



The Peregrine

Three Rivers Birding Club Newsletter

<http://www.3rbc.org>

Vol. 15, No. 5, September/October 2016



GEMS OF THE PACIFIC – Two of the exciting species you will see in Geoff Malosh’s program on October 5 are the Salvin’s Albatross (left) at Kaikoura, New Zealand, and the Red-tailed



Tropicbird at Kilauea, Hawaii (right). Geoff photographed these and many more birds on trips to far-flung regions of the Pacific Ocean. His shows always bring breathtaking oohs and ahhs.

Gorgeous Seabirds Will Thrill Us at Our Oct. 5 Meeting

Geoff Malosh’s extraordinary 3RBC programs have delighted record-setting audiences. His presentation on Wednesday, October 5, is titled “A Few Seabirds of the Pacific.” Geoff will take us across the Pacific Ocean from Alaska to Hawaii to New Zealand for a feast of photos and knowledge of the birds.

The meeting will be held at the Phipps Garden Center, 1059 Shady Avenue in Shadyside. Doors open at 6:30 PM for socializing, a business meeting begins at 7:30, and the program starts at 8:00.

During the past two years, Geoff has traveled the Pacific in pursuit of his long-held interest in seabirds. Recent trips have taken him to the South Island of New Zealand, Hawai’i, and St. Paul Island, Alaska. His presentation will share photos and stories of his travels to these remote islands, and tell us about the biology and lives of these interesting birds.

The program will feature beautiful images of albatrosses, petrels, tropicbirds, auklets, puffins, and more. Geoff says his presentation will not be a comprehensive treatment of these diverse families of birds. But he hopes it will be enough for us to share his curiosity and interest in seabirds.

Geoff is a prominent expert on the birds of our state and beyond. He recently “retired” as editor of the journal *Pennsylvania Birds*, a position he held since 2007. He is a former member of the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee, and this year received the first-ever Service Award from the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology.

His knowledge of bird identification and behavior has led to his appointment as a statewide reviewer for the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s eBird program.



Remembering Chuck Tague

Western Pennsylvania lost a treasure of natural history knowledge, an extraordinary teacher, and an inspiring missionary for conservation on June 17, 2016.

Chuck Tague died at age 71 in Florida. Gaye Welton’s photo at left shows his favorite activity: teaching young people. The memorial comments on pages 9-10 honor his life and legacy.

See *The Peregrine* in beautiful color at 3rbc.org

President's Message

Birding with Chuck

By Bob VanNewkirk

I credit two mentors with the genesis of my passion for birding. The first was Joyce Hoffman, whom I met at her beginners' bird class at the North Hills branch of CCAC in 1998. Instead of spending all of our time in a classroom, we visited local parks. Thanks to Joyce's identification lessons and field trips, my interest in birding was piqued, and I wanted to seek out others who could educate me further in all aspects of birding.

That wish led me to my second mentor: Chuck Tague. I first met him on his March 2000 outing at Pymatuning State Park. What a great day of discovery! Chuck's fantastic knowledge of the park and other local hotspots was amazing. At each stop, we found adult and immature Bald Eagles and other raptors, as well as a good diversity of waterfowl species in nearby ponds and marshes. I noted in my journal when I returned home, "I love birding with Chuck. He can identify birds by sight and sound. He's like a human field guide. No need to pull out my Peterson [field guide]."

Over the years, I tried never to miss one of Chuck's well-attended outings. He was a die-hard birder in all seasons. His visits to a wide range of destinations targeted select species: the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch for raptor migration; the Bavington game lands for grassland birds; Hillman State Park for owls and Eastern Whip-poor-will; Bald Knob for shorebirds and uncommon species; Raccoon State Park for warblers; Presque Isle State Park for warblers, waterfowl, gulls, and shorebirds. My life list kept growing with each trip, as well as my admiration for his birding and people skills. His calm demeanor and pleasant personality made him very approachable to discuss any nature-related subject or just to chat about other topics of interest.

Besides being an excellent bird guide, Chuck always seemed to be in a teaching frame of mind. He presented bird identification workshops at the Frick Environmental Center. He offered classroom and assembly programs on nature, wildlife and the environment for all grades from preschool to high school. I had the pleasure to schedule Chuck as a guest presenter at Seville Elementary School, where I was teaching. His program was entitled "Birds of Prey," and he brought an education bird – a Red-tailed Hawk. After his entertaining and informative program, Chuck invited the students and staff to pet the hawk. What a fantastic way for them to connect with this beautiful creature!

But perhaps what Chuck became better known for in Western Pennsylvania than even his birding prowess was his *Nature Observer News*. Each monthly edition consisted of 12 pages with a wide range of interesting articles written by Chuck and many local experts about bird-related topics such as recent sightings, trip reports, observed behaviors, rehabbing of injured birds, and citizen-science conservation projects. Each edition also included features related to astronomy, wildflowers, trees, and individuals and organizations recognized for significant contributions to nature. Five pages were donated to announcing events sponsored by many of our area's nature-related organizations, county and state parks, nature centers, nature reserves, and local radio talk shows devoted to nature programming.

When Pittsburgh bird lovers met at the Frick Park Nature Center on July 29, 2001, to organize the Three Rivers Birding Club, Chuck promoted this inaugural meeting in the *Nature Observer News*. He published articles by Jack Solomon, club

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Send articles and/or illustrations to:

Paul Hess, Editor
phess@salsgiver.com
1412 Hawthorne St., Natrona Heights, PA 15065

Send ideas or items for the website to:

Julia Pahountis-Opacic, Webmaster
3RBC.website@gmail.com

Send questions and suggestions to:

Bob VanNewkirk, President
van126@comcast.net
126 Timberlane Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15229-1059

Suggest or volunteer to lead outings to:

Steve Thomas, Outings Director
thomassj22@verizon.net
309 Center Ave., Aspinwall, PA 15215

Report bird sightings to:

Mike Fialkovich, Bird Reports Editor
mpfial@verizon.net
805 Beulah Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Send other correspondence to:

Sherron and Pat Lynch, Co-Secretaries
pmfohl@zbzoom.net
195 Hill Haven Lane, Wexford, PA 15090-8834

Membership: FREE Student-Youth, \$15 Individual, \$20 Family, \$50 Contributing, \$100 Sustaining

Send check to Three Rivers Birding Club
c/o Thomas J. Moeller, Treasurer
6357 Ebdy St., Pittsburgh, PA 15217-3035
thosjmoel@gmail.com

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president, detailing the club's activities, and by Paul Hess, newsletter editor, describing the newsletter's planned features and information about the first regular meeting on October 17. Guess who would be the first guest to present a slide show featuring waterfowl and providing identification tips? And guess who was going to lead the inaugural outing to Moraine State Park on October 21 to find and help ID those waterfowl? Chuck, of course.

