

down. Only 4700 were tallied, well below half of usual counts. Perhaps the unusually warm weather in November and December delayed the normal migration. White-crowned Sparrows were scarce, too.

A green Painted Bunting was found on the Northern Nassau County count, but only a few birders were allowed on the private property to see it. A single Dickcissel was found on the Staten Island count.

The mild weather made it a better than average year for wintering black-birds. The Chatham count accounted for the bulk of them with 40,251 Red-winged Blackbirds, 33,000 Common Grackles, and 5033 Brown-headed Cowbirds. Baltimore Orioles were seen on four Long Island counts, as well as in Oneonta.

It was a very modest winter finch year. Pine Grosbeaks were seen on two counts, as were Red Crossbills. White-winged Crossbills were seen on six counts, with Saranac Lake accounting for over half the state total of 222 individuals. A small number of Common Redpolls were found on four counts. Nineteen counts tallied 1848 Pine Siskins, somewhat less than a large

November pulse of the species made some viewers expect. Evening Grosbeak continues to be a rare bird in New York, with only a count week report from New Woodstock-Southern Highlands, and five seen in Saranac Lake.

NEW JERSEY/PENNSYLVANIA

William J. Boyle Jr.

14 Crown Drive

Warren, NJ 07059

sawwhet@optonline.net

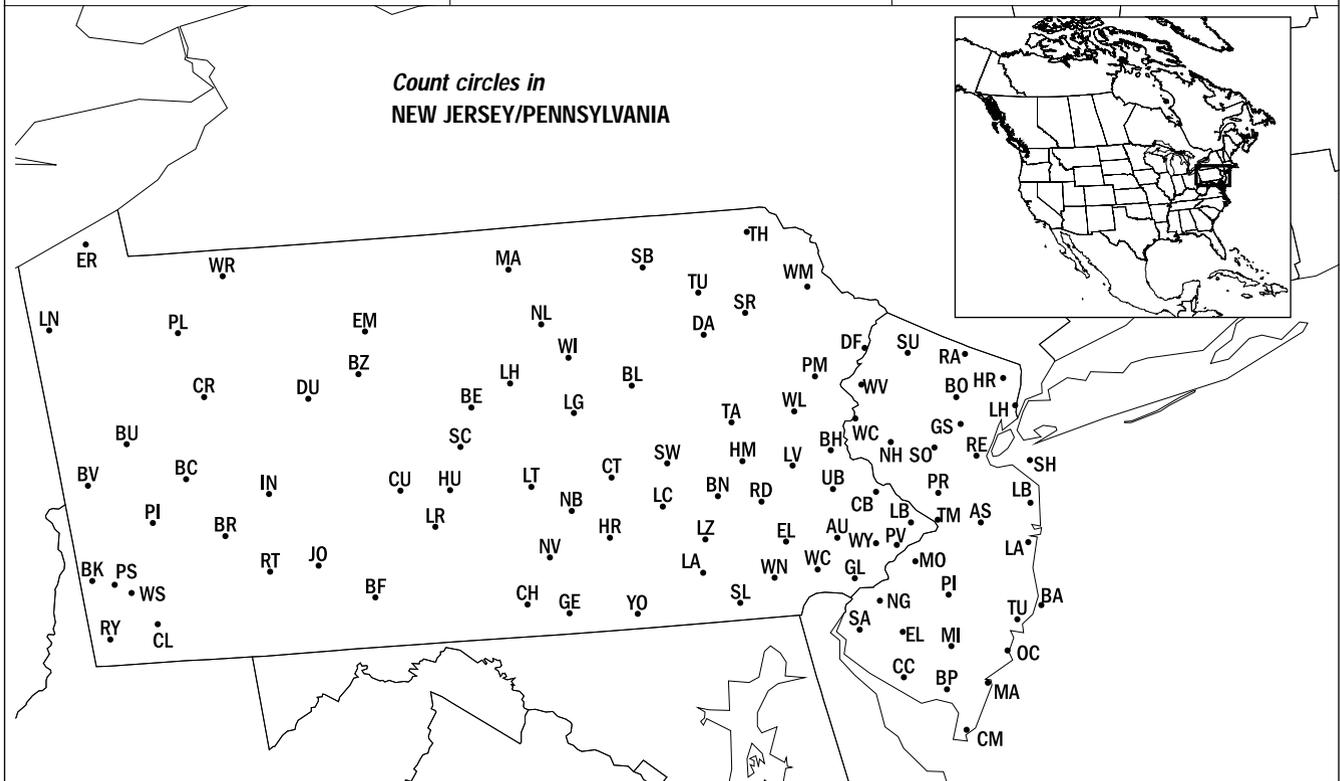
There were no snow storms or nor'easters really to disrupt the 112th New Jersey/Pennsylvania CBC, and most counts were conducted under mild to almost balmy conditions. The unusually warm fall and early winter, with temperatures averaging 4 to 5 degrees above normal in November and December, probably contributed to the variety of late-lingering species. An impressive number of outstanding rarities, especially in Pennsylvania, consisted mostly of holdovers from the fall. Once again there were very few winter finches, and Evening Grosbeak was missed on all counts.

Thirty counts were again run in New Jersey, with the total of 204 species a significant improvement over last year's dismal showing and three above the 20-

year average. Despite an excellent list of rarities, Cape May could manage only 152 species, well below average and one fewer than last year. Barnegat took advantage of the better weather to jump 25 species from last year to a more typical 133, followed by Cumberland County (128) and Long Branch (118). There were no new high counts, but Marmora, which was regularly among the top 10 only 20 years ago, was last and has settled into the bottom third during the past decade.

