



# THE DRUMMER

[www.senecarocksaudubon.org](http://www.senecarocksaudubon.org)



February/March 2013

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## Members' Night

*February 13 Program*

We are planning a special meeting in February, with some snacks to celebrate Valentine's Day. All members and guests are encouraged to bring photos, books, stories, any items of interest. If you have digital photos, please bring them on a flash drive. Our Members' Night is always fun!



Cuban Trogon

Some of our members have already agreed to start us off with photos from recent birding trips. Last March, Michael Leahy, along with several other people from Western Pennsylvania participated in a 15 day tour of some of the spectacular birding areas in Costa Rica. He added over 420 species to his life list and took over 2,000 digital photos. He will share a few of his favorites with us. Flo and Jim McGuire went to Cuba on an Audubon Nature Odysseys trip last October and were enthralled with the endemic birds and the culture. They also have some photos to share.

*Our programs are held at the Clarion Free Library. Come early to socialize - program begins at 6:30 pm.*

## Waterfowl Identification Tips

*March 13 Program by Mike Leahy*

As a prelude to our March 23<sup>rd</sup> outing to Geneva Marsh and Conneaut, Michael Leahy will present a light-hearted yet informative program on waterfowl identification tips, to help us sort out some of those confusing waterfowl.

Michael will cover subjects such as: "What's the difference between a Redhead and a Canvasback?", "Why is it called a Ring-neck Duck and not a Ring-billed duck?" and "What the heck is Scoter?"

Bring your field guides and take notes. We'll cover most of the confusing species we're likely to encounter in Western Pennsylvania.

*Spring Bird Seed Sale!  
Orders are due Feb. 22.  
Order form is on page 9.*



## Geneva Marsh Outing

~ Jim Wilson & Mike Leahy

This will be a combined field trip with members of Presque Isle Audubon from Erie, PA.

Our annual pilgrimage to Geneva Marsh & Conneaut led by Michael Leahy will take place on Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013.

Plan to meet at Aunt Bee's Restaurant off of Smock Drive at the intersection of Route 19, Route

285 and I-79 at 8:00 am. Get there earlier if you want to eat a hearty breakfast. It's also a good place to take a "pit stop". We will then proceed to Custards and our usual areas to look for waterfowl, Eagles and anything else we can find. There have been some reports of some nice birds in the area so be prepared for just about anything from Sandhill Cranes to Rough-legged Hawks.

We will stop at an area restaurant for lunch. Plan on an all-day outing or stay as long as you want. Drive time from Clarion should be about an hour. Try to car-pool as much as possible. I have room for 2 or 3 in my car. If you have 2 way radios, bring them tuned to channel 11.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give Michael a call at 814-229-1648

Bring all of your birding gear and dress for any changeable weather. See you on the 23rd of March.

## Winter Tree ID Workshop

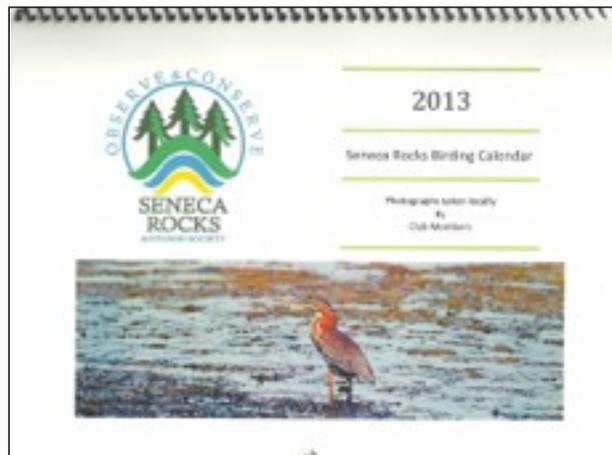
A Winter Tree Identification Workshop will be held on Saturday, February 23, from 10 a. m. to 1 p.m. Most of us learn to identify trees by the leaves. But how can we recognize a tree in winter? This workshop will hone our ID skills.



Can you identify this tree?

Ty Ryan, District Forester, will present an indoor session followed by a look at the trees outside in the DCNR arboretum.