I lost contact with Chuck after he moved to Florida, but I heard through his friends in Pittsburgh that he was leading outings there. In March 2012, my wife and I traveled to Titusville, Florida, where I visited the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and by happenstance met up with my old mentor. He knew immediately who I was, and we talked about our observations at the Refuge. As we headed back to our cars, he asked me if I would like to see a Clapper Rail. He knew where one was near. That rail was a lifer for me. Typical of Chuck, he was always finding a way to help out a birder. This quote reminds me of him:

"The goal of life is to make your heart beat match the beat of the universe, to match your nature with nature." ~ Joseph Campbell, American writer

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Outings to Come

A Fall of Many Walks and Our Annual Picnic

By Steve Thomas, Outings Director

Friday, September 2 – Sewickley Heights Park: In collaboration with the Fern Hollow Nature Center, Sheree Daugherty (shereedaugherty@gmail.com) will lead this walk beginning at 8:00 AM in the upper parking lot. See directions to the park on the 3RBC website (3rbc.org). Besides birding in the park we will drive and make stops along Little Sewickley Creek. Be prepared for muddy trails. It is also advisable to bring water and a lunch. Warblers, flycatchers, thrushes, and vireos will be our target species.

Saturday, September 3 – Harrison Hills Park: Meet leader Jim Valimont (412-828-5338) at 8:00 AM at this county park off Freeport Road between Natrona Heights and Freeport. As you enter the park, bear right and proceed to the parking lot with the traffic circle at the end of the road. Please note, this is not the soccer field parking lot farther down. Dress for wet grass and mud. Previous fall outings have produced a nice variety of fall migrants, including warblers and vireos.

Friday, September 9 – Sewickley Heights Park: In collaboration with the Fern Hollow Nature Center, Bob VanNewkirk (412-366-1694; van126@comcast.net) will lead this walk. We will meet at 8:00 AM at the upper parking lot. See the September 2 listing for further information.

Saturday, September 10 – Dead Man’s Hollow: David Yeany (814-221-4361) will lead our first outing at Allegheny Land Trust’s Dead Man’s Hollow, which is south of Port Vue in Liberty Borough, Allegheny County. Meet him at 7:30 AM in the parking area at the end of Calhoun Road in Elizabeth. We will hike several miles along the ridgeline, into the hollow, and along the Great Allegheny Passage. Here is a link to a map of the site: tinyurl.com/deadman-hollow. Calhoun Road is off Liberty Way going south out of Port Vue/Liberty Borough. Google address: 1 Calhoun Road Elizabeth, PA. GPS coordinates: 40.3115,-708465.

Sunday, September 18 – Presque Isle State Park: Join Bob VanNewkirk (412-366-1694; van126@comcast.net) at one of the state’s prime locations for seeing fall migrants. Meet at 8:30 AM in the first parking lot (Vista 1) on the right as you enter the park. The park is at the north end of Route 832 just west of the city of Erie. Bring a lunch.

Sunday, September 18 – Frick Park: Jack and Sue Solomon (412-521-3365) will lead us starting at 8:30 AM. Meet at the “Blue Slide” park entrance, corner of Beechwood Boulevard and Nicholson Street in Squirrel Hill. Frick can be an excellent fall migrant trap, and we hope for lots of warblers. Take Beechwood Boulevard south from its intersection with Forbes Avenue, 1.1 miles to Nicholson. You will need to park on the street.

Tuesday, September 20 – Moraine State Park: Michael Shaffer, environmental education specialist for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (724-368-3612), invites members of the 3RBC, the Todd Bird Club, and other bird clubs

to look for fall migrants. Meet at 8:00 AM in the Day Use Area (South Shore) in the first parking lot on the right. We will bird along the Sunken Garden Trail and decide from there where else in the park we would like to bird. The outing will end at about 11:00 AM. From I-79, take Route 422 East toward Butler and exit at the Moraine State Park exit. At the end of the ramp, turn left and go straight into the park until you see the first major parking area on your right. Allow one hour driving from Pittsburgh.

Sunday, September 25 – Riding Meadow Park (Fox Chapel): Meet Cecelia Hard (412-759-9565) inside the park entrance at 8:00 AM. Be prepared for muddy trails, wet grass, and a creek crossing. Some of the trails are steep and narrow. We may encounter dogs off-leash. There are no bathroom facilities.

From Pittsburgh take Route 28 North to Exit 8 for Freeport Road, turn left onto Fox Chapel Road (1.1 miles), then take a slight left onto Squaw Run Road (1.1 miles). Turn right onto Squaw Run Road east. From the north, take Dorseyville Road and turn left onto Squaw Run Road (1.2 miles), then left (east) onto Squaw Run Road. Riding Meadow Park will be on the left (0.8 mile). Park in the lot directly opposite from the entrance. GPS coordinates: 40.523676, -79.891976.

Sunday, October 9 – Pymatuning Area: Meet leader Bob VanNewkirk (412-366-1694; van126@comcast.net) at the Wildlife Learning Center (Waterfowl Museum) at 8:00 AM for this all-day outing. Plenty of waterfowl, Bald Eagles, and migrant songbirds should be around. Arrangements will be made for lunch at the Spillway Inn for those who are interested.

Sunday, October 30 – Moraine State Park Picnic: Mark your calendar for the annual 3RBC picnic and bird walk. We will meet at 8:00 AM in the Day Use Area (South Shore) in the first parking lot on the right. After the morning outing, we will have the pot-luck picnic at a park pavilion near McDanel’s Boat Launch. Please bring a dish that will serve 4-6 people. From I-79, take Route 422 east toward Butler and exit at the Moraine State Park exit. At the end of the ramp, turn left and go straight into the park until you see the first major parking area on your right. Allow one hour driving from Pittsburgh.

Saturday, November 5 – Yellow Creek State Park: This will be a joint outing of the 3RBC and the Todd Bird Club. Meet Margaret Higbee (724-354-3493) at the park office at 8:00 AM. The office is located on Route 259 just off Route 422 east of Indiana. Allow an hour and 30 minutes to drive from Pittsburgh. Diverse habitats, including a large lake, attract a wide variety of waterbirds and sometimes exciting rarities.

Sunday, November 20 – Moraine State Park: We will gather at the Day Use Area (South Shore) in the first parking lot on the right at 8:00 AM. This will be a leaderless outing. From I-79, take route 422 east toward Butler and exit at the Moraine State Park exit. At the end of the ramp turn left and travel straight into the park until you see the first major parking area on your right. Allow one hour driving from Pittsburgh.

Outings are free and open to the public. In the event of inclement weather, call the leader in advance to confirm whether the outing is on or canceled. Call the leader, too, with other questions about weather, driving, or trail conditions.

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Outings Revisited

The Migration Season Gave Way to the Summer

Presque Isle – May 21: It rained almost constantly on my way to Bob VanNewkirk’s outing, and I wondered if many people would bother to show up on such a chilly, wet morning. By the time I reached the first parking lot in the park, the rain had stopped, and a hardy group of 16 had shown up. Bob welcomed everyone and told us that we could expect to see roughly 50,000 Yellow Warblers and, hopefully, a few other species. As he spoke, Yellow Warblers were singing, along with American Robins, Song Sparrows, and Baltimore Orioles.

