

Birds of Montgomery County, MD - Dave Czaplak

2nd Edition December 2024

Introduction

This annotated list of 355 species of birds of Montgomery County, MD is based on **Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia** (Stewart and Robbins 1958), records accepted by the **Maryland/DC Records Committee** (MD/DCRC), records from **eBird**, and records from other **historical sources**. The purpose of this compilation is to provide additional information on scarce species not reviewed by the Committee, approximate arrival and departure dates for migrants, and comments on historical trends in some cases. This edition adds three new species for Montgomery: Limpkin, Long-tailed Jaeger, and Black-headed Gull.

Records before 1958 are conveniently summarized in Stewart and Robbins. Records since the eBird era began are also easy to find. The decades in between are covered by seasonal columns in *North American Birds* (formerly *American Birds* and *Audubon Field Notes*), *Maryland Birdlife*, and the *Atlantic Naturalist*. For this work I was fortunate to have access to the late Bob Ringler's comprehensive excel spreadsheet listing records for MD and DC, with citations to the above publications. This was an enormous help in tracking down records of rarities, early and late arrival dates, and high counts.

Records are included here only if they are "**published**" that is found in eBird or the print sources listed. The phrase "all records found" is often used. There may be other reports that were never published, or were never entered into eBird. Often they were reports to the *Voice of the Naturalist* and lack any data at this point. Some of the them may correct. They are not included here. (It is certain that in the process of typing thousands of dates there are some typos. I would appreciate hearing about any errors.)

High counts (usually not CBC totals) are included for some flocking species. Extreme **spring and fall arrival and departure** dates are included for many migratory species. I tried to find the earliest/latest, and the earliest/latest with a

photo in eBird. High counts and breeding dates from Stewart and Robbins provide an interesting contrast with present status, and leave us wondering how bird populations and local habitats have changed since the mid 20th century.

This list is focused on the occurrence of **uncommon and rare** birds, especially migrants. **Breeding birds** are not discussed in detail unless there has been a major change in status. **Spatial distribution**, where in the county common migrants and breeders are most likely to be found, is not treated.

The **seasonal graphs** were constructed using all of the above sources, and so are weighted with data from recent decades. Combining historical and modern data in the graphs is misleading in a few cases where there have been great changes in occurrence. Bobwhite, formerly a common resident and now extinct in the county, is a good example. In such cases a **blue line rather than black line** is used to indicate that these are ancient records, not likely to be repeated. Dashed lines are used for casual (extremely rare) birds. Dashed lines are also used for birds that are irruptive, common in a few years but absent in most. Trumpeter and Mute Swans have odd patterns of occurrence. There may be none in the county for long periods, but the graph shows them present year round, thanks to just a few long-staying individuals. Dashed lines are used for these species as well. The graphs attempt to show **how likely** you are to see a species, but do not indicate actual numbers. Red-winged Blackbird and Downy Woodpecker are both listed as common year round, with a thick line on the graph. You might see hundreds or thousands of Red-winged Blackbirds on a good migration day, but it is hard to find more than a dozen Downy Woodpeckers.

The records presented here are a mix of different levels of **data quality**. Some of the records from Stewart and Robbins, and some reviewed by MD/DCRC are based on specimens. Other records accepted by MD/DCRC are supported by photos, or a written description that was subject to intense review by committee. These are all records of very rare birds. Many records in eBird are also supported by photos or audio recordings. At the next lower level of quality are many records of rarities from the pages of North American Birds, Maryland Birdlife, and The Atlantic Naturalist. Reviewer accepted records of rarities generally had a

written description, by an experienced birder, usually known to the reviewer. The documentation often no longer exists, but was considered acceptable at the time, appropriate for the degree of rarity of the bird involved. This is one of the strengths of eBird, where at least some of the documentation is preserved and available on-line. The above publications also provided many records of early and late migrants, high counts, and out of season birds. Scarce but regular migrants, early winter finches, warblers lingering into December, and ducks lingering into the summer are some examples. Such records often had little or no documentation, and were accepted at the time based on the experience of the observer. No documentation exists today. Records of uncommon species from eBird are supported by written descriptions or sometimes by photos or audio recordings. Records of commoner species from eBird that are not subject to review (flagged) are less reliable. A significant percentage of these records are mis-identified common birds. These are records submitted by observers not familiar with the likely species and the likely times and places to find them. This distorts the impression of abundance, especially near the beginning and end of migration periods. Many first summer Tree Swallows in April are recorded as Bank or Rough-winged Swallows. Many Eastern Phoebes are recorded as Eastern Wood-Pewees, and many Wood-Pewees are recorded as Least/Willow/Alder/Yellow-bellied Flycatchers. Many Barn Owl reports from the county in recent decades are mis-heard calls of young Barred and Great Horned Owls. Many submitted photographs of Cackling Geese are actually of Canada Geese. Many submitted photographs of Sharp-shinned Hawks are actually of Cooper's Hawks. I found one eBird checklist where photos of immature Common Yellowthroats were recorded as three different warblers, none of them Yellowthroat.

Place Names

Some names that have changed, some locations that have vanished:

Route 108 Pond Formerly excellent for sandpipers, ducks and some marsh birds, north of Rt 108 at Muncaster Rd. The pond was "re-sculpted" when Blue Mash Golf Course was built. It still exists, hidden from the road by the artificial hills, but is simply a sterile golf course pond now.

Banded, Potomac refers to Adventure Banding Station on Glen Road, run for many years by Margaret and Don Donald.

Gude's Nursery was located northeast of the intersection of East Gude Drive and Crab's Branch Way. Excellent spot for wintering owls in the early 1980s, with extensive stands of conifers. The Rockville, or Gude Landfill was just to the east. The nursery is now vanished, entirely office parks.

Patton Turf Farm Former extensive turf farm sometimes good for shorebirds. The property was divided and most is no longer turf, just corn or soybeans. Will still attract gulls or shorebirds on rare occasions after heavy rain. The eBird spot is still named Patton Turf.

Seneca Traditionally, the area along the Potomac from above Riley's Lock to below Violette's Lock was known to birders as Seneca, and that is the name used for most historical records. The eBird hotspot names are Riley's Lock and Violette's Lock.

Seneca Wetlands The turning basin above Riley's Lock. Apparently covered with aquatic vegetation in the past.

Summit Hall Turf Farm Former site of regular shorebird field trips. Birders lost access in the 1990s after bad behavior. Improved grading and drainage has made it less attractive to shorebirds in recent years.

Hughes Hollow = McKee-Besher WMA.

Main Sources

AN The Atlantic Naturalist (Volumes 1-4 are titled The Wood Thrush)
Publication of the former Audubon Naturalist Society, now **Nature Forward**. I don't know of any on-line source for these.

eBird Data for Montgomery County, using accepted data in eBird, 1901-2023.
Sullivan, B.L., C.L. Wood, M.J. Iliff, R.E. Bonney, D. Fink, and S. Kelling. 2009.
eBird: a citizen-based bird observation network in the biological sciences.
Biological Conservation 142: 2282-2292.