Directions to the Forestry building on 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave in Clarion: From 322 (Main St Clarion) turn south at the light at 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Travel .4 miles to the DCNR Forestry building just past the cemetery. Both the cemetery and the building are on the right. Parking is available in the front of the building and on the side of the building from Chestnut Ridge. Enter the front door on the porch. The building is handicapped accessible and very close to the parking area.



## SRAS CALENDARS

Our first annual SRAS Calendar, brainchild of Gary Edwards and Ron Montgomery, turned out beautifully! We found that we have quite a few talented photographers in our membership!

There will be some calendars for sale at our next meeting, in case you didn't get a copy or would like another.

Some tips for your photographs for next year's calendar:

- Now, in the winter months, be thinking about some winter photos. They will look great on the winter months of the new calendar.
- Preferably, do not take pictures through a window.
- Do not use your camera's date/time stamp.
- Do not crop your photo - the editors will crop it to fit the space needed.

The *Drummer* is the bi-monthly newsletter of Seneca Rocks Audubon Society (SRAS), PO Box 148, Clarion, PA 16214. SRAS is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. The *Drummer* is published 4 times per year—September, November, February, and April.

The *Drummer* is available on our website in Adobe pdf and may be read or downloaded from the site – [www.senecarocksaudubon.org](http://www.senecarocksaudubon.org).

Members are encouraged to contribute announcements, articles, photos, etc., to Editor Flo McGuire, 609 Ponderosa Lane, Tionesta, PA 16353 (814 755-3672) or email at [fmcguire1@verizon.net](mailto:fmcguire1@verizon.net).



## 26<sup>th</sup> CBC

~ Gary Edwards

Then the heavens opened and it snowed, and snowed, and snowed. Old Man Winter, or perhaps, given the strength of the storm, Old Woman Winter.....on second thought, probably both, did their best to thwart our stout-hearted bird counters. Alas, they were on the verge of success. Some people were forced to cancel; some were delayed until afternoon; some slid off the road; at least one couldn't get out of her driveway and became a feeder watcher; and white-out conditions forced one team to give up before noon. Then, rising to the occasion, SRAS members battled on and the dastardly conditions were overcome resulting in a victory, of sorts, for the home team.

In last year's summary, I stated that Mike & I were going out on a limb and guaranteeing better results after that count produced only 42 species (lowest count ever) and 5,354 birds (3<sup>rd</sup> lowest count ever). For a while it looked as if the limb would break. Six to ten inches of snow (some will say more) between about 4 a.m. and noon tested the resolve of our mobile teams. In the end, 27 brave souls ventured out by vehicle, an increase of five over last year, and 23 feeder watchers, an increase of 16 over last year, recorded 43 species (+1 from last year) and 6,375 individuals (+1,021 from last year). So, given the conditions, you performed a herculean task. Many thanks to all.

Our goal of increasing the number of feeder watchers exceeded expectations and we'll continue efforts to keep Ruth Schurr busy tallying feeder watcher totals. Thanks, Ruth, for all your work, it makes the overall compiling much easier.

We got back on track finding three species missed for the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> time last year -- Carolina Wren, Cedar Waxwing, and Northern Flicker. However, not all results were positive. We missed Brown Creeper for the

2<sup>nd</sup> time after missing it for the first time last year. Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, and Golden-crowned Kinglet went unrecorded for the first time. Bluebirds were probably away from the weather in nest boxes while robins and kinglets are more often seen by walkers -- and the weather precluded walking.

We continue to be the Short-eared Owl capital of Pennsylvania as Ron Montgomery, Ann Hunt, and Pat Conway found three at Mt. Airy while Jack & Fran Williams and Kurt Crosby located one perched in a tree top. Piney Tract and The Bowl were unproductive. Our string of 26 consecutive years with at least one Short-eared is unrivaled. Speaking of owls, Mike Leahy and Paulette Colantonio began owling at 4 a.m. and recorded six Eastern Screech Owls before the weather intervened while Jim Wilson & I had a Great Horned Owl calling an hour or so before sunrise.

There weren't many other highlights, 1,018 Mourning Doves was nine short of a record while 62 Mallards and 213 Northern Cardinals were 3<sup>rd</sup> highest totals. Deb and Ben Freed had a Hermit Thrush at their feeder, always a good bird for the count although surprisingly Hermits have been recorded in 11 years. On the down side, 270 American Crows and 37 House Finches were 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest totals.