We crossed the road to a quieter, wooded area, and found Blackpoll Warblers, American Redstarts, Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, and Bay-breasted Warblers darting about in the shrubbery. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird zipped by. Gray Catbirds, Red-winged Blackbirds, and Common Grackles made it challenging to listen for other birds. An Eastern Wood-Pewee was heard and finally seen. Most of the gulls were Ring-billed, but at least one Herring Gull flew over. As we made our way back to our cars, it was a treat to watch a male House Finch feeding a female.

Two Spotted Sandpipers hurried into cover as we arrived at Leo’s Landing, and several Tree Swallows were swooping overhead. Three Lesser Scaup were sleeping in the bay, with a Ruddy Duck nearby. A male Wood Duck was half hidden in the weeds across the pond. A few Cedar Waxwings twittered as they passed by. We heard our first Wood Thrush and Warbling Vireo.

Near the ranger station along the trail next to the bay, we heard Yellow Warblers and Gray Catbirds in the bushes. The station’s feeders were swarmed by Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and House Sparrows, and it was nice to see

several Baltimore Orioles coming in for jelly. A White-breasted Nuthatch worked the trunk of a tree. On our way back to the cars, we tried to give a wide berth to a pair of Canada Geese with four goslings.

It’s always fun to watch the bird banding at Fry’s Landing. In quick succession, Laura-Marie Koitsch processed Northern Waterthrush, Great Crested Flycatcher, Lincoln’s Sparrow, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Gray Catbird, Magnolia Warbler, and Red-bellied Woodpecker. Sarah Sargent, one of the volunteers, showed off the birds after they had been banded, and she answered our many questions. The flycatcher was the noisiest, and the red-belly the fiercest. For a while, a Scarlet Tanager watched the proceedings with us from a higher vantage point.

When the banding slowed, we explored a nearby trail and found many Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Cape May, Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, and Black-and-white Warblers flitting about. American Redstarts and Common Yellowthroats were also in evidence.

We were thrilled to find a Philadelphia Vireo and a Canada Warbler. A Great Crested Flycatcher posed in the open. A few people saw a female Black-throated Blue Warbler. A Hairy Woodpecker was new for the day, and we heard our first Eastern Towhee. As we left, a Turkey Vulture floated high overhead.

While we had a picnic lunch at the pavilion at the Beach 11 pavilion, a male Red-winged Blackbird sauntered into the shelter and demonstrated his highest notes for us; we wondered whether he was begging for handouts. It was exciting when two adult Bald Eagles flew low over us. An Eastern Phoebe was flycatching in the nearby field as we walked to the beach, but aside from a few Ring-billed Gulls and a Bufflehead on the water, it was quiet. A tern flew too far out to be identified.

At the North Pier, a flighty Eastern Kingbird allowed a few people quick scope looks. Double-crested Cormorants and a Caspian Tern were more cooperative. It was breezy, and rain was

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PRESQUE ISLE HIGHLIGHTS – Birders enjoyed watching bird banders at work during our May 21 outing at this great hot spot for migrants. Great Crested Flycatchers don’t often show up for



banders. Michelle Kienholz photographed the angry one at left. Always a favorite for spring birders is a male Cape May Warbler, and Beth Hartman shows us why in her photo at the outing.

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REGIONAL RARITY – A Glossy Ibis is a rare visitor to western Pennsylvania at any season, and their subtle colors are especially beautiful in the spring. Steve Gosser was fortunate to photograph this one on April 16, 2016 in Indiana County.



OUT IN THE OPEN – To see an Olive-sided Flycatcher, the best place to look is on the tip of a bare branch high in a tree, just like this one's conspicuous perch. Geoff Malosh photographed it at Sewickley Heights Park on May 20, 2016.

Outings Revisited

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beginning. We were happy to get into our cars and drive to the Waterworks to watch the Purple Martin houses. A few youngsters could be seen, but the rain seemed to have grounded most adults.

On the Old Gas Well Trail we saw only a Magnolia Warbler, a couple of Yellow Warblers, and American Redstarts. Did I mention that it was pouring at this point? I counted heads and realized that we still had 16 people with us. There was no question: We were in the company of some very hard-core birders! It's a good thing that they had come to our club outing. There's no cure for this obsession, but we can certainly help them see more birds!

As we stood dripping in the parking lot, Bob told us that he would like to check out the Pine Tree Trail. A few people left, but a dozen of us continued to our last stop. A Killdeer flashed across the road as we arrived, and a few people reported a Wild Turkey. In spite of the rain, the woods were full of warblers: more Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Black-and-white, American Redstart, and Common Yellowthroat. We added an Ovenbird and a Northern Parula. We puzzled over a quiet flycatcher until it finally called *Pee-o-wee*.

We were a wet, bedraggled, but happy group of birders as we said our goodbyes. We were ready to admit that we had indeed seen 50,000 Yellow Warblers and were happy with the other 74 species. –**by participant Debbie Kalbfleisch**

Frick Park – May 22: Aidan Place met us to lead an outing that was memorable for two things: a person who showed up unexpectedly, and a magnificent look at a memorable warbler.

We saw the usual assortment of late May birds, including an exciting surprise visitor – an old dude finding some good birds who seemed to know his botany and insects, too. He looked vaguely familiar. Finally, his voice gave him away. I said, “Mike Leahy, what brings you down here?” Mike lives near the Piney Tract in Clarion County and led outings for 3RBC at those great grasslands. Mike was visiting relatives in Pittsburgh and showed up for our outing.

The memorable bird made itself known late in the outing when avian activity had slowed to a crawl. As we chatted, Aidan suddenly paused, looked and pointed upward on Clayton Hill,

uttering the thrilling words, “That’s a Mourning Warbler I hear. It’s somewhere up there.” No one else heard a thing. Quickly, he scampered up a footpath about 30 or 40 yards. When I caught up, he and several others were staring at the bird in a mass of shrubbery. Despite their help and directions, I couldn’t see it. Having not seen one all year, I felt despair creeping over me. Eons seemed to pass. Finally, the bird moved a little, and I got on it: relief and thrill. It remains my only Mourning Warbler this year. –**by participant Jack Solomon**

Jacobs Creek Wetlands – June 18: This was the second attempt to lead an outing at this location after it was rained out last year. This year was very different with sunny skies and warm temperatures that brought out 23 participants.

We walked trails that wind through the small ponds, finding many birds that prefer wetlands and brush. This area has dense thickets of Gray-stemmed Dogwood that provide cover and food.

We heard and saw at least three Brown Thrashers, and two more made repeated appearances on the road. A White-eyed Vireo was heard but not seen near the brushy wooded edge. Numerous Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and Brown-headed Cowbirds were on hand. A few Orchard Orioles were singing, providing nice views. We also saw a few Baltimore Orioles.

