

Patuxent Wildlife Research Center

Breeding Bird Survey
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Memorandum to Cooperators

SUMMER 2011

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NEW OBSERVERS WELCOME

If this is your first year, thank you for joining the flock of thousands who make the BBS a success! Through your efforts and those of your peers, federal, state, and local conservation agencies have reliable bird population information on which to base sound conservation and management decisions. We want your BBS observer experience to be as enjoyable and meaningful as possible. In working towards this goal we provide many resources, conveniently located on our general web site, to assist you (www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs). For instance, via the “Data Entry” link on our home page, you can log into our online data entry system where you can take the methodology training, enter your bird data, and maintain stop location information for your route(s). You can also use this site to easily update your contact information and to view and print your historical data. The comprehensive online *Dendroica* bird sound reference tool is available year-round and is especially handy for brushing up on identification skills throughout the winter and spring. If you have any questions or problems regarding the BBS, please do not hesitate to contact your state coordinator or us here at the national office. You can find our contact information both online and at the close of this Memorandum, and we are always happy to hear from you.

Here are a few guidelines to follow to help ensure that your BBS season is as productive and enjoyable as it can be:

- 1) Log in to the online data entry system and complete the BBS Methodology Training program and the final review. We cannot use your data if you do not.
- 2) Pay close attention to survey instructions (especially regarding observer requirements, survey timing, and specific route start time as shown on data forms).
- 3) Scout your route before the actual survey day to avoid unexpected delays.

- 4) Submit your data electronically for faster feedback.
- 5) Return your maps and paper data in a timely manner at the end of each season.
- 6) HAVE FUN!

DATA ENTRY IMPROVEMENTS

We are pleased to announce several substantial improvements to the online data entry system that observers will be sure to notice when entering their data in 2011. Below is a quick overview of those changes:

1) First and foremost we have restyled our data entry pages so that the online species lists now match those appearing on the Data Forms for each corresponding route. So, since the Data Forms include only up to 65 of the most frequently encountered species on a route (owing to space constraints), just those species appear in the main list of the online data entry pages too.

2) Adding 'write-in' species has also become easier than ever and our newly restyled pages now keep these species in a separate list below the main list, allowing you to easily compare your original Data Forms with your online data. To add a 'write-in' species now, you simply start typing in the "Add Species" box and voilà, a list of matches automatically appears below that you can choose from. You can take this shortcut and select a name from the auto list, or just finish typing; then you click the "Add to List" button to begin entering your data. As always, after a page has been completed, users should click either the "Save" or "Next" button before navigating away.

3) If you added an incorrect 'write-in' species, no problem, it's easily removed by clicking the red "X" that appears to the left of the species' name. Only 'write-ins' can be removed however, since the main list is meant to remain in sync with the species list appearing on the Data Forms.

4) Finally, you'll notice a breeding status to the right of each species. This is intended to indicate whether the bird breeds in the *vicinity** of the route (*learn about the geographic scope that this refers to in the frequently asked questions section below). The term "Common Breeder" appears in fixed text next to each species in the main list because, owing to the historical frequency of these species on the route, we accept them as breeding. For 'write-ins', however, folks could report a migrant, so a button appears that observers can use to toggle between the default "Breeder" status and an optional "Non-breeder" status. Please note that the status that you select will pertain to that species for all 50 stops. You can leave a species comment or contact the national office if you have a rare instance that does not conform to this system.

