

F.D.C.P. Aug. 6–24 (LyA et al.) may have been the same bird 2 miles farther e. Sep. 10 (AS, RS).

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Place names that are frequently mentioned, but very long, may be abbreviated in a form such as "C.B.B.T." or "W.P.B.O." Such local abbreviations will be explained in a key at the beginning of the particular regional report in which they are used. Standard abbreviations that are used throughout *North American Birds* are keyed on page 24.

appalachian region

GEORGE A. HALL

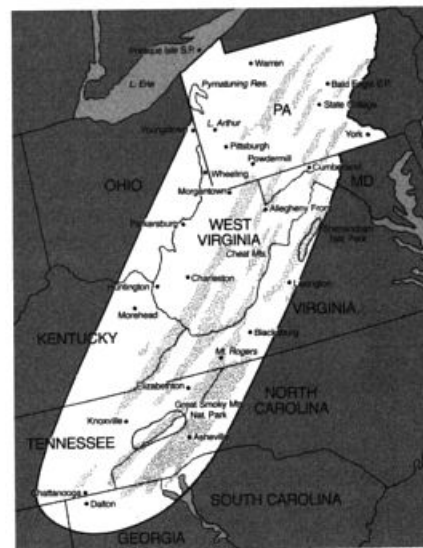
It was a "gentle" autumn. The weather was warmer than normal but not excessively so. At Pittsburgh, Aug. had excess rainfall, but Sep., Oct., and Nov. accumulated a deficiency of 3.38 inches, and near-drought conditions prevailed throughout. Most of the frontal systems were weak, and the lowland areas had had no frosts by the end of the period.

The birding, too, was good but rarely exciting. The migration of passerines started a little early in mid-Aug. With the lack of strong frontal systems, there were no major fallouts of migrants, and the warblers and other Sep. migrants moved through steadily in the latter half of the month. Most were gone by Oct. 1. The Oct. migrants and winter residents also arrived somewhat early. Although the majority of migrants departed early, there was a sizeable list of stragglers with late observations. There were no suggestions that any of the "northern invaders" would stage a flight this winter.

With the lack of rain many wetlands dried up completely and water levels in major lakes were quite low. This had the effect of concentrating waterbirds in a few places.

Only two of the big banding stations reported comparative data. At P.N.R., the 6381 birds banded was at the average of the last 10 years. Yellow-rumped Warblers were +3 Standard Deviations (S.D.) above average, Blue-headed Vireos were +2 S.D. over average, and 5 species were +1 S.D. average. Four species were -1 S.D. below average (RCL & RM). At A.F.M.O., the 8585 bandings was the 4th highest total there. Of 40 species analyzed, Magnolia Warblers and Dark-eyed Juncos were +4 S.D. above average, Chestnut-sided Warbler was +2 over, and 19 species were +1 S.D. above average. No species was as much as -1 S.D. below average (GAH). Besides the banding stations, the Waterbird Count at P.I.S.P. operated again this year.

Abbreviations: A.F.M.O. (*Allegheny Front Migration Observatory, Grant Co., WV*); HW (*hawkwatch station*); M.L.W.A. (*Mosquito Lake*



Wildlife Area, Trumbull Co., OH); P.I.S.P. (*Presque Isle State Park, Erie Co., PA*); P.N.R. (*Powdermill Nature Reserve, Westmoreland Co., PA*); S.H.L. (*South Holston Lake, Washington Co., VA/Sullivan Co., TN*); u. D. L. (*upper Douglas Lake, Cocks Co., TN*); VB (*Valley Birds Listserv*); Y.C.S.P. (*Yellow Creek State Park, Indiana Co., PA*).

LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

The Waterbird Count at P.I.S.P. logged 37 Red-throated Loons from (Oct. 20–Nov. 25; JM). Two were seen at Quemahoning Dam, PA, Oct. 19 (M & EW), and one was at L. Arthur, PA, Nov. 21 (DY). A Com. Loon at S.H.L. Aug. 31 (WC) was quite early, but the fall flight was poor and spotty, the largest concentration being 77 at Pymatuning L. PA, Nov. 21 (RFL). Horned Grebes were more numerous than usual, with an Aug. 31 arrival at S.H.L. about a month nearly (WC). At P.I.S.P. 1927 were counted in 3.5 hours Nov. 14 (JM). The only reports of Red-necked Grebes came from P.I.S.P., where the Waterbird Count listed a total of 10, Oct. 22–Nov. 15 (JM, JF, GC). Eared Grebes appeared on S.H.L. Aug. 30 and Oct. 24 (WC, ME), a 5th consecutive year there; one was at Watauga L, TN, Nov. 2 (HPL & BS); two were seen Oct. 13 at Laurel Bed L., Russell, VA (RR); and one was at P.I.S.P. Sep. 4 & 5 (RS, MF). Double-crested Cor-

morants were widely reported except at Pymatuning L., PA, the maximum count being 63, about 200 less than in 1997 (RFL). A high count of 275 was made at M.L.W.A. Oct. 6 (D & JH).

An apparent ad. male **Magnificent Frigatebird** was noted Oct. 6 at Claytor Lake State Park, *Pulaski*, VA, by Bob Abraham & Curt Rowe (*vide* C. Kessler), possibly the result of Hurricane *Georges*.

Am. Bitterns were reported from Conneaut Marsh, PA, Aug. 8 (RFL), P.I.S.P. Aug. 29 & Nov. 15 (JM), and one was banded at P.N.R. Oct. 7 (RCL & RM). Great Egrets were unusually numerous throughout the Region. The only Snowy Egrets were singles at S.H.L. Aug. 2–26 (WC & LM) and u. D. L. Aug. 19–11 (DE). Little Blue Herons were seen at Pymatuning Fish Hatchery, PA, Aug. 30 (RFL), Pipestem S.P., WV, Aug. 18 (JP), S.H.L., Aug. 2–26 (LM, WC), Greene, TN, Aug. 8 (DM, JHo), and u. D. L. Aug. 19–31 (DE). The only report of Cattle Egrets was of 25+ at u. D. L. Aug. 19–31 (DE). A Yellow-crowned Night Heron in *Venango*, PA, Sep. 6–7 (m. ob.) was a county first. A White Ibis was seen in Blount, TN, Aug. 9 (DT), and up to 11 were at u. D. L. Aug. 22–31 (DE).

A Black Vulture in *Allegheny*, PA, Sep. 26 (JHf) was most unusual, and 16 in Shenandoah, VA, Nov. 28 was a late date such a high

number for (DDa). A count of 2183 Turkey Vultures in 25 minutes was only a small part of major migratory flight in *Russell*, VA, Nov. 6 (RR).

WATERFOWL

The unusually warm weather, together with the absence of major frontal systems, probably account for the relatively poor waterfowl flights. However, the drying up of some wetlands caused concentrations at some places that still had water.

There was a good movement of geese. Unknown in the Region until recently, Greater White-fronted Goose was recorded twice: a single P.I.S.P. Nov. 12 (2nd fall record; GC, JM) and three at M.L.W.A., OH, Nov. 12 (J & DH). The increasing population of Snow Geese is reflected in the reports of this historically rare species in the Region: reports of 60 birds from 11 locations from Erie, PA, s. to *Augusta*, VA, and n.e. Tennessee. Single **Ross's Geese** were located in *Russell*, VA, Nov. 16–17 (DWO & RR; first s. w. Virginia record) and in Washington, TN, Nov. 20–24 (RK & KP; first n.e. Tennessee record). The 2000 Canada Geese at Pymatuning L., PA, Aug. 8 had increased to 18,000+ Nov. 7 (RFL). A Brant was found at Prince Gallitzin S.P., PA, Nov. 2–9 (JSa). The Tundra Swan flight was disappointing, the only concentrations being "many large flocks" over *Warren*, PA (DW) and a high count of 175 Nov. 14 at M.L.W.A. (D&JH) and *Venango*, PA (RSt), as well as 130 at Pymatuning L., PA (RFL). Two Mute Swans were at P.I.S.P. from Sep. 12 to end of period (m. ob.), and one was at Greenville, VA, Nov. 28 (YL).