MB Maryland Birdlife. Available at sora.unm.edu

MD/DCRC Records accepted by the Maryland/DC Records Committee.
Compilation of accepted records is found in the on-line database prepared by Phil Davis. Available at: <https://mdbirds.org/records-committee/>

NAB North American Birds. 1999 to 2007.

National Audubon Society Field Notes. 1994-1998.

American Birds. 1971-1994.

Audubon Field Notes before 1971

Issues from 1971-2007 are available at sora.unm.edu They are all listed under "North American Birds"

S&R Stewart, Robert E., Chandler S. Robbins. Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia. North American Fauna Number 62, 1958. Available on-line: <https://fwspubs.org/toc/nafa/62>

Additional Sources

COOKE Cooke, May Thacher, Birds of the Washington DC Region. Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington, Vol. 42, p1-80, 1929. Available at: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/34559223#page/21/mode/1up>

KIRKWOOD Kirkwood, Frank Coates, A List of the Birds of Maryland. Trans. Maryland Acad. Science. 2:241-382. 1895

Available at:

<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/60218#page/5/mode/1up>

VARCOM Virginia Avian Records Committee

<https://www.virginiabirds.org/varcom>

THANKS

Special thanks goes to the late Bob Ringler. His spreadsheet of published sources for MD and DC bird records, compiled over many, many, years, was a tremendous help in producing this list. Jared Fisher ran specialized searches of the now massive eBird data base to locate many records of interest. John Sojda and Jared Fisher provided much ground breaking information about night migration, based on their extensive recording activities. They, along with Mary Ann Todd, Joe Hanfman, Dave Roberts, Scott Young, Don Simonson, Byron Swift and Bob Augustine provided many informative discussions about Montgomery birdlife past and present. Gerry Hawkins kept me up to date with historical records being added to eBird.

DEFINITIONS

The sequence of families and species follows that used by eBird. Slightly subjective and arbitrary terms of status and abundance are used:

YEAR-ROUND RESIDENT Breeds, and individuals present all year. In the case of many migratory species, such as **Robin**, the birds present in winter might not be the birds that breed. There might be many more individuals passing through during migration, or large flocks just visiting for the winter.

SUMMER RESIDENT Breeds, but departs for the winter. How long they are here depends on the species. **Tree Swallows** are present February or March through October. **Orchard Orioles** are present April through early August.

VISITOR Does not breed, but may be present for a season. Some examples: Many sparrows and finches are **winter visitors**, fall through spring.

A few individuals of some insect eating species like warblers hang on into early winter, as winter visitors or **lingering stragglers**. They may not survive the winter. Winter here is arbitrarily defined as December through February. In reality, it is often impossible to determine when fall migration ends and wintering begins for birds like Orange-crowned Warbler.

Some herons, egrets, gulls and terns are **summer visitors**, loitering for weeks or months before heading south, but never attempting to breed here. They may be post-breeding wanderers from colonies to the south, or migrants from colonies to the north making a very leisurely journey.

MIGRANT Birds traveling on what is probably a regular route, no matter how rarely they are found. Passing through in both spring and fall, unless only one season is specified.

The exact timing of FALL or SPRING migration varies greatly with the species. Fall migration for **Semipalmated Sandpipers** begins in July. Fall migration for **Vesper Sparrows** begins in October.

VAGRANT Birds dispersing way off normal routes, due to extreme weather, or for reasons unknown.

COMMON Expected most days in the appropriate season and habitat.

UNCOMMON Found less often, but regularly, in the appropriate season and habitat.

RARE Likely occurs almost every year, but scarce enough that it might be missed entirely in any given season.

CASUAL = EXTREMELY RARE. Far from normal migration routes, breeding or wintering areas. OR, in a few cases, may migrate over Montgomery County fairly regularly, but rarely stop. Many years may pass between sightings. Their arrival may be weather dependent, or totally a matter of chance. Three very different scenarios:

Shiny Cowbirds breed no closer than Florida. One wanderer turned up in October, 2017, and the species might do so again at any time, but don't hold your breath.

Sooty Terns have turned up four times in Montgomery, but only during the near passage of hurricanes.

A few **Western Kingbirds** head towards the Atlantic coast each fall. When the next one hits Montgomery, decides to stop, AND gets found, is anybody's guess.

Swans, Geese, Ducks

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck

Casual vagrant, but turning up with increasing frequency in the region. Four records:

May 3, 2021 Eleven at Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

May 30, 2009 Twelve, Lake Churchill, Germantown. MD/DCRC

June 4 - July 1, 2006 Washingtonian Center. MD/DCRC

November 20, 1995 Sandy Spring. MD/DCRC

Fulvous Whistling-Duck

Casual vagrant, one record:

September 21, 1977 Nine at Violette's Lock. R. A. Rowlett. AB32:190

Snow Goose

Rare migrant and winter visitor from early October to late March. Most records, especially in winter, are of single birds, but flocks occur in migration.

Early Fall

September 29, 2000 Four at Violette's Lock. eBird

High Counts

November 24, 1963 Flock of 100 at Seneca. MB20:23

March 10, 2023 Flock of 124 northbound over Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird photo

Late Spring

April 8, 1993 Four at Riley's Lock. eBird

May 6-8, 1949 Blue morph at Pennyfield. S&R

Ross's Goose

Casual to rare winter visitor from early November to mid February. Most records of Ross's Geese are of a lone bird, usually with Canada Geese, and they may turn up at any pond or field in the county. It is possible that most of the records are due to just one individual returning and roaming the county each winter.

Ross's Geese first occurred, as great rarities, in goose flocks on the eastern shore in the early 1980s. By the 1990s they were regular there. Only recently they began appearing in the DC area, and are now annual. The first record for Montgomery was one at Little Seneca Reservoir, December 30, 1995 (MD/DCRC). The second record wasn't until January 16-22, 2016 at Partnership Road (eBird photos). They have been found every winter since then.

Early Fall

November 6-22, 2021 Lake Hollowell and Blue Mash. eBird photo

November 19, 2020 Wheaton Branch Stormwater Ponds. eBird photo

High Counts

December 16-31, 2016 Three at Waredaca Farm, Sunshine. eBird photo

December 29, 2017 Three at Laytonsville. eBird photo

Late Spring

March 10, 2020 Darnestown Rd ponds. eBird

Greater White-fronted Goose

Rare winter visitor from mid October to mid March, once in April. Many reports without photos are of Canada x domestic Graylag Geese hybrids, recognizable by their large size and oddities of bill and plumage.

Two forms of White-fronted Geese occur in the region, *gambelli/sponsa* from western Canada, and *flavirostris* from Greenland. They are tricky to identify to subspecies. Bill color seems to change with lighting. Definite examples include one *flavirostris* at Blue Mash December 2, 2020 (eBird photo), and one *gambelli/sponsa* at Georgetown Prep, December 6, 2008 (eBird photo). Notable records:

Early Fall

October 15, 1989 - January 21, 1990 Gaithersburg. MB46:8,52

October 27, 2022 Three at Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird photo

High Counts

January 26, 2014 Six at White's Ferry. eBird photo

January 24, 2018 Four at Rickman Equestrian Park. eBird photo

Late Spring

April 8-12, 1985 Lake Needwood. MB41:59

Brant

Casual vagrant with seven records.

