

BIRDS OF THE POCONO MOUNTAINS

1986 - 1996

Phillips B. Street

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This report updates the status of bird life in the Poconos and supplements Street's "Birds of the Pocono Mountains, Pennsylvania" (*Cassinia* 41:3-76,1954), Street's "Birds of the Pocono Mountains, 1955-1975" (*Cassinia* 55:3-16,1974-75), and Street and Wiltraut's "Birds of the Pocono Mountains, 1975-1985" (*Cassinia* 61:3-19,1984-85). Not all species are listed. Species are included only if there have been significant records or changes in their status since the last report.

Little has changed in the Poconos in the ten years since our last report except for a burgeoning population of both summer and permanent residents, particularly in Monroe County, the fastest growing county in the state. Good interstate highways to the New York metropolitan area and completion of a second Lehigh tunnel have facilitated access from both the east and south. On the plus side, the denial of township status to the Pocono Raceway by the court and the shelving of plans by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to widen Route 115 to four lanes and add an additional interchange on Route 80, these expensive projects simply to alleviate traffic congestion on the two big race days, are good news indeed.

Not only is increasing population affecting the numbers and composition of the avifauna, the overblowing by our much too numerous white-tailed deer has created an alarming situation for which there is no solution unless the Game Commission drastically liberalizes limits to encourage more doe hunting and lengthens the hunting season. Young trees, seedlings, and shrubs are being devoured, and the forest understory is fast disappearing in many places. This is a Pocono and statewide problem of maximum concern.

A big plus was the designation by The Nature Conservancy of the Poconos as one of their forty "Last Great Places" in the world worthy of saving and the establishment of a Pocono office at Long Pond to manage the effort. The emphasis has been on conserving fragile wetlands and much has already been accomplished. Another plus has been the work of the Wildlands Conservancy, so ably led by the late Charlie Nehf, in acquiring threatened and undeveloped areas and turning them over to the Pennsylvania Game Commission to be added to the state's game lands. Some acquisitions have been a joint effort by these two organizations. Tax-deductible contributions to these conservation organizations are highly recommended. What they are accomplishing is invaluable.

The greatest contribution to our knowledge of Pocono birds in recent years was the publication of the *Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania*, ably edited by Daniel Brauning, a project conceived and directed by Frank Gill. The entire state was divided into blocks of approximately 9¼ to 9½ square miles, and they were surveyed during the 1983-1989 breeding seasons by a host of volunteers. Every block in the state received coverage, some very thoroughly and others less so where observers were

scarce or the blocks difficult to access. In the three counties comprising most of the area in this report, Carbon County experienced excellent coverage of 24-30 hours per block, Monroe County had a much lower 12-16 hours, and Pike County only 6-11. Most of Carbon County is readily accessible to observers, and there were many. Monroe County has considerable acreage difficult to reach, and observers are not as numerous. Pike County, the most rural of the three, with scattered farms and vast areas of forest and wetland, had very spotty coverage until 1986 when Joe and Voni Strasser of nearby Hawley in Wayne County pitched in as "blockbusters" to assure that every block in Pike County was visited.

Brauning comments (pers. comm.) that a comparison of the Pocono region with the others is interesting, with species notably more frequently reported here than in other physiographic regions including Tree and Cliff swallows, Myrtle, Black-throated Blue, Black-and-white and Canada warblers, Northern Waterthrush, White-throated Sparrow, and Purple Finch.

Brauning has kindly furnished a printout of *Atlas* results for the Pocono region. The area covered differs slightly from ours, as it includes blocks in the northern part of Wayne County, the small section of Pike County north of the Lackawaxen River valley and a portion of Carbon County west of the Lehigh River. The deletion of those blocks would make a generally very minor difference in the overall picture of the distribution of breeding birds in the Poconos, which the printout so ably presents.

The numbers in each column denote the following:

- X = The numbers of blocks in which the species was recorded but with no indication of breeding, so therefore not mapped in the *Atlas*.
 PO = The number of blocks with species defined as Possible breeders.
 PR = The number of blocks with species defined as Probable breeders.
 CF = The number of blocks with Confirmed breeders.
 T = Total number of blocks

**SUMMARY OF BREEDING BIRDS IN THE POCONO REGION
 FROM BREEDING BIRD ATLAS, 1983-1989**

	X	PO	PR	CF	T
Common Loon	4	4	—	—	8
Pied-billed Grebe	—	7	1	—	8
American Bittern	—	1	—	1	2
Great Blue Heron	—	111	3	8	122
Great Egret	4	—	—	—	4
Green Heron	1	69	15	15	100
Black-crowned Night-Heron	3	—	—	—	3
Mute Swan	2	—	1	1	4

	X	PO	PR	CF	T
Canada Goose	–	17	23	80	120
Wood Duck	–	28	25	43	96
American Black Duck	1	14	23	17	55
Mallard	1	41	48	52	142
Blue-winged Teal	–	2	–	–	2
Ring-necked Duck	1	–	–	–	1
Hooded Merganser	1	3	–	3	7
Common Merganser	1	10	2	14	27
Black Vulture	1	4	–	–	5
Turkey Vulture	–	162	2	1	165
Osprey	14	32	11	4	61
Bald Eagle	19	4	1	–	24
Northern Harrier	–	14	2	–	16
Sharp-shinned Hawk	–	33	12	13	58
Cooper's Hawk	1	36	8	9	54
Northern Goshawk	–	4	2	8	14
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	18	11	1	31
Broad-winged Hawk	1	67	50	33	151
Red-tailed Hawk	–	72	37	36	145
American Kestrel	–	27	22	22	71
Ring-necked Pheasant	2	21	6	7	36
Ruffed Grouse	–	52	34	47	133
Wild Turkey	–	54	9	52	115
Northern Bobwhite	1	2	–	–	3
Virginia Rail	–	1	–	2	3
Common Moorhen	–	1	–	–	1
Killdeer	–	39	19	41	99
Solitary Sandpiper	2	–	–	–	2
Spotted Sandpiper	–	31	8	3	42
American Woodcock	–	21	29	6	56
Ring-billed Gull	6	2	1	–	9
Herring Gull	–	–	1	–	1
Forster's Tern	–	1	–	–	1
Black Tern	2	–	–	–	2
Rock Dove	6	39	12	24	81
Mourning Dove	–	53	53	66	172
Black-billed Cuckoo	–	38	15	3	56
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	–	40	12	2	54
Barn Owl	2	1	5	8	16
Eastern Screech-Owl	–	24	24	12	60

	X	PO	PR	CF	T
Great Horned Owl	1	31	38	38	108
Barred Owl	1	26	12	5	44
Northern Saw-whet Owl	–	8	2	2	12
Common Nighthawk	–	9	2	2	13
Whip-poor-will	–	33	18	–	51
Chimney Swift	3	63	21	8	95
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	–	82	35	19	136
Belted Kingfisher	1	64	29	32	126
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	–	1	–	2
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	18	5	5	29
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	–	9	8	6	23
Downy Woodpecker	–	77	51	48	176
Hairy Woodpecker	–	78	47	18	143
Northern Flicker	–	72	59	48	179
Pileated Woodpecker	–	49	39	9	97
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1	–	–	–	1
Eastern Wood-Pewee	–	75	89	18	182
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	1	–	1	–	2
Acadian Flycatcher	–	23	19	1	43
Alder Flycatcher	–	14	8	2	24
Willow Flycatcher	1	18	21	2	42
Least Flycatcher	1	69	66	9	145
Eastern Phoebe	–	31	24	135	190
Great Crested Flycatcher	–	63	92	21	176
Eastern Kingbird	–	61	54	37	152
Horned Lark	–	3	2	–	5
Purple Martin	–	10	–	13	23
Tree Swallow	–	40	10	130	180
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	–	31	6	21	58
Bank Swallow	–	17	2	12	31
Cliff Swallow	–	14	3	55	72
Barn Swallow	1	20	5	154	180
Blue Jay	–	80	57	53	190
American Crow	–	92	31	69	192
Fish Crow	–	18	4	2	24
Common Raven	–	4	–	–	4
Black-capped Chickadee	–	40	50	98	188
Tufted Titmouse	–	68	43	59	170
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	17	4	2	24
White-breasted Nuthatch	–	91	44	46	181