Wood Ducks were in good numbers, with a new fall maximum of 61 at Swoope, VA (YL), a maximum count of 143 at Y.C.S.P. (MH), and an evening flight into the Pymatuning W.M.A. of 1030 in 15 minutes Sep. 18 (AM). Dabbling ducks were somewhat lower than in recent years. Some high counts were: Gadwall, 52, Nov. 1, Pymatuning L. (RFL); Mallard, 4288, Nov. 7, Pymatuning L. (RFL); Blue-winged Teal, 130, Sep. 21, *Clarion*, PA (JF & MB), and 120, Sep. 22, Y.C.S.P. (MH); and Green-winged Teal, 43, Sep. 6., *Woodcock L.*, PA (RFL). Most diving ducks were in low numbers, and one had the impression that most of them still remained in the north. Some high counts were: Bufflehead, 200, Nov. 6, Fayette, PA (E & MW); Com. Goldeneye, 2500, Nov. 28, Pymatuning L. (RFL); and Hooded Merganser, 1833, Nov. 22, *Crawford*, PA (RFL). Ruddy Duck was especially common, with 400 at L. Arthur, PA, through

Nov. (*vide* PH), 290 at Y.C.S.P. (MH), 287 at L. Somerset, PA, Oct. 10 (AM), and 200 in Fayette, PA, Oct. 22 (M & EW).

Of the rarer species the Waterfowl Count at P.I.S.P. tallied 124 Surf, 117 White-winged, and 153 Black scoters (JM), and two White-wingeds were at L. Somerset Oct 10 (AM). A **Cinnamon Teal** was seen with the teal concentration in *Clarion*, PA (JF & MB), and a **Harlequin Duck** was at P.I.S.P. Nov. 12–27 (ph.; GC & JM).

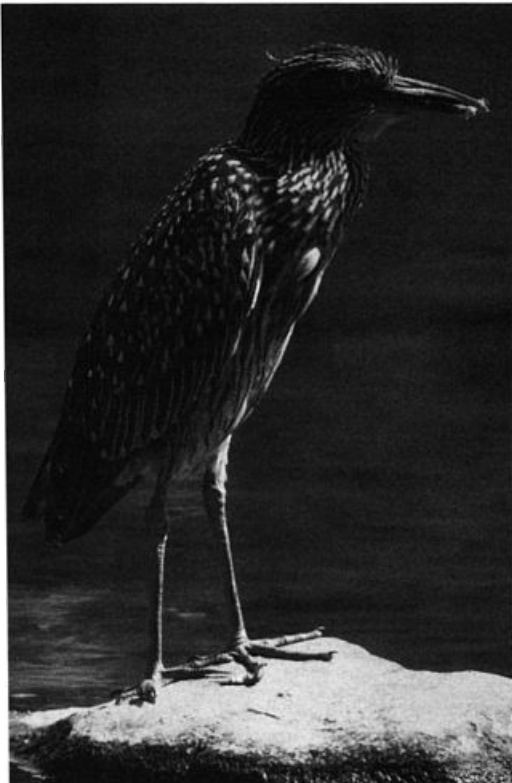
RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES

Only a few of the regular hawkwatches reported this year, but those that did report experienced only moderate flights. The results of two test counts made at *McVillie*, *Armstrong*, and *Brady's Bend*, *Clarion*, PA to determine if the Allegheny River serves as a migration corridor were inconclusive, although several interesting sightings were made.