October 27, 1957 Six, Triadelphia Res. MB14:25

October 29-November 4, 2004 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

October 30-31, 2012 Flock of 14 at Violette's Lock after Hurricane Sandy.

Two lingering until the next day. eBird photo

November 4-6, 2023 Potomac River off Riverbend Park. eBird photo

November 8, 1959 Three, Triadelphia Res. MB16:24

December 21, 1975 Seneca CBC. NAB30:309

January 1-5, 2018 Darnestown Rd ponds. eBird photo

Cackling Goose

Winter visitor, uncommon from early November to early March. Cackling Geese are expanding and increasing as winter visitors in the east. They usually occur with flocks of Canada Geese. If there is a group of them they are notably clannish, sticking tightly together amidst the larger Canadas. All photographed birds are of the most likely subspecies *hutchinsii*. Subspecies *taverneri* might be possible but difficult to identify. Many reports without photos are small Canada Geese, possibly wintering subspecies *parva*, or birds that are a blend of Canada Geese subspecies. Some of these slightly smaller Canada Geese are present year round.

Early Fall

October 10, 2020 Woodstock Equestrian Park. eBird photo

High Counts

February 2-3, 2016 Flock of 18 on the ice at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

January 27, 2013 Flock of 16 at Lake Needwood. eBird photo

Late Spring

March 4, 2022 Twelve at North Branch and Kengla Trails. eBird photo

March 16, 2017 Four at Hughes Hollow. eBird

Canada Goose

Common year-round resident. The locally breeding birds are (accidentally?) introduced. Their numbers are greatly increased by migrants and winter visitors. Canada Geese first bred in the state in 1946, and were common breeders in the county by the 1980s. Fall arrival of winter visitors peaks November to December. Spring migration peaks in March. Most springs there are one or two days when the majority of the wintering birds depart all at once. Flock after flock of northbound geese.

A few high winter counts from eBird, not comprehensive

January 19, 2003 —3000 at Little Seneca Reservoir

February 15, 2004 —3050 at Little Seneca Reservoir

Highest Spring count in eBird

March 10, 2013 —8260 headed north over Violette's Lock in 3.5 hours.

Mute Swan

Escapes or strays from breeding populations elsewhere are rare visitors year round. Mute Swans are not known to breed in the county. Occasionally a bird will take up residence on a pond or stretch of the Potomac, and be a fixture for a few years, before disappearing. The seasonal graph is shown as dashes because there may be long periods when none are present, then a lone bird will take up residence.

High Count

June 18, 2016 Flock of four flying upriver at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Trumpeter Swan

Rare visitor, most records between December and March. All wild Trumpeter Swans are believed to be coming from the introduced population in Ontario and the northern U.S. Many have large yellow numbered wing tags. The seasonal graph is shown as dashes because there may be long periods when none are present, then a lone bird will take up residence. Trumpeter Swans are usually found by themselves, less often in flocks of Tundra Swans. Notable records:

The First Records

January 25 - Feb 26, 1992 Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird photo, MD/DCRC, MB48:66

February 23, 1992 Triadelphia Res. MB48:66

February 17, 1996 Adult and immature. Little Seneca Reservoir. MD/DCRC

Notable High Counts

February 20, 2016 Four, Little Seneca Reservoir and Lake Churchill. eBird photo

February 22 - March 17, 2009 Four at Blockhouse Point, Potomac River. MD/DCRC

March 17, 2013 Four at Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC

November 8, 2014 - March 13, 2017 The long staying male **M78** spent over two years at Little Seneca Reservoir and Lake Churchill. M78 was hatched in Burlington, Ontario in May 2013. After departing Lake Churchill in March 2017 it was seen in Lycoming County, PA, on its way back to Ontario. eBird photos, MD/DCRC

Tundra Swan

Fall migrant, winter visitor, and spring migrant, uncommon from late October to early April. Small parties may winter on the larger lakes and the Potomac. Large flocks pass over at night in migration or briefly land, especially early morning. Peak period of spring migration is late February to mid March. Close to 2000 birds stopped at Triadelphia Reservoir and Little Seneca Reservoir February 26-27, 2021. Most departed on the 27th. These were migrants, because few had been present beforehand. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 9, 1955 —13 at Seneca. AN11:137

November 1, 2002 —51 at Hughes Hollow. eBird

Fall High Counts

November 12, 1979 —700 in flocks over Seneca. MB36:26

November 12, 1986 —1255 at Seneca. MB43:14

Winter High Counts

January 11, 2015 —22 at Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

January 21, 2016 —31 at Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

Spring High Counts

February 26, 2021 —800 to 1000 at Triadelphia Res. eBird photo

February 26-27, 2021 —969 at Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

Late Spring

April 24, 2019 Four at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 5, 2017 Eleven at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

March 29 - May 31, 2024 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Summer Straggler, all records found

June 30, 2914 Pennyfield. eBird
July 15, 1994 Gaithersburg. MB51:153

Wood Duck

Common migrant and summer resident. Uncommon winter visitor. Fall migration peak is early September to mid November. Spring migration peak is late February to late March. Notable records:

Spring High Count

March 15, 2009 —117 at Hughes Hollow. eBird
March 19, 1948 —150 near Seneca. S&R

Early Breeding

March 25, 2002 Hen with chicks at Little Falls.

Fall High Count

October 3, 2004 —102 at Hughes Hollow. eBird
October 25, 1966 —1659 at Hughes Hollow. AN22:43

Winter High Count

December 18, 2011 —31 at Hughes Hollow. eBird

Blue-winged Teal

Spring migrant, common from mid March to late April. Fall migrant, common from late August to early October, with records into early January. Blue-winged Teals bred in the county at least once in the 1970s. Notable records:

Early Spring

February 26, 2021 Four at Hughes Hollow. eBird
February 9 - 28, 2016 Six at Hughes Hollow. eBird

Spring High

April 26, 1953 —150 at Pennyfield. AN9:36

Late Spring

June 4, 2024 Hughes Hollow. eBird
June 6, 1953 S&R

Former Breeding

1970s “Non-flying young observed in Seneca-CW” block. MB34:12

Early Fall

August 4, 1975 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Fall High

August 28, 2012 —67 at Violette's Lock. Fallout in light rain. eBird

October 6, 2023 —80 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Fall to early Winter

December 28, 2019 - January 6, 2020 Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

December 29, 2001 Male at Hughes Hollow. eBird

January 2, 2021 Two, Riley's Lock. eBird

Northern Shoveler

Fall migrant, winter visitor, and spring migrant, uncommon from late September to mid April. Highest numbers are typically during Spring migration in March.

