did not overlook West Virginia. On December 1 LeJay Graffious reported a **Snowy Owl** sighting near Bruceton Mills, Preston County, and the bird was very popular through December 12 (JBo, JoH, GF, SO, MO, DSa, XY, HMy, JBz, CC, MW, JH, NM, RBy). Wendy Perrone reported on January 4 that James and Judy Phillips had found a **Snowy Owl** in Beckley, Raleigh County, and the bird remained until January 12 (MW, GR, BDe). On January 15, James Phillips reported that a **Snowy Owl** had been photographed in Pipestem State Park, Summers County. Once again, our winter reports of **Barn Owls** came only from Moorefield, Hardy County (CBC, MO). Eleven counties each saw reports of **Eastern Screech-Owls** and **Great Horned Owls**. Jeffrey Del Col heard at least two **Eastern Screech-Owls** calling outside his home in Philippi, Barbour County, on January 4, and Cynthia Ellis heard two **Great Horned Owls** calling at her home in Red House, Putnam County, on February 23. Birders in 10 counties reported **Barred Owls**. Wilma Jarrell received a yard visit from a **Long-eared Owl** in Wileyville, Wetzel County, on January 3. On February 22, Derek Courtney observed four **Long-eared Owls** on private property in Taylor County. Hogueland Lane, Grant County, was the state hotspot for **Short-eared Owls** this season (RB, DM, FA, MO). **Short-eared Owls** also appeared in Hardy (CBC), Mason (GR), and Tucker (RB) Counties. Ross Brittain and David Daniels found a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** at Pleasant Creek Wildlife Management Area, Barbour County, on December 21, and another **Northern Saw-whet Owl** showed up in the driveway of L.E. Herrick in Dryfork, Tucker County on January 30.

Hummingbirds—A banded adult-female **Rufous Hummingbird** was still present on Christmas Day at a private residence in Fort Ashby, Mineral County, as reported on December 26 by Terry Bronson.

Kingfishers—Many West Virginia birders reported **Belted Kingfishers** in 18 counties.

Woodpeckers—Christmas Bird Counts in Hardy and Pendleton Counties found **Red-headed Woodpeckers, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Downy Woodpeckers, Hairy Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, and Pileated Woodpeckers**. All were subjects of widespread reports in West Virginia over the winter. Andy Weeks had a rare yard visit from a calling **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** in northern Marion County on January 19.

Falcons—Many birders reported **American Kestrels** in most parts of the state. Birders spotted **Merlins** in Berkeley (CBC), Jefferson (DHa), Kanawha (JWa, CBC), Mason (GR), and Monongalia (TB, JBo, GN) Counties. **Peregrine Falcon** reports came from Grant County (FA, TS), Hardy County (DH), Jefferson County (DHa), Mason County (MG, GR, BDe, DP, WA, TB, DCo), Monongalia County (LeJ), Wetzel County (WJ), and Wood County (JB, CBC). Deborah Hale watched an aerial display by two **Peregrine Falcons** near the Shenandoah River, Jefferson County, on February 22.

Flycatchers—Beginning on December 11, West Virginia's first-record **Say's Phoebe** delivered an encore performance at Gallipolis Ferry, Mason County, as witnessed by David Patick, Michael Griffith, Gary Rankin, and Wendell Argabrite through January 1. Reports of **Eastern Phoebe** came from 19 counties this winter.

Shrikes—On December 21, the Pocahontas County Christmas Bird Count included one **Loggerhead Shrike**. Richard Bailey found two **Loggerhead Shrikes** in Grant and Hardy County on February 21.

Vireos—On December 14, for the second year in a row, the Morgantown Christmas Bird Count included a **White-eyed Vireo** in Monongalia County, and Derek Courtney re-found the bird on January 1 in the same location.

Crows, Jays, Ravens—**Blue Jays, American Crows, and Common Ravens** appeared in their usual haunts throughout the state. Reports of **Fish Crows** came only from Jefferson County (MO, JF, JBz).

Larks—Reports of **Horned Larks** came from Berkeley County (CBC), Grant County (FA), Hardy County (DH, KKi, JBL, FA, MJ), Jefferson County (JBz, JF, MO, DHa, CD, JBL), Mason County (GR, WA, DP, MG), Monongalia County (DCo), Monroe County (JP), Pendleton County (CBC), Preston County (GF, LeJ), and Raleigh County (CBC). Jon and B. J. Little found a flock of at least 200 **Horned Larks** near Charles Town, Jefferson County, on January 18.