The team of Carl & Joan Rowe and Wayne Meier recorded the highest species total, 26.

Field birders were: Ernie Aharrah, Paulette Colantonio, Pat Conway, Kurt Crosby, Pete Dalby, Gary Edwards, Jeff Hall, Janice Horn, Ann Hunt, Michael Leahy, Emily, Gretchen, John and Peter Lugthart, Flo and Jim McGuire, Wayne Meier, Ron Montgomery, Carol Rifer, Carl and Joan Rowe, Ruth Schurr, Gil Twiest, Fran and Jack Williams, Jim Wilson, and Carole Winslow.

Feeder watchers were: Gregg Allhouse, Henricka Bohlen, Cindy Bonner, Ben & Deb Freed, Dorothy Flick, Layne Giering, Sally Hockman, Dixie Humphrey, Henry Irvin, Pat & Peggy Kearny, Rheba Klinger, Bill Kodrich, Jerry McCall, Evelyn Myers, Linda Osterberg, John & Kathy Pokrifka, Margo Wimer, Alan Winslow, and Donna Woodman.

No predictions or guarantees for next year.



Rufous photo by Carole Winslow

## Rufous Hummingbird

~ Carole Winslow

For the past several years at least, each fall as the summer ends, I nurse the flowers on the deck along, trying to keep them blooming for as long as possible. Partly for the departing ruby-throated hummingbirds, bees and other insects but also in the hopes that the longed-for appearance of a rare western hummingbird would finally happen this year. This summer had been no different and the flowers were doing well, with lots of bloom particularly on the black-and-blue salvia and more common blue salvias, as well the gartenmeister fuchsia.

On the afternoon of October 14 the weather was still mild and after a trip up to our top fields watching for birds, deer or other wildlife, we had returned to the house for the evening. I headed up the steps of our back deck and as I walked by the salvias and hummingbird feeder I could hear the sound of wings as something sped off quickly. Hummingbird ! I said it out loud as I thought it in my head and literally dropped what I had in my hands as I raced for the door to get my binoculars. I stood by the door and watched and in just a few minutes a hummingbird dropped down out of the cherry tree and towards the hanging feeder. As I made a move, it startled it back up into the tree before I got a good look. I sat down in a chair at the far edge of the deck and willed myself to just sit still and be patient. Sure enough, after just another few minutes the bird returned and hovered near the feeder for a few minutes, then dropped down and began to feed on the salvia. By this date, most

ruby-throats should have departed and I hoped that this meant that the bird was a selasphorus, or western hummingbird, either a rufous or Allen's. As the tiny bird flitted around the flowers, I could see right away that it had a greenish back, lighter head, stippling or dark marks over the throat, and its flanks and sides appeared light rufous in color. The more I watched it, the more convinced I was that it was indeed a selasphorus, and it returned frequently that evening to the flowers and occasionally the feeders as well.

The next morning I set up the scope with my digital camera and when the bird returned, I was able to get close views and by afternoon had captured some decent photographs. It didn't take long after sharing the photos via email to be pretty sure that the bird was likely a rufous, and by the evening, plans had been made to have Bob Mulvihill, a bander from Pittsburgh, come up the next day to identify and band the bird if possible. Mike Leahy and Gary Edwards were present that evening as well to see the bird and get some beautiful pictures. The bird was present throughout the day on the 16th, and the weather was clear though cool. Gary and Mike returned that afternoon around 4 and shortly Bob arrived for the banding. A box cage was set up around the small feeder next to the deck and we waited for the bird to arrive, however it had decided to fool us by using another feeder in back of the house, until we wised up and took that one down. Shortly after, it appeared at the cage and found it's way in. Bob had it in hand in very short order and we were able to see the beautiful, tiny bird at close range. We could see the dark rufous coloring on the tail feathers when spread and also the rufous color on the sides of the rump and flanks. The identification- a hatch year female rufous hummingbird! One darker feather in the center of her throat was bright orange/red and overall she appeared healthy. Bob quickly checked for fat deposits, measured wings and weighed her on a tiny scale, took a feather sample and then took a very tiny metal band with the number 04437 and placed it on her left leg. At this point, whether from the cooler air as the sun set behind the trees or stress, she seemed to become less responsive and Bob quickly got her to take some nectar from the feeder and then we walked together out into the sun to release her. She lay still on his palm with eyes closed and as I watched her my heart sank and I realized then how this tiny bird had captured my devotion in just two