Notable records:

Early Fall

August 18, 2012 Violette's Lock. eBird

August 25, 2020 Two, Lake Whetstone. eBird photo

Fall High

September 21, 2021 —13 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Winter High

January 11, 2013 —15 at Pennyfield. eBird

Spring High

March 27, 2017 —40 at Violette's Lock, storm fallout. eBird photo

Late Spring

May15-22, 2023 Wheaton Stormwater Ponds. eBird photo

June 7, 2023 Blue Mash eBird photo

Gadwall

Fall migrant, common from late October to late November. Uncommon winter visitor. Spring migrant, common from mid February to late March, with stragglers into mid May. Notable records:

Early Fall

August 19, 1950 S&R

August 31, 2000 Violette's Lock. eBird

September 4, 2010 Brookside Gardens. eBird

Fall High Count

December 1, 2013 —35 at Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

Winter High Count

January 11, 2015 —30 at Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

Spring High Count

February 18, 2015 —104 at Violette's Lock.

March 27 2017 —150 at Violette's Lock, storm fallout. eBird photo

Late Spring

May 22, 2016 Male at Violette's Lock. eBird

Summer Straggler

June 28, 1959 Pennyfield. AN14:275

Eurasian Wigeon

Casual winter visitor, with at least six records, including a long staying drake at the Poplar Springs Animal Sanctuary farm pond. All records sorted by year:

S&R (1958) Specimen near Seneca.

March 3, 1953 Drake, Seneca. AN8:256

March 21, 1993 Violette's Lock. Fide Greg Gough.

December 21, 1996 Triadelphia Reservoir. MB 54:28

March 8-9, 2015 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

December 18, 2016 - April 8, 2017 Poplar Spring. eBird photo

December 17, 2017 - April 1, 2018 Poplar Spring. eBird photo

October 20, 2018 - January 27, 2019 Poplar Spring. eBird photo

January 26, 2020 Poplar Spring. eBird photo

American Wigeon

Fall migrant, uncommon from late September. Uncommon winter visitor.

Common spring migrant from mid February to early April, with stragglers into May. Highest numbers usually during spring migration in March. Notable records:

Early Fall

August 10, 2008 Two, Blue Mash. eBird

September 4, 2005 Blue Mash. eBird

September 22, 2013 Seven at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High Count

November 1, 1986 —67 at Zion Rd pond. eBird

Spring High Count

March 7, 2014 —200 at Riley's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

May 30, 1958 Four at Triadelphia Res. MB14:77

June 1-2, 2024 Two, Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

Summer Straggler

June 1 - July 16, 1953 Five, later one, at Unity. MB10:12.49

Mallard

Common introduced year-round resident, numbers increased by migrants and winter visitors. Highest counts are in winter. There are slight increases mid February to mid March, and early to mid October, suggesting migration of birds that breed farther north. Some birds are hybrids with Black Duck. Many flavors of domesticated Mallards can be found in local ponds.

S&R (1958) "The true status of "wild" Mallards during the breeding season is difficult to determine because of the fact that considerable numbers of semi-wild birds have been released in the State from time to time. Scattered pairs of nesting birds that give every appearance of being feral have been noted in tidewater areas and on inland ponds, lakes, and streams in all sections. Whether any of these are derived from the introduced stock is problematical. It may be significant that Kirkwood (1895) in his book on Maryland birds does not refer to any breeding records for the species. During the past 12 years (1942-1953), downy young or nests with eggs have been recorded in the following areas: Worcester, Dorchester, Kent, Calvert, Prince Georges, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Garrett Counties and the District of Columbia."

Winter High Count

December 21, 1996 —377 at Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird

January 11, 2018 —310 at Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

Historical Breeding for Montgomery

March 20, 1949 Nest with eggs. S&R

American Black Duck

Uncommon fall migrant from early September. Common winter visitor from mid November to mid February. Uncommon spring migrant through late April. Black Ducks show more of a preference for rapids in the Potomac than the Mallard. Very few confirmed breeding records, none recent. Currently a rare summer visitor with no evidence of breeding. Many are Mallard x Black Duck hybrids. Notable records:

Historical Winter High Count

January 1, 1954 —2000 at Triadelphia Res. S&R

Recent Winter High Counts

Dec 19, 2010 —83 at Sycamore Landing. eBird

January 9, 2014 —63 at Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

January 17, 1999 —74 at Hughes Hollow. eBird

Summer Breeding

S&R (1958): None in Montgomery

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: None confirmed. MB34:24

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in one block.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed in one block.

Some recent summer records with photos

May 2-27, 2016 Ken-Gar Palisades. eBird photo

May 28, 2014 Strathmore. eBird photo

July 14, 2013 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Mottled Duck

Casual vagrant with records likely referring to one long staying male. One of the rarest birds to ever turn up in the county.

March 27, 2021 Potomac River at Carderock. eBird photo

December 25, 2021 - March 7, 2022 C&O Canal at Carderock. eBird photo

(Photo of possible Mottled Duck, November 3, 2020 C&O Canal at Angler's Inn, may have been this individual.)

Northern Pintail

Uncommon fall migrant and winter visitor from early October. Common spring migrant from early February to late March, with occasional large fallouts. A few into April and May. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 2, 2010 Three, Little Seneca Res. eBird

September 9, 2012 Triadelphia Res. eBird

September 11, 1980 MB37:18

September 19, 2006 Germantown Soccerplex. eBird

September 21, 2018 Lake Frank. eBird photo

Fall high

October 2, 2015 —16 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Winter High

December 20, 2015 —30 at Poplar Spring. eBird

Spring High

February 13, 2022 —99 Violette's to Riley's Locks. eBird photo

March 9, 2015 —55 at Violette's Lock. eBird

March 28, 1964 —100 Triadelphia Res. MB21:20

Late Spring

April 13, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird

May 3, 1980 Carderock. eBird

May 7, 1955 AN11:28

Green-winged Teal

Uncommon fall migrant and winter visitor from late August. Common spring migrant from late February to early April, with stragglers through mid May. Two summering records. Notable records:

Early Fall

August 15, 1998 Near Triadelphia. MB55:94

August 16, 2020 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird

August 17, 1966 Germantown. MB22:118

Fall High Count

November 7, 2020 —73 Blue Mash. eBird

Spring High Count

March 27, 2017 —270 at Violette's Lock, storm fallout. eBird

April 5, 1984 —100 Hughes Hollow. MB40:62

Late Spring

May 10, 2021 Violette's Lock. eBird

May 15-21, 2022 Lois Green Park. eBird photo

Summering

June 10 - July 8, 2021 Drake, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

July 18, 2020 Kensington. eBird photo

Three records of the Eurasian subspecies *A. c. crecca*

February 22, 2018 Drake, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

March 12-15, 2007 Drake, Pennyfield. MD/DCRC

April 7, 1973 Drake, Hughes Hollow. AN28:171

Canvasback

Uncommon fall migrant, winter visitor, and spring migrant, from mid November to mid April. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 16, 1956 Two, Brookmont. AN12:130

