

WVWA 2005 Birdathon Summary Statement

This year's birdathon was blessed with very nice weather. The weeks prior to the birdathon saw a series high and low pressure systems passing through the east coast bringing on and off showers, primarily to our south, effectively delaying migration just enough to ensure a good supply of birds. Friday afternoon was mostly cloudy with highs only reaching the mid sixties. Saturday morning started off cloudy and cool with temperatures in the mid fifties. As the day progressed it started to clear and with a low pressure system off the east coast humid air was pouring into the area. By the afternoon temperatures reached the high seventies, skies were clear and the air fairly humid.

Collectively the teams recorded 136 species, just shy of our record of 137 in 2002, and well above our five year average of 129. Wood warblers, on the other hand, bested our previous high count of 28 species by one bringing us to 29 species. Thanks to the Falcons for finding our very first Cape May Warbler for the Birdathon at Ft Washington State Park, Flourtown. If only one team had found a Prothonotary Warbler we would have reached that mystical number of 30 warblers. In addition to the Cape May Warbler there were four more new species added to our checklist: A Least Bittern found by the Kestrels at Prophecy Creek Park; a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher by the Hawks at Militia Hill; an elusive Marsh Wren by the Falcons at the Normandy at Blue Bell basin and two fabulous Yellow-breasted Chats found with one displaying and calling at Prophecy Creek Park.

The species count winning team, for the third year in a row, was the Falcons with a record 108 species, breaking the previous high count of 103 by the Hawks in 2000 and 2001. Second place went to the Chickadees with 97 species and third place to Team Snow Goose with 93 species.