Bald Eagles were reported from 7 locations away from the hawkwatch ridges, including a report of 10 immatures on a sandbar at *Mosquito L.*, OH, Aug. 25 (D & JH). There were reports of N. Goshawks from *Mendota Tower H.W.*, *Clinch Mt TN/VA*, Sep. 18, 19, and 20 (VB *vide* RLe), *Table Rock H.W.*, MD, Oct. 22 (GF), and six at the *Stone Mt.*, PA, H.W. (GG). Away from the ridges, N. Goshawks were at *Brady's Bend*, PA (JF), *N. Warren*, PA, Oct. 4 and Oct. 9 (*vide* DW), and *Mt. Nebo W.M.A* Oct. 7 (CS). None of the hawkwatches that reported had high numbers of Broad-winged Hawks, but a count of 2800 was reported from *Mendota Tower* Sep. 20 (VB). Away from the ridges, Rough-legged Hawks were reported from P.I.S.P. Nov. 14 (DS), *Lawrence*, PA, Nov. 14 (B & GD), *Pymatuning L.* Nov. 1 (RFL), and M.L.W.A. Nov. 5 (D & JH). The *Stone Mt. H.W.* logged 49 Golden Eagles in Oct. and Nov. (GG), the *East River Mt. H.W.*, WV, listed two (JP), and one was seen at the *Table Rock H.W.*, MD, Oct. 22 (GF). Lowland reports came from *Pymatuning L.* Nov. 14, *Shermansville*, PA, Nov. 15 (RFL), *Conneautville*, PA, Nov. 23 (EE), and *Brady's Bend* Oct. 11 & Nov. 7 (JF).

Two Merlins were present in Pittsburgh's *Schenley Park*, where several wintered last year, and reports came from P.I.S.P. (JM), *Pipestem S.P.*, WV (JP), and M.L.W.A. (J & DH), as well as from 4 hawkwatches. All the hawkwatches had Peregrines, which were also reported from 7 locations away from the ridges.

A calling N. Bobwhite at *Oakland*, MD, Aug. 16 was at a rather high elevation for



An immature Yellow-crowned Night-Heron on Oil Creek, Venango County, Pennsylvania. Photograph/Gary Edwards

this almost regionally extirpated species (CS). There were many more reports of Soras than usual (see the Middle Atlantic Coast report). Am. Coots were in good numbers, with a high count of 1300 at L. Arthur, PA (*fide* PH). Three Sandhill Cranes, the breeding pair and this year's young, were present all season in the *Butler-Lawrence-Mercer* area in n.w. Pennsylvania. Other reports were one at P.I.S.P., Nov. 22 (DY & DD), two at M.L.W.A. Oct. 21 (D & JH), and a pair in Columbiana, OH, Aug.-Sep. (*fide* DH).

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH TERNS

With many of the wetlands dried up, shorebirds were concentrated on the extensive mudflats accompanying the low water levels in major lakes. Both yellowlegs and the common "peep" were all in good numbers, and the rarer Western, White-rumped, Baird's, and Stilt sandpipers and Sanderling were more numerous than usual.

It was an unusually good year for Am. Golden-Plover, with reports from P.I.S.P. Sep. 2-Oct. 13 (DS & GR) and two other Erie locations Sep. 11-15 (JC, TC); Kahle L., PA, Sep. 13 (GE); Woodcock L. Sep. 26 & Oct. 3 (RFL); Shenango L., PA (*fide* PH); Y.C.S.P. Sep. 9-10 (MH); and S.H.L. Oct. 14 (WC). Black-bellied Plovers were reported from Pittsburgh Sep. 17 (CT), Wood, PA, Nov. 5-6 (JE), and u. D. L. Aug. 19-23 (DE). One of the prizes of the season was a Piping Plover at Woodcock L. Aug. 30 (RFL). Two large concentrations of Killdeer were reported: 250 at Slippery Rock, PA, in late Aug. (GW) and 240 at Shenango L. Sep. 23 (TF). Three Am. Avocets were in *Russell*, TN, Aug. 16 (RR, DWo), and two were at the Pymatuning Fish Hatchery, PA, Nov. 15-26, with one bird straying to the Ohio side of Pymatuning L. (RFL, IF et al.).

