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The **REDSTART**

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OCTOBER, 2022



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Named in honor of A. B. Brooks, Naturalist

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122nd National Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count West Virginia Report

L. E. Helgerman

Let's look back at the 122nd Christmas Bird Count (CBC) season here in West Virginia. The seasonal counts were held between December 14, 2021, and January 5, 2022.

Twenty-two counts were conducted this season, the greatest number of counts ever run in the state. West Virginia joined the CBC in 1904 on the fifth count. With a fluctuating number of counts being conducted over the years, we peaked at twenty in the 108th. Then during the 121st CBC we added the Mason County, Point Pleasant (WVPP) circle, and this season we added the Taylor County, Tygart Lake (WVTL) circle, as our twenty-second circle.

Thirteen counts were run during the first week of the CBC season, four the second, and five during the last week of the season, spanning almost the entire season. Seven of our counts were run during weekdays, which greatly helps alleviating counts overlapping on the weekends.

It's also important to note that there are a few CBCs that border WV and collect data from our state. That data is not reflected in this report. Only counts with CBC center points in West Virginia are reflected in this report.

One hundred thirty-two species were reported on count days, a ten-species increase from the previous five years; additionally two count week species were noted this season.

Season Weather Report

Temperature Lows: Only seven counts started below freezing. Canaan had a cold 18 degree F start while Moorefield had the coldest morning at 15 degrees. Counts starting the morning much warmer were Tygart Lake (50 degrees), and Pocahontas County (52 degrees). Canaan's December 19 count averaged the coldest in West Virginia this season with the low/high range of 18 – 29 degrees.

Temperature Highs: Five counts hit 60+ degrees, with Morgantown hitting 63 degrees. Nine counts had highs reaching between 54 and 59 degrees. Oak Hill's December 28 count averaged the warmest in WV this season, with the low/high range of 48 – 61 degrees.

Weather Notes: Only two counts reported snow on the ground: Elkins with .5" – 1" and Canaan with 0 – 2". Both the Elkins and Raleigh County counts reported light snow falling during the day. Nine counts reported rain at some point during count days. Heavy rain was reported at times on the Charleston, Hampshire County, and Pipestem Area counts.

Effort Report

Participation: Five counts had 20 or more participants; Morgantown (46) had the most field counters. Eleven counts reported 10 to 19 in the field, while six counts reported under 9 participants.

Diurnal Field Effort: Average diurnal field effort statewide this season was 48 hours. Three counts reported more than 70 hours of effort: Morgantown (78), Lewisburg (74.5), and Charles Town (70).

Miles Tallied: The average of miles covered per circle statewide this season was 280 (including car & foot miles, and any other mode of transportation). Twelve counts covered more than 300 miles of circle territory; Lewisburg (507.5) had the most miles tallied.

Feeder Watchers: Sixty-four percent of our counts had from one to six participants counting birds at their feeders and or property. **Author's Note:** All counts can benefit from feeder watchers!

Nocturnal Effort: Sixty-eight percent of our counts reported nocturnal (owling) hours. The counts with the most nocturnal effort reported this season were Morgantown (7 hrs. – 57 miles), Huntington (6.75 hrs. – 55 miles), and Parkersburg (6 hrs. – 58 miles).

121 WV State Effort Totals

By foot: 343.5 miles in 418.25 hours (average .82 mph)

By car: 5,810 miles in 632 hours (average 9.19 mph)

By ATV: 4 miles in 2 hours

By boat: 18 miles in 1 hour

Bird Reports

The avian groups in this report reflect the 2021 American **Ornithological** Society (AOS) check-list. Most species within the avian groups are placed in order of abundance.

Note: Only Count Day data is listed unless otherwise noted. CW – Count Week / HC – High Count / * WV CBC State or Count Record

Geese/Swans: Canada Geese (7,465) were the fifth most abundant species statewide, located on all but one (95%) count. Rarer were the **Greater White-fronted Geese (10)** found on the Morgantown (3) and Point Pleasant (7) counts. Inwood (1) reported the only **Snow Goose (1)**.

Three counts reported **Tundra Swans (47)** on count day, Canaan (40) contributing the majority. Inwood noted **Tundra Swan** as a CW species. The only **Mute Swan (1)** reported was from the Point Pleasant (1) count.

Ducks: Twenty-one duck species were reported this season.

Dabblers: Nine dabbling duck species were reported statewide. The most numerous ducks this season, found on 95% of the counts, were **Mallards (2,580)**, with Charles Town (554) reporting the most, followed by Morgantown (278), Parkersburg (267), and Huntington (237). **American Black Ducks (222)** were located on 50 percent of the counts, Charles Town (96) again with the HC. Eight counts (36%) located **Gadwall (142)**, with HCs from Charles Town (48), Parkersburg (36), and Charleston (33). Eight counts (36%) reported **Green-winged Teal (35)**, Point Pleasant (14) with the HC. **Wood Ducks (29)** are always nice find on a West Virginia CBC, and were tallied on seven (31%) counts, Charles Town (14) reporting nearly half of them. Rarer dabbling ducks this season included **American Wigeon (6)**, with Ona (4), Moorefield (1), and Parkersburg (1) reporting birds. and **Northern Pintail (3)**, with Morgantown (1), Point Pleasant (1), and Tygart Lake (1) reporting birds. Lastly, **Blue-winged Teal (2)** were found on the Moorefield (1) and Point Pleasant (1) counts.

Diving Ducks: Just over 60 percent of our counts reported **Common Mergansers (400)** and **Hooded Mergansers (297)**. The Pipestem Area (144) count reporting an

amazing **Common Merganser** HC, while Point Pleasant (64) and Morgantown (49) reported the most **Hooded Mergansers**. Morgantown (14) reported all of the **Red-breasted Mergansers (14)** this season. More than half (54%) of the counts reported **Ring-necked Ducks (83)**, with Charleston (31) tallying the HC. **Bufflehead (120)** were found only on six (27%) counts; Morgantown (90) had the HC. Diving ducks found in lesser numbers included: **Lesser Scaup (57)**, Ona (30), Charleston (25), Canaan (2); **Greater Scaup (20)**, Morgantown (20) all. **Redhead (21)**, Elkins (10) with the HC; **Canvasback (3)**, Point Pleasant (3) all; **Common Goldeneye (13)**, Tygart Lake (13) all; and **Ruddy Duck (5)**, Morgantown (3), Point Pleasant (2). Additionally, **Black Scoter** was noted as a CW species on the Morgantown count.

Gamebirds: Around 60 percent of the counts (20% fewer than the previous season) reported **Wild Turkey (308)**, (50% of the counts reporting **Wild Turkey** tallied under ten birds), Morgantown (116) and Wheeling (63) reported the high counts. **Ruffed Grouse (3)** numbers continue to decline on the CBC in West Virginia: single birds were reported on the Oak Hill (1), Pendleton County (1), and Pocahontas County (1) counts.

Grebes: Around 60 percent of the counts reported **Pied-billed Grebe (48)**, with Morgantown (17) reporting the HC. Three counts (14%) located **Horned Grebes (15)**: Parkersburg (12), Morgantown (2), and Raleigh County (1).

Pigeons/Doves: **Rock Pigeon (5,261)** and **Mourning Dove (3,526)** took the top 6th and 7th species found in the state. New for a West Virginia CBC this season were the four **Eurasian Collared-Doves (4)** reported with photos from the Lewisburg (4) count.

Rails: Similarly to the 121st count, Charleston (60) and Point Pleasant (3) reported the only **American Coots (63)**. Rare again this season, two counts reported **Virginia Rails (8)** Charles Town (7*) an amazing HC, and Morgantown (1). **Author's note:** Eight **Virginia Rails** is a West Virginia CBC record! Seven on one count, amazing!

Shorebirds: Found on 54 percent of the WV counts, **Killdeer (126)**, Huntington (40) with the HC. **Wilson's Snipe (4)** were scarcer this season, with only Pendleton County (2), Lewisburg (1), and Pocahontas County (1) reporting them on count days. Unusually for a West Virginia CBC, six **American Woodcocks (6)** were reported, with Point Pleasant (3), Huntington (1), Morgantown (1), and Oak Hill (1) flushing them. Very rare this season, a **Spotted Sandpiper (1*)** was seen on the Morgantown count! **Author's note:** This is only the fifth **Spotted Sandpiper** West Virginia CBC record, and a first for Morgantown.

Gulls: **Ring-billed Gulls (224)** were found on 7 counts (32%), the Elkins Area (76) and Parkersburg (75) circles with the HCs. Rarer were the two **Bonaparte's Gulls (2)** found on the Elkins Area (1) and Morgantown (1) counts. Also rare this season, **Herring Gulls (2)**: Point Pleasant (1) and Wheeling (1).

Cormorant: Found on four counts (18%), **Double Crested Cormorants (75)**, Point Pleasant (53) with the HC.