We heard a Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Later, some of the group saw one perched in a sycamore, but it flew off before most of us could see it. One (perhaps the same one) flew across the road in front of the group, again eluding most of us. A few observers saw a Northern Harrier, and a Warbling Vireo sang only once – unusual for a bird that sings almost constantly.

Two Green Herons and a Pileated Woodpecker flew over. A male Ruby-throated Hummingbird on a dead snag gave us good views. Yellow Warblers were almost everywhere, and Willow Flycatchers included one we saw very closely. We had 51 species for the day.

Seventeen-year Cicadas were around, but were not loud enough or close enough *en masse* to keep us from hearing birds.

–**by leader Mike Fialkovich**

Costa Rica Has It All: Can't Wait to Go Back!

By Sheree Daugherty

Whether your interests are birding, botanizing, zip-lining, or cultural studies, this Costa Rica delivers. This West Virginia-sized country has more species of birds than the entire United States: more than 900 species have been recorded within its borders.

Costa Rica preserves one quarter of its lands in a natural state, the highest percentage of any country. From hot, humid lowlands at sea level to cool mountains that soar to more than 12,500 feet, it is a nature lover's paradise.

The Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania arranged our April 8-17 adventure with Holbrook Travel. Edwin Ramirez was our excellent in-country guide. Our group included Lorraine Asturino, Jim Bonner, Sheree Daugherty, Michelle Kienholz, Melissa Little, Virginia McQuown, Clare Nicolls, Cliff and Joan Schoff, Brian Shema, Steve and Suzanne Thomas, Jim and Dorothy Valimont, and Bob VanNewkirk.

When we arrived, we met our guide and driver, and were directed to the bus that would haul us for the next 10 days.

On the way to Selva Verde Lodge in Sarapiquí, we made a few roadside stops. First we visited a small store or "soda" to check out bird feeders. Violet Saberwings, the largest hummingbird in Central America, wowed us along with Bananaquits and Silver-throated and Passerini's Tanagers. At another stop we found our first Yellow-throated Toucans. An Elegant Euphonia played hide-and-seek in a ball of mistletoe. A family of Mantled Howler Monkeys delighted us as they swung through the trees.

Selva Verde was our home for three nights. We checked in and walked to our elevated, screened-in rooms. No need for an alarm clock for morning wake up -- Howler Monkeys took care of that!

We started at 5:30 AM with the first of what our guide called the "coffee ritual." What a perfect beginning to each day: birding from the deck of the dining hall while sipping delicious Costa Rican coffee!

The Selva Verde Reserve protects over 500 acres of rainforest including some of the largest almond trees in Central America., which are essential to the survival of the endangered Great Green Macaw. We saw the macaws twice, along with numerous Scarlet Macaws. Hummers zipped through the profusion of flowers included White-necked Jacobins, Green-breasted Mangos, Crowned Woodnymphs, and Bronze-tailed Plumeleeters.

We were up early to depart for the La Selva Biological Station, which is world renowned for research on rainforest ecology. We were dropped off to hike in, and birded along the way. We quickly added Chestnut-collared Woodpecker, Long-tailed Tyrant, and Fasciated Antbird to our list. Several mammals made appearances. Collared Peccaries crossed the road, an Agouti walk-hopped by, and a tree lump proved to be a Three-toed Sloth.

At La Selva, before we got to the forest, King Vultures soared overhead and Blue Dacnis bounced through trees. In the forest we had our first sightings of the Royal Flycatcher, which has an impressive "watermelon" crest visible only when the bird is displaying or stressed. It would have been nice to see the raised crest, but I'm glad the bird was not annoyed by our presence.

A folded banana leaf alerted our guides that there might be something hidden within. Inside were two furry ping-pong ball-



A REAL DAZZLER – This Yellow-throated Toucan was a highlight for birders on an Audubon Society of Pennsylvania tour of Costa Rica in April 2016. ASWP's Brian Shema photographed it.

sized Ghost Bats, snuggled together in their daytime roost. A more photogenic Two-toed Sloth appeared high in a tree. Its face was visible, and it may have been asleep. Hard to tell; it's a sloth!

On the way to Arenal, we took a side road and found a Spectacled Owl sitting on a nest. Leaf-cutter ants made a path along the road, each one holding high a green flag of leaf.

The Arenal volcano was clearly visible on this rare cloud-free day. Soon on a park trail, we found an Eyelash Pit Viper in a small tree. Another find was a Great Potoo, one of the strangest birds I've ever seen. These birds look like a dead tree stump.

At the cooler elevations of Monteverde, where visiting biologists recognized the cloud forest's diversity, and which became the Tropical Science Center: Monteverde Cloud Forest Biological Reserve.

We stopped at the Curi Cancha Reserve and soon heard the call of a Three-wattled Bellbird. Eventually we had great scope views of one over our heads. Its black wattles wobbled as it called.

At the Santa Elena Cloud Forest we visited an area known to have the coveted Resplendent Quetzal. A nesting box was mounted along the trail. There are fewer natural cavities, and experimental boxes are being tried with some success. A park naturalist alerted us to a quetzal's location. Revitalized, we scampered up the steep hillside to see a beautiful male with streaming tail feathers.

Next, at San Luis we visited the "Women of the Cloud

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Costa Rica

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Forest,” who make embroidered bags and jewelry using seeds from local plants. The road to the village was narrow and rutted, with a breathtakingly steep drop-off on one side. To divert our attention, the guide suggested that we “look at the orchids” growing on the hillside. I think he was really saying, “Don’t look into the abyss.”

The ladies welcomed us graciously. We sat around a long table and were given everything needed to make beaded jewelry. After trying our hands at jewelry-making, the ladies had us make tortillas. We each took a ball of dough and with mixed results formed tortillas, and cooked them on a griddle over a wood fire.

On the way to lower elevations and the transitional forest of Carara, a stop on the Pacific Ocean’s Gulf of Nicoya gave us squadrons of Magnificent Frigatebirds, Brown Pelicans, and a Yellow-headed Caracara.

Detouring on a dusty road, we found several Turquoise-browed Motmots. The road ran through a creek where we were amazed to see a young Plumed Basilisk “run” across the water—behavior earns it the common name Jesus Christ Lizard.

After we checked in at the Hotel Villa Lapas, a boat tour on the Tarcoles River gave us waders including Wood Storks, Roseate Spoonbills, and White Ibis along the shore. The comical-looking Boat-billed Heron was in the mangroves, and one was on a nest. Perhaps the favorite bird on the river was the American Pygmy Kingfisher—at only 5 inches, it’s a cutie. One sat only feet away and repeatedly dived and caught small fish. What a show!

Raptors included Zone-tailed Hawk, Plumbeous Kite, and Collared Forest Falcon. Scarlet Macaws flew over in pairs, and a flock of threatened Yellow-naped Parrots roosted in a tree.