NEW!! ADD-AS-YOU-GO DATA ENTRY MODE

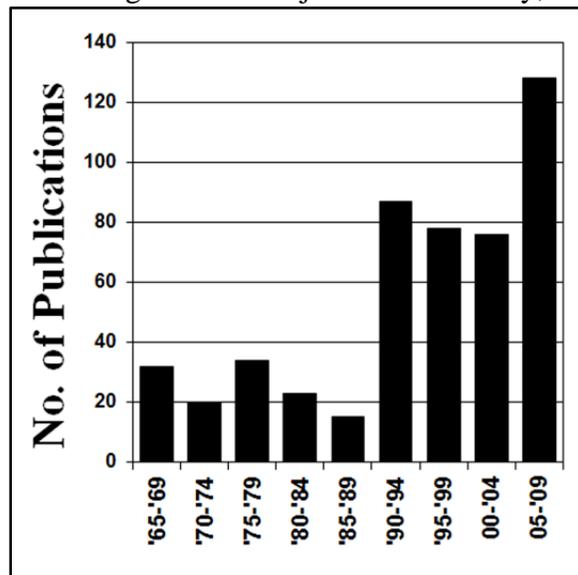
It is with great excitement that we announce the launch of an entirely new data entry mode aimed at accommodating observers who do enter their data online but who don't use pre-printed Data Forms in the field. Observers in this camp employ an 'add-as-you-go' styled approach whereby, in the field, they jot species on field sheets in the order that they were detected at each stop. Given there's 50 stops, this can yield up to 50 different species for a route, and that's a real departure from the premise of our existing data entry system. The new entry mode caters to this niche and allows folks to both enter data in the way they collected it and then subsequently review it in that same format too.

This new feature is easily accessed within our existing online data entry system by simply clicking the “Add-As-You-Go” link that’s above the stop tabs on each of the bird data pages. It differs from our standard “Form Species Mode” in that observers add only one stop’s data per web page before advancing to the next (as opposed to adding five stops per web page). Additionally, species are not pre-populated on these pages so observers can build a separate species list for each stop (a task that’s greatly accelerated by both page design and a new species add tool). You can navigate between stops using the gridded table of stops that appears at the head of the page. Users will quickly learn that, in this table, a blue stop is one that has been previously visited and has had data added and the black stop is the one that the user is currently on. As always, after a page has been completed, users should click either the “Save” or “Next” button before navigating away.

If you’re one of the many observers who don’t record your data on pre-printed forms while in the field, give this new entry mode a try...we’re betting you’ll find it a marked improvement over your previous experience!

BBS PUBLICATIONS

Since its inception in 1966, Breeding Bird Survey data have been included as a substantial part of hundreds of peer-reviewed articles appearing in leading scientific journals. Today, the tremendous potential of the BBS database is being realized with ever increasing scientific and conservation application, as illustrated by a 32% jump in the number of substantive publications since 2005 (see figure to right). Many of these publications have described general changes in bird life over time, including trends in abundance or biogeographical patterns of bird distribution. Others have focused on analytical techniques and the advancement of bird monitoring strategies. Increasingly though, BBS data are being used to test specific hypotheses about landscape ecology, ecological theory, epizootic outbreaks, and climate change. Even beyond these mentioned above, hundreds of other papers are published annually simply referring to the survey’s yearly trend results.



Between the 2010 field season and now, three articles were published by BBS scientists that may be of particular interest to observers. The first, titled “On the road again—for a bird survey that counts”, appeared in the July 2010 issue of the American Birding Association’s magazine, *Birding* (viewable via “Overview Article” link on BBS home page). This generously illustrated article chronicles the creation of the survey and its current state of progress. A second publication, “The 2003-2008 Summary of The North American Breeding Bird Summary”, appeared in October in Volume 10 of the journal *Bird Populations* (available at <http://birdpop.net/pubs/birdpopv10.php>). This article summarizes estimates of continental and

regional changes in bird populations during the 2003-2008 and 2007-2008 periods and considers them in the context of estimates from the entire 1966-2008 period. Finally, a monumental article appeared in the January issue of the journal of the American Ornithologists Union (*Auk*) comparing annual BBS trend results derived from a new hierarchical log-linear model with those derived using the former route-regression analysis. The hierarchical model represents a significant advancement in BBS data analysis and the article officially marks the survey's adoption of this new analytical approach.

