

WVWA 2006 Birdathon Summary Statement

Typical spring weather patterns in the week prior to the birdathon brought occasional showers and moderate temperatures here and to our south. Thursday night before the start of the birdathon brought heavy downpours that effectively stopped our nocturnal migrants from departing leaving us with a good number of birds for the next morning. On Friday the clouds slowly departed leaving us with a beautiful spring afternoon with highs in the low seventies. Friday night was deadly for migration with its calm winds, clear sky and full moon. It seemed nearly all our nocturnal migrants departed, leaving us with only a few non-breeding warblers and almost no Scarlet Tanagers. Saturday was another nice spring day with highs in the low seventies and a few scattered thunder showers in the afternoon.

This year our nine teams recorded a total of 132 species, right in line with our five year average of 130 species. Two new species for the birdathon were recorded by the Hawks; a Peregrine Falcon at Prophecy Creek Park and a Mourning Warbler at Ft Washington State Park, Militia Hill. Our second Great Egret, since our first in 1998, was found at the Morris Arboretum. A Black-crowned Night-Heron found at the Wissahickon Waterfowl Preserve (AKA Ambler Reservoir) was our first since 2001, prior to which we would get one or two per birdathon. Our third Bald Eagle in four years, after having none prior to 2003, solidly reflects the increase in their numbers.

The winning team, as judged by species count, for the fourth year in a row was the Falcons with 100 species. Second place went to Team Snow Goose with 98 species and third place went to the Hawks with 96. Overall the teams are showing a great deal of improvement over the years with the majority of teams now exceeding 90 species for the first time.