Swallows—On February 21, Michael Griffith and Wendell Argabrite found about 100 **Tree Swallows** at Greenbottom Wildlife Management Area, Cabell County. There were many reports of **Tree Swallows** from Jefferson County during the last week of February (MO, JF, JBz, JN, BH).

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

Nuthatches—**Red-breasted Nuthatches** and **White-breasted Nuthatches** were well reported throughout the state.

Creepers—Birders in 13 West Virginia counties reported **Brown Creeper**. Bruni Haydl saw at least seven **Brown Creepers** in a single spot near Charles Town, Jefferson County, on February 8.

Wrens—**House Wrens** appeared in Christmas Bird Counts in McDowell, Monongalia, Raleigh, Randolph, and Tucker Counties. West Virginia birders reported **Winter** and **Carolina Wrens** in good numbers statewide.

Kinglets—This winter **Golden-crowned Kinglets** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were familiar sights in most parts of the state.

Thrushes—**Eastern Bluebirds**, **Hermit Thrushes**, and **American Robins** appeared in good numbers in our state this winter, mostly in lower elevations. Sam Chapman watched a pair of **Eastern Bluebirds** engage in amorous activity around the nest box in his yard in Romney, Hampshire County, on February 1.

Mockingbirds, Thrashers—On December 28, the Parkersburg Christmas Bird Count included six **Gray Catbirds**, and on January 5, Joseph Hildreth found a **Gray Catbird** at Pleasant Creek Wildlife Management Area, Barbour County. On February 13, John Boback discovered a **Gray Catbird** in Morgantown, Monongalia County. The Raleigh County Christmas Bird Count found a **Brown Thrasher** on December 21. West Virginians reported many **Northern Mockingbirds** over the winter season.

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

Pipits—**American Pipits** made appearances in 11 counties: Grant (FA, MO), Hardy (DH), Jefferson (DH, MO, JBz, EK, JF), Kanawha (HG), Mason (ReT), McDowell (CBC), Monongalia (TB), Preston (LeJ), Raleigh (JJP), Summers (JJP), and Wayne (GR). Diane Holsinger saw upwards of 50 **American Pipits** near Moorefield, Hardy County, on January 27.

Waxwings—**Cedar Waxwings** were well-represented in birders' reports this winter, with sightings in 14 counties.

Longspurs and Buntings—Derek Courtney found four **Lapland Longspurs** in Morgantown, Monongalia County, on December 17. On February 15, Wendell Argabrite and Michael Griffith encountered 17 **Lapland Longspurs** and two **Snow Buntings** at Gallipolis Ferry, Mason County; and on the next day Frederick Atwood saw 11 **Lapland Longspurs** on Hogueland Lane, Grant County. Mark Johnson and Matthew Orsie re-found one or more of the Hogueland Lane **Lapland Longspurs** over the following two days. Mark Johnson also saw two **Snow Buntings** on his visit of December 17. Mimi Kibler was driving in icy, windy conditions on Route 93 in Tucker County on January 18, when she spotted a flock of approximately 75 **Snow Buntings**, the first she had ever seen.

Warblers—During most of the month of February, Derek Courtney hosted an **Orange-crowned Warbler** at his suet feeder in Morgantown, Monongalia County. On December 7, Alex Tsiatsos spotted a late **Common Yellowthroat** at Stauffer's Marsh, Berkeley County. **Palm Warblers** made appearances in Jefferson County (DHa), Lewis County (GN), Mason County (GR, WA, DP, MG), McDowell County (CBC), Monongalia County (GN), Monroe County (JP), Pocahontas County (KB), and Summers County (CBC). Birders in lower elevations saw Myrtle-race **Yellow-rumped Warblers** at locations throughout the state.