September 20, 1987 Violette's Lock. eBird

November 2, 1992 Violette's Lock

Winter/Spring High Count

January 20, 2000 —300 at Little Seneca Reservoir. MB58:25

January 23, 1999 —150 at Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

March 16, 2015 —220 at Violette's Lock, storm fallout. eBird

Late Spring

May 12, 1997 Violette's Lock. eBird

May 24, 1952 Seneca. S&R

June 5, 2000 Female at Hughes Hollow. eBird

Redhead

Uncommon fall migrant and winter visitor from early November. More common as a spring migrant from early February through late April. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 9, 1955 Seneca. AN11:137

November 2, 2022 —48 flyby at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Winter or Spring Migration High

January 24, 1990 —440 at Violette's Lock. eBird

February 8, 2015 —178 at Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

March 9, 2014 —554 at Riley's Lock. eBird

March 14, 2015 —530 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Spring or Summering

May 23, 1958 Triadelphia. MB14:77

May 25 - June 19, 2003 Drake, Clopper Lake. MB60:19,43

Ring-necked Duck

Common migrant and winter visitor, from early October to early May. More likely than the other diving ducks to loiter into summer and arrive early in September. The huge numbers that wintered at Little Seneca Reservoir in the 1990s are gone, perhaps because the aquatic vegetation changed. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 14, 2023 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

September 20, 1987 Violette's Lock. eBird

Winter High Count

January 6, 1999 —2000 Little Seneca Res. MB56:29

January 27, 1992 —1400 Little Seneca Res. MB48:67

February 28, 1954 —250 at Pennyfield. S&R

Summering

June 9 - July 7, 2018 Drake, Little Seneca Res. eBird

June 14 - August 3, 2023 Bentley Park Ponds. eBird photo

Greater Scaup

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor, from early November to late April, usually in much smaller numbers than Lesser Scaup. Highest numbers during spring migration, February to March. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 27, 2000 Violette's Lock. eBird

September 29, 2018 Zion Rd pond. eBird photo

October 17, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High Count

November 12, 2020 —15 Triadelphia Res. eBird

Winter or Spring High Count

February 28, 1965 —30 at Seneca. MB21:72

March 9, 2014 —95 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Spring

May 27, 1906 Plummer's Island. S&R

June 5, 2016 Drake, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Lesser Scaup

Uncommon fall migrant and winter visitor, from mid October. Common spring migrant, from late February through early May. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 6, 1997 Unity. MB54:121

October 19, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird

Fall High Count

November 13, 2020 —250 at Triadelphia Res. eBird

Winter High Count

December 16, 2006 —500 Triadelphia Res. eBird

Spring High

March 27, 2017 —340 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Spring Count

May 25, 2015 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 28, 1991 Violette's Lock. MB47:114

King Eider

Casual vagrant. Two fall records for Montgomery. Late fall ebird records for King Eider include two in Pennsylvania, five in the Finger Lakes of upstate New York. These records directly to our north suggest there is regular (if rare) inland flight in the fall.

November 5-11, 1991 Zion Road Pond. MD/DCRC, eBird photo, MB48:14

December 16, 2017 Two im. males, Brighton Dam. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Harlequin Duck

Casual vagrant. One bird wintered in Montgomery. There are at least seven eBird records from Pennsylvania, two from the Finger Lakes of upstate New York.

December 1, 2000 - February 5, 2001 Female, Little Seneca Res. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Surf Scoter

Rare migrant from early October to late December and from late January to late May. There seems to be a gap from late December to late January with no records. Birds turning up in January to February might actually be moving south from freeze-up on the Great Lakes, rather than northbound migrants. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 4, 2010 Five, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High Count

October 28, 1958 Ten at Triadelphia Res. MB15:31

Late Fall

December 21, 2014 Two, Violette's Lock

Early "Spring"

January 31, 2013 Violette's Lock. eBird

Spring High Count

April 16, 2010 Seven, Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

May 14, 1995 Rt 108 pond, Laytonsville. eBird photo
May 20-25, 2015 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

White-winged Scoter

Rare fall migrant and winter visitor, from late October. Uncommon spring migrant early February to mid April. As with Surf Scoter, birds turning up in January to February might be retreating southwards from frozen northern lakes.

Notable records:

Early Fall

October 26, 2005 Violette's Lock. eBird
October 26, 2020 Four, Lake Frank. eBird photo
October 30, 1993 Eight, Little Seneca Res. MB51:67

Late Fall

December 16, 1984 Five, Violette's Lock. NAB39:539
December 19, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird

Winter/Spring High Count

February 2 - March 24, 2014 Flock peaking at 23 on March 9th. Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Spring

April 24, 2020 Four, Sycamore Landing. eBird photo
April 26, 2020 Two, Riley's Lock. eBird photo

Black Scoter

Casual spring migrant from mid February to mid May. Rare fall migrant from mid October to early December. The least common Scoter, missed many years. Despite being the rarest of the three, Black Scoter has turned up in larger flocks than Surf and White-winged. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 19-20, 1996 Little Seneca Res. MB53:111

Fall High Count

October 29, 1966 —30 Triadelphia Res. MB23:13
October 29, 1991 —22 Little Seneca Res. MB48:14
November 3, 2013 —18 Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

Late Fall

December 2, 1991 Three, Seneca. MB48:67
December 9, 2016 Two, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Early Spring

February 11, 2017 —18 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

February 28 - March 23, 2011 Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

May 8, 2013 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 21, 2007 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Long-tailed Duck

Uncommon fall and spring migrant, and rare winter visitor, from mid October to late April. Usually absent in mid winter. Long-tailed Duck can rarely be quite plentiful in migration, with large flocks, but most days you will see none.

Notable records:

Early Fall

October 28, 1951 Triadelphia Res. MB8:45

October 30, 2004 Violette's Lock. eBird

Fall High

November 18, 1989 —95 Sycamore Landing to Seneca. MB46:13

December 20, 1970 —60 Violette's Lock. AN26:86

Spring High

March 4, 2014 —46 Riley's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

April 15, 2024 One Violette's Lock, one Homestead pond. eBird photos

April 29, 1987 Potomac River at Glen Echo. eBird

Summer Vagrant

June 16, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Bufflehead

Common migrant and winter visitor from mid October to mid April. A few records of summer stragglers into May, June, and July. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 9, 1962 Great Falls. AN18:35

September 29, 2015 Lake Frank. eBird

Fall High Count

November 12, 2013 —440 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Winter High Count

February 21, 2015 —190 Violette's Lock. eBird

Spring High Count

March 31, 1997 —800 at Violette's Lock and 150 at Little Seneca Res. eBird

April 2, 1993 —340 at Violette's Lock. MB51:12

Late Spring/Summer Straggler

June 16, 2015 Lois Green Park. eBird

June 20 - July 14, 2022 Damascus. eBird photo

July 3-13, 2009 Riley's Lock. eBird

Common Goldeneye

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor from early November to early April.

Lingering once into June. Large flocks are occasionally seen, but a half dozen birds is a more typical count. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 26, 1957 Three, Seneca/Pennyfield. AN13:62

October 27, 2015 Five, Violette's Lock.