The sun set over the Pacific and we headed back to the docks. As we pulled into the Hotel Villa Lapas, a Common Pauraque sat in the road.

After a wonderful breakfast of scrambled eggs, *gallo pinto* (don’t forget the Salsa Lizano!) and fried plantains, we bussed to Carara National Park for a hike. Perhaps the day’s most exciting sighting was an Orange-collared Manakin. On second thought, maybe it was the Scarlet Macaws at the nest cavity. So many wonderful sights made it hard to decide!

Hooting Howler Monkeys had been our morning wake-up for most of the trip. Here a troop of White-faced Capuchins seemed as curious about us as we were about them. Considered the most intelligent monkey of the four species in Costa Rica, they seemed thoughtful and deliberate. I watched one take a section of palm stem and methodically break small pieces off looking for a tasty grub. A mother with a baby on her back came the closest; her baby watched us over her shoulder.

As we ended the hike, a Spider Monkey swung into view. Spiders are the largest and judged the most evolutionarily primitive Costa Rican monkeys. With only four fingers, they lack an opposable thumb.

The next morning we took a steep road above the hotel and were dropped off to bird our way back to breakfast. We saw a Long-tailed Manakin, with its two long streamer-like tail feathers waving in flight. A Crested Owl sat on a branch looking bored, and a Pale-billed Woodpecker hitched up a tree down the valley.

As all journeys must, ours neared its end. We packed and headed to our departure for a last checklist review and dinner. It was a wonderful trip and wonderful group. Can’t wait to go back!



Our Conservation Award

The Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania has honored our Three Rivers Birding Club with ASWP’s 2016 Trustee Award presented to an organization “in recognition of outstanding effort to further the cause of conservation in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.”

ASWP Operations Director Brian Shema presented the award to club President Bob VanNewkirk on July 14 in Oakland at the society’s 100th anniversary banquet. Many 3RBC members attended the banquet and then walked to the Carnegie Institute Lecture Hall to see an illustrated program by David Allen Sibley, one of North America’s most prominent ornithologists and field guide authors. The attendees received an autographed copy of *Sibley Birds East*, a field guide to the continent’s eastern species.

Above, Brian presents Bob with the impressive award sculpture in metal, a wetland bird amid marsh vegetation – a classic emblem of the importance of preserving marshlands. Below, Bob holds the award flanked at left by Jack Solomon, 3RBC’s founding president, and at right by Jim Valimont, 3RBC’s second president. (photographs by Mike Fialkovich)



The Peregrine



ACTION-PACKED HUNTER – Northern Mockingbirds use a specialized method of finding prey: flashing white wing patches to scare up insects from vegetation. Tom Moeller explains it in his new “Observations” column, and his photos above depict three steps in the action: checking a likely spot, spreading its wings, and suddenly making the flash.

Observations

Mockingbirds Show Us How to Scare Up a Meal

By Tom Moeller

My wife, Nancy, and I stopped at the South Taylor Environmental Center near the Allegheny County Airport in West Mifflin in June 2016. This “environmental center” looks like a pleasant little park with a pond, trees, and grassy areas, but its name is a misnomer because it was built on a hazardous waste material dump. It is now permanently closed to the public, but birds still congregate there, unaware of its toxic origins.

No, we did not venture into the park but stayed at the closed entrance in our car, using it as a blind and letting the birds approach closely. One bold bird, a Northern Mockingbird, came close more than once. It was obviously aware of us, even sitting on a fence near us staring at our binoculars.

We noticed it searching in its own special way. The flickers were pecking at insects, but the mockingbird was walking along the roadside facing the grass. Every few feet the bird would spread its wings to expose the white patches. This motion was slow, almost mechanical, and silent. The bird repeated it at each stop.

I knew what it was doing because I had attended Dr. Ron Mumme’s talk to our club in April 2016. He had researched how Slate-throated Redstarts in Costa Rica and Hooded Warblers in Pennsylvania scare up insects to catch by flashing the white feathers in their tails.

The mockingbird we watched was trying to scare up insects by suddenly flashing the white areas on its wings. The sudden jolt of conspicuous white scared the hidden insects into escape attempts including flight, where they were more easily snatched.

Ornithologists have observed this behavior by mockingbirds, but have noted that wing-flashing is also used as a defensive posture against other mockingbirds during territory disputes, as well as against other species and predators. These aggressive encounters are made along with repeated, loud *chew* calls.

The researchers are uncertain about the relationship of the two uses of wing-flashing and are not certain which came first – defensive action or food-gathering strategy. Other mockingbirds wing-flash, but none have the Northern’s white wing patches. Related species like catbirds and thrashers also wing-flash, but do so merely by movement with no white wing bars. An ancient ancestor of these mimids evidently began this innate behavior, which now has more than one purpose.

Try to see this behavior in a mockingbird yourself.

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Chuck Tague: a Life Well Lived, and Loved by All

Colleagues, students, friends, fellow birders and naturalists, all who knew Chuck Tague realize how fortunate we are.

Joan, his beloved wife, points to a quote on the outfield wall at Jackie Robinson Stadium in Daytona, Florida, written by Robinson himself: "A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives." And, she tells us, "This is the way Chuck lived."

Indeed. That was his life, and it is now his legacy.

After a series of illnesses, Charles R. Tague died at age 71 on June 17, 2016, in Ormond Beach, Florida, where he and Joan had lived since 2011.

Chuck presented countless classroom and assembly programs on birds and ecology for schools, nature centers, and other organizations in western Pennsylvania. He was president of the Wissahickon Nature Club from 1997 through 2010 and previously was the Education Curator at the Pittsburgh Aviary and an adjunct professor at the Rachel Carson Institute at Chatham University. Chuck also wrote commentaries for "Allegheny Front," the radio environmental program. Not surprisingly, he was honored with many awards from nature and conservation organizations.

A significant achievement was *The Nature Observer News*, a monthly journal containing the natural history of western Pennsylvania, which he published from 1992 to 1995, introducing us to many of nature's wonders. He later wrote a weekly blog, "Nature Observer's Journal," an online natural history treasure (tinyurl.com/nature-observer) filled with his marvelous photos, and a nature column, "Bird Watch," for *The Peregrine*, 3RBC's newsletter. For many more details about his background, see the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette obituary (tinyurl.com/P-G-obituary).

Chuck's fame as a naturalist and educator continued in Florida. *The Pelican*, a newsletter of the Halifax River Audubon chapter in Daytona, included a remembrance of his many activities there (tinyurl.com/Pelican-Tague, page 4).

Joan suggests that Chuck may be honored by contributions to the Merritt Island Wildlife Association, P.O. Box 2683, Titusville, FL 32781 (tinyurl.com/Merritt-donation). Please note that your donation is in his memory.

Following, in alphabetical order, are memories by many who experienced Chuck's education and friendship.