Towhees, Sparrows, Juncos—Matthew Orsie observed a **Harris's Sparrow** visiting a private residence near Lewisburg, Greenbrier County, on February 18, and Gary Rankin and Diane Holsinger also saw the bird over the following few days. **Eastern Towhees** made their usual appearances in many parts of the state. In addition, **American Tree, Chipping, Field, Fox, Song, Swamp, White-throated, and White-crowned Sparrows**, as well as **Dark-eyed Juncos**, appeared widely. **Savannah Sparrows** appeared in reports from Grant (FA, MJ), Hardy (DH), Jefferson (CBC, JBz), Mason (GR, MG, WA, DP), and Pendleton (CBC) Counties. Diane Holsinger discovered two **Lincoln's Sparrows** in southern Hardy County on January 27. Randy Bodkins had a yard visit from the earliest **Chipping Sparrow** he has yet hosted in Elkins, Randolph County, on February 16, more than a month ahead of schedule.

Cardinals—Birders throughout the state reported **Northern Cardinals** in good numbers. On January 27, Joey Herron discovered a **Northern Cardinal** in his yard that he had banded as an adult nearly four years earlier in Fairmont, Marion County.

Blackbirds and Allies—Many reports of **Red-winged Blackbirds, Eastern Meadowlarks Rusty Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and Brown-headed Cowbirds** came from areas all over the state. David and Kim Myles saw **Rusty Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and Brown-headed Cowbirds** outside Moorefield, Hardy County, on January 18.

Finches and Allies—It was a poor winter for boreal **finches** in West Virginia. Feeders in most parts of the state saw the usual visits from **House Finches** and **American Goldfinches**, but **Purple Finches** appeared sparsely in Kanawha (HG), Monongalia (CBC), Pendleton (CBC), Pocahontas (CBC, KB), Randolph (HMy), Summers (CBC, JJP), Tucker (CR, CBC), Wetzel (WJ), and Wood (CBC) Counties. Kitty Bailey had 16 **Purple Finches** at her feeders near Hillsboro, Pocahontas County, on February 26. **Red Crossbills** made appearances in Pocahontas (CBC, GR, MO), Randolph (RB), and Tucker (HMy) Counties. The only report of **Common Redpoll** was from LeJay Graffious and Todd Schnopp, in eastern Pendleton County during the Christmas Bird Count on December 20. James Farley found a **Pine Siskin** at his feeder in Jefferson County on December 5, and the author of these notes hosted one or two **Pine Siskins** at his feeders in Dryfork, Tucker County, for most of the season. Those were the only **Pine Siskins** reported in the state this winter.

Weaver Finches—The **House Sparrow** continues throughout the state, primarily in urban settings.

Contributors to the Winter Field Notes: Kyle Aldinger (KA), Sarah Anderson (SAn), Wendell Argabrite (WA), Frederick Atwood (FA), Kitty Bailey (KB), Richard Bailey (RBi), Rodney Bartgis (RB), Jon Benedetti (JB), John Boback (JBo), Joette Borzik (JBz), Roy Boyle (RBy), Ross Brittain (RBr), Terry Bronson (TB), Holly Canfield (HC), J. B. Churchill (JBC), Crissa Coeey (CC), Derek Courtney (DCo), Beverly Delidow (BDe), Carol Del-Colle (CD), Michael Dietrich (MDi), Cynthia Ellis (CE), Richard and Jeannette Esker (DJE), James Farley (JF), Gary Felton (GF), Martha Ferris (MF), Hullet Good (HG), LeJay Graffious (LeJ), Michael Griffith (MG), Deborah Hale (DH), Bruni Haydl (BH), Joey Herron (JoH), Joseph Hildreth (JH), Diane Holsinger (DH), John Hubbard (JHu), Wilma Jarrell (WJ), Emilie and William Johnson (BEJ), Mark Johnson (MJ), Kim Kazmierski (KK), Kathy King (KKi), Elliott and Nancy Kirschbaum (EK), Jon and B.J. Little (JBL), Tucker J. Lutter (TJL), Nancy McDaniel (NM), Herb Myers (HMy), David Myles (DM), 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), Todd Schnopp (TS), Michael Slaven (MSI), N. Wade Snyder (WS), Rennie Talbert (ReT), Mindy and Allen Waldron (MAW), Mindy Waldron (MW), James Waggy (JWa), Mike Willenborg (MWi), and Xiaohan Ye (XY).

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

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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

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

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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*.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Dick Esker, eskerrb@frontier.com	Dawn Fox, trfox@wirefire.com
Carl & Juanita Slater, gusind@stratuswave.net	A. R. Buckelew Jr., jrbuckelew@bethanywv.edu
Gene Hilton, treehugger@suddenlink.net	Shirley Radcliffe, crad238@frontier.com

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

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