days. What had happened ? I felt terrified that we had somehow caused too much stress to this young bird even though everything had seemed to go so smoothly. As I watched her lay so still while Bob tried to warm and rouse her, I whispered the words that my brother uses- Live bravely, little one, I said to myself, trying to send some of that spirit to her. In short order, she started to respond again and then suddenly zipped out of Bob's hand and up towards the top of the cherry tree by the deck, out of sight. I gasped in relief and hoped to see her back shortly at the feeder before night. The visitors left and I watched the feeders in vain for a sight of her, but she did not return before I had to leave for work that night. I spent the night full of anxiety and wondering what had happened, wishing we had waited until a warm morning to try to capture her.

When I got home the next day, I watched the feeder again in vain, until almost 9 with no sign. By then I was near tears, when she finally appeared at the feeder on the deck. Happiness again ! For the next 5 days, she continued to be regular at the flowers and feeder, with longer periods away when it was warm when she likely was feeding more on insects. She continued to appear healthy and active, with no apparent distress after the banding episode despite all my worries. Then, after just a very brief appearance on Oct. 21, she disappeared. After two days of absence, I assumed she had moved on and tried not to worry. I told myself it was crazy to get attached to a bird that I knew was never meant to stay, and that I would likely never see again. It's the way of nature and something I have always accepted without difficulty. But this seemed different, and I missed seeing her at the flowers on the deck as I stood at the kitchen sink. Several warm days went by and I eventually stopped watching. Than late in the day Oct. 25th, I saw a flash at the deck feeder as I was getting supper, and there she was ! I was sure it was her, though she looked a little more worn and had some missing feathers around her throat area. The next day she returned again and I could see her left leg band through the scope, so it was certainly my hummingbird.

As Hurricane Sandy swept through the area in the next several days bringing steady rain and cooler weather, she was constantly at the feeders and occasionally the flowers, sitting often in the large spruce next to the

deck for shelter and sometimes under the porch eave at the feeder there. Despite looking rather ragged, she appeared healthy otherwise and was feeding frequently. The weather started clearing some later in the week and she continued to be a regular presence. On Friday Nov. 2 the weather was mostly cloudy but calm and temperatures warmer. A visiting birder watched her at the feeders mid-day and took some pictures and a short video and then left. She wasn't seen over the weekend while I worked daylight hours and though I watched on the following Monday and Tuesday she was gone. This time she did not return.

Again, it took several days to finally get over the habit of watching the feeders for her. I continued to leave the feeders up in the hopes of another visitor but by the start of December they were freezing daily and I reluctantly took them down for the winter. It still amazes me how quickly I became invested in this tiny bird that shared our farm for a little while, and I am so happy that we were able to provide her sustenance and a place to shelter on her first long journey. I will hope against hope that she is recaptured this winter somewhere in the south and her band read, and that she finds another safe spot for respite before her long trip home next year. And I would be curious to know, with all the numerous other western hummingbird visitors in the state this year, did anyone else find themselves like me, unexpectedly captured by the spirit of this tiny, beautiful bird?



### The oldest Northern Shrike in North America

In northern Wisconsin, a female Northern Shrike has returned to its winter territory near Ashland for at least an eighth consecutive year, making her at least 8.5 years old and the oldest Northern Shrike ever known in North America. She was initially captured March 17, 2006. Read the full story on [Wisconsin eBird](#) to experience her unique story, as told by researcher Ryan Brady.