Jill Argall, Wildlife Center Director for the Animal Rescue League: I met Chuck on the very first day of my internship at the Wildlife Center. I was immediately struck by his soft voice and mannerisms. It seemed that his Red-tailed Hawk understood him, and he understood the hawk. Over the years, I asked Chuck probably 1,000 questions about birds. He always had a full answer, and such a kind way of explaining things. He was so knowledgeable, but never belittled, never made me feel like my questions were beneath him. Even after he moved to Florida, I still knew he was but an email away. I plan to honor his memory by continuing to care for his hawk. He left the bird with the Wildlife Center when he moved. We use the hawk in educational programming, and now each time I interact with the bird, it will be just a bit sweeter.

Jim Bonner, Executive Director, Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania: More than probably anyone else, Chuck is responsible for the direction my life has taken the past 25 years. The positive experience I had, and the encouragement I got, when I first started volunteering with Chuck at the National Aviary made me want to pursue birds and environmental education and



A DAY TO REMEMBER – Cris Hamilton photographed Chuck and Joan at one of their favorite birding haunts, Magee Marsh in Ohio. Shortly after his death, Joan commented, "He dealt with his illness with strength and humor. Unbelievable! He is my hero."

conservation has a vocation, not just a hobby.

April Claus, Director of Environmental Education, Fern Hollow Nature Center and Sewickley Heights Borough Park: Words cannot describe the fond memories I have of my friend. I first met him through a casual invite to a Wissahickon Nature Club about 18 years ago. Years later, by a stroke of luck, I ended up spending an enormous amount of time with him in the Laurel Highlands, as both of us were hired by school districts for environmental education at YMCA Camp Soles in Rockwood, PA. He focused on birds, while I focused on reptiles and amphibians for all the visiting students during their spring overnight trips to the camp. I quickly realized his amazing ability to identify almost anything in terms of trees, wildflowers, insects, mushrooms, and of course birds. As a young person just starting my professional career, he was the perfect mentor. So it is an understatement when I say he will be missed. He was so many things to so many people, and I will never forget that constant smile he always wore on his face.

Mike Fialkovich, President, Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology: I first met Chuck in the 1990s, running into him regularly while birding in Western Pennsylvania. Chuck's knowledge about nature was exponential; I learned so much from him just about every time I was in the field with him. His outings always had great turnouts, and he had a kind and gentle disposition, patiently answering questions. He and I started a Winter Raptor Survey in Allegheny County in 2001 and we collaborated on it until he started spending winters in Florida. I have many great memories of being in the field enjoying nature with Chuck.

Ted Floyd, Editor, *Birding* magazine: I loved *The Nature Observer News*! It was timely and informative. But mainly it was just darned good writing. Some of the essays were profound; a few were disturbing and important; and so many of them, after all these years, have stuck with me. Chuck was honest: He wrote about western Pennsylvania as he saw it, imperfect yet lovely. I've long recognized that Chuck's writing has inspired my own; I'm also coming to realize that his whole worldview has importantly influenced my own.

Paul Hess, Editor, *The Peregrine*: Many years ago in the *Nature Observer News*, Chuck taught us how thrilling and

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Chuck Tague

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fulfilling our observations of nature can be when he wrote, “With each mystery, each wonder, each sighting, I’m reminded that it’s a huge world of mysteries and wonders.” I thanked him for that in his publication’s final issue: “Some nature writers don’t go beyond description, marvelous as their imagery may be. Others – the truly memorable ones – connect us with nature by letting us see it through their hearts as well as their eyes...He is one of those. His hallmarks are an eagerness to learn, to understand, and then let us in on the secrets he has found.” Thank you again, Chuck, for your inspiration and wisdom.

Gabi Hughes, Environmental Educator, Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania: I met Chuck during my first year at Audubon. He had his Eastern Screech-Owl for one of our evening programs. He brought a little girl up on stage to tell a story about an owl in the woods at night. She was a tree, eyes closed, arms outstretched. I will never forget the look on her face as she opened her eyes to see that owl looking straight at her. It was kind of magical. He was also one of the few people who could walk around with a hickory horned devil on his shoulder like it was the most natural summer accessory.

Kathy Knauer, Executive Producer, “The Allegheny Front,” WESA Radio: I had the pleasure of working with Chuck on “The Allegheny Front” program from 1995 through 2003. His weekly Nature Front essays were the highlight of the show, inspiring our listeners to appreciate nature. He inspired me personally as well. He helped launch my love of birds when I took one of his birding classes 20 years ago. He was a gentle soul, and I will miss him. Here is a link to the remembrance we did on the program: tinyurl.com/Remembering-Chuck.

Dianne Machesney, Treasurer, Wissahickon Nature Club: Bob (past Treasurer, Three Rivers Birding Club) and I first met Chuck more than 20 years ago at Linn Run State Park. He invited us to join him and gave us a copy of the *Nature Observer News*. We loved it and became subscribers. About the same time, Esther Allen invited us to come with her to a Wissahickon Nature Club meeting, and lo and behold, there was Chuck. He was the president of the club! Over the years we learned that Chuck was a special guy, knowledgeable and always willing to share his wonder of nature. He was a patient teacher, leading us on hikes, creating Powerpoint presentations, and answering emails asking for IDs of mystery plants. We will remember him as always carrying his binos around his neck and his trusty camera with the big lens over his shoulder, with Joan by his side (or 100 feet ahead birding). His passing leaves a hole in our nature community and in our hearts.

Bob Mulvihill, Ornithologist, National Aviary: Chuck Tague was a very special person who had superlative skills as an educator, communicator, and naturalist, and a gentle, soft-spoken style that endeared him to people of all ages. Many people in the active western Pennsylvania nature-study community, myself included, can point to times when they learned something new from Chuck, or when they were inspired by him to preserve, protect, love, and respect nature.

Scott Shalaway, “Birds & Nature” Talk Show Host, 620 KHB Radio: I first met Chuck at the National Aviary, 25 to 30 years ago. He welcomed me warmly, and I watched as he greeted and charmed visitors with his knowledge about birds. He struck me as Pittsburgh’s “Johnny Appleseed” of birds. Over the years we reconnected occasionally, and he always greeted me as an old friend. Chuck will be missed by all, especially western Pennsylvania’s nature community.

Jack (Founding President, Three Rivers Birding Club)

and Sue Solomon: The all-of-nature outings Chuck led were great fun – birds, plants, insects, whatever. He was personally acquainted with the entire natural world, spotting galls, tiny and cone-shaped like dunce caps, on leaves of a tree. “They’re witches’ hat galls,” he told us. “They only grow on leaves of the witch hazel tree.” Later, Chuck picked up a six-inch caterpillar, demonic-looking and covered in spines. “It’s a hickory horned devil. It’s harmless. It’ll become a Royal Walnut Moth,” he explained. Those Wissahickon outings showed why Chuck had the title “The Nature Observer.” Yes, he was, and nature’s ambassador, too. Sue says, “What I remember with the most fondness were several programs with Magee Marsh warbler images Chuck presented, accompanied by music, with a seasoning of his narration.”