Hérons: Ninety percent of the counts reported **Great Blue Heron (157)**, Parkersburg (30) with the HC. Charles Town (17), Morgantown (17), and Huntington (16) also reported good **Great Blue Heron** numbers. Rare herons this season included a **Green Heron (1)** on the Charleston (1) count, and a **Black-crowned Night-Heron (1)** located on the Ona (1) count! **Author's note:** This is the 13th West Virginia CBC record for **Green Heron**, third for Charleston, and only the 10th **Black-crowned Night-Heron** state CBC record, second for Ona.

Vultures: Now found throughout West Virginia, **Black Vultures (1,027)** were seen on 60 percent of counts this season. **Black Vulture** high counts came in from past strongholds, Lewisburg (238) and Pendleton County (150), although Wheeling (85*) tallied a remarkable record number. **Turkey Vultures (2,128)** were reported on all but 3 counts (86%), with four counts tallying more than 250 birds, Lewisburg (354) with the HC.

Eagles/Hawks: Reports of **Golden Eagles (4)** came in from Canaan (2), Hampshire (1), and Moorefield (1). Pendleton County noted **Golden Eagle** as a CW species. **Note:** All **Golden Eagle** sightings are submitted with a National Audubon Society Rare Bird Report.

Over 60 percent of the counts reported **Northern Harrier (38)**, Moorefield (14) with the HC.

Accipiters: **Sharp-shinned Hawks (18)** were reported on 14 counts (81%); Tygart Lake (3) had the HC. **Cooper's Hawks (53)** were seen on 68% of the counts, Parkersburg (8) with the HC.

Now almost a common sight in WV, **Bald Eagles (156)** were found on 72% of our counts. Pendleton County (26), and Charles Town (23), reporting the most **Bald Eagles**.

Found on all counts, **Red-tailed Hawks (350)** were our most numerous buteo, with Charles Town (34), Moorefield (34), and Morgantown (30) logging the HCs. **Red-shouldered Hawks (209)** were tallied on all but one count, with four counts reporting more than twenty birds, Point Pleasant (29) with the impressive HC.

Owls: Seven owl species were reported this season (one as a CW species). **Eastern Screech-Owls (78)** were the most commonly reported owl, with 79% of the owling teams reporting them, Inwood (22) with the nice HC. **Barred Owls (27)** were tallied on 66 percent of the counts, Huntington (7) with the HC. **Great Horned Owls (22)**, were reported on about half of the counts, Inwood (10) with the big HC. Rarer owls this season included: **Barn Owls (4)** in Moorefield (2) and Pocahontas County (2); **Northern Saw-whet Owls (2)**, from Morgantown (1) and Tygart Lake (1); and **Short-eared Owl (1)**, Inwood (1). Also, Point Pleasant noted **Snowy Owl** as a CW species. **Note:** Owl percentages are based on the number of counts conducting nocturnal surveys.

Kingfisher: Reported on all but one count was the **Belted Kingfisher (155)**, Parkersburg (17) reporting the HC.

Woodpeckers: Of the seven species of woodpeckers reported, **Red-bellied Woodpeckers (946)** were the most common, Charles Town (91) with the HC. Other woodpeckers reported in good numbers (in order of abundance) were: **Downy Woodpecker (828)**, Pendleton County (97) with the HC; **Northern Flicker (601)**, Inwood (61) with the HC; **Pileated Woodpecker (370)**, Pendleton County (58) with the HC; **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (247)**, Pendleton County (37) with the amazing HC; and **Hairy Woodpecker (219)**, Pendleton County (30) with the HC. The woodpeckers above were found on all counts except **Hairy Woodpecker**, missed by one count. Rarer, **Red-headed Woodpeckers (24)**, were reported on six counts (27%), Pendleton County (14) tallying more than half.

Falcons: Ninety percent of the counts listed **American Kestrels (201)**; Point Pleasant (29) had an exceptional HC. **Merlins (12)** were located on nearly twice as many counts as on the 121st. Fifty percent of our counts reported a single **Merlin**; the exception was Huntington (2). Found on 27 percent of the counts, in circles were they typically breed, were **Peregrine Falcons (12)**, Point Pleasant (4) with the HC.

Flycatchers: Almost 60 percent of our counts reported **Eastern Phoebe (46)**, Pendleton County (10), and Charles Town (8) both having impressive high counts. Also

reported this season as a ‘heard only’ species on the Parkersburg CBC was an **Eastern Wood-Pewee (1)**. **Author’s note:** Due to the extreme rarity, the absent of records during December, and the ‘heard only’ aspect, this **Eastern Wood-Pewee** had to be coded as questionable.

Vireos: Always rare on a West Virginia CBC, **White-eyed Vireo (3)** reports came in from two counts this season, Morgantown (2) (fourth consecutive season), and Ona (1). **Author’s note:** this is the eighth season **White-eyed Vireo** has been reported on a state CBC!

Jays/Crows/Ravens: Reported on all counts, **Blue Jay (2,771)** numbers were down from the 121st, though still the tenth most-abundant species found statewide. Around 70 percent of our counts reported more than 100 **Blue Jays**, Pendleton County (257) with the HC.

Again, on all West Virginia counts, **American Crows (32,674)**, were the second most-reported species statewide. Large **crow** roosts were reported this season from Raleigh County (15K), Wheeling (9K), and Charleston (4,400). **Author’s note:** The Wheeling **crow** roost was relocated this season, but did not have the historical high numbers. All **crow** roost numbers are estimates. **Common Raven (425)** numbers were also down, but located on 86% of our counts. High **Common Raven** numbers always come in from the eastern counties, Pendleton County [72] with the HC this season. Always a rare state CBC corvid, a **Fish Crow (1)** was reported on the Charles Town (1) count.

Chickadees/Titmice: 72 percent of the counts tallied **Carolina Chickadee (1,537)**, while 45 percent of counts noted **Black-capped Chickadee (692)**, and 31 percent reported **chickadee** spp. Morgantown (205) with the **Carolina Chickadee** HC, and Pendleton County (220) the **Black-capped Chickadee** HC. All counts reported **Tufted Titmouse (1,825)**, Pendleton County (266) with the HC.

Kinglets: Golden-crowned Kinglets (411), were found on all counts; Morgantown (62) reported the HC. Only found on half of the counts were **Ruby-crowned Kinglets (44)**, Charles Town (10) with the HC. Both **kinglet** species numbers were down from the previous season.

Waxwings: All but one count tallied **Cedar Waxwings (2,676)**, a species that can fluctuates yearly on a West Virginia CBC, numbers being way up this season. Morgantown (662) reported a remarkable HC, and Pocahontas County (340) also reported good numbers.

Nuthatches/Tree Creepers: All counts reported **White-breasted Nuthatches (1,233)**, Pendleton County (173) a good HC. **Red-breasted Nuthatches (33)** were down this season by a factor of five, found on only 45 percent of the counts; Pendleton County (11) again found the HC.

Wrens: A common winter resident, **Carolina Wrens (1,845)** were found on all counts, Morgantown (170) HC. **Winter Wrens (121)** were found on 81 percent of the counts, Pendleton County (23) with the amazing HC! Rarer wrens: three counts reported **House Wrens (6)**: Morgantown (4), Ona (1), and Raleigh (1). Very rare for a WV CBC, a **Marsh Wren (1)** was located on the Morgantown (1*) count! **Author’s note:** this is the first **Marsh Wren** record for Morgantown, and only the 11th state CBC record.

Mimids: Ninety-five percent of the counts tallied **Northern Mockingbirds (644)**, Charlestown (72) and Inwood (72) sharing the HCs. Rarer, four counts (18%) reported

Gray Catbirds (9): Tygart Lake (4), Morgantown (3), Huntington (1), and Pocahontas County (1). Also, five counts (23%) reported a **Brown Thrasher (5)**.

European Starling: The most numerous species, found statewide, was **European Starling (40,296)**. With 60 percent of our counts reporting estimates of more than 1,000 birds, Charles Town (9,800 est.) reported the HC.

Thrushes: Most counts reported our three seasonal thrushes. The most prevalent thrush was **American Robin (9,363)** with Morgantown (2,650 est.) reporting an amazing HC. **Eastern Bluebird (1,595)** high counts coming in from Pendleton (174), Charles Town (167), and Inwood (153). Two counts noted remarkable high counts of **Hermit Thrushes (215)** this season: Inwood (33) and Pendleton County (33).

Finches: **House Finch (1,307)** and **American Goldfinch (1,647)**, as typical, were found on all counts. Charles Town (140) reported the **House Finch** HC, and Pendleton County (234) tallied an impressive **American Goldfinch** HC. **Purple Finch (86)** numbers were down from the 121st with only 36 percent of the counts reporting them: Pendleton County (42) and Canaan (33) having the majority. Rarer finches: Pocahontas County (26) reported the only **Red Crossbills (26)**. Wheeling (6) and Morgantown (3) reported the only **Pine Siskins (9)**, and Pocahontas County (8) found the only **Evening Grosbeaks (8)** this season.

Sparrows: Eleven species of sparrows were found again this season. **Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-Colored) (3,147)** was the most reported sparrow and the eighth most-abundant species statewide, with Pendleton County (555) and Elkins (435) tallying impressive HCs. Impressive numbers of **White-throated Sparrows (2,940)** were reported from Hampshire County (401), Inwood (298), and Charles Town (286). **Song Sparrow (2,291)** numbers were down overall from the 121st, but Moorefield (302) had a huge HC. All three species were found on all counts.