BILL DEFORMITIES – A CALL FOR ASSISTANCE

In the wake of a rapidly spreading epidemic of beak deformities in Alaska, a team of researchers at the USGS Alaska Science Center is searching for answers. More than 2,500 affected individuals of 30 species have been reported in just that state alone since 1998 – including nuthatches with bizarre hummingbird-like beaks, grossly cross-billed warblers, and chickadee mandibles more fitting for of an Akiapol'au than a tit. A number of historical episodes involving organochloride contaminants in the Great Lakes, elevated selenium levels in California, etc., etc., have underscored that a sudden appearance of physical malformations is often telling of a much greater underlying ecological problem. In this case, however, researchers with a real mystery since detailed investigations have turned up no evidence of exposure to the kinds of contaminants, bacteria, viruses, and parasites implicated in previously known beak deformities.

To get a better handle on the current extent of the malady and to monitor its spread, the Alaska Science Center is collecting observations and historical records from throughout the U.S. and Canada. Birders can report beak deformities and learn more about the phenomenon online at: <http://tinyurl.com/ysmzsj>. Although the BBS methodology requires observers to proceed along routes too quickly to perform bill inspections, casual birding and feeder-watching observations from our collective observer pool could greatly help in elucidating this issue.

COORDINATOR UPDATES & HELP NEEDED

We welcome Matt Mckim-louder to his new role as Illinois state coordinator. Matt is as top-notch as they come but even this couldn't prevent the collective sigh of lament that was heard around the office when we learned that Vern Kleen was stepping aside. Vern has been a model of dedication and professionalism since starting in the early 70's, not only in rallying Illinois to consistently achieve a near complete coverage of the state's routes, but also in accomplishing 358 route runs himself (the second highest total in BBS history). Just knowing that Vern specifically picked Matt as his replacement gives us a sense of the fine things to come in Illinois.

In the next state over to the west, Missouri, Andy Forbes additionally left big shoes to fill on the heels of his recent move northward. We are very appreciative for his generous service and are equally excited to welcome Janet Haslerig in his stead. Some other states are large enough and have so many routes that coordinators can make great gains by pairing up with co-coordinators. Such is the case in California where Rob Doster and Eric Kershner have joined forces with Lyann Comrack and Brian Williams. Both Lyann and Brian previously managed that state's program alongside Bob Mckernan, whom we've had a long and prosperous relationship that we'll now greatly miss.

We continue our search for a state coordinator for Delaware. Having just 10 routes in a region with some of the mid-Atlantic's most dedicated and enthusiastic birders, Delaware represents a great opportunity for someone looking to contribute to the birding community in a new role. Additionally, the BBS is seeking suggestions for a new co-coordinator for northern and western areas of New York who will lend assistance to Charlie Smith, who has been single-handedly managing all of New York for many years. A complete list of current state coordinators and their contact information is available from the BBS web page via the "Contact Us" link.

TOP 2 MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF 2010

** Can you tell me when a "breeder" and "non-breeder" should be marked – obviously I know the general concept, but how particular are you about this?*

The difference between these two designations comes down to careful consideration of both 1) date, and 2) location of observation. Of course, the general concept being here that a bird seen *within* its typical migration dates but *away from* a known breeding area is justifiably considered a non-breeder, and vice versa for a breeder. The first part of that is fairly straight-forward but note that migration windows differ between species, between physiographic strata, and sometimes between years (especially with eruptive and nomadic species). Most migrants have moved through the BBS sampling area though by the time much of the country begins sampling, so migrants are generally uncommon across the majority of states. Returning to that "away from a known breeding area" part, this can be a little tricky. We can best illustrate our geographic scope of interest here by way of an example. Consider the case of an Orange-crowned Warbler viewed well within normal migration dates, along a desert basin route where the species *isn't* known to breed, but only 30 miles from two neighboring mountain ranges where the species *is* known to breed. If breeding habitat (or breeding evidence) does not occur in the area sampled by the route, the species would be considered a non-breeder on that route. Suffice to say that we don't review BBS data on as fine a scale as a breeding bird atlas would, so if there's breeding habitat close by the route but not necessarily right on the roadside, that's good enough. OK, so that still begs the question of what "close by" means. Well, we could suggest an exact distance in regard to this particular warbler's habitat, but that distance is going to change between species. For example, a Peregrine Falcon can have a very large home range. If one were observed on this same route – even though, just like the warbler, the nearest nest may be in the neighboring mountain ranges 30 miles away – we would possibly considered this a breeder. Reason being that an individual could be on a foraging trip from an aerie in one of the nearby mountain ranges. And whereas we don't need comments for situations as clear cut as the Warbler, the case of the Peregrine would definitely benefit from a comment from the observer.