The only reports of Willet came from L. Oneida, *Butler*, PA, Aug. 10 (DY) and u. D. L. Sep. 6 (FA). Up to 6 Hudsonian Godwits were found at Mosquito L. Oct. 21-Nov. 8 (m. ob.), and one was at P.I.S.P. Sep. 2-4 (DS, JM). A Marbled Godwit was at u. D. L. Aug. 20 (DE). Red Knots were at P.I.S.P. Aug. 27 (DS) and at Woodcock L. Aug. 20 (RFL). Up to 20 Buff-breasted Sandpipers were at u. D. L. Aug. 20-31 (DE), and they were reported from Shenango L. as well (*fide* PH). The rarely reported Long-billed Dowitcher was found at Eaton Res., *Erie*, PA, Aug. 16 (GR), Pymatuning L., Aug. 16 & 30 (RFL), Wood, WV, Sep. 3-4 (JE), and *Russell*, VA, Oct. 13 (RR). Wilson's Phalaropes were at Conneaut Marsh, PA, Aug. 16 (RFL), Lyndhurst, VA, Aug. 26 (YL), and a



This juvenile Sabine's Gull was found dead at Presqu'ile State Park, Pennsylvania, September 24. Photograph/Jerry McWilliams

Greene, TN, Aug. 24 (DM). A Red Phalarope was at u. D. L. Aug. 23-28 (RP), and a Red-necked Phalarope was reported at Shenango L. (*fide* PH).

Unidentified jaegers were seen at P.I.S.P. Nov. 27 & 30 (JM et al.). Rare gulls from P.I.S.P. included seven Franklin's Gulls between Nov. 12 and Nov. 26, a result of the great early Nov. storm (JM); 4-5 Little Gulls Nov. 5-13 (JM, GC); a Sabine's Gull found dead on the beach Sep. 24 (AD) and a Black-legged Kittiwake Oct. 21 (JM). Two high counts of Bonaparte's Gulls were 450 at Pymatuning L. Nov. 7 (RFL) and 200 at Mosquito L. Nov. 9 (CB). Maximum counts at Pymatuning L. were 179 Herring and 4125 Ring-billed gulls in mid-Nov. (RFL). A 2nd Herring Gull nesting colony (2 nests) was discovered at Pittsburgh, and the two colonies here produced seven young (DR, PB).

Caspian Terns were reported from Pymatuning L. Aug. 20, Woodcock L. Aug. 28 (RFL), Y.C.S.P. Sep. 22 (MH), u. D. L. Aug. 19-28 (DE), and S.H.L. Aug. 20 (LM). Com. Terns were found only at M.L.W.A. Aug. 27 (J & DH), but Forster's Terns were at P.I.S.P. Aug. 8-13 (DS, JM), *Wood*, WV, Aug. 11 (JE), *Greene*, TN, Aug. 8 (JHo, DM), and S.H.L. Aug. 30 (ME).

CUCKOOS THROUGH WRENS

A webworm outbreak in n. *Butler*, PA, brought a major influx of both cuckoo species (GW), but elsewhere they were quite scarce. A Nov. maximum of 13 Short-eared Owls was located at *Imperial*, PA (CT). Both a Long-eared Owl (GC) and a Short-eared Owl (SK) were seen at P.I.S.P. Nov. 8, and a