Continuing in order of abundance with percentage of counts reporting: 77% - **White-crowned Sparrow (522)**, Moorefield (133) HC. 90% - **Field Sparrow (448)**, Moorefield (75) HC, 90% - **Eastern Towhee (397)**, Point Pleasant (79), an impressive HC, and 77% **Swamp Sparrow (160)**, Ona (20) and Point Pleasant (19) HCs. Rarer sparrows with fewer than 100 birds reported statewide: **Fox Sparrow (62)** reported on 68 percent of the counts, Pendleton County (24) with the HC again this season. On 36 percent of counts were **American Tree Sparrows (61)**, Parkersburg (31) reporting the HC. **Savannah Sparrows (36)** were found on only on two counts: Moorefield (20) and Point Pleasant (16). **Chipping Sparrow (33)** was tallied on 27 percent of the counts, Moorefield (20) with the impressive HC.

Blackbirds: Ten counts (45%) reported **Common Grackles (16,082)** the most (misleadingly) numerous blackbird reported this season. A huge roosting flock found on the Parkersburg (16,000 est.) count, tallied all but 82 of **grackles** found statewide! Typically, our most common CBC blackbird, **Red-winged Blackbirds (1,333)** were reported on 54 percent of our counts, Charles Town (268) and Moorefield (500 est.) the HCs. With declining numbers most everywhere, **Rusty Blackbird (274)** numbers were actually up this season in West Virginia with the Inwood (200 est.) and Ona (60) counts reporting nice numbers. Good to report, only 27 percent of counts tallied **Brown-headed Cowbirds (217)**, most from Moorefield (90). Half of the counts found **Eastern Meadowlarks (188)**, Point Pleasant (80) with the impressive HC. Very Rare, **Brewer's Blackbirds (14)** were seen and photographed on the Point Pleasant (14) CBC! **Author's note:** This is the first

Brewer's Blackbird record for Point Pleasant or any past Mason County CBC, and only the fourth state CBC record, the last being 35 years ago!

Warblers: Another species that can fluctuate greatly on a CBC, **Yellow-rumped Warblers (1,007)**, were found on all but one count, and up fivefold from the 121st, Pendleton County (247), with the remarkable HC. Rarer were the **Palm Warblers (8)**, all on the Parkersburg (8) count, and the only **Common Yellowthroat (1)**, reported on the Elkins (1) count.

Cardinals and Allies: Northern Cardinals (2,760) were found on all counts, but down 33 percent from the 121st, Ona (229), Wheeling (228) with the HCs. Seasonally rare, an **Indigo Bunting (1)** was reported with photos from the Parkersburg* (1) CBC. **Author's note:** This was the first **Indigo Bunting** record for Parkersburg and only the fifth state CBC record.

Other Noteworthy Birds: Four counts posted **Horned Larks (52)**, Athens-Princeton Area (19) with the HC. Two counts located **Loggerhead Shrikes (2)**: Lewisburg (1) and Pocahontas County (1). **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (1)**, found and photographed on the Huntington* (1) count, was a great West Virginia CBC find! **Author's note:** This was the first **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** record for WVHU and only the fourth state CBC record!

Twenty-two Rare Bird Reports were submitted this season, I would like to thank all those participants who followed NAS CBC protocol, and sent in those important forms.

Getting the most accurate data possible on the CBC is very important. This data not only includes the species reported, but all the effort it took to find those species. All of this information is looked at closely by our current twenty-two state compilers, and then by the West Virginia State Editor before we submit our final results to the National Audubon Society, adding to the 121 years of avian data already submitted. The NAS CBC is the longest running avian census in the world!

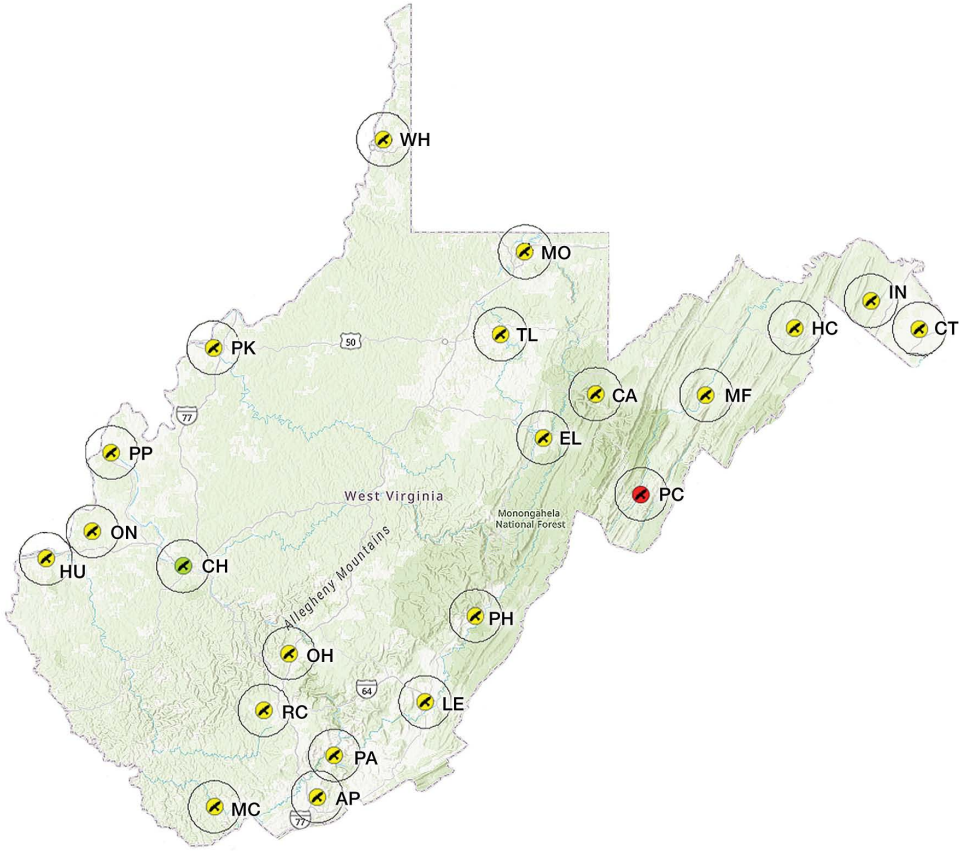
As always, please help where you can and on as many counts as possible!

For more information on West Virginia's Christmas Bird Counts and complete seasonal CBC data, go to the Brooks Bird Club website <http://www.brooksbirdclub.org/wv-cbc-results.html>

Here you will find where all of the West Virginia circles are located, compiler contact information, and count dates (when available) for all WV counts.

This was my sixth year as the West Virginia State Editor and I would like to again give thanks to all the state compilers for their dedication and hard work. Without these committed compilers, and all their devoted participants, our state would not have been so well represented during this 122nd winter bird survey.

Wheeling, WV 26003



2022-23 West Virginia Christmas Bird Count circles

WVAP Athens-Princeton Area
 WVCA Canaan
 WVCH Charleston
 WVCT Charles Town
 WVLE Elkins Area
 WVHC Hampshire County
 WVHU Huntington
 WVON Ona
 WVLE Lewisburg
 WVMC McDowell County
 WVMF Moorefield

WVMO Morgantown
 WVOH Oak Hill
 WVON Ona
 WVPA Pipestem Area
 WVPC Pendleton County
 WVPH Pocahontas County
 WVPK Parkersburg
 WVPP Point Pleasant
 WVRC Raleigh County
 WVTL Tygart Lake
 WVWH Wheeling