The 36 species of waterfowl recorded included two Greater White-fronted Geese on both the Long Branch and Somerset County CBCs, as well as a **Ross's Goose** on the Warren County-Northampton County count. Five different counts reported a total of 12 Blue-winged Teal, while Cape May (2) and Raritan Estuary (1) accounted for the three Eurasian Wigeon. Barnegat had three King Eiders and 23 Harlequin Ducks, but only 99 Common Eider, down from the 709 of the previous count.

A single Ruffed Grouse was found on the Walnut Valley count, continuing the dismal showing for this species in recent decades, and the Wild Turkey tally of 1222 was barely half of last year's record



number. Cape May and Long Branch each had a Red-necked Grebe, and Long Branch added a Brown Pelican, only the fifth time the species has been recorded on a New Jersey CBC. Four counts recorded a total of six Snowy Egrets, but a **Green Heron** at Cumberland County and a Glossy Ibis at Cape May were exceptional.

Record numbers of both Black Vulture (2027) and Turkey Vulture (5303) were counted, as well as a new high for Bald Eagles of 480, a total that would have been inconceivable only 20 years ago. Cape May reported the only Osprey, and a Golden Eagle was a surprise visitor to the Pinelands count. Rough-legged Hawks again made a mediocre showing, with only nine on six counts. A Common Gallinule on the New Jersey side of the Lower Hudson count area was the only one for the state. Sandhill Cranes were recorded on three counts, with two at Assunpink, two at Cumberland (part of the resident flock), and five at Somerset County, where a small flock has wintered in recent years.

Nineteen species of shorebirds were found, including a record 109 Willets, all of them "Western," and all on the Oceanville count, and a lone Whimbrel on the Cumberland count. Oceanville also had 42 of the 46 Marbled Godwits. Perhaps owing to the mild weather, Purple Sandpipers were scarce, with the tally of 122 being the lowest in 20 years. A solo Short-billed Dowitcher, a species not recorded every year, was with four Long-billed Dowitchers at Cape May. Single Laughing Gulls were at Cape May, Barnegat, and Sandy Hook, which also contributed the only Little Gull of the season. Only two Iceland Gulls and one Glaucous Gull were found, but both Cape May (2) and Sandy Hook (1) had Black-legged Kittiwakes from shore. Individual Forster's Terns were at Barnegat and Sandy Hook.

New Jersey finally recorded its first CBC **Eurasian Collared-Dove**, when one took up residence in Cape May Point in July 2011 and decided to stay indefinitely. The first Snowy Owl in three years arrived at Merrill Creek

Reservoir in late October and lingered into April, making a fine addition to the Warren-Northampton CBC. A hummingbird that wintered at a Cape May feeder was initially identified as a Rufous, but gradually molted into adult male plumage to reveal itself as the state's first **Broad-tailed Hummingbird**. Other rarities from the west included an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** at Long Branch and Western Kingbirds at Cape May and Sandy Hook. The premier rarity of this group, however, was the **Bell's Vireo** present for weeks in Cape May, only the second ever recorded on a New Jersey CBC.

Common Ravens continue to increase, with a record 45 counted, an amazing total since the first time one found on a CBC was in 1991. Cape May had the only two Tree Swallows of the season. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, a species noted only about once in four years on average, was reported from Long Branch and Moorestown. Yet another western rarity, a **Townsend's Solitaire**, the third for a New Jersey CBC, was discovered on the Walnut Valley count. Among the nine species of warblers detected were one each of Nashville Warbler, Ovenbird, and Wilson's Warbler. Rounding out the list of unusual species were an **Indigo Bunting** at Walnut Valley and a Dickcissel at Lower Hudson. Other than a small number of Purple Finches and Pine Siskins, winter finches were nonexistent.

Pennsylvania's 70 counts, one more than last year with the addition of Tamaqua, reported a total of 174 species, an improvement of 19 over last year's total and the second highest ever. Southern Lancaster County resumed its position at the top of the table with 107 species, followed by Harrisburg (102), Southern Bucks County (98), and Lititz (96). Two counts, Dingman's Ferry and Pennypack Valley achieved new highs.

An impressive 33 species of waterfowl included a **Ross's Goose** at Audubon and Lehigh Valley, and a total of seven Greater White-fronted Geese at three locations. Thirty-five Cackling Geese were picked out of the staggering collec-

tion of 260,000 Canada Geese, and single Trumpeter Swans were found in Bedford County and Butler County. A Blue-winged Teal at Newville was an excellent find, and a new high of 1223 Ring-necked Ducks came from 35 counts. Erie, as usual, had the greatest variety of waterfowl with 21 species, including all three scoters. Ruffed Grouse numbers were up significantly to 174, with Emporium recording 50, but Wild Turkeys were down 10 percent to 3341.

A Red-throated Loon was found at Butler and Erie added four more. Pied-billed Grebes (141) and Horned Grebes (45) were up substantially from last year, but there were no reports of Red-necked Grebe. Among the herons detected were three Great Egrets at Southern Bucks and a single at Newville, an unusual **Green Heron** at West Chester, and a single Black-crowned Night-Heron at Southern Bucks. More remarkable was a **White Ibis** at Hamburg, the first ever for a Pennsylvania CBC. As in New Jersey, Turkey Vultures set a new high with 4552, including 533 at Western Chester County. Newville's interesting count produced the state's only Osprey, while the statewide total of 405 Bald Eagles was only 10 off last year's record high. Some of the other raptors were scarce—only two Northern Goshawks were found, the lowest total since 1968, and just 12 Rough-legged Hawks, lowest since 1958. Peregrine Falcons, on the other hand, continue to do well at 34, tying last year's high, and the Newville Prairie Falcon was found for the fourth time in six years. A Gyrfalcon reported on the Hamburg CBC would be the fifth for a state count and the first since 1993, pending acceptance by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee.