Kate St. John, Author, “Outside My Window” Blog (birdsoutsidemymywindow.org): Chuck’s enthusiasm for the outdoors was infectious. I first met him more than 20 years ago when I attended his birding classes at the Rachel Carson Institute. His welcoming spirit changed my life. I spent more time birding, attended outings, joined the Wissahickon Nature Club, and assisted him on the Raccoon Christmas Bird Count. We became friends, and I traveled with Chuck and his wife Joan to Presque Isle and Magee Marsh for spring migration and visited them in Florida. Chuck’s website (tinyurl.com/Tague-website) and Facebook page are always educational and his outings were pure fun. He never limited our curiosity as we examined birds, plants, insects, everything! We always learned something new.

Jim Valimont, Past President, Three Rivers Birding Club: On our annual visits to Florida in the winter months, we would usually stop for several days in the Daytona Beach area. Chuck and Joan would show me places to bird and we’d sometimes spend the entire day birding. Dorothy and I met them for dinner last January. Later, Dorothy and I were on a trail in Biscayne National Park when I spotted a butterfly that I thought was probably a Mangrove Skipper. I sent a photo to Chuck, and he confirmed my identification. That was my last communication with Chuck, and appropriately, it was on a topic of nature.

Mark VanderVen: To illustrate Chuck’s enthusiasm for nature and why I will remember him fondly: I birded at Presque Isle with Chuck on an early January morning in the late 1980s. We walked out in the bitter wind and cold to the water’s edge. Close to the water, we spooked and were mutually spooked by a Snowy Owl that rose up, circled closely around us, and dropped down. We jumped up and punctuated the silence, jubilantly yelling and high-fiving in the cold, windy, semi-dark. Nearby fishermen were staring at us, obviously unable to figure out why men with telescopes and binoculars were whooping it up at the edge of a cold Great Lake while 99.999999% of the Eastern Time Zone was still a couple of hours away from rolling out of bed. We laughed about it every time we had a random encounter in the field for the next 20 years. I’d remind him that he never struck me as the high-fiving type. “Consider the circumstances, Mark,” he’d tell me.

Susanne Varley, Editor, The Nature Observer News: Chuck was sensitive to all aspects of life. I was honored to watch in amazement as he addressed audiences from preschool children through senior citizens. He loved teaching and kept control over his audiences and his birds by using wit and humor. Chuck realized that schools taught about tulips in Holland and poison frogs in the rainforest but said nothing about Eastern Screech-Owls in our own back yards. So he founded The Nature Observer News. Nature enthusiasts and educators celebrated the new publication in 1992 and mourned its closure in 2005. Chuck made everything fun and adventurous. Chuck cherished the Wissahickon Nature Club, serving as president. He continued to help me long after he and Joan moved to Florida. I miss my friend.

The Peregrine

Birds in the Three Rivers Area

April–May 2016 Brought Pelicans and Bitterns

By Mike Fialkovich, Bird Reports Editor

A late **Snow Goose** flew over Pine Twp. 5/17 (PL, SL). Two **Mute Swans** were at Emsworth 4/24 (MV). Three **American Wigeons** were found 4/23 in Findlay Twp. (MV), 2 were at the Moody Road ponds, and 1 was at Janoski's Farm. A **Redhead** was at Imperial 4/20 (MJ). A **Ruddy Duck** was in Jefferson Borough 5/26-28 (SSn), and a **Common Loon** was on the Allegheny River at Sharpsburg and Lawrenceville 5/20-22 (JH, ABo, CB).

Two **American White Pelicans** flew high over Duck Hollow 4/2 (TM, NM, TL) on a blustery day as a cold front passed, providing the third Allegheny County record. A possible **Anhinga** was reported flying over Sewickley 4/30 (AP, JC, SA).

An **American Bittern** was in the meadow at Beechwood Farms 4/27 (BS), interestingly in dry brushy habitat. A **Least Bittern** was a great find at Wingfield Pines 5/3 (DW), where it fed and perched in the open for much of the day – the fifth Allegheny County record. A **Great Egret** was along the Allegheny River at Fox Chapel from late March to 4/8 (AH et al.).

A **Black Vulture** soared over Homewood Cemetery and Frick Park 4/2 (MF) during the passage of a cold front following unseasonably mild weather. Black Vultures are rare here, but reports have been somewhat more frequent in recent years. A rather late **Merlin** was found at Wingfield Pines 4/29 (DP).

A **Virginia Rail** was at Imperial 4/15-16 (GM, et al.), the first at that location in two years. One was at Wingfield Pines 4/26 (MJ); up to 5 were there 5/3, and they were heard regularly to 5/22 (v.o.). A **Sora** was at Wingfield Pines 4/20 (MJ) and 2 were heard regularly there to 5/19 (v.o.). Rails have been reported annually at this site in recent years, partly because the mitigation wetland has matured, but also because many birders visit the site regularly.

Two **Greater Yellowlegs** were at Imperial 4/9 (GM, MV), and a late one was there 5/29 (GM). A **Lesser Yellowlegs** was at Wingfield Pines 4/7 (ST). Other reports from Imperial: 8 **Wilson's**



THE RIGHT PLACE, THE RIGHT MOMENT – At Duck Hollow on the Monongahela River, Tom Moeller looked up at just the right time on April 2, 2016, and was thrilled to see two American White Pelicans – rarely seen in our area – flying over on their way to breeding grounds in the West. They were flying very high on a dreary day, but Tom was able to document them with photos.

Snipe 4/9 (MV); a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** 5/9 (MJ); **Least Sandpiper** including 1 on 4/28 (MJ), 3 on 4/29 (MV) and 10 on 5/9 (GM). A Least was detected by nocturnal flight calls at Moon Twp. 5/2 (GM). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** at Imperial 4/29 (MV) was the only report. A **Dunlin** was at Imperial 4/29-5/3 (MV et al.). Rare in spring, a **Short-billed Dowitcher** was detected flying over Moon Twp. by a nocturnal flight call recorder 5/14 (GM).

Small numbers of **Ring-billed Gulls** migrated past Dashields Dam in April (GM et al.). **Herring Gulls** continue to nest on the Highland Park Bridge over the Allegheny River. Normally, only nests are counted, not individual birds, but a total of 83 individuals

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COLD MIGRANTS – Geoff Malosh decided to visit Bald Knob Pond near Imperial on April 9 and was rewarded with two early migrants on a cold day. In his photos are a Wilson's Snipe (left)



and a Greater Yellowlegs (right). Cold indeed: Those white blobs below the yellowlegs are patches of snow. In fact, Geoff says snow was falling at the time.