N. Saw-whet Owl (DD) was seen Nov. 1. Fewer Com. Nighthawks were reported than last year, with high counts of 325 at Middlebrook, VA, Aug. 26 (YL) and 197 at Rockfish Gap, VA, Aug. 31 (YL), and a very late sighting Oct. 18 at Waynesboro, VA (RPo). Only two Whip-poor-wills were reported from *Allegheny*, PA, and one from *Butler*, PA (*fide* PH); two were found at Inwood, WV, Aug. 31 (SM). Chimney swifts were seen in good numbers (500-600) in *Lawrence*, PA, Sep. 12-13 (BD). An average total of 175 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds was banded at P.N.R. Aug. 3-Sep. 22 (RCL & RM). One at Shelocta, PA, Oct. 4 was quite late (M & RH). A Rufous Hummingbird was at Bristol, TN, Oct. 29-Nov. 8 (m. ob.), and a banded Rufous Hummingbird appeared at a feeder in Delmont, PA, Sep. 10 to the end of period, presumably the one banded there last year (RM). Good news were the reports of Red-headed Woodpeckers from 10 areas, including several reports of first-year birds and several flying past hawkwatch stations.

Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported from P.I.S.P. Sep. 10 (DB), *Venango*, PA, Aug. 29 (JS), Rowlesburg, WV, Aug. 29 (GF), and Staunton, VA, Sep. 2 (YL). Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were more widely reported than normal, and at P.N.R. 63 were banded compared with the 10-year average of 46 (RM, RCL). At A.F.M.O., 14 were banded compared with an average of four. There were 2 convincing reports of W. Kingbird: singles in *Mercer*, PA, Sep. 25 (RS) and *Clarion*, PA, Oct. 18 (JF). The only northern "invader" so far is the N. Shrike, with reports from P.I.S.P. Oct. 23 to end (JF, DD), Franklin Twp., *Erie*, PA, Nov. 7-29 (JD), another *Erie*

location Nov. 13 (RFL), *Venango*, PA, Nov. 22 (JS), M.L.W.A Nov. 15 (*fide* DH), *Butler*, PA, Oct. 25 (SB & RC), Prince Gallitzin S.P. Nov. 5 (JSa), *Huntingdon*, PA, Oct. 31–Nov. 7 (GCr), and as far south as P.N.R., where one was banded on Nov. 6 (RCL, RM).

Blue-headed Vireos were unusually numerous, and there were more reports than usual of Philadelphia Vireos, which frequently move through unidentified. The Blue Jay migration at A.F.M.O. was poor, with only 920 fly-bys counted (RB).

Tree Swallow counts at Mosquito L. of 1250 Oct. 12 (CB) and 600 Oct. 13 were late (J & DH). A count of 790 N. Rough-winged Swallows came from Elkton, VA, Sep. 11 (MS). A total of 3500 Barn Swallows was seen at L. Somerset Sep. 8 (RCL). Black-capped Chickadees seemed to be more numerous than usual in their normal range, but there was no sign of a southward irruption. Unlike last year's heavy flight, Red-breasted Nuthatches were almost completely absent this fall.

The benign breeding season following a mild winter has resulted in good population of Carolina Wrens at the n. extremity of the range in n.w. Pennsylvania and n.e. Ohio. A **Bewick's Wren** of unknown subspecies was seen at Brady's Bend, PA, Sep. 29–Oct. 3 (JF). Sedge Wrens were found at Shady Valley, TN, Aug. 2 (JSh), and Marsh Wrens were reported from *Venango*, PA, Oct. 8 (first county record) (JS), Grand River W.A., OH, Aug. 23 (D & JH), Prince Gallitzin S.P. Sep. 30 (MH), and one banded at P.N.R. Sep. 23 (RM, RCL).

THRUSHES THROUGH WARBLERS

There was a report (subject to Records Committee review) of a **Townsend's Solitaire** from *Clarion*, PA, Oct. 5 and Nov. 24 (DH, JF). Gray-cheeked Thrushes were more numerous than in recent years. Given its normal migratory route and the currently reduced populations, **Bicknell's Thrush** should be very rare in this Region, but a convincing report (subject to review by Records Committee) came from Wise, VA, Oct. 2 (RP). At both P.N.R. (RCL, RM) and A.F.M.O. (GAH), bandings of Hermit Thrushes were 1 S.D. above the ten-year average.

