



NORTH AMERICAN BIRD PHENOLOGY PROGRAM



E-Newsletter
June 2011

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

- Version 4 of the transcription screen is now live! You can access it at: <https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/BPP/v4/index.php>. New functions like a magnifying glass, new tally bar, and previous button have been added. The previous button will show you the previous card so you can complete another transcription of that card and add it to the system.
- V2 has been taken down from the BPP website as we move ahead with new versions. V3 will also be taken down after users adjust to the V4.
- Top transcribers charts have been enlarged to highlight more of our incredible volunteers! Check it out: [Charts](#).
- On May 18th, Jessica participated in a panel discussion in Washington, D.C. for the National Archives, "Are You In: Citizen Archivists, Crowdsourcing, and Open Government."
- On May 25th Jessica participated in a NSF CCEP "Power of Place Workshop: Climate Change Cafe, Gathering Collective Wisdom to Transform Climate Change Communication" at the Southern Department of the Interior Building.
- Sadly, BPP computer programmer Asif Jamil's contract came to an end on May 30th and due to funding constraints we were not able to extend his position. Asif assisted the program in countless ways and provided crucial IT support. He will be missed! Kevin Laurent has once again stepped in to help the program with IT support and development.
- Scanning of nest, egg, double-sided and large records continues. Images of these records will eventually be uploaded onto the BPP website.
- Remember- you can download an initial data set of 40,000 migration records at [Download Data](#).

What We're Working to Bring You

- We are currently working on uploading new species to be transcribed. Keep an eye on the species drop down lists on the transcription page for additional options.
- We are working to keep the webpage up to date, add content, keep all links functional, and provide any information you need.

Volunteer of the Month

Margaret Mitchell

I was born and raised in the spice island of Grenada, West Indies. I was an employee of the Government of Grenada Public Service and in my senior years I got married and came to live in

Current Progress



Current Migration Card Count:

2,243
Online Volunteers

457,876
Cards Transcribed Online

8
Office Volunteers

581,318
Cards Scanned in BPP Office

232,417
Cards Scanned by CDMP

Quick Links

Register to become an online transcriber

Become an office volunteer

BPP News

Find us on Facebook 

USA-NPN



The BPP is part of the USA-NPN which brings together citizen

Hummingbird

California with my husband.

During the month of July 2009, my husband saw an advertisement on the television for online volunteers for the

North American Bird Phenology Program in which I became very interested. Since I enjoy using the computer keyboard, I felt that this would provide me with an opportunity to do some voluntary service and also utilize my spare time in a very meaningful manner. Immediately I signed up to be a part of that program.

From my childhood days I had great admiration for nature which included taking leisurely walks to the countryside, viewing the trees with its leaves and branches, the different flowers with beautiful colors, and the color and beauty of the birds flying in a flock or a single bird moving from tree to tree, and also looking at the water in the rivers, lakes and sea. I also love to see when the birds are preparing for their eggs and young ones, making their nests in the trees.

Throughout my working experience I know the importance of proper record keeping and I am grateful to be part of a team to ensure that this relevant information regarding bird migration is maintained in an up to date manner for easy retrieval by interested individuals and groups.

When I started this program I realized that it is very educational as it created an opportunity for me to learn the names of birds, the names of numerous counties, cities and places in the U.S.A. and other countries. At times I become so curious to obtain additional information about a particular bird that I do some research on the computer to read about it.

I will continue to serve as an online volunteer with this program as long as my services are required and I hope that an online network can be created for team members to gain valid information pertaining to paid employment.

Observer of the Month

Francis Morey Uhler

Francis Morey (Fran) Uhler was born on January 26, 1902, on the campus of Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minnesota, where his father was a science professor. He developed an early interest in wildlife while exploring the natural areas around his campus home and often went hunting or trapping before attending high school classes.



Francis Uhler

Fran began his professional career on July 1, 1924, as a wildlife research biologist with the Bureau of Biological Survey. He came armed with a degree in biology from Gustavus Adolphus College and a tremendous willingness to learn more about wildlife and their habitats. Shortly after reporting to Washington, D.C., he was called upon to become a member of a select team of three biologists who were responsible for identifying areas suitable for federal acquisition as waterfowl refuges. This mission proved invaluable in the development of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

During the fall of 1933, Fran conducted a very important investigation in the Illinois River area involving the shooting of ducks over live decoys and bait. He found that there was a surprisingly large amount of field-pen shooting with live decoys and bait. As a direct result of his report, live decoys and baiting were prohibited after 1934.

Fran was an internationally-known expert on the foods and feeding habits of wildlife. He conducted intensive studies of fish-eating birds and determined that they were having no detrimental effect on game fish populations. With his coworker, Dr. A. C. Martin, he wrote a significant

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.

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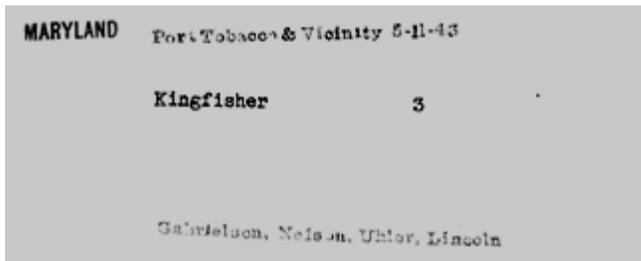
report on the Food of Game Ducks in the United States and Canada. During the 1970s and 1980s he was involved with an intensive study of Chesapeake Bay and documented the dramatic decline of submerged aquatic vegetation as a food for waterfowl wintering in the Bay. Fran is credited with analyzing more wildlife food samples than any other person in the United States and possibly the world.

Fran worked and lived at Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel, Maryland, from 1940 to 1985. All the major impoundments at Patuxent were constructed under Fran's supervision. He experimented with numerous designs of nesting structures for ducks and developed two designs that were successfully used by ducks, but would deter the use by starlings. The wetlands of Patuxent are still productive wildlife areas, and a continuing testimony to his expertise in wetland management. Two Patuxent impoundments (Uhler 1 and 2) were renamed for as a tribute to him at Patuxent's fiftieth anniversary in 1989.

In recognition of his achievements in the field of wildlife research, with particular reference to studies of food habits of North American wildlife, he was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award of the Department of the Interior in 1958. An honorary Doctor of Science degree was awarded to Fran at Patuxent in 1987 by Gustavus Adolphus College. His motto was "With a little curiosity, there's never a dull moment."

Fran was a member of the AOU from 1924, and was elected to the Washington Biologists' Field Club in 1929, and served as president of the Club from 1940 to 1942. He was awarded honorary member status in 1972. Fran loved the outings at the Island and is most remembered for his enthusiastic attention to cooking shad and oysters over the grill. Fran died in his home on September 30, 1990, after spending part of the day watching birds at his bird feeder. He was a Washington Biologists' Field Club member for 61 years.

Before his death in 1990, Uhler donated much of his life's savings to purchase open space along the rapidly developing Patuxent River corridor in Maryland and permanently save it for posterity and nature. That area is now the Fran Uhler Natural Area, operated by the Maryland - National Capital Park and Planning Commission. The Nature Conservancy has also named a natural area in his honor.



Francis Uhler BPP Migration Card

Thank you Bob Hartman for contributing this observer biography to our newsletter!

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

Trivia

Congratulations to last month's winner, Dave Dean, who answered correctly that Fred Lincoln developed the continental flyway concept.

Here's this month's trivia question, remember to send your answers to [Jessica](#).

Toehead was a local name for what species?



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