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Birds in the Three Rivers

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were counted at the site 4/4 (SK). Numbers of **Bonaparte's Gulls** were low this year at Dashields Dam, where they are counted annually during migration, and 134 were tallied 4/1-22. Away from Dashields, a single **Bonaparte's Gull** was at Imperial 4/29 (MV), 20 were along the Allegheny River at Fox Chapel, Blawnox, and Sharpsburg 4/19 (AH, PM), and several were at Woods Run on the Ohio River 4/20 (SK).

Tern numbers were also low at Dashields this spring: The first **Caspian Tern** flew past 4/11 (GM, MV) and only 11 were tallied in April; 2 **Common Terns** were seen on 4/21 (GM) and 2 on 5/15 (MV); an early **Forster's Tern** passed by on 4/1 (GM), 3 on 4/21 (GM) and 1 on 5/1 (GM). Elsewhere, a **Caspian Tern** was along the Allegheny River at Fox Chapel 4/22 (DN). A **Common Tern** was at Imperial 5/2 (GM), only the fourth record for that location. **Forster's Terns** included 1 at Fox Chapel 4/21 (TH), 3 at Duck Hollow 4/24 (JS, SS), and 5/2 (AP, JC), 1 in Lawrenceville 4/30 (ABO, CB), and 1 flying along the Allegheny River at Harrison Hills Park 5/23 (DP). A **Black Tern** was a great find at Wingfield Pines 5/22 (DP), the first report in the county since 2014.

A **Great Horned Owl** nest was discovered in Schenley Park on the Anderson Bridge in an old Red-tailed Hawk nest 4/2 (KSJ). Two chicks were near the nest that day.

Common Nighthawks were reported in Pittsburgh 5/9-10 (AK, GG). First spring reports in other locations included 1 in Greenfield 5/23 (KSJ), 1 in Lawrenceville 5/27 (ABO, CB), and 1 in Bridgeville 5/29 (RT). An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was photographed in Marshall Twp. 4/27 (reported by MJ). Another was found roosting at Frick Park 5/3 (MD); it apparently moved from its roost during the day, but was heard calling nearby at dusk.

The 2 **Red-headed Woodpeckers** that wintered at North Park were still present in early April (BM). An adult was at a feeder all winter in Allison Park and last reported 4/4 (AH). This is close to North Park, so there is speculation that it could have been the adult from that location.

A singing **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at Sewickley Heights Park 5/20 (GM). A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was a nice find at Homewood Cemetery 5/31 (JC).

A **Cliff Swallow** was seen at Blawnox 5/15 (AH, PM) and 2 were in North Park 5/29 (MV) at the only currently known nesting site in the county. A **Marsh Wren** returned to Wingfield Pines 4/26 (MJ) and 2 were there 4/30 (v.o.). An **American Robin** with a completely white tail was photographed at Duck Hollow 4/2 (TM). Ten **American Pipits** at Imperial 4/3 (MV) were the only report of this species.

A total of 33 species of warblers were reported this spring, including the following highlights. **Worm-eating Warbler** is a rare migrant and breeder here; 1 was at Sewickley Heights Park 5/17 (GM), perhaps a former breeding location, and 1 was in Shaler Twp. for a week around 5/22 (JH). There were 3 **Golden-winged Warbler** reports, the most in years: single birds at Sewickley Heights Park 5/4 (GM), Homewood Cemetery 5/5 (JC), and Schenley Park 5/7 (eBird). A rare migrant **Prothonotary Warbler** was found at Duck Hollow 4/25 (AB) and remained to 5/8 (v.o.). Rare in spring, an **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at Sewickley Heights Park 5/10 (ST). There were only 2 **Mourning Warblers** reported: 1 at Moon Twp. 5/12 (GM) and 1 at Frick Park 5/22 (AP). **Kentucky Warblers** returned to breeding sites at Sewickley Heights Park and Barking Slopes 4/29 (GM) and 5/14 (TH), respectively. A **Cape May Warbler** was recorded via a nocturnal flight call at Moon Twp. 5/2 (GM) and 1 was at Findlay



SPRING BEAUTY – Black Terns in breeding plumage combine a black body with silvery white wings and tail. These marsh nesters are declining severely with loss of habitat in much of their range and migrants are now rarely seen. Geoff Malosh photographed this one at Wingfield Pines, Allegheny County, on May 22, 2016.

Twp. 5/4 (GM). **Cerulean Warblers** returned to Sewickley Heights Park by 4/24 (GM) and to Harrison Hills Park by 5/7 (SG), both traditional breeding sites; 1 was at Frick Park 5/3 (JC) and 1 was at Beechwood Farms 5/4 (CK). **Pine Warbler** is an uncommon migrant in the county; 1 was at Linbrook Park 4/5 (KD), 1 was in Pine Twp. 4/18 (PL, SL) and 1 was at Frick Park 5/2 (AP, JC). **Prairie Warblers** were back at Imperial by late April, and 1 at Wingfield Pines 4/5-9 (ST et al.) was unusually early. A **Canada Warbler** was at Frick Park 5/14 (JC), and a **Wilson's Warbler** was in Pine Twp. 5/13 (PL, SL).

A real surprise was an eBird entry with photographs of a male **Western Tanager** on Pittsburgh's Northside 5/4. The bird visited a feeder for a single day. The only other record I'm aware of was from Harrison Hills Park in 1999.

A **Purple Finch** visited a feeder in Natrona Heights 4/19 (PH); 3 were at Frick Park 4/15 (JS, SS). Up to 2 were at Pine Twp. in late March through April (AH, PM), and an immature male was singing in Monroeville 5/23 (KSJ). The small **Pine Siskin** invasion continued, with the flock in Sewickley remaining from the winter at least to 5/1 (JT). Others listed through April in eBird included a high count of 25 in Leetsdale 5/10. The last report was in South Park 5/13 (JF, LF).

Observers: Sameer Apte, Roy Bires, Al Borek (ABO), Carol Borek, Alan Buriak, Jack Chaillet, Michael David, Karyn Delaney, Leslie Ferree, Mike Fialkovich, John Flannigan Gigi Gerben, Steve Gosser, Amy Henrici, Paul Hess, Joyce Hoffmann, Todd Hooe, Matthew Juskowich, Alyssa Karmann, Scott Kinzey, Chris Kubiak, Todd Ladner, Pat McShea, Bob Machesney, Nancy Moeller, Tom Moeller, Aidan Place, David Poortinga, Brian Shema, Pat Lynch, Sherron Lynch, Geoff Malosh, Dick Nugent, Kate St. John, Jack Solomon, Sue Solomon, Julia Tebbets, Shannon Thompson, Ryan Tomazin, Mark Vass, Dave Wilton, various observers (v.o.).

*If you have identified birds that you believe are unusual for this area, out of season, or otherwise of special interest, report them to Mike Fialkovich at mpfial@verizon.net. These might be of interest not only to readers of *The Peregrine* but also to readers of the state journal *Pennsylvania Birds*. Mike also compiles Allegheny County bird reports for that publication of the *Pennsylvania Society of Ornithology*.*