Table 1
Species Participation Effort

122nd NAS Christmas Bird Count
Region: West Virginia
Species/Participants/Effort/Totals

| Count Code | CBC Count Name | Total Species | Max Field Participants | Parties Max | Total Hrs. Diurnal | Total Birds | Species Found in High Numbers | Single Birds |
|------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|--|--------------|
| WVMC | McDowell County | 33 cw-0 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 272 | No high count species | 9 |
| WVAP | Athens Princeton Area | 47 cw-0 | 7 | 5 | 28 | 2640 | CANG-176 TUVU-101 AMRO-235 ERST-658 | 1 |
| WVOH | Oak Hill | 48 cw-0 | 6 | 5 | 26.5 | 1265 | ROPI-140 ERST-340 | 7 |
| WVCH | Charleston | 54 cw-2 | 15 | 9 | 33 | 7952 | CANG-226 TUVU-146 ROPI-857 AMCR-400 ERST-553 | 6 |
| WVCA | Canaan | 56 cw-1 | 19 | 9 | 38 | 2330 | BCCH-120 ERST-488 CEDW-157 DEJU-190 | 8 |
| WVPA | Pipestem Area | 56 cw-4 | 8 | 8 | 31.5 | 2441 | CANG-255 COME-144 AMCR-187 ERST-396 | 5 |
| WVRC | Raleigh County | 57 cw-0 | 9 | 6 | 41.5 | 18585 | CANG-251 AMCR-15K AMRO-280 ERST-1850 | 9 |
| WVHC | Hampshire County | 58 cw-0 | 14 | 8 | 48 | 4161 | CANG-135 MODO-183 AMCR-171 ERST-771 DEJU-338 WTSP-401 | 5 |
| WVEL | Elkins Area | 58 cw-1 | 10 | 8 | 49.75 | 4522 | AMCR-319 AMRO-577 ERST-993 DEJU-435 | 7 |
| WVLE | Lewisburg | 60 cw-0 | 20 | 11 | 74.5 | 6053 | CANG-861 BLVU-238 TUVU-354 AMCR-307 AMRO-261 ERST-2200 | 9 |
| WVPH | Pocahontas County | 61 cw-0 | 10 | 5 | 37.5 | 2505 | MODO-198 ERST-182 CEDW-340 | 9 |
| WVWH | Wheeling | 62 cw-0 | 21 | 10 | 58.75 | 15338 | CANG-401 MALL-181 ROPI-343 AMCR-9K AMRO-584 ERST-2450 | 7 |
| WVON | Ona | 68 cw-0 | 18 | 8 | 54.5 | 4832 | CANG-248 AMCR-235 AMRO-507 ERST-1150 NOCA-229 | 10 |
| WVPC | Pendleton County | 68 cw-2 | 14 | 11 | 62.75 | 7825 | CANG-248 BLVU-150 BUJA-257 ERST-2150 YRWA-247 DEJU-555 | 7 |
| WVHU | Huntington | 69 cw-4 | 17 | 7 | 56.5 | 6579 | CANG-429 MALL-237 TUVU-235 ROPI-369 AMRO-727 ERST-2160 | 8 |
| WVTL | Tygart Lake | 71 cw-0 | 14 | 6 | 46 | 3630 | MALL-151 AMRO-560 ERST-1100 | 11 |
| WVIN | Inwood | 72 cw-1 | 17 | 10 | 64.75 | 9820 | CANG-977 TUVU-235 ROPI-383 AMRO-422 ERST-4300 WTSP-298 | 12 |
| WVCT | Charles Town | 75 cw-0 | 30 | 11 | 70 | 15652 | CANG-899 MALL-554 TUVU-259 ERST-9800 WTSP-286 RWBB-268 | 2 |
| WVMF | Moorefield | 77 cw-0 | 9 | 5 | 36 | 6519 | MODO-658 ERST-1500 DEJU-187 WTSP-267 SOSP-302 RWBB-500 | 12 |
| WVPK | Parkersburg | 78 cw-1 | 22 | 9 | 54 | 26329 | CANG-718 MALL-267 MODO-420 AMRO-880 ERST-4800 COGR-16K | 8 |
| WVPP | Point Pleasant | 81 cw-1 | 11 | 7 | 54.75 | 6594 | CANG-502 ROPI-285 MODO-372 AMCR-875 AMRO-541 ERST-1400 | 13 |
| WVMO | Morgantown | 95 cw-3 | 46 | 17 | 78 | 9595 | CANG-729 MALL-278 ROPI-464 AMRO-2650 ERST-1K CEDW-662 | 14 |

The average number of species this season: 64.

Table 2
Species Distribution and Volume

122nd Audubon Christmas Bird Count
Region: West Virginia - Species Distribution - Widespread Species
Count percentages rounded to the nearest whole number

Species found on twenty-two (100%) of the WV Counts:

1. Red-tailed Hawk – 350
2. Rock Pigeon – 5,261
3. Mourning Dove – 3,526
4. Red-bellied Woodpecker – 946
5. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker – 247
6. Downy Woodpecker – 828
7. Northern Flicker – 601
8. Pileated Woodpecker – 370
9. Blue Jay – 2,771
10. American Crow – 32,674
11. Tufted Titmouse – 1,825
12. White-breasted Nuthatch – 1,233
13. Carolina Wren – 1,845
14. Golden-crowned Kinglet – 411
15. Eastern Bluebird – 1,595
16. European Starling – 40,296
17. Dark-eyed Junco – 3,147
18. White-throated Sparrow – 2,940
19. Song Sparrow – 2,291
20. Northern Cardinal – 2,760
21. House Finch – 1,307
22. American Goldfinch – 1,647

Species found on twenty-one (95%) of the WV Counts:

1. Canada Goose – 7,465
2. Mallard – 2,580
3. Red-shouldered Hawk – 209
4. Belted Kingfisher – 155
5. Hairy Woodpecker – 219
6. American Robin – 9,363
7. Northern Mockingbird – 644
8. Cedar Waxwing – 2,676
9. Yellow-rumped Warbler – 1,007
10. House Sparrow – 2,354

Species found on twenty (91%) of the WV Counts:

1. Great Blue Heron – 157
2. American Kestrel – 201
3. Hermit Thrush – 215
4. Field Sparrow – 448
5. Eastern Towhee – 397

Species found on nineteen (86%) of the WV Counts:

1. Turkey Vulture – 2,128
2. Common Raven – 425
3. Brown Creeper – 127

Species found on eighteen (82%) of the WV Counts:

1. Winter Wren – 121

Species found on seventeen (77%) of the WV Counts:

1. White-crowned Sparrow – 522
2. Swamp Sparrow – 160

Species found on sixteen (73%) of the WV Counts:

1. Carolina Wren – 1,845
2. Bald Eagle – 156
3. Carolina Chickadee – 1,537

Species Found on fifteen (68%) of WV Counts:

1. Cooper's Hawk – 53
2. Fox Sparrow – 62

Species Found on fourteen (64%) of WV Counts:

1. Hooded Merganser – 297
2. Common Merganser – 400
3. Black Vulture – 1,027
4. Northern Harrier – 38
5. Sharp-shinned Hawk – 18

**Table 2 (continued)
Species Distribution and Volume**

Species Found on thirteen (59%) of WV Counts:

1. Wild Turkey – 308
2. Pied-billed Grebe – 48
3. Eastern Phoebe – 46

Species Found on twelve (55%) of WV Counts:

1. Ring-necked Duck – 83
2. Killdeer – 126
3. Eastern Screech-Owl – 78
4. Red-winged Blackbird – 1,333

Species Found on eleven (50%) of WV Counts:

1. American Black Duck – 222
2. Merlin – 12
3. Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 44
4. Eastern Meadowlark – 188

**Table 3
122nd NAS CBC 2021 – 2022
Region West Virginia - Total Species by Abundance**

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) European Starling – 40,296 | 27) Red-bellied Woodpecker – 946 |
| 2) American Crow – 32,674 | 28) Downy Woodpecker – 828 |
| 3) Common Grackle – 16,082 | 29) Black-capped Chickadee – 692 |
| 4) American Robin – 9,363 | 30) Northern Mockingbird – 644 |
| 5) Canada Goose – 7,465 | 31) Northern Flicker – 601 |
| 6) Rock Pigeon – 5,261 | 32) White-crowned Sparrow – 522 |
| 7) Mourning Dove – 3,526 | 33) Field Sparrow – 488 |
| 8) Dark-eyed Junco (slate) – 3,147 | 34) Golden-crowned Kinglet – 434 |
| 9) White-throated Sparrow – 2,940 | 35) Common Raven – 422 |
| 10) Blue Jay – 2,771 | 36) Common Merganser – 400 |
| 11) Northern Cardinal – 2,760 | 37) Eastern Towhee – 397 |
| 12) Cedar Waxwing – 2,676 | 38) Pileated Woodpecker – 370 |
| 13) Mallard – 2,580 | 39) Red-tailed Hawk – 350 |
| 14) House Sparrow – 2,354 | 40) Wild Turkey – 308 |
| 15) Song Sparrow – 2,291 | 41) Hooded Merganser – 297 |
| 16) Turkey Vulture – 2,128 | 42) Rusty Blackbird – 274 |
| 17) Carolina Wren – 1,845 | 43) Yellow-bellied Sapsucker – 247 |
| 18) Tufted Titmouse – 1,825 | 44) Ring-billed Gull – 224 |
| 19) American Goldfinch – 1,647 | 45) American Black Duck – 222 |
| 20) Eastern Bluebird – 1,595 | 46) Hairy Woodpecker – 219 |
| 21) Carolina Chickadee – 1,537 | 47) Brown-headed Cowbird – 217 |
| 22) Red-winged Blackbird – 1,333 | 48) Hermit Thrush – 215 |
| 23) House Finch – 1,307 | 49) Red-shouldered Hawk – 209 |
| 24) White-breasted Nuthatch – 1,233 | 50) American Kestrel – 201 |
| 25) Black Vulture – 1,027 | 51) Eastern Meadowlark – 188 |
| 26) Yellow-rumped Warbler – 1,007 | 52) Swamp Sparrow – 160 |