A Virginia Rail was at Delaware County, and three counts combined for a record total of 29 Sandhill Cranes. The total of six species of shorebirds was above average and included a Lesser Yellowlegs at Elverson and a well-photographed **Long-billed Dowitcher** at Linesville, only the second ever for a Pennsylvania CBC. The 1746 Bonaparte's Gulls

reported from six locations is not particularly high by historical standards, but compares to the zero that were seen on the 111th count. Unusual gulls were a Little Gull at Erie and a Thayer's Gull at Southern Lancaster. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were down a bit this year to 468, but Southern Bucks 65,409 Herring Gulls was the highest total for North America.

Pennsylvania did slightly better than New Jersey with Snowy Owls, one each at Delaware County and Erie, and these were the first since 2005. An amazing five well-documented Rufous Hummingbirds were recorded on the 112th CBC, one each at Lebanon County, Lehigh Valley, Pittsburgh, Wild Creek-Little Gap, and York. All were present for extended periods of time. The species was first noted on a Pennsylvania CBC in 1996 and the previous high was two. Among the many outstanding rarities in the state for the period was the long-staying **Say's Phoebe** tallied on the Central Bucks count, the seventh CBC record. A new high of 380 Common Ravens was recorded, as this species continues to expand into the southeastern part of the state.

Three different species of swallow were found, including a record high 150 Northern Rough-winged Swallows at Pennypack Valley, which also had a Barn Swallow. Harrisburg added two Rough-wingeds, and Southern Bucks County had a pair of Tree Swallows. A Marsh Wren at Pittsburgh was the first of its kind found since 2006, as were the two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers at Newville and one at Washington. Butler County was home to a beautiful male **Varied Thrush**, only the fourth recorded on a Pennsylvania CBC. The highlight of the eight species of warblers recorded was a Nashville Warbler at Pittsburgh; among the others sightings were three Orange-crowned Warblers, an Ovenbird at Lehigh Valley, and a Yellow-breasted Chat at Dingman's Ferry.

A **Green-tailed Towhee** present at Bernville for some time was only the second for a Pennsylvania CBC, the first coming in 1994. A record 508 Eastern Towhees were concentrated in the south-

eastern part of the state, while the lowest total of American Tree Sparrows (2855) since 1951 is probably a reflection of the mild weather keeping them north of our area. Single Lincoln's Sparrows were at Curtin, Southern Bucks County, and Tunkhannock, but the star sparrow of the season was the **Harris's Sparrow** that wintered at Hamburg. A single Lapland Longspur was present at Newville, while the 14 Snow Buntings, 12 at Linesville, represent the lowest total since 1953.

Lancaster recorded an immature male **Painted Bunting**, the second Pennsylvania CBC record, that lingered for a couple of weeks, while four different counts had Baltimore Oriole. Winter finches were again almost nonexistent, with just two Red Crossbills at State College, 15 Common Redpolls at Scranton, and another two in Warren County. Once again, I thank Nick Bolgiano for sharing some of his insights into the Pennsylvania CBCs in advance of publication.

DELAWARE/MARYLAND

Laura Balascio

34 Covered Bridge Lane

Newark, DE 19711

avocet@UDel.Edu

John B. Churchill

17607 Pompey Smash Road, SW

Frostburg, MD 21532

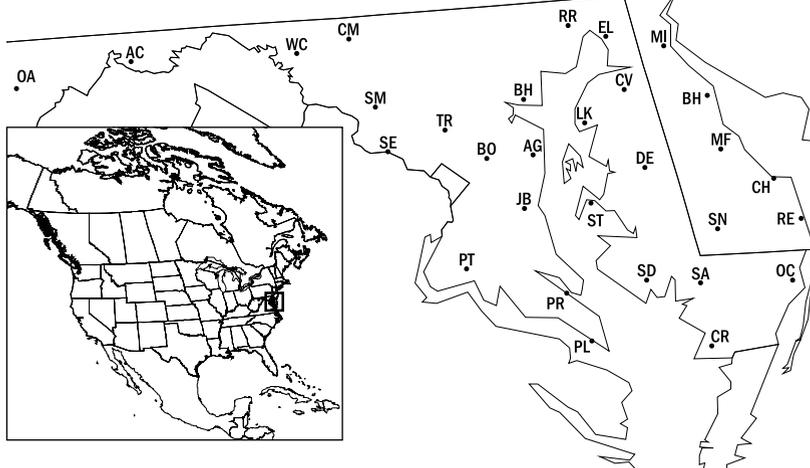
jchurchi@atlanticbb.net

Unlike the previous two years with cold temperatures, frozen bodies of water, and snowstorm cancellations, the 112th Delaware/Maryland CBCs

experienced relatively mild temperatures and little precipitation. Exceptions were the heavy rainfall during Crisfield and Milford and high winds endured by Seaford-Nanticoke. Milder weather conditions led to some unexpected results. Several counters wondered, "Where are the birds?" while others sighted first species records and numerous high counts. Unusual species of note include American White Pelican, Green Heron, Cattle Egret, American Oystercatcher, Marbled Godwit, Black-necked Stilt, Northern Goshawk, Rufous Hummingbird (5), Northern Shrike, White-eyed Vireo, Nashville Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Dickcissel, and Black-headed Grosbeak.