## Programs at Cook Forest State Park

~ Dale Luthringer

Saturday, February 9 at 11:30 am - *'Snowman in the Forest Day'* Come join us for a day of fun wintry activities within the heart of Cook Forest State Park. Various activities will be held at the Sawmill Center for the Arts complex located on Forest Road. Event sponsored by the Cook Forest Vacation Bureau. Go to [www.cookforest.org](http://www.cookforest.org) for more details. (3 hrs)

Saturday, February 16 at 8:30 am - *'Otter Watch'* Please bring your binoculars and spotting scopes to the Park Office for a driving tour to otter hotspots along the National Wild & Scenic Clarion River. This is the prime time of the year to witness otter activity. Chances are good to observe otter sign such as slides, tracks, and carp kills along the banks of the river. Hot chocolate will be available at the Park Office to warm us up. (2 hrs)

Saturday, February 16 at 12:00 pm - *'Hike Cook Forest: Seneca & Mohawk Trails'* Please meet at the Park Office for a challenging wintry interpretive hike into the forest primeval along the Seneca and Mohawk Trails. Observe untouched old growth forests as we venture through some of the steepest trails in the park. We'll be passing through the 1976 tornado blowdown as well as observing the tallest known Eastern hemlock north of the Smoky Mountains. Don't miss this majestic view of the Clarion River through the finest remaining old growth hemlock forest in the entire Eastern United States. Hot chocolate will be on hand to warm us up! (2 hrs)

## Clarion County Report Fall 2012

~ Carole Winslow

**Locations:** Cook Forest (CF), Curllsville (CV), Foxburg (FB), Kahle Lake (KL), Mount Airy (MA), Mount Zion (Piney Tract IBA/SGL 330)(MZ), Rimersburg (RB).

By far one of the best waterfowl reports of the past fall is that of a single **Ross's Goose** found on the Allegheny River near FB 9/16 and present there with a large flock of **Canada Geese** until 9/18 (MM). This is very likely the first county record for this species and photos documenting this bird were able to be obtained. Not only is this an unusual fall record but at this early date it is even a rarer occurrence. The large group of Canada geese that it flew in with were noted as separate and likely a migrating group, distinct from the local small numbers of geese that are common along the river.

**Tundra Swans** made their first appearance in several small flocks migrating over 11/14 and 11/15 at CV and Knox (ML,CW). Other waterfowl reports were limited for this season with most coming from a scattering of small ponds on reclaimed strip mine fields near RB. Three **Wood Ducks** were last seen there 11/16, a single **Northern Shoveler** 10/1, and on 10/23 a **Gadwall** was present along with 4 **Green-winged Teal** which continued there through the end of the fall season (MM). These small bodies of water are present in many reclaimed strip mine areas through the southern part of the county, some with surprisingly passable water quality, and are generally very poorly covered by birders for waterfowl.

One interesting note for this fall, a carryover from the breeding season, 2 female **Wild Turkeys** were noted near Limestone 9/3 with 12 young birds, which were still fairly small (FW). This is not the first report of late nesting turkeys this year, possibly due to rain and cold weather earlier in the nesting season. Several interesting raptor reports were received, with the first amongst those a rather late **Osprey** found near RB 11/6 (MM). In this same area with mixed small woodlots and large open areas, 2 **Merlins** were found 9/26, with a single bird seen there 10/6 and then last seen 10/23 (MM). Another bird was reported from Knox the first week of September (ML). The first **Rough-legged Hawk** was seen outside of Knox 11/15 (ML), a rather typical first arrival date for these winter residents. Several **Northern Harriers** were reported, all female birds, one bird at CV strips area 8/31 (MM), one bird on Rankin Rd. near CV 10/18 (CW), and another single bird present near RB from 10/30 through 11/16 (MM,CW). All areas with harrier reports were on reclaimed strip mine fields.

Two sightings of **Sora** were received this year which is very unusual, as the county has very scant reporting of any rails. The first report was of a single bird 9/14 at marshy areas near RB on Cherry Run Rd (MM), and a second report also of a single bird, flushed at the grassy edges of KL 10/13 (GE). For shorebird reports, as with waterfowl, only several sightings were noted other than some exceptional sightings related to Hurricane Sandy at the end of October. At KL 8/19, 11 **Least Sandpipers** were present along with a single **Spotted Sandpiper** (ST). At small ponds near RB, 2 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were seen 8/23 and on 9/15 there were 2 **Solitary Sandpipers** reported at the same location (MM). For storm related birding post Hurricane Sandy, at KL 10/31 species reported were 140 **Dunlin**, 7 **Black-bellied Plover**, and 4 **Red Phalaropes** (JS), all exceptional records for this body of water shared with Venango Co. At this same area on the previous day the only gull report for the season was noted, and also certainly related to the hurricane, a single **Black-legged Kittiwake** (JS).