- 53) Great Blue Heron – 157
54) Bald Eagle – 156
55) Belted Kingfisher – 155
56) Gadwall – 142
57) Brown Creeper – 127
58) Killdeer – 126
59) Winter Wren – 121
60) Bufflehead – 120
61) Purple Finch – 86
62) Ring-necked Duck – 83
63) Eastern Screech-Owl – 78
64) Double-crested Cormorant – 75
65) *chickadee sp.* – 75
66) American Coot – 63
67) Fox Sparrow – 62
68) *Greater/Lesser Scaup* – 62
69) American Tree Sparrow – 61
70) Lesser Scaup – 57
71) Cooper’s Hawk – 53
72) Horned Lark – 52
73) Pied-billed Grebe – 48
74) Tundra Swan – 47
75) Eastern Phoebe – 46
76) *Mallard (domestic type)* – 45
77) Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 44
78) Northern Harrier – 38
79) Savannah Sparrow – 36
80) Green-winged Teal – 35
81) Red-breasted Nuthatch – 33
82) Chipping Sparrow – 33
83) Wood Duck – 29
84) Barred Owl – 27
85) Red Crossbill – 26
86) Red-headed Woodpecker – 24
87) Great Horned Owl – 22
88) Redhead – 21
89) Greater Scaup – 20
90) Common Loon – 19
91) Sharp-shinned Hawk – 18
92) Horned Grebe – 15
93) Red-breasted Merganser – 14
94) Brewer’s Blackbird – 14
95) Common Goldeneye – 13
96) Merlin – 12
97) Peregrine Falcon – 12
98) Greater White-fronted Goose – 10
99) *sparrow sp.* – 10
100) Gray Catbird – 9
101) Pine Siskin – 9
102) Virginia Rail – 8
103) Palm Warbler – 8
104) Evening Grosbeak – 8
105) American Wigeon – 6
106) American Woodcock – 6
107) House Wren – 6
108) *blackbird sp.* – 6
109) Ruddy Duck – 5
110) Brown Thrasher – 5
111) Golden Eagle – 4
112) Wilson’s Snipe – 4
113) Eurasian Collared-Dove – 4
114) Barn Owl – 4
115) Northern Pintail – 3
116) Canvasback – 3
117) Ruffed Grouse – 3
118) White-eyed Vireo – 3
119) Blue-winged Teal – 2
120) Northern Shoveler – 2
121) *duck sp.* – 2
122) *buteo sp.* – 2
123) Bonaparte’s Gull – 2
124) Herring Gull – 2
125) Northern Saw-whet Owl – 2
126) Loggerhead Shrike – 2
127) Snow Goose – 1
128) Mute Swan – 1
129) *Am. Bl. Duck x Mallard Hy.* – 1
130) Green Heron – 1
131) Black-crowned Night-Heron – 1
132) *Sharp-shinned/Cooper’s Hawk* – 1
133) Spotted Sandpiper – 1
134) Short-eared Owl – 1
135) Eastern Wood-Pewee – 1
136) Fish Crow – 1
137) Marsh Wren – 1
138) Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – 1
139) *kinglet sp.* – 1
140) American Pipit – 1
141) Common Yellowthroat – 1
142) Indigo Bunting – 1
143) Black Scoter – cw
144) Snowy Owl – cw

132 Species - 2 count week species

Table 4
Regional Status Report

122nd Audubon Christmas Bird Count
Region: West Virginia, Status Report
Twenty-two Active Circles
WV CBC State Editor: L. E. Helgerman

| Count Code | Count Circle Name | Circle Compiler(s) | Contact Information |
|------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| WVAP | Athens-Princeton Area | Ron Canterbury | ron.canterbury@uc.edu |
| WVCA | Canaan | Casey Rucker | autoblock@frontiernet.net |
| WVCH | Charleston | Doren Burrell | g.immer@doren.net |
| WVCT | Charles Town | Bob Dean | bobdean52@gmail.com |
| WVEL | Elkins Area | Rich Bailey | richard.s.bailey@wv.gov |
| WVHC | Hampshire County | David Malakoff | malakoff@comcast.net |
| WVHU | Huntington | David Patick | patick@comcast.net |
| WVIN | Inwood | Bob Dean | bobdean52@gmail.com |
| WVLE | Lewisburg | Ben Handley | ben@potteryvalley.com |
| | | Larry Davis | anldavis@suddenlink.net |
| WVMC | McDowell County | Allen Waldron | awaldron@suddenlink.net |
| WVMF | Moorefield | Kyle Rambo | kerambo@gmail.com |
| | | Darrell Good | darzgood@gmail.com |
| WVMO | Morgantown | LeJay Graffious | lejaygraffious@gmail.com |
| WVOH | Oak Hill | Hilarie Jones | hljones1336@yahoo.com |
| WVON | Ona | David Patick | patick@comcast.net |
| WVPA | Pipestem Area | Jim Phillips | jimandjudyphillips@gmail.com |
| WVPC | Pendleton County | Fred Atwood | fredatwood@yahoo.com |
| WVPH | Pocahontas County | Rich Bailey | richard.s.bailey@wv.gov |
| WVPK | Parkersburg | Jeanette Esker | eskerrb@frontier.com |
| | | Dick Esker | eskerrb@frontier.com |
| WVPP | Point Pleasant | Josh Holland | jhollandua@gmail.com |
| WVRC | Raleigh County | Allen Waldron | awaldron@suddenlink.net |
| WVTL | Tygart Lake | Matthew McKinney | mckinneymi@ab.edu |
| | | Ross Brittain | rossalanbrittain@gmail.com |
| WVWH | Wheeling | Molly Check | molly.check@gmail.com |

eBird Report

March 1, 2022 – May 31, 2022

Michael Slaven

This Spring season was a mixed bag for bird enthusiasts, although some trends could be readily observed in eBird reports. Among the disappointing results of the waterfowl migration was a general decline in duck species reported, furthering what hopefully is not a long-term trend. Since the weather was rather temperate in March and April, it might be simply that the gentle temperatures and precipitation did not necessitate as many migrants to linger in West Virginia as they migrated. Ducks tend to be more numerous when the weather is colder, wetter, snowier, and windier. This spring offered very little in the way of harsh conditions. Snow Geese were reported in small numbers, Tundra Swans only figured into in a couple of eBird reports, along with Mute Swans. Canada Geese were far and away the most prevalent species, and their adaptability has made many of them into residents, saving the arduous migrations to far away habitats for other species. A bright note this spring was that Glossy Ibises appeared again this year and have become regular enough visitors so that they will surely be taken off the West Virginia Birds Record list soon, although they will still be listed as “rare” in the eBird filters for our state for the foreseeable future.

Turning from waterfowl to other birds, it is notable that there were far fewer reported cuckoo sightings this year than in most of the past decade. Both Black-billed and Yellow-billed cuckoo reports were dismal this year. They are heavily dependent on caterpillars as a food source, and there were not many visible in the boreal areas I visited this spring.

It was generally a better year for warblers comparatively. A quick count shows 33 species reported this season, with fair numbers of species including many of the harder to find species. Some of this can be attributed to the heavy use of Merlin sound ID, which swept through the eBird community like a storm this spring.

Merlin Sound ID and its impact on eBird was a topic I introduced in the winter issue of *the Redstart*, with the promise to write more extended comments this time. Merlin’s abilities to identify bird sounds in the field in real time are a massive step forward in birding and could do for bird sound identification what binoculars and spotting scopes did for visual identification. I have had time to use the app in all sorts of habitats, and it has an uncanny ability to accurately identify birds. Merlin learns to be better as input from users confirms the identifications where possible. The deceptive songs and calls sung by Catbirds, Northern Mockingbirds, and Yellow-breasted Chats are hardly a challenge at all to Merlin, and the confused and numerous songs, calls, grunts, and chips and buzzes of Common Grackles are almost instantly identified by the app.

This spring, on May 28, I thought I heard a Swainson’s Warbler calling in White Park in Monongalia County. They are a loud but skulking bird and sing a song that sounds almost the same as a Louisiana Waterthrush, and I was about to dismiss the bird as the more expected waterthrush, but I thought the call lacked the couple of chip sounds at the end of the song that resembled a sharp “throat clearing,” an important diagnostic component for the waterthrush. I turned on the Merlin app and after it listened to the call, it confirmed my suspicion that it was a Swainson’s Warbler, one of only two I know of reported from that location. I wanted to make sure of this since there has been extensive degradation of

nearby habitat, and I still was not entirely comfortable making the identification without some visual confirmation, but after using playback a couple of times the bird popped out long enough for me to confirm the identification. Without help from Merlin I probably would have failed to list the bird, and that would have left an important datum point out of the eBird database. This is Merlin working brilliantly to help birders and scientists alike.

The near-flawless performance makes it tempting to rely heavily on its identifications, but there are reasons to temper our expectations and use the app wisely and in the way it was intended. Merlin is close to perfect, but it does occasionally get it wrong. This spring another reviewer and I had several experiences of field experiences where the Merlin app identified a Philadelphia Vireo even when the bird in question turned out to be a Red-eyed Vireo after it was seen through binoculars. More than likely this explains at least some of the larger-than-normal number of reports of the Philadelphia Vireos this Spring. I urge birders to use the feedback button in the app when Merlin is correct, and especially when it makes a mistake. The app learns from both its triumphs and its errors and gets better over time as the number of samples it records grows and gives more data to refine its performance.

