

# NORTH AMERICAN BIRD PHENOLOGY PROGRAM



E-Newsletter  
January 2012

*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*

The North American Bird Phenology Program is embarking on its fourth year of operation. After eleven months of preparation, our website went live in February of 2009. Since that time we have grown to a network of over 2,500 volunteers worldwide who have transcribed over 500,000 records online. As we progress each year, we redefine our annual goals. So, in 2012, after completing the scanning of high priority records, we aim to transcribe as many bird migration records as possible. We would like to meet the growing requests for data we receive each year for data by making the bird migration records accessible online to managers, researchers, and the public. We ask the volunteers to continue to dedicate their time and encourage others to get involved as well. We thank all those who are involved with the BPP and look forward to another year working with people around the globe who contribute to making our goals achievable.

## Announcement

- Congratulations to Charlotte Cook-Fuller for reaching a tremendous milestone of 85,000 migration cards transcribed. This is a huge accomplishment and the BPP is thankful for her continued dedication to the program.
- The BPP has completed adding approximately 500,000 new migration cards to the transcription screen over the past few months. New species and locations are available in the drop-down lists. Remember, as volunteers transcribe records you will also see species disappear from the drop-down lists.
- Phil Hicks from Oregon volunteered to begin transcribing our observer records as a special project with the BPP. The observer records contain observer names, postal codes, and years spent contributing to the collection of records. Another volunteer is needed to assist Phil in this endeavor. If interested, please contact [Jessica](#) at the BPP Office.
- The BPP has temporarily taken down our data-set of 40,000 records from our [Download Data](#) page while we implement a new automatic validation system to our database. Check back soon for an updated list of validated records.
- Don't forget to use our [Species Table](#) when looking up a species common name, scientific name, ALPHA code, or AOU number. Just type any known information into the search bar and find the rest of the information you're looking for!
- The [Species Scanned Chart](#) has been updated. It now draws information directly from our database depicting an accurate number of cards currently in the BPP system. There are only a few species which have yet to be added online.
- Remember: Please mark all cards with multiple years or more than 4 dates, as a "problem card." These cards will have to be addressed in the BPP Office.

## What We're Working to Bring You

- Several volunteers received error messages while working on the transcription screen. We are working to resolve this issue in a timely manner. If you get any of these messages while transcribing, please contact the office and tell us about it.
- We are creating a new volunteer training manual for the v4 transcription screen.
- We are working to keep the webpages up-to-date, by adding

## Current Progress



## Current Migration Card Count:

2,638  
Online Volunteers

560,271  
Cards Transcribed Online

5  
Office Volunteers

1,104,494  
Cards Scanned

## Quick Links

[Register to become an  
online transcriber](#)

[Become an office  
volunteer](#)

[BPP News](#)

[Find us on Facebook !\[\]\(1f56542a42e2413e44a2b2023033aa2e\_img.jpg\)](#)

## 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...](#)

content, keeping all links functional and secure, and providing assistance as needed.

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## Volunteer of the Month

### Barbara Curry

Thank you for choosing me as volunteer of the month. I was born and raised in the midwest and my husband and I moved to California twenty years ago. I have always had a healthy love for the great outdoors but am relatively new to the birding world. We moved to the central coast five years ago and there I became friends with a woman who loved to feed backyard birds. We both love the beach and spend plenty of time there.



I found myself constantly asking

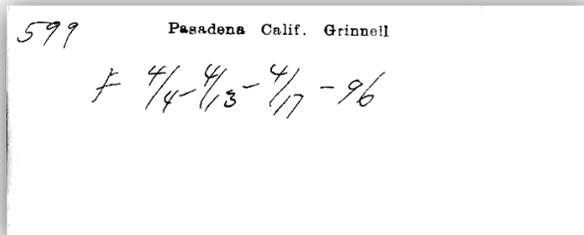
"I wonder what kind of bird that is?" And there it all began. My friend eventually bought a "Wild Birds Unlimited" store and asked me to help her out with it. It was do and learn or look very stupid with other birders. Doing the migration cards has helped me immensely and I am enjoying it. I now have a top of line set of binos which I carry everywhere with me. I take lots of bird walks and have my own assortment of feeders in my backyard. I live in an area where I back up to an empty field which affords me all the pleasure of watching many species of birds and their antics. California is a great place to experience bird watching and the great outdoors.

## Observer of the Month

### Joseph Grinnell

Joseph Grinnell was born on February 27, 1877, at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, to Dr. Fordyce Grinnell and Sarah Elizabeth Grinnell. His mother was an author of many papers and books on various topics including ornithology. The family moved to Pasadena, California where Joseph attended high school and later received a bachelor's degree from Throop Polytechnic Institute (now California Institute of Technology) in 1897. He went on to receive a Master's in 1901 and Ph.D. in 1913 from Leland Stanford Junior University (now common referred to simply as Stanford). While pursuing his degrees Grinnell became an instructor at Stanford in 1901 and was promoted to Professor of Biology in 1905. During that time he also met and married Hilda Wood on June 22, 1906. Together they had four children.

Joseph Grinnell developed a reputation as an "all around naturalist" due to his extensive research and publications. He published over 550 books and papers relating to ornithology, mammalogy, geographic distribution, speciation, and conservation of natural resources. His early successes in the biological field led to his appointment as Director of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, established by Miss Annie M. Alexander, at the University of California in 1908. He held this position for over 30 years. In addition to the numerous research activities which he pursued, Grinnell conducted courses in vertebrate zoology in the Department of Zoology at the University of California. He became an Assistant Professor in 1913, and was made Professor of Zoology in 1920, a post which he occupied until his death in 1939.



Joseph Grinnell Migration Card

Information for the biography and picture were collected from the following resources:

*University of California: Calisphere*  
*Hall, E. Raymond. 1939. Joseph Grinnell, 1877-1939. The Journal of Wildlife Management, Vol. 3, No. 4, pp 366-368.*

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 question stumped the volunteers. The question was, "What BPP observer participated in the first Christmas Bird Count in 1900?" The correct answer was, Alexander Wetmore.

A picture was taken of Wetmore two years later taking part in the Christmas Bird Count. Picture by the [Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History's Field Book Project](#).



Here's this month's trivia question: I came across a species name in the files that eluded me and did some digging which lead to interesting findings. First the question, What is the current common name for Brasher's Warbler? Findings to follow in next month's newsletter.

Remember to send your answers to [Jessica](#). The first person to email a

correct answer will receive a BPP prize.

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

[Forward email](#)



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