

# NORTH AMERICAN BIRD PHENOLOGY PROGRAM



E-Newsletter  
February 2013

*With the help of volunteers worldwide, the North American Bird Phenology Program is working to understand the scale of global climate change and how it is affecting bird populations across North America*

## Announcements

- Congratulations to Jason Courter, Ron J. Johnson, William C. Bridges, and Kenneth G. Hubbard for their paper in The Auk, January 2013 Issue, "Assessing migration of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*) at broad spatial and temporal scales." The paper, which analyzes a BPP dataset, has been getting national attention including the Huffington Post, US News & World Report, AP Big Story, MSN News, ABC News, and Yahoo News (just to name a few!). To read the paper or media reports about the article, you can go to [Ron Johnson's Blog](#).
- 33,893 New York cards have been validated through the newly improved Validate-O-Rama system. This system compares multiple transcriptions completed for each migration card for matches. It also validates certain fields such as species to make sure the species is a recognized name (not a local or obsolete name) and location to make sure it is a known location with an assigned latitude and longitude for mapping. Once all records with multiple transcriptions are sent through Validate-O-Rama they will be released to the public.
- Additional training videos, created by Isabelle Doucet and Ed O'Brien, have been added to Appendix 4 of the [BPP Training Manual](#). The videos can also be accessed directly by clicking [here](#).
- The [Top 25 Transcribers This Week](#) chart has been changed to a leader board for easy viewing.
- Winger West's updated Bird Observer List has been added to Appendix 3 of the [Training Manual](#).
- Big thanks to Robert Turk, BPP Office volunteer, for handling our web updates each month, updating our volunteer charts, and helping to update our new homepage!
- [LIKE US](#) on Facebook so you can use the page to talk with fellow participants, read relevant articles and learn about what is happening in the BPP Office.

## What We're Working to Bring You

- We are working to get all NY records through our Validate-O-Rama system before moving onto all transcribed records.
- We are always working to keep the webpages up-to-date, by adding content, keeping all links functional and secure, and providing assistance as needed.

## Volunteer of the Month

### Ed O'Brien



Ed O'Brien is an Information Technology Project Manager from Rockville, MD who spends much of his spare time playing and recording music. He has long been interested in environmental issues and was happy to assist when another BPP volunteer was looking for help with creating training videos for the BPP website. While you won't find him singing on the BPP website, he has lent us his vocal talents to narrate the

training videos that we have recently posted.

## Current Progress



### Current Migration Card Count:

2,512  
Online Volunteers

726,164  
Cards Transcribed Online

5  
Office Volunteers

1,042,494  
Cards Scanned

## Quick Links

[Register to become an online transcriber](#)

[Become an office volunteer](#)

[Like us on Facebook](#) 

## USA-NPN



### USA-NPN

The BPP is part of the USA-NPN which brings together citizen scientists, government agencies, non-profit groups, educators and students of all ages to monitor the impacts of climate change on plants and animals in the United States.

[Learn More....](#)

## Observer of the Month

### Henry A. Astholz



Henry A. Astholz was born in Hanover, Germany on October 24, 1840. He was the son of Christian and Sophia Astholz, both of whom died in Germany in 1857. A year after his parents' passing, Henry immigrated to America. He first arrived in Louisiana where he served as a plantation overseer for a few months. He then went to St. Louis where he enlisted for service in the Civil war. He joined Company B, Fifth Missouri Calvary, and at the time of its consolidation with the Fourth Missouri Cavalry was color bearer.

After the war Henry relocated at Cape Girardeau and worked in the tanning business until about 1869. He then became an agent for the Union Milling

Company, where he worked for seven years. His fellow townsmen then called him to the office of marshal and collector of the city of Cape Girardeau and he again served in that position for seven years. At the end of that time he became associated with those organizing the Cape Girardeau Building and Loan Association, of which he became appointed secretary. He worked for the Building and Loan Association for thirty years before retiring.

In 1867 Henry married Miss Augusta Brandes, a native of Cape Girardeau, and together they had fourteen children, eight of whom survived. Henry was liberal in his political views but votes independently of the candidates party association. He was a member of the Masons, the Odd Fellows and the Eagles.

Information for the biography and picture were collected from the following resources: [FindAGrave.com: Henry A. Astholz](#)  
[Missouri the Center State: 1821- 1915, Volume 4 by Walter Barlow Stevens.](#)

We are in need of volunteer help to put these write-ups together. If you are interested, please [contact](#) the BPP.

## Trivia

Last month's trivia question was, "What mammal's name was dedicated to Charles Emil Bendire?" The correct answer, "Bendire's shrew (*Sorex Bendirii*), known to many as the Marsh Shrew," was sent in first by Judy Reynolds. Judy Staberow, Janet Burnett, Brad Halcums, Rosane Guimaraes, Bill Winson, and Mary Small also sent in the correct answer.

This month's trivia question is:  
Relative to its size, which owl species has the longest legs?

Remember to send your answers to [Jessica](#). The first person to email a correct answer will receive a BPP prize!

## Special Poem by BPP Observer

A Little Bird Talk  
By Mary L. Rann of Manchester, Iowa

Ere pales in Heaven the morning star,  
A bird, the loneliest of its kind,  
Hers Dawn's faint footfall from afar  
While all its mates are dumb and blind.

It is a wee sad-colored thing,  
As shy and secret as a maid,  
That, ere in choir the robins ring,  
Pipes its own name like one afraid.

It seems pain-prompted to repeat



The story of some ancient ill,  
But Phoebe! Phoebe! sadly sweet  
Is all it says, and then is still.

Originally published in  
The Observer: An Illustrated Monthly Magazine. A medium of interchange  
of observations for all students and lovers of nature. E.R. Bigelow, Editor  
and Publisher. Vol VI. 1895.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, suggestions or complaints, please [contact me](#).  
Sincerely,

Jessica Zelt  
Program Coordinator  
North American Bird Phenology Program  
U.S. Geological Survey/ Patuxent Wildlife Research Center



Picture by Petrina Vecchio