	X	PO	PR	CF	T
Brown Creeper	1	55	11	9	76
Carolina Wren	–	23	9	6	38
House Wren	–	35	37	112	184
Winter Wren	–	5	1	2	8
Sedge Wren	–	1	–	–	1
Marsh Wren	–	4	–	–	4
Golden-crowned Kinglet	–	11	3	3	17
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	–	53	30	23	106
Eastern Bluebird	–	23	17	85	125
Veery	–	57	87	38	182
Swainson's Thrush	–	5	–	–	5
Hermit Thrush	–	71	50	21	142
Wood Thrush	–	61	88	26	175
American Robin	–	29	16	149	194
Gray Catbird	–	27	72	95	194
Northern Mockingbird	–	39	34	24	97
Brown Thrasher	–	51	49	6	106
Cedar Waxwing	2	82	46	43	173
European Starling	1	41	10	101	153
White-eyed Vireo	–	7	3	1	11
Solitary Vireo	–	56	22	16	94
Yellow-throated Vireo	–	52	31	9	92
Warbling Vireo	–	29	7	3	39
Red-eyed Vireo	–	48	82	62	192
Blue-winged Warbler	–	36	15	5	56
Golden-winged Warbler	–	31	19	16	66
Brewster's Warbler	–	1	–	–	1
Lawrence's Warbler	–	1	–	–	1
Nashville Warbler	1	17	13	1	32
Northern Parula	–	11	6	1	18
Yellow Warbler	–	59	57	60	176
Chestnut-sided Warbler	2	45	56	17	120
Magnolia Warbler	–	25	21	5	51
Black-throated Blue Warbler	–	32	24	4	60
Yellow-rumped Warbler	–	25	12	11	48
Black-throated Green Warbler	–	41	39	2	82
Blackburnian Warbler	–	36	21	5	62
Pine Warbler	–	20	20	3	43
Prairie Warbler	–	27	32	5	64
Blackpoll Warbler	1	1	–	–	2

	X	PO	PR	CF	T
Cerulean Warbler	–	25	9	3	37
Black-and-white Warbler	–	62	48	68	178
American Redstart	1	41	83	41	166
Prothonotary Warbler	–	1	–	1	2
Worm-eating Warbler	–	26	10	3	39
Ovenbird	–	44	81	65	190
Northern Waterthrush	–	26	15	4	45
Louisiana Waterthrush	–	41	22	18	81
Kentucky Warbler	–	5	2	–	7
Mourning Warbler	–	–	1	–	1
Common Yellowthroat	–	33	64	94	191
Hooded Warbler	–	13	8	4	25
Canada Warbler	–	38	29	11	78
Yellow-breasted Chat	–	3	3	–	6
Scarlet Tanager	–	66	93	29	188
Northern Cardinal	–	59	61	36	156
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	–	51	87	30	168
Indigo Bunting	–	60	63	29	152
Eastern Towhee	–	38	103	33	174
Chipping Sparrow	–	34	30	127	191
Field Sparrow	–	71	42	42	155
Vesper Sparrow	–	7	8	2	17
Savannah Sparrow	–	15	4	–	19
Grasshopper Sparrow	–	13	9	3	25
Song Sparrow	–	38	77	72	187
Swamp Sparrow	–	33	24	7	64
White-throated Sparrow	1	18	17	9	45
Dark-eyed Junco	–	27	8	14	49
Bobolink	–	22	18	6	46
Red-winged Blackbird	1	45	62	68	176
Eastern Meadowlark	–	23	20	5	48
Common Grackle	–	74	33	60	167
Brown-headed Cowbird	–	79	52	29	160
Orchard Oriole	–	5	2	3	10
Northern Oriole	1	49	37	50	167
Purple Finch	1	60	19	28	108
House Finch	–	48	39	66	153
Pine Siskin	–	1	1	–	2
American Goldfinch	–	65	79	25	169
House Sparrow	–	48	17	74	139

Are breeding populations in the Poconos declining? There seems to be no question that this is true, both from the authors' observations and those of many other active birders. There are exceptions, notably the increase in southern species which have been spreading northward. A well-documented example of these changes is reflected in the results of a thirty-year Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) by Street and Robert Lewis in an area quite typical of the plateau as a whole. The route begins at Pocono Summit, passes through Pocono Pines, Pocono Lake, crosses the Lehigh River at Thornhurst, and terminates beyond the Lackawanna State Forest in a scrub area east of Route 115. Habitats include both mature and second-growth forests, the latter with large stands of beech, two scrub areas which have changed very little, hay fields, several ponds and a bog. There has been only a minor amount of new construction along the route except at Pocono Summit, where development includes a noisy truck depot, but the increased traffic now being encountered every year reflects the effect of new housing built near but not directly along the actual path which the survey follows.

The table lists all the species noted during the first five-year period 1966-1971 in order of abundance whose average counts were in double-digit figures and the average counts of the same species during the last five-year period 1991-1995.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Average 1966-1971</u>	<u>Average 1991-1995</u>
Eastern Towhee	57.4	5.2
American Robin	41.0	28.8
Red-eyed Vireo	33.8	36.0
Common Yellowthroat	30.2	23.8
Common Grackle	30.2	6.2
American Crow	29.6	48.8
Song Sparrow	28.6	7.4
Gray Catbird	27.6	13.6
Cedar Waxwing	23.2	23.6
Ovenbird	23.2	21.0
Veery	22.6	11.4
Red-winged Blackbird	22.0	2.6
Chipping Sparrow	21.2	27.4
Barn Swallow	19.6	6.6
European Starling	17.0	7.2
Chestnut-sided Warbler	16.8	7.2
House Wren	10.8	3.6
White-throated Sparrow	10.0	3.6

The maturation of the forest in thirty years and damage to the understory and ground cover by overblowing deer are certainly factors in some of these changes. Increased traffic noise is certainly another. Yet the precipitous decline in the Eastern

Towhee cannot be explained by any noticeable change in its habitat. The declines in the Common Grackle and Red-winged Blackbird are not significant because a marsh frequented on the earlier counts has been drained. Some other decreases, but from a smaller base, are: Least Flycatcher from 9.4 to 0.4; Brown Thrasher 2.6 to 0; and American Redstart 5.4 to 1.0. Some increases include Canada Goose from 0 to 14.6; Mourning Dove 2.8 to 14.0; Tufted Titmouse 0.4 to 7.0; Hermit Thrush 2.2 to 6.2; and Magnolia Warbler 1.6 to 3.4.

Readers will notice in the annotated list the preponderance of records from the Beltzville State Park (BSP)–Wild Creek (WCR) and Penn Forest (PFR) reservoirs area. This is the prime location in the Poconos for waterfowl and shorebirds and draws birders here in far greater numbers and with greater frequency than anywhere else. A hole in the Penn Forest dam resulted in vast mudflats in 1995 which attracted shorebirds.

The fall raptor migration along the Blue Mountain is better documented with the inclusion of the data from the Little Gap Bird Observatory in *Pennsylvania Birds (PB)* since 1989. Little Gap is an excellent hawk watching spot which can be reached by car without the physical exertion needed to reach the lookouts at the more familiar places. It is where the road from Little Gap to Danielsville crosses the mountain. Easy hawk watching is accomplished by turning east into the ski complex to its parking lot. Raptors may often be seen quite well from here if the winds are favorable, but it is an easy walk to the top of the ridge where you can see the birds passing on either side. Or you can find the service road just to the west of the main buildings and go up by car.

Winter finches, usually a Pocono specialty, have been in drastically short supply during this ten-year period, as D.V.O.C. participants on Pocono winter field trips will attest. Common Redpolls and Pine Siskins occasionally appeared in good numbers, but crossbills, Pine Grosbeaks, and Evening Grosbeaks have been major disappointments.

Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) have contributed records. The Pocono Mountain CBC is totally within our area, but three others, Wild Creek–Little Gap, White Mills, and Dingmans Ferry are only partially in it, and this makes use of their records more difficult.