In other eBird news, birders using eBird may have seen a visual change on the reporting page or mobile app. eBird now has been experimenting with giving the eBird listings for particular birding areas in order of expected occurrence of sightings rather than as taxonomic groups. I personally do not find this very useful since I normally look up birds through 4-letter birding codes to fill out the eBird forms for observations, but I know it might be frustrating the first time a user encounters the new system. It is very easy to go back to the classic view, and so it is an “improvement” that can be used or opted out of according to user preference.

This was the spring of a new way of birding, and it creates an exciting moment for birders. It allows those potential naturalists who live apart from other birders to still develop reasonable skills and improve their identifications. It also has the downside of potentially encouraging lazy field skills and depending on a mobile phone to do the work of birding and lessen the joy of it. I am optimistic that this challenge to tradition will eventually prove to be an enormous boon to conservation and protection of avian species and will ultimately broaden the interest of birders for the future. I wish all of you great times in the field, and I am waiting for a season when I can report that there are eBird lists from every county in the state!

632 West Virginia Avenue
Morgantown, WV 26501

Field Notes
Spring Season
March 1 – May 31, 2022

Casey Rucker

March was much warmer and much drier than usual weather in West Virginia, April was cooler and drier than average, and May was warmer and wetter than average, according to the Northeast Regional Climate Center at Cornell University.

These notes were gathered from the West Virginia Birds Listserv, sponsored by the National Audubon Society, from bird-count results, and from field notes submitted to the editor by email and regular mail. The full content of the submitted reports by the contributors of the WV Listserv may be viewed by visiting the archives at <http://list.audubon.org/archives/wv-bird.html>.

A **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** was spotted by Josh Holland and Janet Keating on April 28 at Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area in Cabell County. On the same day, Daniel Jonas discovered six **Glossy Ibises** at Sandy Creek Backwater, Wood County. Mimi Kibler discovered a **Varied Thrush** in Parsons, Tucker County, on March 7. On March 12, Hullet Good hosted a **Brewer's Blackbird** at his feeders in Milliken, Kanawha County. Reports were down for the second year in a row. During the spring season 220 species were reported in West Virginia with only 33 of 55 counties contributing to our state's avian lore. Birders found 34 species of warbler during the spring season.

Geese, Swans, and Ducks – The **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** observed by Josh Holland and Janet Keating at Green Bottom Wildlife Management area is described in the foregoing paragraph. Mason County was the place to find **Snow Geese** this spring: Gary Rankin, Michael Griffith, Janet Keating, and David Patick found a **Snow Goose** at Shady Waters Campground on March 14, and Gary Rankin and Janet Keating saw a **Snow Goose** at Gallipolis Ferry on April 16. **Canada Geese** continued to be widespread. Terry Bronson saw a **Mute Swan** at Mineral Wells wetlands, Wood County, on April 19. The only **Tundra Swans** reported this season were three juveniles observed on March 15 by Michael Griffith and Janet Keating at Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area, Cabell County.

Duck sightings in West Virginia were down once again from the prior spring, and diversity declined with 20 species reported. There were many reports statewide of **Wood Ducks**. The following **ducks** were reported in five-to-nine counties during the spring: **Blue-winged Teal**, **Mallards**, **Ring-necked Ducks**, and **Hooded Mergansers**. The following species were only reported in the counties listed: **Gadwalls** in Cabell and Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP); **American Wigeons** in Cabell and Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP); **American Black Ducks** in Cabell (GR, MG, JK, DP); **Green-winged Teal** in Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP) and Ohio (PM); **Canvasbacks** in Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP); **Redheads** in Kanawha (RG), Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP), and Summers (JP); **Greater Scaup** in Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP); **Lesser Scaup** in Kanawha (RG), Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP), and Summers (JP); **Surf Scoter** in Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP); **Long-tailed Duck** in Mason (MG, JK); **Buffleheads** in Kanawha (RG) and Summers (JP); **Common Goldeneye** in Mason (MG); **Common Mergansers** in Clay (HG), Hardy (DH), Kanawha (HG), and

Summers (JP); **Red-breasted Mergansers** in Hardy (JTr), Kanawha (LC), Mason (DP), and Wetzel (WJ); and **Ruddy Ducks** in Ohio (PM) and Summers (JP).

Turkeys and **Grouse** – Birders throughout the state reported **Wild Turkeys**, while reports of **Ruffed Grouse** came only from Summers County (JP).

Grebes – Birders reported **Pied-billed Grebes** only in Kanawha (RG) and Raleigh (MW) Counties.

Pigeons and **Doves** – **Rock Pigeons** and **Mourning Doves** continued to reside throughout the state. Jack O’Connell saw one of the continuing **Eurasian Collared-Doves** in Henning, Greenbrier County, on April 29.

Cuckoos – **Cuckoos** once again seemed to arrive somewhat later than usual, and sightings remained sparse. David Patick observed the first **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** of the season on May 14 at Chief Cornstalk Wildlife Management Area, Mason County, and first **Black-billed Cuckoo** as well, on May 1 in Buckeye, Pocahontas County. Other reports of **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** came from three counties, and of **Black-billed Cuckoos** from four counties.

Goatsuckers and **Swifts** – Reports of **nightjars** were very sparse this spring. N. Wade Snyder saw two **Common Nighthawks** on May 10, flying over Blue Ridge Technical College, Berkeley County, as the only sighting of the season. Kevin Campbell reported that the **Chuck-will’s-widows** on Spyder Ridge, Wood County, began singing on April 24. Another **Chuck-will’s-widow** serenaded Donny Good at his farm in Roane County on April 29. On May 4, David Patick found a **Chuck-will’s-widow** at its accustomed haunts in Mount Zion Cemetery, Mason County. Reports of **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were flat, coming from six counties, while those of **Chimney Swifts** were up once again, with ten counties represented. After listening to an **American Woodcock** outside her home in Red House, Putnam County, Cynthia Ellis heard an **Eastern Whip-poor-will** calling on April 13.

Hummingbirds – **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** began arriving on April 14; James and Judy Phillips reported the first sighting at their feeder in Pipestem, Summers County. **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** also appeared in reports from 16 other counties throughout the state.

Rails and **Coots** – **Virginia Rails** were observed on April 16 at Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area, Cabell County (JK, GR, DP), at McClintic Wildlife Management Area, Mason County (RBi), and at Cranesville Swamp, Preston County (KKI). Gary Rankin, Janet Keating, and David Patick found a **Sora** on April 15 at Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area, Richard Bailey found three **Soras** at McClintic Wildlife Management Area on May 4, and on the next day Laura Ceperley spotted a **Sora** at CV Technical College wetlands, Kanawha County. **American Coot** reports were scanty as usual this spring, coming only from four counties.

Plovers – It was a sparse season for **plovers**. Derek Courtney found the season’s only reported **Black-bellied Plover** in Morgantown, Monongalia County, on May 6. **Killdeer** reports came from twelve counties. **Semipalmated Plovers** appeared in Mason County (MG, JK) and Wood County (TB).

Sandpipers – Fifteen **sandpiper** species made appearances in the Mountain State. **Spotted** and **Solitary sandpipers** were observed in eleven and nine counties this season, respectively, and **American Woodcock** as well as **Lesser** and **Greater yellowlegs** were reported in at least five counties. The following species were reported in fewer

than five counties, as listed: **Sanderling** in Wood (TB); **Dunlin** in Mason (MG, JK); **Least Sandpipers** in Mason (MG, JK), Wetzel (WJ), and Wood (TB); **White-rumped Sandpipers** in Mason (MG, JK) and Wood (TB); **Pectoral Sandpipers** in Mason (GR, MG, DP, JK) and Monongalia (DCo); **Semipalmated Sandpipers** in Mason (MG, JK) and Wood (TB); **Short-billed Dowitcher** in Mason (MG), **Wilson's Snipe** in Barbour (DMi), Greenbrier (JO), Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP), and Tucker (HMy); **Willetts** in Cabell (JsH, JK, DP); and **Red-necked Phalarope** in Marion (CMu).

Gulls and Terns – **Bonaparte's Gulls** inspired reports only in Hardy (CR) and Summers (JP) Counties. **Ring-billed Gulls** were only reported in Tucker (EG) and Wood (TB) Counties, and **Herring Gulls** only in Mason County (GR, MG, JK, DP).

Tern sightings were also sparse as usual. **Caspian Terns** were only found in Wood County (TB). On May 6, Derek Courtney watched four **Common Terns** and 27 **Forster's Terns** over the Monongahela River in Morgantown, Monongalia County. **Forster's Terns** also appeared in Kanawha (RG), Summers (JJP), Taylor (CMu), Wayne (DP), and Wood (TB) Counties.

Loons – **Common Loon** reports came from Greenbrier (DaB), Preston (LeJ), Raleigh (MW), and Summers (JJP) Counties.

Cormorants – West Virginia birders reported **Double-crested Cormorants** in only six counties this spring.