Unusual records of cuckoos are not often received in the county, but this year 2 **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were seen rather late in the season near CV 9/29, feeding together on caterpillars high in a chestnut oak (CW). **Barred Owls** are not often reported for any season, so 2 birds noted at CF 8/7 was a welcome sighting (CM). **Short-eared Owls** made their return for the winter in early November, with the first sighting that of 4 birds on MA 11/8 (CW), and then 3 birds there 11/20 and 11/27 (MM). A single bird was also noted 11/14 at MZ and one 11/26 on Rankin Rd. near CV (CW).

It was a good season for hummingbirds this year with a report of a very late **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** in Knox until 10/12 (ML). Just two days later a probable *selasphorus* hummingbird was found in a yard near CV and subsequently captured for banding 10/16 by Bob Mulvihill, when it was positively ID'd as a hatch year female **Rufous Hummingbird** (CW, RM, GE, ML). The bird continued at this location until 10/21, after which it was absent during a stretch of warm weather and then returned on 10/25 and remained until 11/2 when it was last seen at feeders mid-day during stable weather (GM, JM, MM). As with other *selasphorus* birds reported this fall, it fed frequently at flowers (salvia and fuchsia) and on insects, but then relied increasingly on feeders at the onset of colder weather. Two notable woodpecker sightings also this season, the first being a high number of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, with 7 birds seen in a small area of property near CV 9/29, most seen on European Larch trees (CW). These birds were migrants as they are not breeders in this part of the county. On 9/20 a sighting of a single **Red-headed Woodpecker** near FB islands was reported (MM), prompting speculation on the possibility of nesting birds as there have been regular reports from this location now for the

past three years, although in spring and fall, not summer. With the declining numbers of this species and availability of appropriate habitat at this spot, it warrants more attention during breeding season to watch for possible nesting activity.

A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, a species not reported every year, was found and photographed 9/4 near RB, within their typical migration period (MM). At a property near CV, 2 **Eastern Kingbirds** were seen 9/17, and then a single bird at the same location 9/24 (CW). Both dates are on the very late end of this species migration period and likely a late record for the county. The first **Northern Shrike** for fall was seen at MZ 11/11, in one of their typical spots where they have been regular visitors for most winters (MW). A single **Philadelphia Vireo** was seen early in their migration period at SGL 63 near Shippenville 9/2 (LC), and a second bird was seen in a yard near CV 9/29 (CW). This is another species not seen yearly but reports were noted to be up this year throughout the state. Evidence of a banner year for **Red-breasted Nuthatches** was seen early on, with the first bird seen at a property near CV 8/29 (CW). At this and other sites with pines and spruce, numbers continued to grow through the second week of September with up to 6 at feeders common and a high property count of 10 on 9/29. At MZ, where large stands of larch and red and scots pine are abundant, a count during approximately two hours there yielded an astonishing total of 23 birds (RM). A normally more abundant fall migrant, **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were only seen four times this season, with just a single bird 10/7 and 10/9 (CW, MM), 2 birds 10/26 and a single bird last seen near CV 10/27 (CW).

The thrush migration this year was first noted 8/29 near CV with several **Veery** and 1 **Wood Thrush** flight call in early morning (CW). On the morning of 9/10 and also 9/12, good migration flights were noted with several hundred calls of both **Swainson's Thrush** and **Wood Thrush** (CW, FM, JM). On the morning of 9/29 approximately 200 calls were again heard, primarily Swainson's and Wood Thrush, but also with 4 **Gray-cheeked Thrush** flight calls noted as well (CW). On that day later at the same location near CV, a Swainson's Thrush was observed feeding along with robins in wild grapevines at the edge of a scots pine stand (CW). In a nice early date for this species, **Snow Buntings** were observed at the parking area on the *Clarion* side of KL 11/15 with 5 birds present (ML).