Greater White-fronted Goose was observed in Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook, Lower Kent County and St. Michael's. Cackling Goose sightings continue to increase yearly with 13 counts reporting the species. Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook tallied a historical high of Eurasian Wigeon (3). Count highs of Green-winged Teal were recorded in Ocean City (1316), Milford (609), Bowie (39), and Sugarloaf (27). Gadwall highs were tallied in Rehoboth (273), Lower Kent County (720), and Ocean City (357). The highlight of the Point Lookout count was a first record sighting of Barrow's Goldeneye. Patuxent River boasted a remarkable Ruddy Duck high count (25,006).

Count circles in
DELAWARE/MARYLAND





**Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*),
Rehoboth, Delaware.
Photo/ Charles Fullmer**

Cape Henlopen (94) topped the region with a historic high count of Wild Turkey followed by Rehoboth (45), Sugarloaf (39), Ocean City (33), and Point Lookout (13). A highlight of the Chesterfield count was a first sighting of Red-necked Grebe. Exceptionally high numbers of Northern Gannet (1071) were observed at Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook while the one individual observed in Milford was unusual due to its distance from the Delaware Bay. Both American White Pelican (14, high count) and Brown Pelican were observed in Ocean City. Southern Dorchester County tallied an additional 15 American White Pelicans, and Rehoboth had a count high of six Brown Pelicans. Perhaps indicative of the mild weather, nine counts set historic high counts of Double-crested Cormorant: Annapolis (589), Baltimore Harbor (765), Bombay Hook (28), Denton (8), Elkton (28), Jug Bay (79), Lower Kent County (104), Middletown (128), and Port Tobacco (1548). A first count sighting of Cattle Egret and Green Heron (cw) were tallied in Lower Kent County. Numerous high counts of Black and Turkey vulture were tallied across the region, with many setting records. Those setting historic highs for both vulture species are Annapolis (209, 251), Baltimore Harbor (126, 66), Sugarloaf Mountain (242, 383) and Wilmington (117, 563). Osprey was tallied in four counts: Annapolis-Gibson Island, St. Michael's, Ocean City (cw), and Wilmington (2). Bald Eagle numbers continue to thrive in the

region with 1416 individuals observed throughout the region. Wilmington tallied its sixth occurrence of Northern Goshawk and Milford its second. Patuxent River and Southern Dorchester County each observed Rough-legged Hawk. American Kestrel numbers continue to trend low.

Point Lookout tallied a first count Sora. Bowie's second occurrence of Sandhill Crane was tallied during count week. Mild weather and open water allowed for several circles to organize boat trips that for Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook resulted in a first count sighting of American Oystercatcher (2). Bombay Hook, assisted by the Delaware Dunlins, a youth birding group sponsored by the Delaware Ornithology Society, tallied two new count species: Black-necked Stilt and Marbled Godwit (2). The latter was also seen in Ocean City. Spotted Sandpiper was added as a new species to Lower Kent County. Sanderling, although common on coastal counts, is an unusual sighting at Southern Dorchester County where 45 individuals were observed.

Gull species of note include Black-headed Gull observed in Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook and Rehoboth and Laughing Gull (2) in Bowie. A record high count of Lesser Black-backed Gull (39) was tallied in Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook. Both Common Tern (3) and Royal Tern were observed in Ocean City; the last observations of these terns were in 1981 and 1971, respectively. Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook tallied its fourth occurrence of Razorbill.

A single Monk Parakeet was sighted in Bowie for the second consecutive year. Seven owl species were observed across the region with Lower Kent County setting a historic high count of Eastern Screech-Owls (50) and tallying the only Northern Saw-whet Owl. Short-eared Owl was an unusual sighting for St. Michael's, a first for that count. A single Rufous Hummingbird is a novelty for the region; however, sightings on five counts (Rehoboth, Jug

Bay, Rock Run, Triadelphia, and Washington) were very unusual. The Rehoboth bird stayed in the area for some time, being photographed and banded. Woodpecker counts were in the median range throughout the region, with no extreme highs or lows for most species. Exceptions are Red-headed Woodpecker high counts in Elkton (4), Jug Bay (15), and Port Tobacco (45); and Pileated Woodpecker high count in Port Tobacco (32) and record low in Sugarloaf Mountain (24).

Northern Shrike returned to Chesterfield for a fourth consecutive year, and Bowie had a first count sighting of this species. Loggerhead Shrike was tallied in Washington County. White-eyed Vireo (cw) was a first for Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook. High counts of Common Raven occurred in Seneca (10) and Triadelphia Reservoir (4). Second occurrences of Tree Swallow in Middletown and Barn Swallow in Annapolis-Gibson Island were tallied. Black-capped Chickadee was limited to its year-round range in Allegany County, Oakland, Washington County, and Wilmington. Southern Dorchester County counted a historic high of Brown-headed Nuthatch (178). Winter Wren high counts ranged from St. Michael's (12), Lower Kent County (25), Jug Bay (32), and Annapolis-Gibson Island (69) to Seneca (72). Both Lower Kent County and Wilmington hosted Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Large flocks of American Robin and Cedar Waxwings were tallied across the region with significant high American Robin numbers counted in Bowie (19,317) and Seaford-Nanticoke (4585) and Cedar Waxwings in Bombay Hook (798), Ocean City (935), Rehoboth (435), and Seaford-Nanticoke (398). Conversely, Gray Catbird tallies were down; Elkton missed the species for the first time in 20 years. Seven circles sighted Orange-crowned Warbler, with one at Jug Bay being a first count record. Chesterville (cw) and Lower Kent County each hosted their first Nashville Warbler,

while Wilmington added Wilson's Warbler to its species list.