** The BBS requests additional information for unusual sightings, but what is your idea of 'unusual' and what kind of comments are you aiming for?*

A simple rule of thumb goes a long way here: since nearly all modern field guides have at least in part used BBS data to inform their maps, any bird occurring noticeably outside of the range shown by one of these contemporary guides will benefit from at least a quick note of documentation. Beyond that, careful consideration of date and location again come into play. Namely, any 'breeder' observations collected in areas where breeding has yet to be documented (either via atlas, a previous observer's notes, etc.) and/or observations from times when migrants are still possible should be accompanied by a brief account of the encounter. Documenting accounts can be left in the *species comments* section of the online date entry system. Specifically,

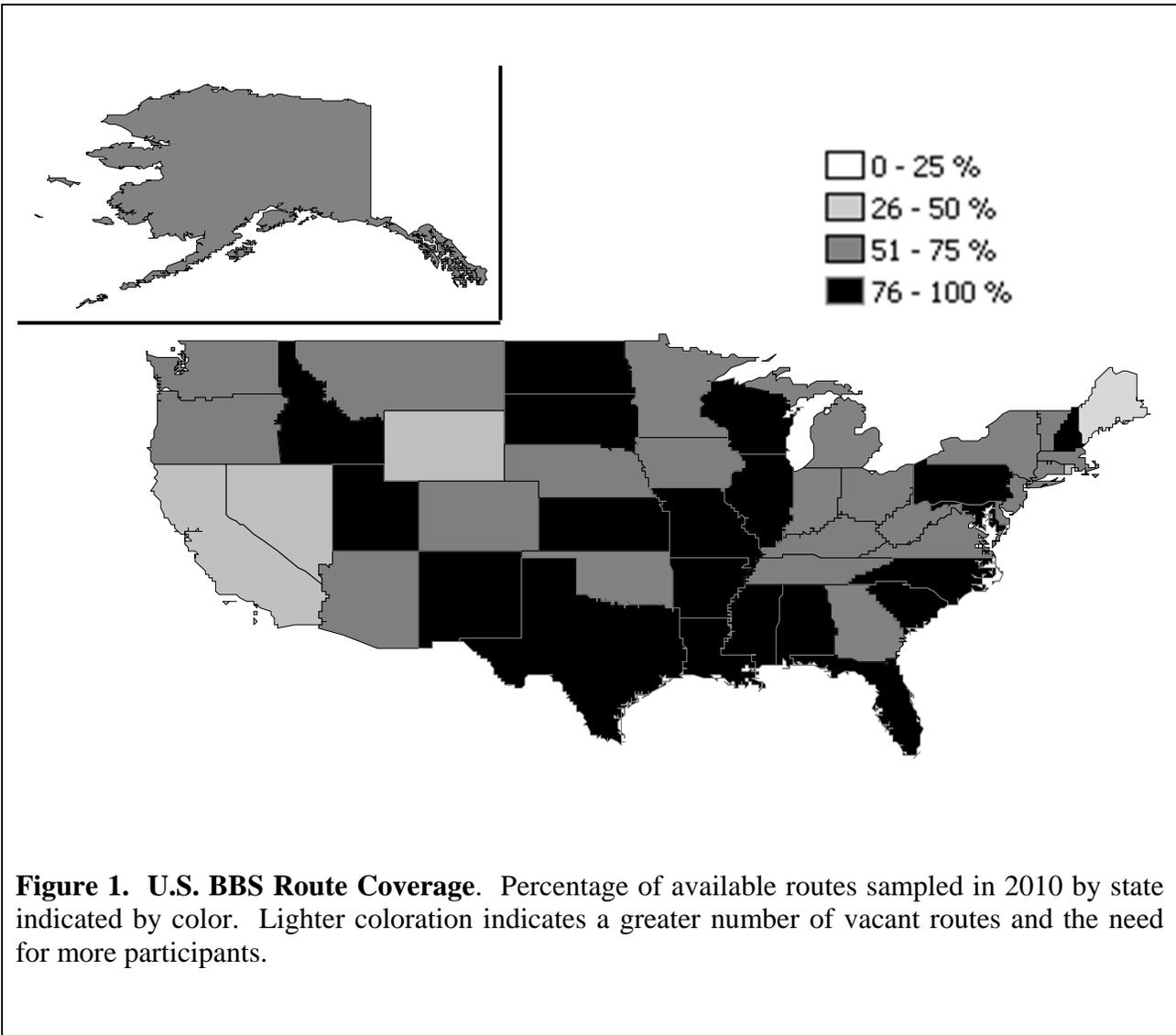
these should include how the bird was detected, the approximate distance from the bird, and the characters that were observed that lead to certainty in identification. Any brief remarks about the observer's understanding of the bird's occurrence in the area as a potential breeder will be most helpful. By providing documentation you ensure that future BBS data users will be able to accept the validity of those records.