Winter High Count

January 31, 1953 —200 at Pennyfield. S&R

March 9, 2014 —207 Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

Late Spring

April 19, 2018 Two at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 5 - June 10, 2007 Two drakes at Great Falls. eBird

June 27, 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird

Hooded Merganser

Common migrant and winter visitor. Uncommon summer resident at Hughes Hollow, and along the Potomac. (Photos of hens with chicks.) Hooded

Mergansers are widespread in county ponds late spring and early summer, but these are mostly (?) non-breeding or post-breeding birds. No evidence of nesting in many places. They were historically rare breeders on the piedmont. (S&R) Not found breeding during the Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73 (MB34:12), or the First Maryland Atlas 1983-87. Breeding regularly at Hughes Hollow beginning in 2003. Notable records:

Breeding

May 1, 1954 Adult with young near Seneca. S&R

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: April 24, 2003 Downy young, Hughes Hollow.

Migration/Winter High Counts

November 14, 1948 —24 at Great Falls. S&R
December 22, 2010 —184 Little Seneca Res. eBird
January 1, 2011 —192 Little Seneca Res. eBird

Common Merganser

Common winter visitor, with largest numbers on the big reservoirs, Triadelphia and Little Seneca. Uncommon summer resident along the Potomac. Common Mergansers began breeding in western Maryland in 2002, and in Montgomery County in 2004. Chicks ranging from downy young to nearly full sized are seen late March through June. As far as I know, only two nesting records away from the Potomac, although small flocks are seen in late summer far up Seneca Creek and on Little Bennett Creek. Notable records:

First Breeding Records

May 30, 2004 Unaccompanied chick. Violette's Lock. eBird
June 8, 2004 Downy young, Watkins Island. Second Maryland Atlas

Away from the Potomac

May 2, 2020 Hen, ten chicks, on Seneca Creek three miles upstream from the Potomac. eBird
June 29, 2022 Adults and chicks on Seneca Creek near Clopper Lake. eBird

Summer High Counts

July 29, 2020 —60 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Winter High Counts

December 14, 2019 —1800 Triadelphia Res. eBird
February 23, 2014 —300 Little Seneca Res. eBird

Red-breasted Merganser

Uncommon fall migrant and winter visitor, from early November. Common spring migrant peaking in March. A few female/immature plumaged birds regularly linger into late May, when they can be confused with full grown young of the nesting Common Mergansers. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 22, 2016 Three, Violette's Lock. eBird

Fall High Counts

December 5, 2010. —24 Riley's Lock. eBird

Spring High Counts

March 31, 1997 —110 Violette's Lock. eBird

April 18, 2020 —120 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 29, 1991 Drake, Shady Grove. MB47:139

Summering

July 4, 2024 Violette's rapids. eBird photo

Ruddy Duck

Uncommon to common migrant and winter visitor from early October to early May. Many records of stragglers into June and a few records of summering birds.

Notable records:

Early Fall

September 27, 2016 Seven, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High Counts

October 28, 1958 —400 Triadelphia Res. MB15:31

Late Spring

June 5, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

June 13, 2014 Drake, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Summering

July 1-24, 2018 Female, Violette's Lock eBird photo

July 5, 1999 Drake, Violette's Lock. eBird

July 14 - August 18, 1970 Near Poolesville. AN25:182

New World Quail

Northern Bobwhite

Formerly a common year-round resident. Declined quickly in the 1990s and no longer breeds anywhere in the county or nearby parts of Maryland and Virginia.

Birds seen today are all escaped pets and birds released to train hunting dogs.

You can buy them online and have them shipped to your door. Most are very tame, allowing close approach, and don't survive even a few days in the wild.

Brief timeline:

September 25, 1949 Downy young, Takoma Park. S&R, MB5:42

Stewart and Robbins 1958: "fairly common in the piedmont"

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed throughout the county.

December 21, 1975 —419 Seneca Christmas Bird Count.

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in many blocks, mostly the western part of the county.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed in one block, absent from most.

Today: Extirpated.

Grouse, Pheasants, Turkeys

Wild Turkey

Uncommon year-round resident. Wild Turkeys were extirpated from the county in the early 20th century. Today's birds are descended from reintroductions. Brief timeline:

Stewart and Robbins 1958: "Formerly occurred throughout the Allegheny Mountain, Ridge and Valley, and Piedmont sections, and in portions of the Western Shore section near the fall line; but was extirpated from the greater part of its range during the last half of the nineteenth century. Turkeys were of regular occurrence in some of the wilder sections of Montgomery County until 1890, the latest record occurring on October 28, 1894, when 4 birds were observed at Seneca."

June 4, 1859 Nest with eggs near Rockville. S&R

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: "formerly nested in the Maryland Piedmont, but now only introduced birds are found." Confirmed in two blocks, Hughes Hollow area.

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: "It was not until wild, live-trapped Wild Turkeys were relocated that reintroduction programs began to show positive results."

Confirmed in several blocks, western part of the county.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed in several blocks, western part of the county.

Today: Widespread in the county.

Ruffed Grouse

A former year-round resident. Apparently (and amazingly) a relict population survived along Northwest Branch into the 1970s. None seen since. Brief timeline:

Stewart and Robbins 1958: "formerly occurred throughout the Piedmont section and in the northern part of the Western Shore section ...but gradually disappeared from this area during the period 1900-1920."

April 28, 1895 Nest with eggs. S&R

February 22, 1916 Below Great Falls. Cooke (1929)

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: "A hen was seen with chicks along Northwest Branch in Kensington-CE (N. MacClintock), evidently a relict population; none have been stocked there." MB34:14

Today: Extirpated.

Ring-necked Pheasant

Formerly an uncommon to rare introduced year-round resident, but numbers augmented by releases and perhaps never self sustaining. Birds seen today are all releases for hunting. Other pheasant species are possible. One "Ring-necked" reported in eBird at Violette's Lock a few years ago was a Golden x Lady Amherst's Pheasant. Brief timeline:

Stewart and Robbins 1958: "Introductions of this species have been made on numerous occasions, at many locations in Maryland. However, the Ring-necked Pheasant has been unable to maintain itself in numbers except locally in the Piedmont, Ridge and Valley, and Allegheny Mountain sections."

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in several blocks in western Montgomery and along the border with Howard. Perhaps supported by continued releases.

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in a few blocks.

August 12, 1995 Female and ten large young, River Road. MB53:12

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Only released birds.

Today: Extirpated.

Pigeons and Doves

Rock Pigeon

Common year-round resident.

Passenger Pigeon

Former irregular migrant. Extinct.

Reports for Montgomery from 1877-1879. MD/DCRC

S&R (1958): "In the vicinity of Washington, DC, this species appeared in flocks at irregular intervals throughout the fall, winter, and spring; the last large flight took place in the fall of about 1858 or 1859 (Coues and Prentiss, 1883). By 1880, this species had become quite rare throughout its range. In the District of

Columbia and nearby sections of Maryland (Cooke, 1929) a few were seen and specimens collected in 1887, 1889 (small flock near Laurel and flock of 12 at Jefferson), and 1891 (latest collected on May 2, 1891).

