

THE BREEDING BIRD CENSUS—WEST GROVE, PA.

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In June of 1966 the Bureau of Migratory Bird Populations, now the Bureau of Migratory Non-game Bird Studies at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland, initiated the Breeding Bird Survey. The purpose of the study then as it still is today is to gain by random sampling a general picture of the abundance of breeding birds across the country. In 1966 the total number of roadside counts conducted was 585. Ten years later the total for the country had risen to 1,753 counts

The routes as they are called, are run once a year, preferably on or about the same date, and at the peak of the breeding season. In our area, southeastern Pennsylvania, this is usually during the first or second week in June. Each route is 25 miles long and consists of fifty 3 minute stops every $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. At each stop the observer records all birds seen and heard within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of the stop. The total time spent on the route is not to exceed $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

The particular route I have been censusing for the past four years was initiated in 1966 by Paul Schwalbe. Schwalbe conducted the census during 1966 and 1967. In 1969 the route was "reactivated" after a years lapse by Ed Rigby, and continued by him and his son until 1974 when I took over the census.

The route, which begins in south-central Chester County a few miles below the town of West Grove, runs north to Ercildoun and then east to Marshaltown, which is a few miles west of West Chester. This circuit runs through large tracts of open farm and meadowland, deciduous woodlots, and flood plain.

The past eleven years of accumulated data gives a reasonably accurate picture of the number of breeding species found in this area and a fairly accurate index to certain species populations from year to year. Because of the three different observers, weather conditions, and dates of each census there is obviously some bias in numbers of each species. Increases and decreases in particular species are more accurately reflected in census' when the same observer conducted the same count for more than two years under favorable conditions. The following list is a cumulative species list for the past eleven years for the West Grove Breeding Bird Census. An asterick beside the name indicates a special note further in the text.

CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF SPECIES OBSERVED ON WEST GROVE CENSUS

Green Heron	Carolina Wren
*Cattle Egret	*Long-billed Marsh Wren
Great Egret	Mockingbird
Canada Goose	Catbird
Mallard	Brown Thrasher
*Black Duck	Robin
*Wood Duck	Wood Thrush
*Common Merganser	*Swainson's Thrush
Turkey Vulture	Veery
Red-tailed Hawk	*Eastern Bluebird
*Red-shouldered Hawk	*Cedar Waxwing
*Broad-winged Hawk	Starling
Kestrel	White-eyed Vireo
Bobwhite	*Yellow-throated Vireo
Ring-necked Pheasant	Red-eyed Vireo
Killdeer	Warbling Vireo
Rock Dove	*Blue-winged Warbler
Mourning Dove	Yellow Warbler
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	*Chestnut-sid. Warbler
*Black-billed Cuckoo	*Prairie Warbler
Great Horned Owl	Ovenbird
Chimney Swift	*Kentucky Warbler
*Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Common Yellowthroat
Common Flicker	Yellow-br. Chat
*Red-bellied Woodpecker	*Am. Redstart
*Hairy Woodpecker	House Sparrow
Downy Woodpecker	*Bobolink
Eastern Kingbird	Eastern Meadowlark
Great-Cr. Flycatcher	Red-winged Blackbird
Eastern Phoebe	Orchard Oriole
*Acadian Flycatcher	Northern Oriole
*Willow Flycatcher	Common Grackle
*Least Flycatcher	Brown-headed Cowbird
Eastern Wood Pewee	Scarlet Tanager
*Horned Lark	Cardinal
*Tree Swallow	*Blue Grosbeak
Rough-winged Swallow	Indigo Bunting
Barn Swallow	*House Finch
*Cliff Swallow	American Goldfinch
Purple Martin	Rufous-sid. Towhee
Blue Jay	Grasshopper Sparrow
Common Crow	*Vesper Sparrow
Fish Crow	Chipping Sparrow
Carolina Chickadee	Field Sparrow
Tufted Titmouse	*Swamp Sparrow
White-br. Nuthatch	Song Sparrow
House Wren	

CATTLE EGRET—Increased significantly in 1977.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO—Rare

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER—Highest count ever in 1977 (11). This was following the harsh winter of 1976-77 when southern species expanding northward were to have incurred heavy losses.

HAIRY WOODPECKER—rare

WILLOW FLYCATCHER—Past three year average has been 15 birds per year.

LEAST FLYCATCHER—rare

BOBOLINK—Increasing. Breeds commonly on the eastern edge of the route, as does the Savannah Sparrow.

BLUE GROSBEAK—First appeared in 1976. Found at the same locations in 1977.

SWAMP SPARROW—rare

BIRDS LISTED BELOW SEEN ONLY ONCE IN 11 YEARS—1966—Eastern Bluebird, Kentucky Warbler, Vesper Sparrow; '67—Horned Lark; '71—Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Broad-winged Hawk; '72—Chestnut-sided Warbler, Great Egret, Black Duck; '74—Tree Swallow, Long-billed Marsh Wren; '75—Common Merganser, Blue-winged Warbler, Prairie Warbler; '76—Red-shouldered Hawk, Cliff Swallow (2 active nests), Yellow-throated Vireo, American Redstart; '77—Swainson's Thrush, Wood Duck, Acadian Flycatcher, Cedar Waxwing, House Finch.

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