2010 ROUTE COVERAGE

Our thanks to everyone who participated in the 2010 BBS season! Data for 2966 routes have been received by the national office so far. While the numbers are not exact (a small percentage of 2010 data have yet to arrive), Table 1 below provides good indication of how route coverage in each state played out. Only five states experienced notable increases in route coverage relative to this time last year with New Hampshire, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Utah earning a leg up to the 76-100% bracket and Oregon making the leap to the 51-75% bracket. Congratulations to the observers in these states and their respective coordinators (Rebecca Suomala, Ricky Davis, Laurel Moore Barnhill, Jim Parrish, and Harry Nehls). Folks in Arkansas and their state coordinator Dick Baxter, as well as Ricky Davis and the dedicated folks in North Carolina, all deserve special mention for having achieved double digit increases in number of routes covered this year. What a perfect illustration of the difference a coordinator can make; both of these coordinators having only recently picked up their reigns.

Top accolades also go to the hard working observers in Mississippi, North Dakota, and Utah and their respective coordinators (Dan Twedt, Ron Martin, and Jim Parrish) for having achieved consecutive years of growth. Maintaining consistent growth over multiple years is a task more difficult than it might appear; the vagaries of weather and unforeseen time conflicts test observers' persistence and measure a coordinator's route filling acumen. In other news, it's certainly become a rite of spring now – the annual tipping of the hat to Sandy Williams and the outstanding observers in New Mexico! They were just one route shy of achieving 100% coverage, again, for the fourth year in a row...outstanding work!! Last year we predicted Dan Brauning and his team in Pennsylvania might be closing the gap on the NM crew. That didn't happen this year, but at in a year when so many other states suffered crippling losses, PA held its own at 92% coverage – that's impressive, way to get it done!