Eurasian Collared-Dove

Casual vagrant. Seems to have trouble establishing breeding populations in the northeast. Eurasian Collared-Doves have quickly become common breeders in much of the southern and western U.S. Two county records:

November 18, 2007 Rockville. MD/DCRC

June 9, 2024 Damascus. eBird

White-winged Dove

Casual vagrant. One record:

April 26, 2009 Hunting Quarter Road, Poolesville. MD/DCRC

Mourning Dove

Common year-round resident. There are banding recoveries involving Canada and states to the north and south of Maryland. (S&R p174) So migrants pass through, or perhaps winter, and some of our breeding birds may winter elsewhere.

Cuckoos

Yellow-billed Cuckoo

Common migrant and summer resident, from late April to mid October. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 15, 2013 Riley's Lock. eBird photo

April 22, 1973 Sycamore Landing. MB29:116

Late Fall

November 13, 2011 Greenbridge Rd, Triadelphia Res. eBird

November 14, 1980 Hughes Hollow. MB37:33

Black-billed Cuckoo

Uncommon migrant from late April to late May and from mid August to early October. Black-billed Cuckoos were formerly uncommon breeders, now rare or

even absent most years. For the months June through July eBird has only one audio and no photos. Some of the described songs of heard only birds in eBird reports are obviously Yellow-billed Cuckoo songs. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 24, 1990 Banded, Potomac. MB46:101

April 30, 2008 Blue Mash. eBird photo

Late Spring migrant

June 1, 2024 Night flight call. Darnestown. eBird audio

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in two blocks, probable in one.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: None.

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-23: Probable in two blocks:

June 14, 2020 Little Bennett. eBird audio

June 14, 2020 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Late Fall

October 6-14, 2020 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird photo

October 11, 1980 Banded, Potomac. MB37:33

October 17, 2017 Aspen Hill. eBird

Nightjars

Common Nighthawk

Uncommon spring migrant in May. Common fall migrant from early August to mid October. Common Nighthawks were formerly uncommon breeders in urban areas, now extirpated. The numbers seen in migration are also reduced. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 14, 1949 S&R

April 15, 1996 Pennyfield. eBird

Spring High Counts

May 18, 2011 —98 Riley's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

June 19, 2003 Woodend. eBird

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in one block, probable in three.

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Probable in two blocks.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Probable in one block (Dickerson Power Plant?)

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-23: None

Early Fall

August 2, 2024 Chevy Chase. eBird

Fall High Counts

August 31, 1957 —600 Triadelphia Res. MB19:6

August 26, 1981 —1258 Near Laytonsville. MB38:25

September 2, 1998 —1139 Rockville. MB55:99

Late Fall

November 1, 1991 Near Germantown. MB48:22

November 1, 2020 One bird feeding, evening, Redgate Park. eBird

Chuck-will's-widow

Casual spring migrant, with birds overshooting from their breeding range on the coastal plain. One possible breeding record. Once in fall. At least eight records.

May 4-7, 1985 Singing, Sycamore Landing. MB41:66

May 7, 1989 Hughes Hollow. MB45:110, eBird

May 8, 2015 One singing, Halbert Hook Rd. eBird audio

May 9, 1990 Singing, Kennington. MB46:101

May 12, 2016 One singing, Malcolm King Park, Gaithersburg. eBird

May 16, 1986 Singing, Rockville. MB42:47

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: "one bird was heard regularly through one summer in a pine woods in Rockville-CW." (MB34:18) I could find no further info, the year was 1971, 72 or 73.

September 11, 1978 Banded, Potomac. MB34:18

Eastern Whip-poor-will

Rare spring migrant from early April to late May. Casual fall migrant in September. Once in late October. A formerly uncommon breeder, Whip-poor-wills declined in the 1990s and are now probably extirpated as breeders in the county. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 7, 2014 Glen Query. eBird

April 13-14, 2023 Izaak Walton Rd. eBird audio

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: Probable in 14 blocks. MB34:18

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Probable in 18 blocks.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Probable in two blocks.

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-23: None

Late Fall

August 27 - September 4, 2023 Vocal migrant at Sycamore Landing. eBird audio

September 28, 1990 Rockville. MB47:19

September 30, 1990 Chevy Chase. MB47:19

October 28, 1982 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB39:22

Swifts

Chimney Swift

Common migrant and summer resident from mid April to late October. Large numbers might be seen at urban roost sites in late summer/early fall. There is often a big clear-out flight in early October, with birds feeding over the river where most of the insects are. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 31, 2014 Bethesda. eBird

Spring High Counts

May 4, 2016 —700 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High Counts

August 31, 2012 —5000 Silver Spring. eBird

October 2, 2020 —1800 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Fall

November 2, 2018 —24 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

November 4, 2002 —40 at Little Falls. MB59:25

November 23, 1992 Bethesda. MB49:26

Hummingbirds

Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Common migrant and summer resident from mid April to mid October.

Noticeable peak in fall migration from mid August to mid September. One record of a banded bird wintering at a feeder. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 7, 2019 Damascus. eBird

April 14, 1954 S&R

April 18, 2019 Pennyfield. eBird photo

Fall High Counts

August 23, 1969 —100 AN24:218

September 12, 1954 Thirty at Seneca. S&R,

Late Fall

November 1, 2020 Lake Needwood. eBird photo

November 5, 2021 Nike Missile Park. eBird photo

November 20, 1979 Wheaton. MB36:33

Wintering, all records found

November 2005 - January 20, 2006 Banded December 3. Fide Paul O'Brien.

Rufous Hummingbird

Casual fall and winter visitor at feeders, from mid October to mid April. Many disappear by January, not over-wintering. Nine banded, three others positively identified as Rufous, for a total of twelve records. There are some date and location discrepancies between eBird and the various published accounts. I sorted them out as best I could.