For the first time in 29 years, no Savannah Sparrow was tallied in Seaford-Nanticoke. Low numbers of Savannah and Swamp Sparrow were noted in Southern Dorchester County, while Wilmington boosted a Song Sparrow (850) historic high. Unusual sparrows of note include Clay-colored Sparrow at Chesterfield (cw), Ocean City (3), Salisbury (1), and Sugarloaf (1); Vesper Sparrow at Port Tobacco; and Nelson's Sparrow at Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook. Star sparrow honors go to Ocean City where a Lark Sparrow was observed by many birders and photographers since showing up in September at Assateague State Park.

With the help of the Delaware County Bird Club, Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook added a first record Dickcissel. Baltimore Oriole was tallied in Port Tobacco (2), St. Michael's (2), Middletown and a first count in Seaford. A scattering of winter finches were observed: Purple Finches in Catochin Mountain, Denton, Rock Run, and Seneca; and Pine Siskin in Ocean City and Cape Henlopen-Prime Hook. Several compilers commented on lower than normal American Goldfinch numbers with Baltimore Harbor reporting a count low (30). Lastly, but by far the best bird of the count, was a **Black-headed Grosbeak** spotted by Bill Miller at a feeder in Denton; the bird remained in the area for several weeks.

WASHINGTON, DC/ VIRGINIA

Teta Kain

7083 Caffee Creek Lane

Gloucester, VA 23061

tkdragonrun7@gmail.com

This was the winter that wasn't. The persistent trend of the jet stream to veer far north of its usual path across the United States kept Virginia and the Washington, DC, area bathed in warmer-than-usual temperatures during most of the 112th CBC season. Conditions were generally quite mild, with only a couple of western circles reporting ice on still water, and only a handful experiencing very light rain or snow. It was a very different setting from the raging winds, torrential downpours, and blowing snow of the previous two years. Although it was a boon for birders to conduct their counts in balmy climes, it did, however, disrupt the southward drift of many northern species we expect to find in this region during the winter months.

With the return of the Big Flat Mountain count after a 10-year absence on the Audubon roster, 47 counts were submitted, the most ever for this region. Even though the Great Dismal Swamp N.W.R. count was conducted, a late-summer lightning strike started a huge fire which swept through a large section of the swamp in August and September, destroying thousands of wooded acres and rendering many areas almost devoid of birds or any other wildlife. As would be expected, numbers of many species

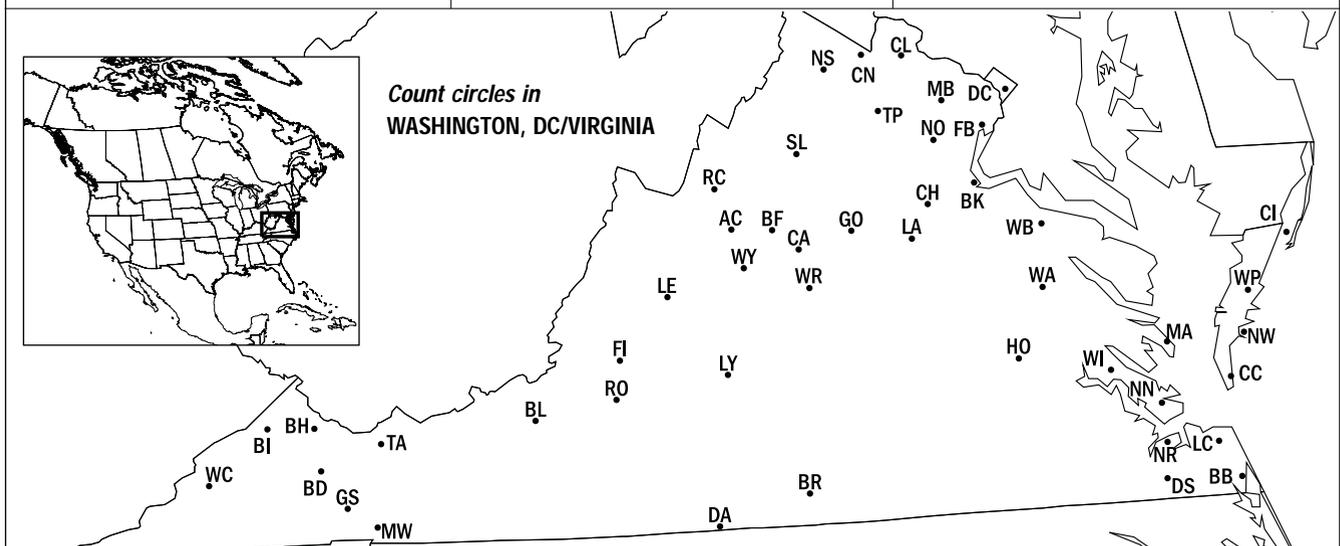


Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*), Denton, Maryland. Photo/Mark L. Hoffman

were low. Lake Anna was back after a one-year absence, with Donna Finnegan assuming leadership duties from Mike Boatwright who had served as compiler since 1989. One other change of compilers was at Breaks Interstate Park where Austin Bradley replaced Terry Evans who had compiled that count since 1998.

It seems like just about every year a bird appears that is truly mind-warping. This year's headliner was a Brewer's Sparrow, so unlikely that it wasn't even in the realm of possibilities. Great photos left no question of identity, and lots of observers were lucky enough to see the bird before it disappeared.

Two other dramatic discoveries were also recorded on Coastal Plain counts: four Sandhill Cranes at Wachapreague, and a Western Tanager photographed on a bird feeder at Williamsburg, only the second Virginia CBC sighting. The previous Western Tanager was an individual at Back Bay in 1972.