Eighteen states experienced a coverage loss of more than five routes in 2010. Check and see if your state was one of them by comparing the "sampled in" columns from 2009 and 2010 in Table 1. Twelve of these dropped from their previous benchmarks in the 76-100% coverage bracket to the next lower 51-75% bracket, and two dropped from the 51-75% bracket to the 26-50% bracket. Observers are sorely needed in California, Maine, Nevada, Rhode Island, and Wyoming where fewer than 50% of routes were covered in 2010 (see figure 1 below), leaving plenty of room for qualified observers wishing to make a difference in those states. Oklahoma and Oregon are also in special need of additional observer assistance since recent coverage losses have reduced the sampling efforts of these states to precariously near the 50% mark. If you roost in any of these states, or one of the many other states experiencing reduced coverage, please encourage your qualified birder friends to migrate over to the state coordinator to lend a wing. As always, coordinator contact information is conveniently accessed on our web site via the "Contact Us" link.



BETTER LATE THAN NEVER - Do you have BBS data from previous years that were never sent in? Remember, it is never too late. Whether they are from last year or a decade ago, we can still use them. While we don't wish to promote late data submission, don't throw them out just because they are old; send them to us!

PARTICIPANT AWARDS

With the completion of the 2010 BBS season, 124 participants have earned the following BBS awards:

Recipients appear in alphabetical order grouped by award category

10-years — 66 recipients:

Linda Angerer, Scott Baughman, Patricia Beecher, Peter Bente, Lois Boggs, Jeff Briggler, Marilyn Campbell, Elizabeth Chato, Lisa Church, Leslie Curran, Nathan Darnall, Jill Davies, Bill Day, Roseanna Denton, Timothy Dever, Bryant Diersing, Robert Donnelly, Pat Farrell, John Feith, Suzanne Fellows, Catherine Flick, Michael Francis, Trudy Gerlach, Brad Grover, Thomas Haggerty, J Hines, Charles Hundertmark, Clem Klaphake, Nathan Klaus, Jonathan Kline, Kenneth Kneidel, Dan Kramer, David Krueper, Jerry Krummrich, Sherri Labar, Herbert Larner, Jeffrey Mason, Arch Mccallum, Mark Mcconaughey, Carol Mccullough, Michael Means, Randy Meyers, Mark Miller, Donald Miller, Sarah Nighswonger, Cheri Pierce, Diann Prosser, Stan Roth, Robert Russell, Thomas Seamans, Jill Shaffer, Maureen Shaffer, Kathy Shelton, Matt Smith, Theron Steffan, Howard Vainright, Laurie Vanfleet, Frances Vonmertens, Jeffery Walk, Sharon Wander, Phil Wedge, John Weeks, Dan Wenny, Russell Widner, Hank Zaletel, Mark Zloba

20-years — 35 recipients:

Jonathon Anderson, John Andre, David Bailey, Paul Bedell, Bradley Bergstrom, Frank Blomquist, Lysle Brinker, Nancy Cox, Curt Dusthimer, Marian Frobe, George Gavutis Jr., Gregory Grove, Richard Hallowell, William Igo, Michael Ketchen, James Kovanda, Jr., Loice Lacy, Gary Lester, Jeff Mackay, Andy Mason, Keith Merkel, Christian Michelson, Glenn Ousset, John Parmeter, Barbara Peck, Dwain Prellwitz, Mike Rader, Jack Rauenhorst, Susan Reel, Deborah Rudis, Howard Sands, Barbara Stedman, Walter Sumner, Dale Tribby, William Vermillion

30-years — 9 recipients:

Delano Arvin, Mary Batcheller, Bill Goodwill, Allen Hale, David Hughes, Gail Kirch, Dan Lashelle, Helen Ogren, Stephen Oliveri

40-years — 2 recipients:

Lowell Mcewen, James Peavy

50 Routes sampled — 12 recipients:

Timothy Baird, Barbara Duerksen, Buddy Johnson, Thomas Kemp, Edward Miller, Keith Pardieck, Kathleen Paulin, Jerry Probst, Harold Reeve, Clark Talkington, Michael Verser, Thomas Winters

Years-of-service calculations are based on the actual number of years that observers returned data for one or more of their assigned BBS routes. While we value and appreciate contributions made by assistants on routes, we are unfortunately unable to perform such calculations for them given the limitations of our strictly relational database based on observer numbers. If you work with an assistant that has participated in the BBS for any of the award time periods above and feel that they should be recognized for their service, please contact us in writing; include your assistant's

name and address in the correspondence and we will gladly commend them for their outstanding service as well.