Warbler migration was mixed again this year, with overall numbers small although variety was good. Both Tennessee and Cape May warblers had lower numbers than usual, while palm and Wilson's were up. The first migrant of note was that of a single **Mourning Warbler** at CF 8/7, possibly a post-breeding individual with this early date and suitable habitat in the area

(CM). The first big migrant push was at SGL 63 on 9/2, when a large variety was sighted although in small numbers for each species. Birds reported were **Tennessee, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Cape May, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue, Palm, Pine, Yellow-rumped, and Black-throated Green Warblers** (LC). This game lands area has excellent edge and wooded habitat with abundant small apples and crab apples, as well as shingle and white oak, and black cherry. A second day with good warbler variety noted was 9/29 near CV, when small numbers of the following were seen: Tennessee, **Nashville**, Common Yellowthroat, Cape May, Magnolia, Blackburnian, **Blackpoll** and Black-throated Green Warblers (CW). Also on this date 2 **Pine Warblers** were seen, not a more common migrant here, as well as a total of 15 **Palm Warblers**, likely an underestimate of numbers (CW). This was a high number of this species for the area, and birds were seen feeding low to the ground in small pines as well as gray dogwood. A single **Wilson's Warbler** was also seen, the second one of the fall, with another bird at this spot 9/17 (CW). This species is also not reported annually. Lastly for this date and location, approximately 14 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were also present, feeding often on poison ivy berries and some Virginia creeper, as is common this time of year.

The arrival of **American Tree Sparrows** was in the typical time frame this year with the first two birds noted in a brushy field area outside of RB on 11/6 (MM,CW). At SGL 63 in some of the field areas a larger number of at least 30 birds was seen feeding on goldenrod seed heads along with 1 **Field Sparrow**, 3 **Fox Sparrows**, and 5 **White-throated Sparrows** 11/14 (CW). The departure of **Chipping Sparrows** as usual corresponded very closely with the arrival of tree sparrows, with the last one reported from a feeder near CV 11/7 (CW). Local breeding **Clay-colored Sparrows** were noted still at the CV strips site 8/9 with 2 birds seen, already in non-breeding plumage (MM). They were last seen there for the season with a single bird noted 8/14 (MM). A single migrant clay-colored sparrow was also reported from SGL 63 on 9/2 (LC). Breeding **Henslow's Sparrows** were also last noted for the county at the CV strips site 8/9, with photos taken of a juvenile bird (MM). **Fox Sparrows** were first noted for the fall at a yard near CV 11/5 and remained regular through the end of the reporting season (CW). Lastly for sparrows, the first **Lincoln's Sparrow** was seen near CV 9/28 in its usual brushy field/road edge type habitat and then 2 birds were seen in this same location 10/11 with no other sightings reported after this date (CW).

**Dickcissels** remained into the fall reporting season at their breeding site from this past summer's invasion, with a single bird still present at the CV strips site 8/9

and still carrying food (MM). Some better migration sightings for **Bobolinks** were obtained this fall with the last date seen 8/19 near RB (MM) and several flocks of 50+ birds seen in the evenings during the third week of August migrating over field areas outside of CV (CW). Four **Eastern Meadowlarks** continued on recently reclaimed strip mine fields outside of RB, with the last sighting there 11/6 (MM,CW). Although these birds are occasionally seen during mild winters in certain areas, they are not regular winter residents. While reports of **Rusty Blackbirds** have gone from few to almost none for the county, this fall one sighting was received from 11/25, when 11 birds were found outside of RB at a marshy area (DY).

With abundant habitat available, *Clarion* joined the growing list of counties reporting northern finches in this irruption year. **Red Crossbills** were first seen at SGL 72 near Shippenville 11/11 with just a single bird, then a flock of 20+ birds at MZ 11/29 as well as 3 birds seen later that date at SGL 63, near Shippenville (MW). Two flocks with at least 5 birds were also seen outside of RB in pine and spruce stands 11/26 (DY). **White-winged Crossbills** were reported with even higher numbers. On 11/10 approximately 61 birds were seen in two flocks at a cemetery in Shippenville feeding in Norway spruce and hemlock (MW). At SGL 72, not far away, on 11/11, large numbers were also seen in Norway spruce stands feeding on cones (MW). Outside of RB, 5 flyover flocks, at least 6 individual birds, were seen in spruce and pine stands 11/26 (DY) and several birds also noted at MZ 11/29 (MW). A single bird was seen at a Norway spruce stand outside of CV 11/19 (CW). **Common Redpolls** were not as numerous but reported from several areas, 2 birds at SGL 72 on 11/11 (MW), 4 birds on a European larch near CV 11/23 (CW) and a single bird in RB on 11/28 (MM). Several birds were also noted 11/29 at MZ (MW). **Evening Grosbeaks** were also sighted although not in the numbers as seen from the rest of the state this season. A single flyover bird was noted near Knox 11/3 (DY) and a single female was seen at a feeder near CV 11/19 (CW).