Two finds on the Washington, DC, count were of interest: a Nashville Warbler, the third CBC record; and a Dickcissel found during count week. Merlins equaled an all-time high there and compiler Larry Cartwright noted that accipiters, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered hawks, and Peregrine Falcons are also adapting well to the urban environment as evidenced by sustained high numbers. Again White-breasted Nuthatches reached an all-time high, continuing a dramatic increase on that count that has spanned the past eight years.

At best, Razorbills are spotty in occurrence on Virginia counts, so this year's total of 16 individuals on four counts in the lower Chesapeake Bay area was stunning. There are several records of occurrence during count week, but Razorbills have been seen only three times in the past on count day. One was at Back Bay in 1976, one was reported both at Back Bay and Cape Charles in 1996, and Back Bay recorded two in 2008.

The Summer Tanager at Wachapreague was the second CBC record for the region and probably the first winter record for the Coastal Plain. The only other CBC record is one individual at Roanoke in 1982. The Long-billed Curlew, also a first for Wachapreague, was the only sighting of this species on a Christmas count day since 1988.

The western sector of the region had its fair share of rarities: an Indigo Bunting was reported at Blackford; a *Selasphorus* hummingbird was photographed at Glade Spring; Northern Shenandoah Valley birders found a Wilson's Warbler; a Black-and-white Warbler showed up at Shenandoah N.P.-Luray; and Northern Shovelers were found for the first time on the Waynesboro count. The Northern Goshawk that appeared at Calmes Neck count was a first for that count and the only one seen in the region this year.

In the Piedmont, Central Loudoun County birders enjoyed three first-time ever records: a Greater White-fronted Goose, a Golden Eagle, and a Peregrine

Falcon. A Green Heron and a Lesser Yellowlegs were firsts for Manassas-Bull Run. A *Selasphorus* hummingbird appeared at a feeder at Charlottesville; a nice photograph was obtained of a Baltimore Oriole on a feeder in the Banister River W.M.A. circle. A Great Cormorant was photographed at Manassas-Bull Run, the first Piedmont CBC record of this species.

A paucity of waterfowl was expected as a result of the mild weather conditions, and totals of several species were somewhat lower than usual, but the real surprise was the staggering influx of 12,751 Gadwall, more than doubling state totals of the last 34 years and surpassing the previous all-time high of 12,324 set in 1974. Another astonishing record-breaker was 6575 Green-winged Teal. The previous high was set in 1973. Ironically, the 528 birds last year was the lowest tally of Green-wingeds in 25 years.

Seldom do we hope for lower numbers of a species, but the Mute Swan is an exception. This year's state total of 41 is the lowest since 34 were counted in 1998. Several areas have waged a constant battle to keep swan numbers down or to eradicate them altogether. The first Virginia CBC record was nine birds at Chincoteague in 1973. From then on, they inexorably spread out over eastern Virginia, showing up on 13 of 17 Coastal Plain counts. Rockingham County CBC was the first to report them in the Mountains and Valleys region in 1987, but birds there have been kept in check with only six individuals constituting the highest number counted. The same trend is seen in the Piedmont.

Given the weather conditions, it is not surprising that there weren't many Red-breasted Nuthatches around this year. This species has a history of huge fluctuations over a long period. The yearly average is just under 150 birds, but every two or three years or so numbers plummet to as low as 35, rebound to 400 to 500 for a year or two, then fall back to average levels. This year's statewide count of 31, however, is

the lowest since only 6 birds were recorded in 1967.

It is interesting to see Brown-headed Nuthatches occurring at Roanoke and Blacksburg for the five past years. Only once before over the span of the 80 years that these two counts have been conducted, has this species shown up when one was at Roanoke in 1967. Then, starting in 2007, four were spotted at Blacksburg. Two were reported in 2011 and one this year. Roanoke reported one in 2010 and another in 2011. What has transpired that would cause this change—and will it continue? Whatever the case, the sightings are a welcomed bonus.

NORTH CAROLINA

Ricky Davis

608 Smallwood Drive

Rocky Mount, NC 27804

RJDNC@aol.com

The 112th CBC season in North Carolina consisted of 48 counts; there were no new counts, and Tryon was not conducted this year. Weather was rather benign, as temperatures were warmer than average across the state, and snow was not present on any count. Heavy rain was endured at Cape Hatteras and Catawba Valley, while strong winds affected only a handful of coastal and mountain counts. During this year's count 1,023,935 individuals of 223 species and three forms were reported. There were four additions to the cumulative North Carolina CBC list this year: Mottled Duck at Wilmington, White-rumped Sandpiper at Bodie-Pea Islands, Anna's Hummingbird at New Bern, plus a count week Allen's Hummingbird at Catawba Valley. Top coastal species totals included Wilmington's 160, Morehead City's 158, Southport's 157, and Bodie-Pea's 142. Tidewater counts included 152 at Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge (Mattamuskeet), 120 at Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge (ARNWR), and 119 at New Bern. Coastal Plain counts were led by Greenville with 105 and Rocky Mount with 92. Leading Piedmont counts had

totals of 99 at Southern Lake Norman and Falls Lake, 98 at Southern Pines, 94 at Kerr Lake, and 93 at Jordan Lake and Charlotte. Mountains counts were led by Henderson County's 85, Brevard's 68, Buncombe County's 68, and Balsam's 65.