A N. Mockingbird at Fairview, Erie, PA, Oct. 15 (JM) was noteworthy so far north. Am. Pipits were reported as far s. as Lyndhurst, VA (YL), and they were very numerous in the north, with a high count of 300 at Shenango L. Sep. 23 (TF, PH).

As usual there were mixed reports on the warbler flight. It was considered the best in

several years in Wise, VA (RP), but thought to be poor in the Youngstown, OH area (NB). At P.N.R., it was considered to be about average (RCL, RM), but at A.F.M.O. it was the best in years. The migration started early, with a frontal system bringing the first wave to A.F.M.O. on Aug. 22 (GAH). The peak was in the 3rd week of Sep. There were a number of unusually late records: Ovenbird in Allegheny, PA, Nov. 2 (RSc) and Com. Yellowthroat at P.N.R. Nov. 29 (RCL, RM). At A.F.M.O., the 1228 Black-throated Blue Warblers banded was a record high (GAH), while at P.N.R., the 57 banded represented the 2nd highest in the last 10 years, and the 883 Yellow-rumped Warblers banded there was the 2nd highest total ever. Palm Warblers were more common than usual, with a high count of 78 at Swoope, VA, Sep. 15 (YL). Oddly the percentage of "Yellow" Palm Warblers was higher than normal for this Region. At A.F.M.O., the Spruce Budworm specialists (Tennessee, Cape May, and Bay-breasted warblers) were 23% below the long-term average (GAH). Of the rarer species, a Yellow-throated Warbler in *Venango*, PA, Sep. 21 was n. of the usual range and a bit late (JS). The never abundant Orange-crowned Warbler was in low numbers, but there were more reports than normal of Connecticut Warbler. "Brewster's" Warblers were reported from Butler, PA, Aug. 28 (DY) and Allegheny, PA, Sep. 19 (PH). A "Lawrence's" Warbler was banded at P.N.R. Sep. 3 (RM, RCL).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

There were 2 reports of **Western Tanagers**: Wise, VA, Sep. 3 (RP, *fide* VB) and Carter, TN, Sep. 29 (BS). A Lark Sparrow on the Allegany, MD, Fall Count Sep. 12 was a first for that annual count (RKi). Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were found in *Greene*, TN, in late Sep. (DM) and Mercer, PA, Oct. 19 (SB et al.). Fox and White-crowned sparrows were more common than in recent years. Dark-eyed Juncos in *Shenandoah*, VA, Sep. 19 were early (DDa), and an "Oregon" Junco was at Natrona Heights, PA, Nov. 29 (PH). Lapland Longspurs were found at Conneautville, PA, Oct. 19 (EE), P.I.S.P. Oct. 23–Nov. 8 (JF, JM), and Fairview, PA, Nov. 26 (JM). Small numbers of Snow Buntings were at several w. Pennsylvania locations and were as far s. as Bluestone L., WV, Oct. 30–Nov. 1 (JP), and Roan Mt, TN, Nov. 28 (ES).

There were more reports than usual of Rusty Blackbirds. A maximum count of 9500 Com. Grackles was at Y.C.S.P. Oct. 6 (MH). Red Crossbills were on Roan Mt.

Nov. 28 (RK), and small numbers of both crossbill species were at Erie N.W.R., PA, Nov. 29 (RFL). Am. Goldfinches were scarce in Shenandoah, VA (DDa), and at A.F.M.O., about 2700 flyover goldfinches were tallied compared with 4100 in 1997. A few Pine Siskins were present in the Region, and precisely two Evening Grosbeaks were reported

PERSONAL POSTSCRIPT

My first seasonal report covered the winter of 1958-59, and now, after 160 of these reports, it is time to write—30— (to use an old newsman's term) and turn the Appalachian birds over to someone else. I wish to express my whole-hearted thanks to the hundreds of people whose contributions have made these accounts possible—30

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