Observers: **Carole Winslow, 159 Moggey Rd, Sligo, PA 16255, 814-745-3818, [cjnal@windstream.net](mailto:cjnal@windstream.net)**, Shawn Collins, Lewis Crowell, Cory DeStein, Gary Edwards, Deb Freed, Mike Leahy, Chris McCreedy, Jeff McDonald, Geoff Malosh, Ron Montgomery, Mark Moore, Robert Mulvihill, Richard Nugent, Doug Raybuck, Jerry Stanley, Shannon Thompson, Mike Weible, Fran Williams, David Yeany II.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY:

I frequently tramped eight or ten miles through the deepest snow to keep an appointment with a beech-tree, or a yellow birch, or an old acquaintance among the pines.

-Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

## SRAS **Blue Seal** Bird Seed Sale

This is your opportunity to purchase quality birdseed from our local **Blue Seal** dealer and support the conservation, education and environmental activities of the Seneca Rocks Audubon Society. Blue Seal will offer a 15% discount on bird feeders, suet cages and nyjer sacks when you pick up your order. There are two store locations: J&J Feeds on route 66 midway between Marianne Corners & I-80 and J&J Feeds Brookville on Allegheny Blvd across from the old Agway Store

**ORDER BY FRI February 22**

**PICK-UP from MON March 4 to SAT March 9**

Mail this order form with check (payable to SRAS) to: Seneca Rocks Audubon Society  
 c/o Janice Horn  
 32 Barber St. Clarion, PA 16214

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ e-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your pick-up location: Brookville \_\_\_\_\_ or Shippenville \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity	Seed Type	Lbs	Unit Price	Total
_____	Nature's Choice - premium mix with corn	40 lb	\$ 25.00	_____
_____	Concerto - no corn premium mix	40 lb	\$ 26.00	_____
_____	Songmaker - economic mix	40 lb	\$ 20.00	_____
_____	J & J Blend - most popular	50 lb	\$ 25.00	_____
_____	Black Oil Sunflower	50 lb	\$ 29.00	_____
_____	Black Oil Sunflower	25 lb	\$ 18.00	_____
_____	Cracked Corn - triple cleaned	50 lb	\$ 15.00	_____
_____	Cracked Corn - triple cleaned	25 lb	\$ 9.00	_____
_____	Cracked Corn - once cleaned	50 lb	\$12.00	_____
_____	Cracked Corn - once cleaned	25 lb	\$ 8.00	_____
_____	Nyjer Seed	50 lb	\$ 44.00	_____
_____	Nyjer Seed	25 lb	\$ 25.00	_____
_____	Suet Cakes		\$ 1.50	_____

Make checks payable to: \_\_\_\_\_ Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_  
 Seneca Rocks Audubon Society  
 Note NO TAX

Donation to Seneca Rocks Audubon \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total \_\_\_\_\_

## Upcoming Dates & Events

Feb. 13 Program - Members' Night

Feb. 23 - Winter Tree ID Workshop

March 4 - March 9 - Pick up Bird Seed

March 13 Program - Mike Leahy, Waterfowl ID

Feb. 15 - 18 - Great Backyard Bird Count

March 23 - Geneva Marsh & Conneaut Outing

May 11 - Warbler Walk at Oil Creek State Park



*The wilderness is a place of rest -- not in the sense of being motionless, for the lure, after all, is to move, to round the next bend.*

*The rest comes in the isolation from distractions, in the slowing of the daily centrifugal forces that keep us off balance.*

*-- David Douglas (Scottish botanist)*

### **SRAS Leadership Team**

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Paulette Colantonio	797-2031
Pete Dalby	782-3227
Gary Edwards	676-3011
Janice Horn	226-7367
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