

FRANKLIN COUNTY: JUNE – JULY 2016 NARRATIVE FOR PSO QUARTERLY

Locations: Bender's Farm (BEFA), Greencastle Reservoir (GRRE), Michaux State Forest (MSF)

Unless a rarity is found, June and July become a lull during while the breeding season for most species. There is the hoped for arrival of a couple species, such as Dickcissel and Blue Grosbeak, and maybe something unusual or vagrant. Success was had to a mild degree in our county this "summer" reporting period as is reported in the narrative that follows.

Dickcissels were first reported from Wenger Road 6/6 (CG,BO), then 6/25, 6/26, 6/30 along Portico Road (BK,TK,VB,CG), and also along Burkett and Boundary Roads 7/3, 7/8, 7/9 (BO,VB,NM). **Blue Grosbeaks**, which had a couple reports from May in the previous reporting period, were found 7/3 (male) and 7/9 (female) along Burkett Road (BO). All known sightings during the reporting period were west of Chambersburg and north of Route 30.

As for other "good" breeders, **Cliff Swallows** again nested under the bridge over Wilson Run on Wenger Road west of Chambersburg (BO,CG), **Barn Owls** again nested in that vicinity (BO,CG), and **Eurasian-collared Doves** again nested in the Shady Grove/Greencastle Reservoir area. (CG,DG). Also during the period **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were found during night time checks of MSF. Three were heard singing 6/9 in MSF south of Route 30 (BO,VB,LN), and five were heard 6/20 in MSF north of Route 30 (BO,VB).

June is the month of lull between the northbound shorebird migration and its reverse southbound migration. On 6/30 an **American Avocet** was at GRRE (CG,DG). It has been an exceptional year for them in our county following the 34 and 50 that were reported four days apart and in different locations during the first week of May. Evidence of reverse migration followed with first known sightings of **Lesser Yellowlegs** 7/6 and **Least Sandpiper** 7/7 at GRRE (CG), with **Solitary Sandpiper** (2) 7/9 and **Semipalmated Sandpiper** 7/23 at a pond near Roxbury (BO). An unexpected find was a **Wilson's Snipe** at a pond near Lurgan 7/30 (BO).

Great Egrets, which are hard to come by in the county in the spring period, began to show as expected in July with reports near Roxbury 7/16 (BO), and Keefer Road 7/17 (BO). Large numbers of them (12-14 in number) were found at various ponds in the Pleasant Hall-Upper Strasburg area beginning 7/22 and remained for over a week (BO). Another good bird was a **Black Tern** beginning to transition from breeding plumage at Kriner Road Retention ponds 7/25 (BO,JB).

Out of season specie reports were **Ruddy Duck** at GRRE 6/19 through 6/28 (CG), **Ring-necked Duck** at GRRE 7/3 (CG), **Northern Harrier** near Pleasant Hall 7/9 (BO), and **Brown Creeper** in MSF 7/31 (BO,RV).

Regarding interesting sightings, a **Bald Eagle** was observed eating a groundhog along Wenger Road 6/26 (CG), an **Osprey** was observed being chased by a Bald Eagle at BEFA 7/23 (BO), and a **Peregrine Falcon** was observed chasing a Killdeer at BEFA 7/30 (BO). Between one and eight **Pine Siskins** continued at the feeders at a home near Caledonia with begging behavior observed several times in early June (VB). And lastly a bird along Stillhouse Hollow Road that at first thought was a Clay-colored Sparrow because it was singing that song often, turned out to be a Chipping Sparrow which was actually singing the song of both species. (BK,CG,BO)

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