Congratulations to all and thank you again for your commitment to the BBS!

ROUTE PROBLEMS

As the degree of urbanization has steadily increased over the past decade, not surprisingly, so too has the number of route problem requests that the BBS receives annually. Safety is the highest priority in the BBS, and the staff would like to maintain a safe as well as fun experience for all observers. As might be imagined, we receive a large volume of requests each year and, though time and staff is severely limited, we do our best to resolve route problems before the upcoming field season. Observers can send hazard related issues directly to us using our route problem email address (bbsrouteproblems@usgs.gov) or, if submitting data online, via the route problems section of the comments page.

We strongly appeal to observers to consider before submitting route problem requests that, while routes with dwindling natural habitat are certainly less appealing than those in more pristine areas, progressively urbanizing routes are critical to the survey's ability to measure the landscape level change that birds are experiencing. Even so, there are situations where routes become too challenging to hear birds on or suffer from other problems, such as very heavy traffic, road closures, and safety hazards. In these cases, please first consider that many problems can be solved simply by shifting a stop by the permitted .10 of a mile or by running the route as 'Sunday only', a day when traffic is usually significantly less. In cases where significant safety hazards are imminent and immediate, please cease sampling at that location and call the BBS office directly (301-497-5753) for an immediate route solution.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

At the end of each field season the national office receives hundreds of notes detailing fascinating sightings, unusual occurrences, and outright tales of adventure from recent runs on BBS routes. Not unlike working with wood though, there's considerable challenge in whittling down all of this material into a few finished pieces to be shared with the flock. In the course of doing so, we inevitably pass over a hundred or more brief musings – not quite the weighty packets of eloquently composed prose that some observers graciously pen – but interesting to read all the same. Marian Moeckel left just such a brief note; it tickled a funny bone for one or two of us in the office with a dry sense of humor, and left the rest poignantly agreeing, "so true!":

"There is nothing truly funny but it is interesting that some people slow down and ask if we need help and others just fly by."

You will want to keep supermodel Kelly LeBrock's classic line "don't hate me because I'm beautiful" in mind when reading this next short. Tom Hall in Colorado has perhaps the best deal going in the BBS; his Deadman Road route is the thing we all dream of early on count mornings:

"I love this count – 2 miles from my driveway to the first stop. Can't beat that – get to sleep in!"

I think there may be undiscovered gold in Jeanie Cole's brief comment from her Manley Hot Springs, Alaska route...this to me just seems like a perfect concept for a poster in a high school guidance counselor's office:

"We saw a beaver waddling down the middle of the highway with no water close by. It looked small, possibly a youngster looking for a vacant stretch of stream."

Anyone familiar with the "hang in there" cat poster will know what I mean when I say that such a poster would fit right in. We could go on, but we have some other, more detailed, observations that we thought you might find equally interesting – starting with this slightly Disneyesque scene from Colleen Sweeney on the Triangle route in Idaho:

"At stop #20 on Toy Summit just prior to descending Bachman Grade, 7 birds (2 mtn. BB, 2 GT Towhees, 2 Chip. Sp.) flew up the mountain to meet me. All came right up to the pick-up. A female bluebird lit on the rear-view mirror, the window sill and the boat rack before leaving 19 imprints in dust on the shell window as she tried to get in. She and other tried to perch on the hood of the pick-up. I have no explanation for this. In the past I've had flycatchers, phoebes, chickadees, bluebirds, owls, etc. fly perch on the pick-up or even enter and perch on the passenger seat, but never as a flock."

From David Hawksworth, Castleton route, Colorado

"The Great Blue Heron at point 33 caught a Tree Swallow! After frantically flapping its wings for 30 seconds or so, the swallow was able to escape, apparently unharmed. The heron already had the swallow in its beak when I first saw them, so I'm not sure how the heron managed to capture the swallow."