Most of the records contained here have appeared in *PB*, *American Birds (AB)* and its successor, *Field Notes (FN)*, or *Cassinia*.

We wish to thank all those birders whose observations have resulted in data for this report. We particularly want to cite the following for their assistance in making it possible: Dan Brauning, Steve Boyce, Bernie Morris, Bill and Naomi Murphy, Jack Padalino, Larry Rymon, Mike Schall, Brad Silfies, John Serrao, and Joe and Voni Strasser.

ANNOTATED LIST

Species not mentioned in the three previous reports are denoted by an asterisk.

Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*). The first spring record was Wiltraut's observation of one at Beltzville S.P. on May 6, 1989. All spring sightings have been between the dates of April 12 and May 25. Four were of single individuals and there were two counts of six, by Silfies on April 21, 1992, and by Wiltraut on April 12, 1994. All except the Silfies 1992 observation, which was at Penn Forest Res., were at Beltzville S.P.. There were six fall records of single birds between November 8 and December 31 and one of a group of five on November 11, 1987, when an early snowstorm forced them down. All fall reports are from Beltzville S.P. except for November 8, 1992, when one was seen on Penn Forest and one on the WCR.

***Pacific Loon** (*Gavia pacifica*). A loon, probably this species, was carefully observed, described and sketched by Boyce during a day of fog and drizzle at PFR on May 12, 1990. He submitted his notes to the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (P.O.R.C.), which ruled that the details did not completely rule out the less likely closely related Arctic Loon (*G. arctica*). Most spring records of Pacific Loons in the northeast have occurred in May.

Common Loon (*Gavia immer*). The effect of storms on migrating waterfowl is well illustrated by the following events. The November 11, 1987 snowstorm which brought five Red-throated Loons down in Beltzville S.P. also forced some fifty Common Loons to land there and fifty at nearby PFR. Similarly, the April 21, 1992 storm which deposited six Red-throated Loons onto PFR gave Silfies a record of 470 Common Loons there when there had only been 33 the day before. Another 200 were found by Boyce at PFR on April 20, 1991. Dave DelGrosso counted 290 on PFR on May 5, 1989. Reports of summering loons always bring the hope that they can be found to be nesting. A pair was seen at Beltzville S.P. throughout July 1988 by Judy Wink, and one was found by Morris on Bear Creek Lake on July 13 of that year. An adult was seen on July 11 and 19, 1989, at the mouth of the Lackawaxen River by Frank Hohenleitner. None gave any indication of breeding, and most summer records seem to be non-breeding juveniles.

Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*). Monroe County wetlands provided six *Atlas* locations of possible breeding, the most in any eastern Pennsylvania county. A lingering bird was seen at Beltzville S.P. by Wiltraut on January 30, 1995.

Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*). Wiltraut observed 34 at Beltzville S.P. on April 2, 1993, a record high count there.

Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*). There are four April records from Beltzville S.P. or PFR during this period and one December 21, 1988, sighting, all of single birds.

***American White Pelican** (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*). Park naturalists found one on June 26, 1986, in the Delaware River at its confluence with the Lackawaxen River (*vide* V. Strasser). The report (*AB* 40:183) comments that "what must have been the same bird paused briefly at the Peace Valley Nature Center, Bucks, Pennsylvania, June 29."

***Great Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). An adult and two immatures of this species were found on December 20, 1992, by Wiltraut and Joel Silfies and

subsequently seen by many observers. This is a Carbon County record and probably a Pocono area first. A photograph of one of the birds was published in *PB*.

Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*). Increased summer sightings in the past ten years and especially in the last two may indicate that a breeding range extension into northeastern Pennsylvania is a real possibility in the near future. Cormorants have been observed at Beltzville S.P., WCR, Pocono Lake, Brady's Lake, and at the Strasser's lake near Hawley. Spring migrants include ten at Beltzville S.P. May 20, 1993, and a high count of sixteen at Beltzville S.P. on April 3, 1995. The high fall count was 65 flying over Little Gap on October 23, 1993.

American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*). Long Pond is the only confirmed *Atlas* breeding site. Bitterns have been seen here regularly for years. Other wetlands where they have been occasionally seen in summer seem suitable for breeding and should be explored.

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*). While they are commonly seen throughout the summer, their rookeries are few and far between. The Strassers noted that in 1987 there were two large (40-50 nests ea.) rookeries in southern Wayne County, and these appear on the *Atlas* species map. The *Atlas* shows three rookeries in Pike, and the Strassers now know of four, none of them large. It shows three confirmed and one probable nesting site in Monroe and none in Carbon. While Great Blue Herons are noted for traveling long distances between nests and feeding grounds, it seems probable that there are additional small rookeries to be discovered. A few lingerers are sometimes found on CBCs when there is still open water.

Great Egret (*Ardea alba*). There is only one spring record during this period, one seen by many observers at Beltzville S.P. on May 9, 1992. July and August records of post-breeding wanderers include one at Beltzville S.P. July 21, 1989, one near Hawley July 21, 1991, three in a marsh near Lake Wallenpaupack in August 1994, one at Brady's Lake and two near Locust Ridge on August 10, 1995, and three at PFR on August 21, 1995.

Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*). There are two Beltzville S.P. observations, one seen by Gordon Yoder and Wiltraut on May 2, 1987, the first record for that location, and another by Wiltraut on July 21, 1989.

Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*). An immature was noted by Wiltraut at Beltzville S.P. on July 21, 1989.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*). One was seen along the Lehigh River at Stoddartsville on April 20, 1992, by James Butler (*vide* H. Webster).

Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*). This species has virtually disappeared from the Poconos. Street heard one calling at Pocono Lake on an August 1995 evening.

***Wood Stork** (*Mycteria americana*). *Amer. Birds* 42:1274 reported that "Atlasers in n. e. Pennsylvania were astonished to see an immature Wood Stork flying over Little Spruce L., Wayne, June 17" (1988). The report was submitted by Helen McWilliams. Spruce Pond, as it is also called, is in northern Wayne County some

thirty miles north of our coverage area. This interesting observation is included here because Spruce Pond is so close.

Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*). Wiltraut found an immature resting on a pond in Cherry Valley on March 28, 1990, and Schall saw six flying over Little Gap on November 25, 1990.

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*). Most records are from CBCs with birds noted along the Delaware River or on local ponds. They occur regularly at Cherry Valley Vineyard near Saylorsburg. One seen at Beltzville S.P. from April 2-7, 1987, by Wiltraut and Yoder was a first from that place. Two were seen there on December 17, 1989, and the D.V.O.C. winter field trip found one on January 25, 1992.

Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*). One Snow and eight blue morphs were noted by Robert Bergstrasser at Beltzville S.P. on February 15, 1991. Street saw one there on April 3, 1993. A flock of 94 was observed by Mike Schall flying over Little Gap on November 1, 1992. Jim Wilson watched a flock of 300 flying over Jonas on March 30, 1996.

Brant (*Branta bernicla*). One was present at Beltzville S.P. from October 25 to at least November 14, 1987. Observers included Frank Haas, Bill Stocku, and Wiltraut. Boyce saw 225 flying over Little Gap on October 29, 1988, and Silfies counted 45 there on October 23, 1991. Wiltraut had a single bird at Beltzville S.P. from October 31 to November 3, 1989. Boyce saw eleven at PFR on May 17, 1992, a late date for this rare transient.

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*). A high count was Wiltraut's seeing a flock of sixteen at Beltzville S.P. on April 2, 1993. An interesting nest report came from the Strassers at Hawley who had a nest which was in a box 45 feet above the ground and 700 feet from the pond.

Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*). Records are surprisingly scarce. Three were seen at WCR on April 2, 1987, six at Cherry Valley on March 28, 1990, and ten at Beltzville S.P. on April 2, 1993, by Wiltraut. Three were reported seen on a Pocono CBC on December 15, 1991. There was one "confirmed" nesting in southern Wayne County during the *Atlas* period.