Hérons and Egrets – Josh Holland and Janet Keating flushed an **American Bittern** at Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area, Cabell County, on April 28, and Terry Bronson saw a **Least Bittern** at Belleville wetlands, Wood County, on May 23. **Great Blue Herons** and **Green Herons** appeared widely, while **Great Egrets** were observed in Cabell (MG, GR), Mason (DP), Pocahontas (SK), Putnam (CE), and Summers (JJP) Counties. David Patick photographed a **Cattle Egret** at McClintic Wildlife Management Area, Mason County, on April 26. On April 10 and again on May 5, Cynthia Mullens found a **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** at Pleasant Creek Wildlife Management Area, Barbour County.

Ibises – Daniel Jonas spotted six breeding-plumaged **Glossy Ibises** at Sandy Creek Backwater, Wood County, on April 28, as reported by Terry Bronson.

Vultures – Birders in ten West Virginia counties reported seeing **Black Vultures**, while **Turkey Vulture** reports came from only fourteen counties.

Hawks, Eagles, and Kites – **Osprey** were reported from Barbour (CMu), Kanawha (RG), Mason (MG, ReT, GR, JK, DP), Putnam (LC), Summers (JP), Tucker (JTr), and Wetzel (WJ) Counties, beginning on March 5 when Michael Griffith and Janet Keating saw one at Robert C. Byrd Locks and Dam, Mason County. On March 28, James Phillips spotted a **Golden Eagle** at Bluestone State Park, Summers County, and three days later the editor of these notes saw a **Golden Eagle** at Kimsey Run Lake, Hardy County. **Northern Harriers** appeared in reports from Jefferson County (WS), Mason County (GR, MG, JK, DP), and Preston County (LeJ). **Accipiter** reports were practically nonexistent this spring, with **Sharp-shinned Hawks** reported only in Tucker (CR) and Wetzel (WJ) Counties and **Cooper's Hawks** observed in only five counties. Reports of **Bald Eagles**, **Red-shouldered Hawks**, **Broad-winged Hawks**, and **Red-tailed Hawks** were widespread in West Virginia during the season. Wilma Jarrell spotted an early pair of **Broad-winged Hawks** soaring above her home in Wileyville, Wetzel County, on April 11.

Owls – **Owl** reports continued to be scanty. The **Barn Owl** *nest* near Belleville wetlands, Wood County, continued to be occupied, as reported by Terry Bronson on April 19. On April 24, Hannah Clipp and Derek Courtney found **Eastern Screech-Owl** and **Great Horned** and **Barred owls** in Morgantown, Monongalia County, during the Morgantown Birding Cup. Donna Mitchell listened to a **Great Horned Owl** and an **American Woodcock** while enjoying a lunar eclipse on May 16, at her home in Barbour County. David Patick reported an **Eastern Screech-Owl** on May 4 in Mount Zion Cemetery, Mason County. **Great Horned Owls** also inspired reports in Barbour (DMi), Berkeley (WH), Kanawha (JTr), and Summers (JJP) Counties; birders reported **Barred Owls** in only six West Virginia counties. On April 22, Cynthia Burkhart hosted two **Northern Saw-whet Owls** in her yard in Ritchie County, her first ever.

Kingfishers – **Belted Kingfisher** reports were widespread in West Virginia this season, with reports from ten counties.

Woodpeckers – **Red-headed Woodpeckers** inspired reports in seven counties, and of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** in eight. Our state's other five species of **woodpecker** were all widely reported.

Falcons – **American Kestrel** reports were down this spring, coming from Kanawha (LC, RG), Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP), Monongalia (KF), Summers (JP), and Wood (TB) Counties, Laura Ceperley reported the only **Merlin** of the season, at Spring Hill Cemetery, Kanawha County, on March 10. Terry Bronson reported the lone **Peregrine Falcon** of the season, on the Route 50 bridge over the Ohio River in Wood County on April 19.

Flycatchers – Reports of **flycatchers** dipped compared to last year. First-reported dates, counties, and observers are listed in parentheses: **Great Crested Flycatchers** (April 30, Marion, SO), **Eastern Kingbirds** (April 19, Wayne, GR), **Eastern Wood-Pewees** (May 1, Wood, JB), **Acadian Flycatchers** (May 1, Wood, JB), **Least Flycatchers** (May 8, Monongalia, LS), and **Eastern Phoebe**s (March 2, Summers, JP).

Vireos – Our five breeding **vireos** returned to nesting grounds throughout the state beginning on the dates listed, along with counties and observers: **White-eyed** (April 15, Cabell, GR, DP, JK), **Yellow-throated** (April 12, Summers, JP), **Blue-headed** (March 24, Wayne, GR, DP, MG), **Warbling** (April 24, Marion, SO), and **Red-eyed** (May 1, Wood, JB). Paul McKay spotted the only **Philadelphia Vireo** reported this spring, on his farm near Wheeling, Ohio County, on May 8.

Shrikes – Richard Bailey banded seven **Loggerhead Shrikes** in Greenbrier and Monroe Counties in late April.

Jays, Crows, and Ravens – **Blue Jays, American Crows, and Common Ravens** were reported widely throughout the state. **Fish Crows** were reported in Berkeley (WH) and Jefferson (WS) Counties.

Chickadees and Titmice – **Black-capped** and **Carolina chickadees** were reported in their usual habitats in West Virginia this spring.

Larks – Gary Rankin, Michael Griffith, Janet Keating, and David Patick found **Horned Larks** at Gallipolis Ferry, Mason County, on March 14 and April 12; on April 21, Kyle Klotz and Mike Mosser found **Horned Larks** during the Morgantown Birding Cup in Monongalia County.

Swallows – On April 19. Gary Rankin and David Patick saw four **Bank Swallows** at Gallipolis Ferry, Mason County. **Tree Swallows** had already made appearances in

West Virginia at the end of February, and **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** arrived on April 2 in Summers County (JP); both species appeared widely. **Purple Martins** began to arrive on April 9 in Summers County (JP), and were also reported in Mason (GR, DP, JK), Raleigh (JP), and Wood (TB) Counties. Michael Griffith spotted the season's first **Barn Swallow**, on March 31 at Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area, Cabell County; and **Cliff Swallows**, at Robert C. Byrd Locks and Dam, Mason County on April 6. **Barn Swallows** made widespread returns to West Virginia this spring, and **Cliff Swallows** inspired subsequent reports from Raleigh (JJP), Summers (JP), Wetzel (WJ), and Wood (TB) Counties. On May 2 Bruni Haydl contributed chicken feathers, some of which were repurposed from **House Sparrow** nests, to the **Tree Swallows** *nesting in her boxes* in Charles Town, Jefferson County.

Kinglets – Birders reported **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** in thirteen West Virginia counties during the season, and **Golden-crowned Kinglets** in only four.

Waxwings – **Cedar Waxwing** reports came from only seven counties.

Nuthatches – In accordance with their biennial irruption pattern, **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were sparse this spring, making appearances only in Pocahontas (DP, JJP), Preston (LeJ), Summers (JP), and Tucker (CR) Counties. The reliable **White-breasted Nuthatch** continued its widespread presence.

Creepers – **Brown Creeper** reports were also sparse this season, coming from seven counties.

Gnatcatchers – On April 2, David Wills found a **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** in Spring Hill Cemetery, Kanawha County, as reported by Jim Triplett, and Cynthia Mullens spotted a **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** at Teter Creek Lake, Barbour County. **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** subsequently returned to haunts throughout the state.

Wrens – **Carolina** and **House wrens** appeared in good numbers in reports from all over the state. On April 6, Michael Griffith and Janet Keating found an early **House Wren** at Green Bottom Wildlife Management Area, Cabell County. Christina Carr reported the only **Winter Wren** of the season, at Kanawha State Forest, Kanawha County, as reported by Jim Triplett.

Catbirds, Thrashers, and Mockingbirds – During the spring season **Gray Catbirds, Brown Thrashers, and Northern Mockingbirds** once again serenaded their breeding grounds in West Virginia.

Starlings – **European Starlings** continued their broad occupation of habitats in our state.

Thrushes – The **Varied Thrush** discovered on March 7 in Tucker County by Mimi Kibler is described near the beginning of these notes. **Thrush** reports were down a bit this spring. **Eastern Bluebirds, Wood Thrushes, and American Robins** were seen widely in their breeding areas in the state. **Veeries** appeared only in Mason (DP), Monongalia (LS), Pocahontas (DP, JJP), and Summers (JP) Counties, **Swainson's Thrushes** in Jefferson (BT), Kanawha (JNMC, LC), Mason (DP), Monongalia (LeJ), Tucker (HMy), and Wetzel (WJ) Counties, and **Hermit Thrushes** in Berkeley (WH), Kanawha (LC), Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP), Monongalia (LS), Ohio (PM), and Tucker (HMy) Counties. Herb Myers found an early **Swainson's Thrush**, along with **Hermit Thrushes** and **American Robins**, in Canan Valley, Tucker County, on a snowy April 18.

Weaver Finches – The **House Sparrow** continues to occupy our state, primarily in urban and farm settings.

Pipits – American Pipits were observed at Bluestone State Park in Summers County (JP), on March 13 and on the next day near Shady Waters in Mason County (GR, MG, JK, DP).