From Joel Geier, Barnhouse route, Oregon

"My son Wil, with his learner's permit, helped immensely this year by driving part of the route as well as helping with the recording. However, at stop 44 an idea to save a few seconds backfired. With the keys on the driver's seat, our border collie Heidi, who was along for the ride, put her paw on the door handle and triggered the electric locks, with all of the windows closed. This is in a remote part of the Ochoco Mountains, so we didn't know how long we might wait for someone with modern tools to come along. So we used a bit of Stone Age technology (a roadside rock) to smash the back window so that Wil could crawl through. After getting out the first aid kit to bandage my hand, we continued to the next stop...though forgetting my binoculars on the ground! I borrowed Wil's bin's for the last few stops and we completed the route by 9:30. Then we went back to retrieve my bins, clean up the broken glass, and rig up a way to keep the dust out for the ride home."

From David Bradshaw, Barton Creek route, South Carolina

"As we approached our stop #1 about 15 minutes early, we had quite a treat. We observed 3 Chuck-wills Widows sitting right in the roadway feeding. They flew up to catch flying insects and landed right back in the road seemingly unaffected by our headlights. One bird almost flew right into our wind shield. This is a first for me in the 33 years I have conducted the route survey. We generally hear them but we have never seen such a beautiful display of flying agility."

From Jazmyn McDonald, Gebo route, Wyoming

“There I was listening away on minute 1 by the stock pond at stop #41 when a lively young horse trots around my car (it’s open range) and while I am hoping he doesn’t step on my feet, he is headed for the hood of my Highlander, which he proceeds to rub with his nose, and then lick. I am continuing to count, but when the horse starts hoofing and pawing at my hood, I stop the clock, hop into my vehicle and honk madly. I cannot think of the expression on that horse’s face without laughing! He did back off, and so did I, and I hightailed it for the other side of the cattle guard, horse following me the whole way. Since then, my horse-owning friends and family have said, oh yeah, they have a thing for car paint!!!”

From Alan Gamache, Broad Creek route, North Carolina

“Between stops #19 and #20, I drove right up close to a Wild Turkey that persisted in sitting right in the middle of this narrow dirt road. I got out of the car and started to walk over to the bird to shoo it out of the way. Only when I had gotten quite close did the hen Turkey reluctantly rise to its feet, whereupon it revealed ten recently hatched little chicks that were huddled beneath. They all slowly tottered off the road and vanished into the brush. Quiet charming!!!”

From John Parrish, Dover route, Georgia

“I recently retired and while cleaning (throwing out) junk, ran across a copy of an old BBS appreciation sheet that you’all used to fire off to BBS participants (I included a copy FYI). I was surprised I did my 1st BBS run in 1972 when I was working on my Ph.D. at BGSU (Bowling Green, OH). Of course I saved this extremely valuable piece of paper! That sheet made it in moves from BG to Gambier, OH, Austin, TX, Emporia, KS, Ithaca, NY and Statesboro, GA (wow, it must have been valuable!).”

May we all remain as committed to the survey as John is!! Thanks to all who submitted notes from the field this year and, as always, we wish we could publish them all. We look forward to your stories in 2011!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Besides the thousands of you in the field, we would also like to thank Alan Hedin, Ellen Kowalski, and Felicia Lovelett, and Sandra Jackson for their outstanding help in the BBS office during the 2010 season. We owe a special dept of gratitude to a number of gulf coast observers who headed the call and performed triplicate runs of their BBS routes in order to establish a solid baseline for use in post-oil spill data comparisons. This dedicated team included Charles Bryant, Marc Ealy, Brush Freeman, Beverly Hansen, Janet Lloyd, Cecilia Riley, Bronwyn Rorex, and Barbara Stedman.

Good luck & good birding in 2011!

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