Waterfowl numbers were characterized by puddle ducks being up slightly, but diving ducks were way down! Highlights included a **Cackling Goose** at Winston-Salem and two **Mottled Ducks** at Wilmington. The Mottleds were at Eagle Island, a place where the species had been noted before. Some diving ducks were present in low numbers this season, such as only one Long-tailed Duck and 57 Surf Scoters being reported. The Northern Bobwhite continued its precipitous decline. Only 32 were noted on the counts, this is the lowest North Carolina CBC count total since the 1930s! A **Pacific Loon** was noted at Wilmington in the usual Common Loon flock off Wrightsville Beach. Grebe numbers were up slightly and included single Red-neckeds at Bodie-Pea Islands, Greensboro, New Bern, and Pamlico County. Anhingas lingered/wintered in good numbers as evidenced by the total of 13 being counted from six counts. The North Carolina CBCs fourth **Great Blue Heron (white morph)** was a bird that was present in the Durham count circle from the fall season. Bird of prey highlights included a record number of Bald Eagles (373 on 36 counts), an adult

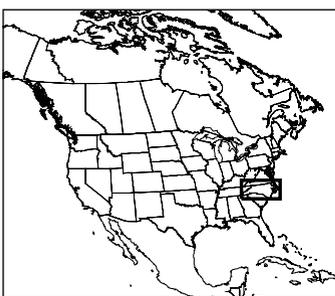


Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*), Southern Lake Norman, North Carolina.
Photo/Chris Talkington

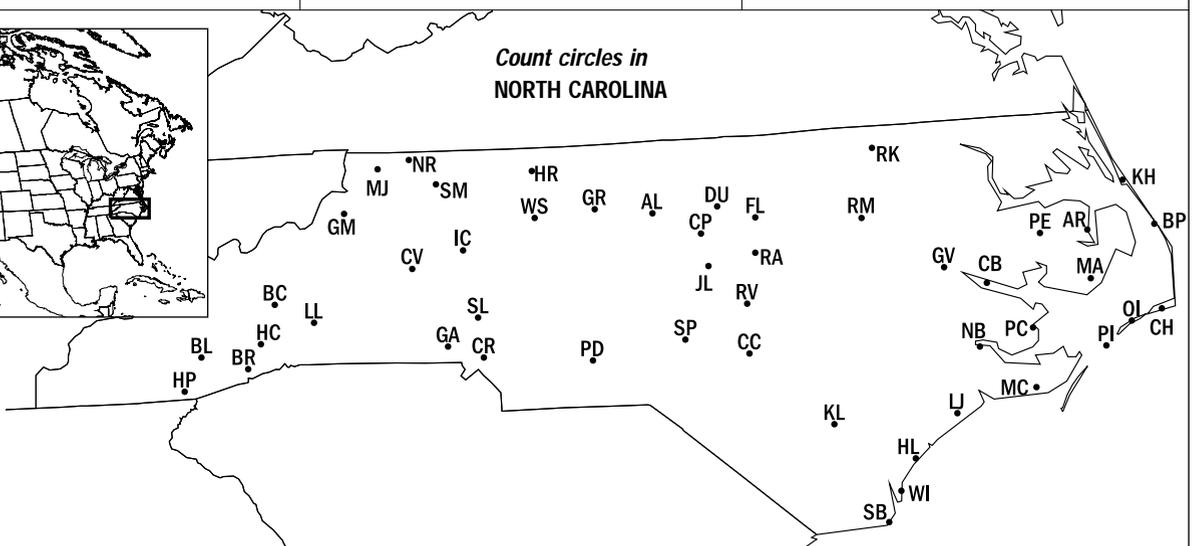
Northern Goshawk at Alligator River N.W.R. (ninth North Carolina CBC), and a good showing from Golden Eagle with two at Alligator River and singles at Mattamuskeet and Pettigrew. A count week **Yellow Rail** was seen at Morehead City, always a noteworthy event in the state. There were eight Sandhill Cranes found this season with five at Henderson County, two at Pamlico County, and one at Pee Dee N.W.R. Sandpiper numbers for most species rebounded from last year. Noteworthy birds included a Wilson's Plover at Morehead, inland Spotted Sandpipers at Kerr Lake (2) and Charlotte, and a **White-rumped Sandpiper** at Bodie-Pea. The latter bird, apparently injured, provided a first North Carolina CBC record as the species is extremely unusual in the state after November. Gull highlights included the farthest inland **Black-headed Gull** ever for North Carolina at Charlotte, the farthest inland **Thayer's Gull** ever for the

state at Southern Lake Norman, an Iceland Gull at Cape Hatteras, a Glaucous Gull at Holly Shelter, and four Black-legged Kittiwakes at Cape Hatteras. Overall tern numbers were back up from last year. Of interest was the count week **Caspian Tern** at Falls Lake; an inland Caspian in December is truly not to be expected in North Carolina. Parasitic Jaegers were present in good numbers with a total of 11 being found on four counts. **Razorbills** staged an impressive early flight into southern North Carolina coastal waters this year. Wilmington's amazing count of 981, along with 5 from three other counts, produced a grand total of **986** for the NC CBC. This obliterated the previous North Carolina CBC grand total of 22 from the 108th CBC!