Finches and Allies – House and Purple finches and American Goldfinches made appearances throughout the state. **Pine Siskins** were scarce, with reports coming only from Pocahontas (JJP), Summers (JP), Tucker (CR, JTr), and Wayne (GR) Counties.

Sparrows, Juncos, and Towhees – Fourteen **sparrow** species made appearances in accustomed haunts throughout our state. **Fox Sparrows** made appearances through the beginning of April, in Berkeley (WH), Cabell (GR, MG, JK, DP), Summers (JP), and Tucker (JTr) Counties. Jim Triplett spotted the only **American Tree Sparrow** reported this spring, at his feeders in Canaan Valley, Tucker County, on the late date of May 15. Widely reported **White-throated** and **White-crowned sparrows** stayed through mid-May. Resident and returning **sparrow** species made first appearances this season in reports from the following counties: **Grasshopper** on April 12 in Jefferson (WS), **Chipping** on March 19 in Cabell (JK), **Field** on March 5 in Wetzel (WJ), **Dark-eyed Junco** on March 2 in Summers (JP), **Vesper** on March 30 in Wetzel (WJ), **Henslow's** on April 21 in Monongalia (KKI), **Savannah** on March 14 in Mason (GR, MG, JK, DP), **Song** on March 2 in Pocahontas (KBr), and **Swamp** on April 15 in Tucker (HMy). **Eastern Towhees** were already present in some areas at the start of the spring season, and by its end were reported from throughout the state.

Chats – Yellow-breasted Chats appeared on May 1 in three locations: Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area, Berkeley County (RBy), Core Arboretum, Monongalia County (LS), and McDonough Wildlife Refuge, Wood County (JB). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** also made an appearance in Putnam County (JTr).

Blackbirds and Allies – The **Brewer's Blackbird** hosted by Hullet Good on March 12 in Kanawha County is described at the beginning of these notes. **Bobolinks** returned to Canaan Valley, Tucker County, on April 29, as observed by Jim Triplett, and also appeared in Barbour (DMi), Greenbrier (JO), Jefferson (WS, DHa), Kanawha (RG), and Preston (LeJ) Counties. There were many West Virginia reports of **Eastern Meadowlarks**, **Orchard** and **Baltimore orioles**, **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Brown-headed Cowbirds**, and **Common Grackles**. **Rusty Blackbirds** appeared only in reports from Cabell (GR, MG, JK, DP), Kanawha (RG), and Wetzel (WJ) Counties.

Warblers – The following **warblers**, all regular migrants through or breeders in West Virginia, made their first-of-season appearances in the following counties: **Ovenbird**: April 16, Kanawha (CC), **Worm-eating Warbler**: May 1, Wood (JB), **Louisiana Waterthrush**: March 31, Summers (JP), **Northern Waterthrush**: May 10, Monongalia (LS), **Golden-winged Warbler**: April 25, Wetzel (WJ), **Blue-winged Warbler**: April 15, Cabell (GR, DP, JK), **Black-and-white Warbler**: April 7, Summers (JP), **Prothonotary** and **Swainson's warblers**: April 22, Kanawha (JBT), **Tennessee Warbler**: April 25, Wetzel (WJ), **Orange-crowned Warbler**: April 27, Mason (DP), **Nashville Warbler**: April 25, Wetzel (WJ), **Mourning Warbler**: May 6, Wayne (BDe), **Kentucky Warbler**: April 24, Wetzel (WJ), **Common Yellowthroat**: April 16, Cabell (JK), **Hooded Warbler**: April 16, Wayne (GR), **American Redstart**: April 21, Kanawha (LC), **Cape May** and **Cerulean warblers**: April 25, Wetzel (WJ), **Northern Parula**: April 13, Summers (JP), **Magnolia Warbler**: May 8, Monongalia (LS), **Bay-breasted Warbler**: May 12, Kanawha (LC), **Blackburnian Warbler**: April 27, Preston (LeJ), **Yellow**

Warbler: April 15, Kanawha (RG), **Chestnut-sided Warbler:** April 25, Wetzel (WJ), **Blackpoll Warbler:** April 26, Kanawha (BS), **Black-throated Blue Warbler:** April 27, Preston (LeJ), **Palm Warbler:** April 21, Wayne (GR), **Pine Warbler:** March 8, Ritchie (CB), **Yellow-rumped Warbler:** March 11, Kanawha (LC), **Yellow-throated Warbler:** March 31, Kanawha (LC), **Prairie Warbler:** April 15, Cabell (GR, DP, JK), **Black-throated Green Warbler:** April 2, Kanawha (JTr), and **Canada Warbler:** May 17, Pocahontas (JJP). LeJay Graffious had a ten-warbler walk at Old Hemlock, Preston County, on May 12. Only sixteen, or fewer than half, of these warbler species appeared on or before the “first-seen” dates in George A. Hall’s *West Virginia Birds*, with four ties.

Tanagers, Cardinals, Grosbeaks, and Buntings – Summer Tanager reports were down this spring, coming from Cabell (DP), Kanawha (LC, JNMK), Mason (DP), 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. Terry Bronson watched a female **Blue Grosbeak** *gathering nest material* at Belleville wetlands, Wood County, on May 23. David Patick found a **Dickcissel** on Leon Ferry Road, Mason County, on May 14.

Contributors to the Spring Field Notes: Kitty Bailey (KB), Richard Bailey (RBi), Jon Benedetti (JB), Roy Boyle (RBy), Dan Britten (DaB), Terry Bronson (TB), Cynthia Burkhart (CB), Christina Carr (CC), Laura Ceperley (LC), Derek Courtney (DCo), Beverly Delidow (BDe), Cynthia Ellis (CE), Elaine George (EG), Hullet Good (HG), LeJay Graffious (LeJ), Richard Gregg (RG), Michael Griffith (MG), Wil Hershberger (WH), Diane Holsinger (DH), Wilma Jarrell (WJ), Sharon Kearns (SK), Janet Keating (JK), Kyle Klotz (KKl), Paul McKay (PM), Donna Mitchell (DMi), Cynthia Mullens (CMu), Herb Myers (HMy), John Northeimer and Marjorie Keatley (JNMK), Jack O’Connell (JO), Susan Olcott (SO), David Patick (DP), James Phillips (JP), James and Judy Phillips (JJP), Gary Rankin (GR), Casey Rucker (CR), Larry Schwab (LS), Barbara Smith (BS), N. Wade Snyder (WS), Carole and Bill Telfair (BT), Jim Triplett (JTr), Jim and Beverly Triplett (JBT), and Mindy Waldron (MW).

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REDSTART EDITORIAL POLICY

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

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The Brooks Bird Club, Inc. is a nonprofit organization whose objective is to encourage the study and conservation of birds and other phases of natural history. Membership includes subscriptions to *The Redstart* and *Mail Bag* and entitles one to all the privileges offered by the Club. Classes of membership are Student, \$20; Individual, \$35; Family, \$40; Sustaining, \$60; Life, \$550; Family Life, \$700. Checks should be written payable to The Brooks Bird Club and mailed to P.O. Box 4077, Wheeling, WV 26003.

2022 Calendar of Events The Brooks Bird Club, Inc.

| Date | Activity | Place |
|----------------------|--|--|
| January | BBC Membership Month | Wheeling, WV |
| January | Trip to Killdeer Plains (Contact Dick Esker) | |
| February | Write an article for The Redstart and Mail Bag | |
| Feb 24-25 | Killbuck Marsh (overnight trip — contact Dick Esker) | |
| March 4-6 | Early Spring Meeting (Contact Dick Esker) | North Bend State Park Harrisville, WV |
| March 12 | Waterfowl Field Trip (day trip)..... | Seneca Lake, OH |
| April 23 | BBC/Three Rivers Bird Club (day trip) (Contact Ryan Tomazin) | Raccoon Creek State Park, PA |
| May 5-8 | Wildflower Pilgrimage | Blackwater Falls State Park, WV |
| May 14 | International Migratory Bird Day | |
| June 3-11 | Foray – Camp Galilee..... (contact Janice Emrick or Ryan Tomazin) | Terra Alta, WV |
| August–October | Bird Banding | Dolly Sods, WV |
| October 28-30 | BBC Fall Reunion & Meeting, | Hawk’s Nest State Park |
| | BBC 90th Anniversary (Contact Cindy Slater) | Ansted, WV |
| November 9-13 | Eastern Shore (Contact Cindy Slater) | |
| Dec. 14–Jan. 5, 2023 | Christmas Bird Count..... | Statewide |

*Due to the uncertainties of COVID-19 in 2022,
please visit the BBC website calendar for updates throughout the year.*

BBC FORAYS

2022 Camp Galilee, Terra Alta, Preston County
2023 Camp Horseshoe, Tucker County

SEASONAL FIELD NOTES DUE

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

ARTICLES FOR THE MAIL BAG DUE

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

<http://brooksbirdclub.org>

The dates for the 2022 BBC programs may be changed if necessary. Changes will be announced on the web page or in The Mail Bag.

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