American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*). The *Atlas* map indicates that Monroe County has by far the highest breeding concentration in the state. Black Ducks were present in 31 percent of the blocks compared to six percent statewide. They are also abundant in winter where there is open water. A D.V.O.C. field trip saw over 300 at WCR on January 11, 1986, a favorite wintering place. The highest number counted on a CBC at Lake Wallenpaupack was 75 in 1989. Most counts were twenty or less.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*). The average Pocono CBC count was around 600, with a high count of 1073 in 1988.

Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*). Lewis and Street found a pair on Long Pond on August 26, 1990, and Wiltraut saw eleven at Beltzville S.P. on April 2, 1993, and eight on September 26, 1995.

Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*). Six were observed at Brady's Lake on March 23, 1990, by Lew Molnar.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*). Lewis and Street saw three on Kitchen's Pond, Pocono Lake, on September 1, 1988. Wiltraut and Yoder saw one on Weir Lake near Gilbert on December 18, 1988, during the CBC. Wiltraut found one at Beltzville S.P. on April 2, 1993, and three at Saylor's Lake on January 4, 1995.

American Wigeon (*Anas americana*). Street saw six on Pocono Lake October 7, 1990, and Wiltraut eight at Beltzville S.P. on April 2, 1993, and seven at WCR April 6, 1993. The Pocono CBC had two in 1986, three in 1989, and seven in 1990.

Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*). Wiltraut and Joel Silfies saw a flock of eighteen at Beltzville S.P. December 17, 1992. Wiltraut had two at Beltzville S.P. on December 18, 1986.

Redhead (*Aythya americana*). The D.V.O.C. field trip found five at Beltzville S.P. on January 11, 1986.

Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*). A single male noted at WCR by Terry Master and Bernie Morris on May 14, 1988, is our latest spring record. High counts include eighty at Beltzville S.P. by Wiltraut on March 18, 1989, 85 at Peck's Pond by Street and Polly Crawford on March 21, 1995, and 100 on a pond at Gilbert by Richard ZainEldeen on March 22, 1996.

Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*). There are five Beltzville S.P. records. Wiltraut saw one on December 18, 1986, four on December 21, 1988, and three on April 7, 1993. Morris saw about ten on March 26, 1989. Wiltraut saw two at Beltzville S.P. on December 17, 1992.

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*). Spring sightings, all from Beltzville S.P., include two on March 31, 1992, by B. and P. Morris, fifty on April 2, 1993, by Wiltraut and fifteen on April 13, 1993, by Street. DeReamus saw thirty at PFR on October 14, 1989, an early fall date. Wiltraut saw 30, perhaps the same flock, on November 3. The D.V.O.C. field trip noted two on January 14, 1995. Wiltraut saw 22 at Beltzville S.P. on December 17, 1992.

Oldsquaw (*Clangula hyemalis*). The earliest fall record is of eight seen at Beltzville S.P. by Wiltraut on October 21, 1993. There are several early winter sightings of a few individuals in late December and early January when there was still open water, but most observations are from late March until the end of April. Morris saw one at Beltzville S.P. on March 27, 1988, the earliest arrival date for this period. Street found eight on Pocono Lake on April 28, 1986, and Wiltraut one at Beltzville S.P. on April 30, 1990, the two latest. Wiltraut had a high count of 92 on April 2, 1993.

Black Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*). Morris found a flock of 35 at PFR on October 3, 1992, and Wiltraut had singles at Beltzville S.P. on October 30 and November 13, 1993.

Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*). Two were found at WCR by Wiltraut on May 10, 1989. He saw two at Beltzville S.P. on October 30 and November 13, 1993. B. and P. Morris saw one there on November 10, 1990.

White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*). There have been at least fourteen spring sightings during this ten-year period. Fall occurrences have been scarce. Street

found eight on Pocono Lake on September 28, 1986, an early date. Wiltraut saw one at Beltzville S.P. on October 18, 1991. The earliest spring record was of one seen by Wiltraut at WCR on March 12, 1989. The latest dates are May 16, 1990, with seven seen at Beltzville S.P. by DeReamus, Silfies, and Wiltraut, and May 16, 1994, when six were seen at PFR by Wiltraut.

Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*). Common in winter where there is open water, particularly along the Delaware River. A high count of 45 was recorded at Beltzville S.P. on April 2, 1993.

Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*). High count was 75 seen by Wiltraut at Beltzville S.P. on April 22, 1992. A late observation was on May 3, 1995, when Altemus, Johnson, Street, and Webster saw two on Pocono Lake, and Wiltraut saw seven at PFR on May 2, 1987.

Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*). The *Atlas* shows three confirmed nesting locations. One is in southern Wayne County, one in Pike County at the Shohola Preserve, and one in the upper reaches of Marshalls Creek. More nesting sites are expected to be found, as the species is increasing and there are many suitable wetlands for it to occupy. Winter numbers are up, too. Some of the higher counts are 25 at WCR on November 24, 1987, by B. and P. Morris and 31 there on November 10, 1994, by Wiltraut. They are present as long as there is open water.

Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*). It is a regular spring migrant. Spring dates are from March 31 to April 22, mostly from Beltzville S.P.. Street saw a record 45 there on April 13, 1995. One seen by Wiltraut at PFR on June 26, 1993, was a first summer Pocono record. Fall records during this period are nine seen by Morris on October 30, 1988, and two seen on Lake Wallenpaupack during the December 21, 1991, CBC and an early record of one seen by Wiltraut at Beltzville S.P. on September 26, 1989.

Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*). One seen at Beltzville S.P. on April 4, 1987, was only the third record for that location. Nine were seen there on September 26, 1989, and six at PFR on October 11, 1991, all by Wiltraut.

Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*). Birds are seen more and more frequently, but there is still no evidence of nesting in the Poconos. They are most often noted along the Blue Mountain at Little Gap, especially in October.

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*). Ospreys are thriving in the Poconos. It has been sixteen years since their first hacking at Pocono Lake by Larry Rymon and his team. Four, and possibly five, active nests are there today. There are two nests in the Francis Walter Dam area, the first one dating from 1987. An oak swamp at the Tobyhanna Army Depot contains another. There has been an active nest near Albrightsville along the Dilldown Creek since 1987. A pair regularly seen along the Delaware River near Mashipacong Island are probably nesting on the New Jersey side of the river. Just south of our area at Portland are two active nesting pairs. Winter sightings are unusual. Richard Bell and Alfred Kronschnabel observed one at Beltzville S.P. on January 9, 1988, during a D.V.O.C. field trip, and one was reported seen on the

January 1, 1995, Dingman's Ferry CBC. A total of 593 Ospreys were counted passing Little Gap in the fall of 1990.

***Swallow-tailed Kite** (*Elanoides forficatus*). One was seen and "well documented and sketched" by Richard ZainEldeen between Jonas and PFR on May 24, 1991, after a day of steady southwest winds, a first Pocono record.

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). Brauning reports (pers. comm.) that two nests have been confirmed in Pike County since the *Atlas*. One at Shohola Lake has been occupied since 1992, and one at Pickerel Pond since at least 1995. Boyce believes they nested at PFR in 1994, as he regularly saw two adults and heard what he believed to be young calling. There was an unconfirmed report of a nest in the Lake Naomi area this summer and, from the numerous sightings of adults at Pocono Lake, Stillwater Lake, and Stoddartsville, a Monroe County nest should certainly be discovered in the near future. One of the great wintering areas for Bald Eagles is along the Lackawaxen and Delaware Rivers south to the Water Gap. As many as 39 individuals have been counted in a single day. There are occasional winter sightings at Beltzville S.P. and PFR, and two adults spent the winter of 1995-96 at Lake Naomi, fishing from the mud flats exposed while the dam was under repair. Boyce has seen adults cooperatively hunting ducks at PFR. Wiltraut found two immatures feeding on a deer carcass at Beltzville S.P. on December 4, 1989. An interesting observation was that of Sally Afflerbach, who saw one catch and eat a Great Blue Heron at Lake Maskewozho, Pike County, on July 30, 1996.

Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*). The *Atlas* showed two probable nesting locations, both in Monroe County. One is at Long Pond, where a pair has been present for many years, and the other is in the Marshalls Creek area where a pair was noted in 1987. We do not know the present status.

Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*). Over 1000 were counted at Little Gap on October 22, 1989. A record 4,719 passed the lookout during the 1990 season.

Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*). The highest annual count for this species at Little Gap was 425, also in 1990.

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*). This rare breeder seems to be faring well in the mature forests of the Poconos. The Strassers know of four active nests in Pike County, and there have been at least four nesting reports from Carbon and Monroe. Nesting locations are deleted in deference to the rarity of the species. In 1986 Boyce, Silfies, Wiltraut, and Yoder banded three young in a Carbon County nest where they found the remains of Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, and Blue Jay. By far, the highest annual fall migration count at Little Gap was 62 in 1990.

Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*). What was once the dominant *Buteo* in the Poconos has now become the scarcest.

Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*). A very early migrant was one seen by Silfies on March 15, 1990. Wiltraut examined the stomach contents of a road-killed immature at Hickory Run S.P. in July 1996 and found a dozen caterpillars, several beetles, a cicada, and the foot of a small bird.

Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*). They are occasionally seen in winter in fields around Beltzville S.P. and in the Delaware River valley. It is an irregular migrant at Little Gap in late October and November.

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*). Our earliest fall record is of an immature that Wiltraut saw at Little Gap on September 25, 1993. Padalino reports that one or two are seen each winter along the Delaware River. The Little Gap seasonal high was 1994 when 45 were counted. On October 28, 1996, Angela Lambert, Randi Anderson, Wiltraut, and Yoder saw six at Little Gap immediately after a front passed through. Yoder remained until dusk and counted five more for a total of eleven!

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*). Kestrels seem to be doing well in Carbon and Monroe Counties where more open country and nest boxes have contributed to their breeding success, but they are now scarce in Pike. Perhaps a nest box project there could reverse this trend.

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*). A D.V.O.C. field trip saw one at Beltzville S.P. on January 6, 1990. ZainEldeen saw one at PFR on April 19, 1992. Most sightings are of fall migrants along the Blue Mountain, and Little Gap's high annual count was 51 in 1990. An early date was September 1, 1995, when Wiltraut observed one. There was a daily high count at Little Gap of 24 on October 22, 1989.

Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). This is a regular fall migrant at Little Gap from late September to mid October with occasional sightings into November. Schall noted a very early migrant there on August 8, 1992. He saw seven on one day on October 1, 1991. The high season total occurred in 1990 when 39 passed, and Schall had a daily high oftenthat year on October 6.

Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*). The Strassers reported seeing three on their Hawley property in the summer of 1987, one of them a chick. They saw another in the fall of 1990 when Joe Strasser flushed one while mowing a field. It moved twice as the cover got smaller and finally flew to a fence row and perched long enough for excellent views.

Sora (*Porzana carolina*). The Strassers have noted them in Pike County wetlands and believe they nest there. ZainEldeen noted one at Beltzville S.P. on October 6, 1990.

American Coot (*Fulica americana*). It is occasionally found in winter where there is open water. There are CBC records from Lake Wallenpaupack in 1985 and 1991, January records from Beltzville S.P. in 1992 and 1995, and two were seen there on April 13, 1993. There have been breeding records in the past and, with the Poconos wetlands being preserved, they should be looked for again.

Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*). One was found in a field at Beltzville S.P. by Wiltraut and Yoder on December 17, 1989. Pauline England and Jason Horn saw it there the next day. It, a first county record, was photographed by Wiltraut, and the photograph appeared in *PB* (3(4):139).

Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*). Records are surprisingly scarce. One was seen by Wiltraut on September 21, 1989 and one by Silfies and Wiltraut on

October 18, 1989, both at Beltzville S.P., and one by Wiltraut at PFR on August 21, 1995, on the exposed mud flats.

American Golden Plover (*Pluvialis dominicus*). There are four Beltzville S.P. records. One seen by Wiltraut on October 16, 1987, was a first for this location. He found another on September 21, 1989, three on September 11, and two on September 18, 1991. Four were found on September 13, 1995, and photographed.

Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*). One was seen at the Cherry Valley Pasture by Boyce and Wiltraut on May 27, 1991. Two were found at Beltzville S.P. on August 28 and one on September 11, 1991, during a period of low water which made the flats attractive to shorebirds. Four were seen there on September 10, 1995, all these by Wiltraut.

***American Oystercatcher** (*Haematopus palliatus*). Wiltraut discovered one on a sandy beach at Beltzville S.P. on April 2, 1993, during a period of steady northeasterly winds, the first documented record for the state. It disappeared within two hours, much to the chagrin of many birders who hurried there. The account and photograph appeared in *PB* 7(2):51.

Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*). They are seen regularly on migration, particularly in the fall. Wiltraut's observation of thirteen at Beltzville S.P. on September 21, 1985, was a high count.

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*). May 9, 1992, brought one to Beltzville S.P. where it was seen by Silfies, Wiltraut and many others. This was a second county record. Another was seen by Deuane Hoffman at PFR on August 22, 1995.

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*). Several sightings in recent years at Beltzville S.P. include four on August 22, 1990, two on May 5, 1993, two on September 13, 1995, and three on October 5, 1995, all by Wiltraut. B. and P. Morris and Silfies and Horn found four on May 31, 1992.

Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*). There was a spring sighting of one at Beltzville S.P. on May 31, 1992, by Horn and B. and P. Morris. Fall records are more numerous. Wiltraut saw single birds on September 24, 1990, and September 6, 1991, two on September 11, 1991, and four on September 13, 1995, all at Beltzville S.P..

Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*). This is the most frequently observed "peep."

White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*). A first Carbon County record was established on May 31, 1992, when one was observed on the beach at Beltzville S.P. by Horn, B. and P. Morris, and Silfies.

Baird's Sandpiper (*Calidris bairdii*). One was seen at Beltzville S.P. on September 18 and 19, 1991, by Wiltraut. The low water at PFR brought three there on August 21, 1995, which were noted by Wiltraut, and two on August 25, seen by Horn. Hoffman and Wiltraut found one at Beltzville S.P. on September 26, 1995.

Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*). Fall sightings include three on September 19, 1991, and thirteen on September 26, 1995, both observations at Beltzville S.P. by Wiltraut.

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*). Wiltraut's records at Beltzville S.P. are of four on October 16, 1987, one on May 24, 1989, two on October 11, 1991, one on October 12, 1993, and one on September 26, 1995. Brad and Joel Silfies saw two at Beltzville S.P. May 10, 1996.

***Buff-breasted Sandpiper** (*Tryngites subruficollis*). During a low water period at Beltzville S.P., Wiltraut found one on September 11, 1991, a first record for the Poconos.

Short-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus*). One was observed by Wiltraut at Beltzville S.P. on May 19, 1987, the first record for this locality.

Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*). Wiltraut found eleven at Cherry Valley on April 23, 1990. There are occasional winter sightings on CBCs. LaBar has noted them in Cherry Valley in January.

Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*). All sightings were at Beltzville S.P.. Wiltraut saw one on May 2, 1989, a first county record, and another on May 16. DeReamus had two on April 30, 1990. Morris and England saw one on June 9, 1990, a first summer record for the county. Silfies and Wiltraut saw one on May 9, 1992. An adult seen by Wiltraut on September 6, 1991, was the first fall record. He saw another on October 21, 1995.

***Black-headed Gull** (*Larus ridibundus*). The Strassers saw one at their pond at Hawley on March 13, 1994, distinguished by its dark red bill.

Bonaparte's Gull (*Larus philadelphia*). The earliest date was March 29, 1987, when Wiltraut found seven at Beltzville S.P.. The latest one was December 24, 1990, by Chris Kita and Silfies. A remarkable high count of approximately 300 was recorded by Wiltraut on April 13, 1987. Wiltraut saw an adult at Beltzville S.P. on August 11, 1989, the only summer record.

Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*). A high count of 207 from Lake Wallenpaupack was reported from there December 19, 1992, CBC.

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*). One seen flying over the Lehigh Gap on a December 18, 1988, CBC by Wiltraut and Yoder constituted a county record. ZainEldeen observed one at Beltzville S.P. on February 16, 1992.

Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*). All reports are from Beltzville S.P.. A record early date was for one seen by Horn on April 18, 1991. Silfies saw another on May 6. A second early observation was of one by Wiltraut on April 22, 1992. Wiltraut saw one on May 6, 1989. B. and P. Morris found one on May 31, 1992, and ZainEldeen saw two on August 13, 1989, the only late summer sighting. Brad and Joel Silfies saw two on May 10, 1996.

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*). All sightings are from Beltzville S.P.. The earliest was of two on May 2, 1989, and the latest was of two on June 7 of that year, both by Wiltraut. There are five other May records during the years 1990-1993. Brad and Joel Silfies saw five on May 10, 1996.

***Arctic Tern** (*Sterna paradisaea*). On May 16, 1992, during a driving rainstorm from the east, Wiltraut discovered two Arctic Terns at Beltzville S.P., the first documented record in Pennsylvania in this century. They were subsequently seen

by many observers and photographed. The account of this find and a photograph may be found in *PB* 3(2):64.

Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*). There are nine records during this period between the dates of April 12 and June 15, all from Beltzville S.P., except one from PFR. The highest one day count was twelve on May 10, 1989.

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*). Single individuals were seen at PFR on June 2, 1986, by Mike Mauer, Silfies and Wiltraut, on May 2, 1989, by Wiltraut, an early date, and on May 31, 1992, at Beltzville S.P. by Horn, Morris, England, and Silfies.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*). The *Atlas* showed only one confirmed nesting. It was a nest with three young found by Rymon near Analomink, Monroe County, in 1987. A probable breeder was found that year near Marshalls Creek. The Strassers knew of one living in a barn near Hawley from 1987 to 1990. Yet there were seven confirmed nestings in southwestern Carbon County, all of them west of the Lehigh River and thus just beyond our territory, these the result of excellent work by Judy Wink.

Snowy Owl (*Nyctea scandiaca*). One was found in Stroudsburg on the Court House roof in December 1991 by David Bank and was there for the December 15 CBC.

***Northern Hawk-Owl** (*Surnia alula*). The exciting discovery of a Northern Hawk-Owl wintering in Pennsylvania near Lookout, Wayne County, while some 25 miles north of our area, certainly merits mention here. It was apparently present from late October 1990 until March 17, 1991, and was seen by a multitude of observers after confirmation of its presence on February 13 to the birding world. For details see *PB* 5(1):16-18.

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*). Sherri LaBar found one perched on a telephone wire near Stroudsburg on January 21, 1994. It was surmised that the deep snow had forced it to hunt out along the road. There were no *Atlas* breeding records for the Poconos.

Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*). *Atlas* records show two "confirmed" nesting records in Monroe County, two "probable" in Pike County and two "probable" in southern Wayne County. One was observed near the Beltzville S.P. boat ramp during the December 15, 1991, CBC, and one was seen by Dennis Murphy at Brodheads ville on October 31, 1995.

Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*). *Atlas* records show two "confirmed" nesting records in Monroe County, two "probable" in Pike County and two "probable" in southern Wayne County. One was heard calling at the Hickory Run S.P. office on June 30, 1987, by Silfies and Wiltraut and Wilson has heard them calling in spring near Gilbert and Bushkill. This species could benefit by nesting boxes placed in appropriate habitat.

Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles vociferus*). The *Atlas* showed only two confirmed nestings, both in southeastern Monroe County. One was observed "booming" over the Blue Mountain at Palmerton in July 1995 by Wiltraut. The numbers seen on their fall migrations have decreased alarmingly in recent years; this is a species in trouble.

Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*). Boyce, DeReamus, and Wiltraut had a high count of 22 at PFR on May 19, 1991.

***Rufous Hummingbird** (*Selasphorus rufus*). An adult male frequented a feeder at Cherry Valley August 7 to 9, 1994, *fide* LaBar, and was photographed. Wiltraut examined the photos.

Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*). This is a scarce but regular fall migrant at Little Gap in late September and October, and there are occasional sightings in the Beltzville S.P. area. Rymon and Brian Hardiman found two adults and two immatures in the dead trees which had been flooded out by beavers behind the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DWGNRA) headquarters building at Bushkill in the fall of 1994. They were present as late as April 17, 1995, when Street watched one which seemed to be excavating a cavity. None could be found on a subsequent visit on May 13.

Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*). Its range expansion north along the Delaware River valley into Pike County is continuing. It has also reached eastern Carbon County in the Beltzville S.P. area.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*). This species breeds more extensively in the Poconos than we had previously believed. The *Atlas* showed five confirmed breeders in southern Pike County, one in southern Lackawanna County in the Lackawanna State Forest, and a surprising one along the Blue Mountain in southern Monroe. Serrao watched two courting at Skytop on April 18, 1991.

Black-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*). A female was discovered by Sam Droege flaking bark off a dead white pine at Milford on April 23, 1988. The Strassers saw one near Hawley in December 1988.

Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus borealis*). This is a scarce migrant in late August or early September, usually seen after early cold fronts.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*). This former rare breeder created a stir with its rediscovery during the breeding season of 1990 when Brauning heard two singing males in Adams Swamp at Pocono Lake Preserve. Street had heard one there on May 28, 1989, but dismissed it as being a late migrant. He heard it or another on August 29 and surmised it to be a fall migrant. Brauning's June observations made nesting a very real possibility, but later visits to the bog by Doug Gross failed to find the birds again.

Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*). This species is now found breeding in lower elevations of eastern Carbon, eastern Monroe, and in several Pike County locations.

Alder Flycatcher (*Empidonax alnorum*). This is primarily a species of the glaciated plateau region of southern Wayne and northwestern Monroe Counties, but Wiltraut has noted singing males in June and July in recent years at Beltzville S.P. in Carbon and along Faulstick Road in southern Monroe County near Cherry Valley along the Blue Mountain. They are common at Long Pond, where Boyce and Wiltraut counted some twenty or more during a canoe trip on June 17, 1989.

Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*). The Willow Flycatcher is more common in the lower altitudes, especially in southern Carbon and Monroe Counties.

Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*). Hardiman found a very late lingerer at Smithfield Beach in the DWGNRA on December 16, 1995.

Purple Martin (*Progne subis*). There is still a substantial colony at Saylorburg, although not as well populated as in the past. Monroe County below the plateau hosts a dwindling supply of still occupied houses.

Fish Crow (*Corvus ossifragus*). There has been a gradual spreading out from the Delaware River valley with recent sightings from Promised Land Lake, Pocono Summit, Pocono Lake, and Beltzville S.P.. LaBar observed at least twenty individuals at a roost in East Stroudsburg during the third quarter of 1991.

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*). Increasingly frequent sightings in various diverse locations during the breeding season strengthened the belief that there must be nesting ravens in the Poconos. There were observations at the DWGNRA, Skytop, Lackawanna State Forest near Thornhurst, Tom's Creek, Tobyhanna, and Hickory Run S.P.. The *Atlas* showed two places in Pike County with possible breeding birds, two in Carbon similarly designated, and several just north of there in southern Luzerne County, one of which was considered as probable. On April 6, 1993, a group of students rock climbing on a cliff near the Spruce Lake Retreat near Canadensis discovered a stick nest on the cliff face containing three young. This was reported to Jane Atwell who then informed Wiltraut. He visited the site on April 23 and photographed the adults and young, the first confirmed Pocono nesting. (*PB* 7(2):53). Ravens at the DWGNRA were observed carrying nesting material in the spring of 1991, and Katzmire thought them to probably be nesting on the New Jersey side of the Gap. Ravens were found nesting on the Pennsylvania side of the Gap in 1994 on a rock shelf at Mt. Minsi, high above the parking lot at the Gap. They nested successfully and fledged two young. (*vide* Hardiman, Wilson). This nesting failed the following year. Ravens are regular fall migrants along the Blue Mountain.

Red-breasted Nuthatch (*Sitta canadensis*). While a regular resident of the mixed forests of northwestern Monroe County and especially in the Pocono Lake area where it outnumbers the White-breasted Nuthatch, evergreen plantings are responsible for its spread south of the plateau to such locations as WCR, where Wiltraut found adults feeding fledglings in the spruces on July 5, 1992, and Saylorburg, where he heard one calling in spruces on July 20, 1993. Winter distribution is spotty and depends upon the availability of the food supply. They are regular winter visitors to bird feeders at Pocono Lake and periodic visitors to the WCR spruce plantation.

Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). The *Atlas* showed two confirmed breeding locations in southern Wayne County and one in eastern Pike County. Summer observations indicate that it is now a more widespread breeder than these records indicate. The Murphys called it a "consistent breeder" along Marshalls Creek in areas of hemlocks. Horn found one singing at PFR on May 16, 1992, Serrao heard one singing at Skytop on July 6, 1993, and Hohenleitner heard two singing at Decker's Hollow in Pike County in the summer of 1995.

Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus platensis*). Diligent searching at Long Pond has failed to find any trace of these former breeders. They should still be looked for however in sedgy wetlands and damp hayfields in light of Wiltraut's discovery of a nesting pair in May 1996 at Jacobsburg S.P., Northampton County, a few miles south of our coverage area.

Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*). The Strassers have seen this species in the Rocky Run watershed of the Lackawaxen, and this lead should be pursued, for there are no Pocono breeding records and very few observations of any kind in the Poconos. Brad and Joel Silfies saw one at Beltzville S.P. on May 10, 1996.

***Townsend's Solitaire** (*Myadestes townsendi*). John Pushcock was hiking along the Appalachian Trail near the Lehigh Gap on January 18, 1986, when he saw a bird he could not identify. He was able to photograph it, and it proved to be this species. Wiltraut examined the photos. (*AB* 40(2):263).

***Bicknell's Thrush** (*Catharus bicknelli*). The recent splitting off of this species from the Gray-cheeked Thrush (*C. minimus*) will necessitate careful identifications of these two migrants to determine the relative abundance of each.

Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*). There was a veritable explosion in their numbers in 1995. On a June 17, 1995, BBS, Lewis and Street counted fifteen singing males at fourteen different stops. Their high count previously was seven heard singing at five stops and with usually only one or two per count. Many persons at Pocono Lake Preserve commented on their sudden abundance, and similar observations were made by the Murphys in southern Monroe County and the Strassers in southern Wayne.

Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*). A D.V.O.C. field trip noted a wintering bird in the hedgerows at Beltzville S.P. on January 20, 1996.

American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*). Late spring migrants include a flock of eighteen seen by Wiltraut and others at Bear Creek Lake on May 15, 1992.

***Northern Shrike** (*Lanius excubitor*). There are many scattered winter records. Gordon Yoder photographed one at Beltzville S.P. on November 3, 1986. Wiltraut photographed a different bird there on January 20, 1987. One was seen at Cherry Valley on February 20, 1988, by Hardiman. Wiltraut tape-recorded one singing at Beltzville S.P. February 2, 1989. This bird sang often and remained into March. On March 22 Wiltraut found a roost with about 35 pellets in multiflora rose. Most contained jaw bones of voles. Schall had one at Little Gap on November 3, 1991. One found at Beltzville S.P. on December 4, 1991, remained there for the December 16 CBC. Still another was found on January 22, 1992, and stayed into February. The winter of 1995-1996 brought an invasion. The D.V.O.C. field trip on January 20, 1996, found one near the boat ramp at Beltzville S.P. and two at the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) in Dingmans Ferry, a first for that location. Dennis Murphy saw one at Brodheads ville on February 7.

White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*). There are no records from the plateau during this period. Locations south of it at which singing birds have been heard included PFR on May 11, 1986, by Wiltraut, Chicola Lake on June 9, 1987, by Boyce and Wiltraut,

Faulstick Road, south of Saylorburg, and along the Aquashicola Creek near Little Gap on May 19, 1990, by Wiltraut and others, Faulstick Road again on May 27, 1991, by Wiltraut, and Bushkill on May 14, 1995, by Street and Altemus. One seen feeding fledged young at Shawnee on July 5, 1991, by Boyce and Wiltraut may represent the first breeding record for the Poconos.

Solitary Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*). It is a common breeder on the plateau in mixed or predominately hemlock forest and through most of Pike County. Wiltraut has found them in summer in the DWGNRA in hemlocks, this an area not shown on the *Atlas* map as being a potential breeding location. One observed feeding a fledgling at Little Gap on June 18, 1987, by Wiltraut may be the most southeastern breeding record for the Delaware Valley. ZainEldeen saw a late migrant at Jonas on November 17, 1991.

Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*). Most summer records are from Cherry Valley and north along the Delaware River into Pike County where they are widely scattered. Street counted at least five singing males in the big trees along the river at the Eshback boat ramp south of Dingmans Ferry on May 15, 1995, and found them also abundant there the year before.

Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*). It breeds very commonly along the Delaware in Monroe and southern Pike counties where there are sycamores but is rare elsewhere. Street's group counted at least 25 singing males along the river between Dingmans Ferry and the Water Gap on May 6, 1993. One heard singing at Beltzville S.P. in May and June 1987 was a first for that locality. An interesting record from the plateau was Walter Thurber's observation of one at Blakeslee on June 18, 1980, during an *Atlas* survey.

Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*). ZainEldeen observed one at PFR on September 4, 1994.

Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora pinus*). This species is quite abundant in the southern and eastern lowlands but rare on the plateau.

Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*). This species is less tolerant of habitat change than the Blue-winged. It is still holding its own on the plateau in areas of scattered pitch pines and scrub oak and on the hillsides above the flood plain of the Delaware between the Water Gap and Milford where abandoned weedy fields with still young trees and second-growth woodland borders still exist. The Murphys (pers. comm.) could find up to fifteen on territory around the Meesing Nature Center north of Marshalls Creek a decade ago, "but the habitat changed. The forest grew up. We started searching for (nearby) cut over areas, and when we did we found Golden-wings," so their overall numbers remained quite constant. The *Atlas* showed them to be widely distributed in suitable habitat in Pike, Monroe, and east-central Carbon counties, but if areas could be managed specifically for this bird (e.g. controlled burns, clear-cutting), their survival would be more assured.

Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*). The Murphys found two at Tom's Creek near New Egypt on September 26, 1987, and Hohenleitner saw one at Billings Pond near Lords Valley on September 14, 1991.

Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*). The *Atlas* showed the Pocono plateau to be this warbler's main stronghold in Pennsylvania. Though uncommon, it can be found in many of the spruce and tamarack borders of sphagnum bogs, singing from a high perch. With the Nature Conservancy's emphasis on wetland preservation in the Poconos, it should continue to do well. A singing male with food in its beak was seen by Wiltraut on the Blue Mountain at the Water Gap on June 12, 1987, an unusual location. A late fall sighting was ZainEldeen's of October 21, 1991, at Jonas.

Northern Parula (*Parula americana*). The only place in the Poconos where this uncommon breeder may be found with any certainty is along the Delaware River between the Water Gap and Milford.

Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*). The WCR spruces, where Wiltraut heard five singing males on May 26, 1987, comprise what is probably the southernmost regular breeding spot in eastern Pennsylvania.

Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*). While the *Atlas* showed this to be a widespread breeder on the plateau and in southeastern Monroe County, Street has noted a marked decrease in the population around Pocono Lake and attributes it to the deer depredations.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*). The "Myrtle" Warbler continues to extend its breeding range on the plateau. Street finds it second to the Magnolia in abundance in the forests of the Pocono Lake area. The WCR spruce plantation is still probably the southernmost regular breeding site in eastern Pennsylvania. Wintering birds seen on the CBCs vary in numbers from year to year. The Pocono 1991 count had 32 and the Wild Creek count 11.

Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*). Morris and England observed one at Beltzville S.P. on October 20, 1990, a late date.

Yellow-throated Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*). It would be no surprise to find this species breeding in Monroe County along the Delaware River, although there have not been any found breeding in the Poconos to date. Two singing males were found along the river road near Shawnee on May 13, 1990, by Street and his group. Rick Mellon observed one near Analomink on May 3, 1994.

Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*). Two early fall migration sightings were on September 13, 1989, at PFR by Wiltraut and September 8, 1991, at Pocono Pines by Street.

Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*). During *Atlas* surveys in 1987 there were two sightings of Blackpolls in the Poconos, by Helen McWilliams at Spruce Pond and by the Strassers near Damascus. Both were in bogs in central Wayne County, a few miles north of our study area, which only extends into southern Wayne. A Blackpoll nest was discovered in western Wyoming County on June 29, 1994, by Brauning and Gross in the Coalbed Swamp (*PB* 8(3):128-132). This is a large boreal sphagnum swamp dominated by red spruces and shrubs of the same composition as those occurring in our area, so we should be alerted to watch for possible breeding here.

Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*). Ceruleans seem more prevalent now in Monroe County than the *Atlas* map indicated. The Murphys recently counted ten or more singing along a ten-mile stretch of road on the plateau north of Marshalls Creek. Street, P. Crawford, H. Hallowell, and J. Warren found singing birds in three separate locations in the DWGNRA on June 4, 1996, and LaBar heard five along Route 191 near Kirkridge on May 10, 1991.

Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*). One was observed by Arlene Koch and Kathy Sieminski near WCR on May 14, 1988, a first Carbon County record. The Strassers found one along a stream near Hawley on June 16, 1994, and another on May 12, 1995. There has been no confirmed nesting since Rymon's 1985 nest on DePue Island near Shawnee. Nesting boxes placed on islands in the Delaware River might encourage breeding again.

Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorus*). Wooded hillsides along the Blue Mountain, at Cherry Valley, and above the Delaware River flood plain between the Water Gap and Dingmans Ferry are where they are most frequently found, although nowhere abundant. Singing birds have been noted on the plateau on a few occasions. Boyce and Wiltraut found a nest with young at the DWGNRA on June 10, 1992.

Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus novaboracensis*). Eric Sullivan found one on a dock at Lake Monroe, north of Marshalls Creek, on November 1, 1993, a very late date.

Kentucky Warbler (*Oporornis formosus*). Wiltraut's observation of a parent feeding two young at Hialeah-Shawnee on June 29, 1989, was the first actual indication of breeding in the Poconos. Street, Altemus, and Clark heard one singing at Bushkill on May 11 and 12, 1991, and another in Cherry Valley on May 9, 1992. Terry Master found one at Tannersville on June 7, 1991.

Mourning Warbler (*Oporornis philadelphia*). A singing male was found on Faulstick Road just south of Saylorburg on May 12, 1990, by Boyce, DeReamus, and Wiltraut. Lewis and several others saw a male at Pocono Lake Preserve on August 26, 1993, and the Strassers had one near Hawley on May 12, 1995. Brushy clearings in wooded tracts at higher elevations should be surveyed during the nesting season in hopes of finding them nesting in the Poconos again. They were last found here early in the century.

Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*). Wiltraut noted three single birds at Little Gap on the Carbon-Northampton county line on September 17, 18, and 21, 1990, after a cold front. One was an adult male.

Canada Warbler (*Wilsonia canadensis*). While breeding commonly in wet woods where hemlocks and rhododendrons flourish on the plateau, they are scarce along the southern borders of our area. Here Wiltraut has found them in summer at the DWGNRA on the Monroe-Northampton county line in rhododendron thickets.

Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*). The *Atlas* showed one "probable" breeding location in northern Carbon County in the Hickory Run S.P. area and two in eastern Pike. It also shows five "possible" breeders in southeastern Pike. Singing birds

have also been heard in the Beltzville S.P. area on six different occasions during this period, three times in May, twice in June, and once on July 6, 1989.

Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*). One was seen at Hialeah-Shawnee on May 4, 1988, by Hardiman, and Colin Campbell found a singing male near the village of Delaware Water Gap on June 4, 1994.

Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*). A singing male was seen at the Little Gap Bird Observatory on July 30, 1991, by Wiltraut. The observatory is on the Northampton County side of the Blue Mountain (*PB* 5(3):120). When it "flew north and out of sight," it may have reached Carbon County. But whether it did or not, it is an interesting record of a species whose range has been extending northward rapidly.

Vesper Sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*). Vesper Sparrows are becoming increasingly scarce in the Poconos. Fewer fields and changed agricultural practices are factors.

Lincoln's Sparrow (*Melospiza lincolnii*). It is an uncommon but regularly seen fall migrant. Most sightings are in October and mainly around the shores of Beltzville Lake. September observations include one at Tom's Creek on September 26, 1987, by the Murphys and one at Beltzville S.P. on September 12 and 19, 1991, by Wiltraut. October observations other than Beltzville S.P. include sightings of one at Little Gap by Wiltraut on October 10, 1990, and October 4, 1991.

Swamp Sparrow (*Melospiza georgiana*). Nearly every wetland in the Poconos contains breeding Swamp Sparrows. One indication of their abundance was the counting of about fifty singing males during a canoe trip down Long Pond by Boyce and Wiltraut on June 17, 1989.

White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*). This uncommon migrant occasionally lingers here in winter. It has been recorded on several CBCs.

Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*). A common nester, this year a very late nesting date was reported to Street by Judy Talbot at Pocono Lake Preserve. The one and only fledgling left this unusual nest in a hanging flower basket on September 5, 1996.

Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*). To encounter a flock of Snow Buntings in winter is always a pleasant event. Wiltraut found fifty at Beltzville S.P. on November 11, 1987. Kevin Crilley saw 150 or more at the Hickory Run turnpike service plaza on December 24, 1990, and ZainEldeen saw forty at Beltzville S.P. on November 10, 1991. Wilson saw about 100 near Jonas on December 12, 1996.

Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*). There has been a serious decline in their numbers. They are almost totally absent from the plateau and Pike County and occur in limited numbers in eastern Carbon and southern Monroe counties, where they were once common. Loss of grassland to development or reforestation and earlier mowing of hay fields have contributed. These same conditions are adversely affecting such grassland species as Grasshopper Sparrow and Bobolink.

Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*). This disappointing ten-year period for northern finches in the Poconos gave us only two reports of this species, with twenty

g seen on the December 20, 1987, Pocono CBC and two at Bushkill, Pike County, April 16, 1995, by Wilson.

Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*). There was only one sighting during this re period, when Schall noted two females at Little Gap on September 8, 1990.

White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*). Wiltraut saw ten at WCR on ary 4, 1990, There were no other reports.

Common Redpoll (*Carduelis flammea*). Occasional flocks of Common polls and Pine Siskins saved this decade from being a total bust with winter es. The D.V.O.C. field trip saw a small flock of Redpolls at WCR on January 16, 7, and Pike County observers reported having an invasion there. The winter of 3-1994 brought large numbers. Among the reports were seventy seen at Beltzville on December 19 by Wiltraut, 115 seen on the White Mills CBC (Hawley area) December 18, fifty at Tobyhanna by Serrao on February 17, seventy at Analomink ric Sullivan on March 3, and a late one at Beltzville S.P. on April 12 by Wiltraut. cck of 100 or more flew overhead at WCR on January 20, 1996, observed on the .O.C. field trip.

Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*). Wiltraut found a flock of about 100 near WCR ovember 21, 1987, and sightings were widespread enough during the winter of 7-1988 to consider it to be an invasion. Molnar counted as many as sixty at his e Arrowhead feeders on March 16, 1990, a winter in which there were many er reports. Wiltraut saw forty at Little Gap on November 5, 1989, and 50-60 on ember 26, 1989. Wiltraut saw twenty at Little Gap on October 23, 1993, and had e one at Beltzville S.P. on May 17, 1990.

Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*). The Pocono CBC reported Evening Grosbeaks in December 1986 and 152 in 1987, and it's been downhill since, with the exception of 1992 when 133 were counted. None were recorded 90, nine in 1993, and none in 1994. Molnar had seventy at his Lake Arrowhead ers in late December 1989 and a high count of only 24 the following March. Some r so were found at Beltzville S.P. in January and February of 1991. D.V.O.C. ary field trips, which include visits to both Beltzville S.P. and to PEEC at gmans Ferry, experienced five years out of the last ten in which they saw none. A did stay at Dingmans Ferry during the winter of 1995-1996 where Padalino had any as forty coming to his feeders. As grim as these figures are, the exciting news vening Grosbeaks being found breeding in nearby Wyoming County, a state first, me 1994 by Skip Conant (*PB* 8(3):130-135) helped ease the pain of this long ght.

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