The Morehead City count produced a **Long-eared Owl**, a species that is probably present in the state each winter but is notoriously hard to find. Hummingbirds again made news on the counts with six Rufous spread across the state, a total of 55 Ruby-throateds along the coast, an **Anna's Hummingbird** at New Bern, and a count week **Allen's Hummingbird** at Catawba Valley. The latter two were easily first time North Carolina CBC records. Woodpecker numbers were on a par with those from last season, but the total of 126 Red-cockadedads from six counts was very impressive. This tied the previous high count from the 98th CBC. An **Ash-throated Flycatcher** was a good find on



Count circles in
NORTH CAROLINA



the Pettigrew count. This was the seventh count season to record this species for the North Carolina CBC, all since the 102nd count! Tree Swallow numbers were down considerably this year, although the location of the large wintering flocks present in the state does not always fall into count circles. Red-breasted Nuthatch numbers were back down compared to last year. Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher numbers were back up this year, while Hermit Thrush, American Robin, and mimic thrush numbers were down. No Lapland Longspurs or Snow Buntings were detected during the counts this year. Warbler highlights this count season included three **Northern Parulas** with singles at Mattamuskeet, Greenville, and New Bern; and an **American Redstart** at Holly Shelter provided only the fourth North Carolina CBC record. Numbers of Prairie Warblers (8) were up while Black-and-whites (5) and Ovenbirds (3) were down. Last year's **Summer Tanagers** at Raleigh and Wilmington returned for this winter's counts; this time the Raleigh bird was seen count day while the Wilmington bird was noted count week! Noteworthy sparrows included four Bachman's (singles at Wilmington and Southport, and two at Southern Pines), single Clay-colored and Grasshopper at Greenville, a Henslow's at Holly Shelter, four Le Conte's (2 at Gastonia and singles at New Bern and Greenville), and a good total of nine Lincoln's from eight counts. An **Indigo Bunting** was a good find at Rocky Mount, as inland winter Indigos are quite rare. Wintering Painted Bunting numbers were down with four at Southport, two at Holly Shelter, and singles at Morehead City and Kitty Hawk. Blackbird numbers were down overall, and the best Rusty Blackbird counts were 101 at Durham and 81 at Greensboro. A **Brewer's Blackbird** was at Henderson County, providing a good North Carolina CBC report for that mountains locality. Baltimore Oriole numbers were down somewhat with the

best count total being 11 at Rocky Mount. Finches were way down when compared to last winter. Purple Finches (40 on 14 counts) and Pine Siskins (66 on 9 counts) were spread rather thinly and in small numbers across the state. And for the fifth year in a row, not a single Evening Grosbeak was observed during the counts!

SOUTH CAROLINA

Dennis M. Forsythe
Department of Biology
The Citadel
 171 Moultrie Street
 Charleston, SC 29409
 dennis.forsythe@gmail.com

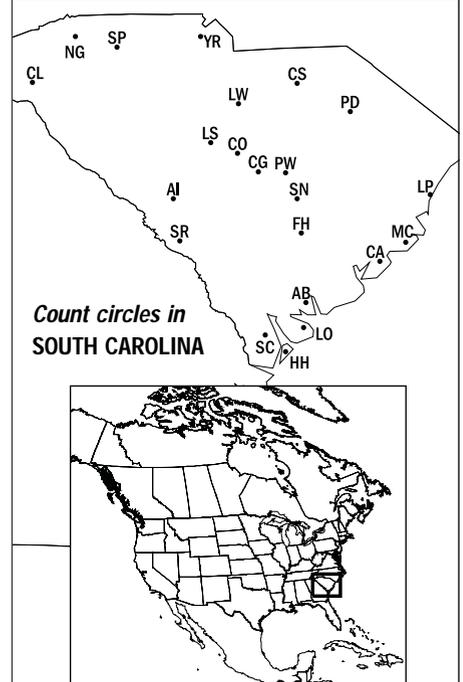
Twenty-two counts were conducted in South Carolina during the 112th CBC season, three less than last year. This winter was unusually warm, with a number of late migrants and half-hardy species along with reduced numbers of wintering species, especially waterfowl. There were good numbers of Pied-billed Grebes, Cooper's Hawks, woodpeckers, titmice, chickadees, and Winter Wrens. Le Conte's Sparrow had a mini-invasion on midlands counts. The warm winter also resulted in reduced numbers of Northern Harriers, kinglets, catbirds, juncos, sparrows, and blackbirds. Eurasian Collared-Dove numbers declined, perhaps related to the increase in Cooper's Hawks. Northern Bobwhite, American Kestrel, and Loggerhead Shrike continue to decline. Red-breasted Nuthatch, Purple Finch, and Pine Siskin were virtually absent. For the first time in recent memory, all counts experienced excellent weather conditions except temperature-challenged Lake Wateree.

McClellanville tallied the highest species total (176), while Santee N.W.R. (127) was the highest Outer Coastal Plains count, Savannah River Site (109) the highest count of the Inner Coastal Plains/Sandhills, and Clemson (90) the highest Piedmont count.

The ACE Basin tally (146) had two exclusives: Black-bellied Whistling-Duck and two of the reintroduced Whooping Cranes, plus a high of 50

Bald Eagles. Aiken (82) had their first Grasshopper Sparrow, plus a low for the declining Rusty Blackbird. Charleston (133) had a count-first adult Lesser Black-backed Gull, plus new lows for 17 percent of species, including the endangered Piping Plover. Congaree Swamp (95) had five new species (Merlin, Solitary Sandpiper, Barn Owl, and Le Conte's and Henslow's sparrows) and 15 record tallies. New to Clemson (90) was a Cattle Egret. Unique there was the high count of 40 Brewer's Blackbirds. Columbia (84) had four new species (Snow Goose, Anhinga, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Harris's Sparrow). Cooper's Hawk, Sedge Wren, and Le Conte's Sparrow were new for the Carolina Sandhills N.W.R. (78). Four-hole Swamp (89) had four new species (Wilson's Snipe, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Bachman's Sparrow, and one Red-breasted Nuthatch). Thirty-seven Purple Finches were also notable.

Hilton Head Island (156) had a remarkable Red-eyed Vireo, plus record counts for Wood Stork and Anhinga. In its third year, the Lowcountry count (112) had excellent results with increased coverage, including 11 new species and record counts of Bald Eagles and American Oystercatchers. Also remarkable was the 1180 Willets.



Count circles in SOUTH CAROLINA