All records, arranged by year

Nov 9, 1988 - April 17, 1989 Imm male, banded, Takoma Park. MD/DCRC, MB45:32,73,110, eBird photo

October 30 - November 3, 2001 Imm female, killed by mantis, specimen, Takoma Park. MD/DCRC, MB58:60

October 10-17, 2002 Adult male, Rockville. MD/DCRC, MB59:25

October 24 - Dec 1, 2003 Imm female, banded, Ednor Rd. MD/DCRC, MB60:57

November 19 - December 9, 2006 Female (age?) banded, Silver Spring. eBird, NAB61:243

December 8, 2006 Banded (sex and age?) south of Burtonsville. NAB61:243

November 21, 2010 - January 11, 2011 Imm female, banded, College Park. eBird photo

December 19-21, 2010 Imm female, banded, Thornhill Rd, Silver Spring. eBird

December 17, 2011 - January 8, 2012 Adult female, banded in 2009, "back for third year" Colesville. I have no dates for the first two years. eBird photo

December 8, 2012 - January 3, 2013 Imm female, banded, Thornhill Rd, Silver Spring. eBird photo

November 25-29, 2021 Female, age undetermined, Silver Spring. Not banded. eBird photo

December 11, 2021 - February 21, 2022 Adult female, banded, Potomac.
Found dead due to collision. eBird photo

***Selasphorus* Hummingbird species**

Birds not banded, identified as Rufous/Allen's. Some were reported as simply Rufous at the time. I don't think any were suspected of being Broad-tailed or Calliope. Seven records:

Arranged by year

October 24 - November 17, 1993 Allegheny Ave, Takoma Park. MD/DCRC, MB51:73

September 17, 1998 Rockville. MB55:99

November 5-9, 1994 Allegheny Ave, Takoma Park. MD/DCRC

November 4-22, 1996 Montrose Drive, Chevy Chase. MD/DCRC, MB53:116

November 6-11, 2002 Radnor Rd, Bethesda. MD/DCRC, MB59(3-4):25

December 16, 2003 From earlier, Rockville. MB61(1-2):14

September 15-16, 2014 Goshen Valley Dr. eBird photo

Rails, Coots, Gallinules

King Rail

Casual migrant. Only one definite breeding record, from Hughes Hollow, in 1949. All records found:

March 18, 1990 Hughes Hollow. MB46:97

April 3-24, 1997 Sycamore Landing Rd. eBird

April 23-24, 1949 Two, Seneca. AN4:200

May 3-9, 1996 Sycamore Landing Rd. eBird photo

May 5, 1951 Two, Seneca. MB8:30

May 5, 2002 Sycamore Landing Rd. eBird

May 8, 1993 Calling over Poolesville. MB51:14

May 14, 1967 Pennyfield. eBird

May 19, 1982 Hughes Hollow. MB38:98

May 21, 1967 Hughes Hollow. eBird

May 29, 1949 Downy young at Hughes Hollow. S&R

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Probable in one block, Hughes Hollow area.

June 2, 1985 Hughes Hollow MB41:111

July 10-24, 1983 Hughes Hollow. eBird

September 13, 2012 Hughes Hollow. eBird
September 24, 1980 Hughes Hollow. MB37:30

Clapper Rail

Casual vagrant, one record. There are two similar records of Clapper Rails overshooting into Washington DC, in April and September.

July 1, 2018 Fern St, Wheaton. Later found dead. eBird photo

Virginia Rail

Rare spring migrant from late March to late May. Casual fall migrant from early September to late October, and casual winter visitor. Has bred, or been suspected of breeding, a few times. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 27 - April 5, 2023 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

April 1, 1988 Hughes Hollow. MB44:95

Late Spring

June 8, 2024 Late migrant. Night flight call, Darnestown. ebird audio

Breeding and possible breeding:

July 8, 1950 Adult with downy young, Unity. S&R, MB7:10

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in one block, Hughes Hollow area.
MB34:14

May 27 - August 9, 2016 At least one bird, Ken-Gar Palisades. eBird photo, audio

Early Fall

September 3, 2012 Wheaton RP. eBird

September 23, 1993 Banded, Adventure Banding. MB51:69

Late Fall

October 8-23, 2016 Ken-Gar Palisades. Same as May-Aug bird? eBird

Wintering, all records found

January 5, 2014 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

January 23-28, 2018 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

February 16, 1969 Rock Creek. AN24:103

Sora

Uncommon spring migrant from late March to late May. Scarcer fall migrant from mid August to late October. There are no definite breeding records, but

some years birds have lingered at Hughes Hollow until mid June, and there are a few July records of early migrants, or lingerers, or birds that may have nested.

Soras have bred at Lilipons. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 21-25, 2021 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo, audio

Late "Spring"

June 1-11, 2003 Hughes Hollow. eBird, MB60:45

Early "Fall"

July 3-5, 2004 Two, Hughes Hollow. eBird

Jul 27 - August 16, 2003 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Fall High Count

September 7, 1953 Fifty at Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

November 1, 1995 Hughes Hollow. MB53:12

November 12, 1966 MB23:14

Common Gallinule

Uncommon spring migrant from early April to early June. Rare fall migrant from mid August to late October. Has bred a few times at Hughes Hollow. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 25-27, 2022 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

April 3, 1995 Hughes Hollow. MB52:85

Breeding or possible breeding

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Probable in one block, Hughes Hollow area.

June 24, 1989 Pair with three young, Hughes Hollow. MB45:142

July 22 - August 9, 1990 Pair with 5 young, Hughes Hollow. MB 46:126, 47:15

July 28 - September 12, 2015 LM Stevens Park, Poolesville. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 29, 1996 Little Seneca Res. MB53:113

November 1, 1959 Pennyfield. MB16:24

American Coot

Common migrant and winter visitor from late September to late May. Only one definite breeding record, but a number of records in June and July. American

Coots have bred recently in Washington, DC. No records for August. Hundreds formerly wintered at Little Seneca Reservoir, but scarce there in recent years.

Notable records:

Early Fall

September 10, 2021 eBird

September 22, 2023 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

September 25, 1949 Pennyfield. MB5:57

Winter High Counts

December 11, 1994 —500 at Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in one block, downy young, Potomac River. MB34:14

Summer lingering

June 10 - July 10, 2023 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

July 8-20, 2002 Little Seneca Res. eBird

July 27, 2003 Hughes Hollow. MB60:45

Purple Gallinule

Casual summer visitor, with seven records. Some have lingered for awhile. All records found:

May 2-22, 2011 Hughes Hollow. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

May 6 - June 17, 2004 Hughes Hollow. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

May 10-13, 1964 Pennyfield. AN19:245

May 23, 1970 Hughes Hollow. AN25:138

June 19-29, 1975 Seneca Marsh (Riley's). eBird, MB31:118

June 30 - July 17, 1974 Hughes Hollow. NAB 28:5:887, MB30:14

July 19-25, 1953 Seneca. S&R, MB19:50, MD/DCRC

Yellow Rail

Casual spring migrant, very difficult to detect. Two records:

April 28, 2012 Hughes Hollow. MD/DCRC, eBird

May 14, 1992 Rouen Lane, Potomac. Flushed by mower. MD/DCRC, MB54:10

Black Rail

Casual spring migrant, very difficult to detect. Two records:

May 9-12, 1994 Willard Rd. Singing at night in large crop field. MD/DCRC, eBird

May 7, 2011 Hughes Hollow. MD/DCRC

Limpkin

Limpkin

Casual vagrant, with one summer record. Records increasing in the northeast in recent years.

August 19 - September 11, 2023 Pennyfield. eBird photo

Cranes

Sandhill Crane

Formerly a casual vagrant, with five records 1987-2010. One bird spent over two years around a horse farm near Poolesville. Beginning in February 2013 a single bird wintered at Algonkian Regional Park, Virginia, using the woodland pond near the Potomac River. This bird would make feeding excursions across the river into western Montgomery County. Two birds wintered there in 2016-17, and three to four birds beginning in the winter of 2019-20. These birds sometimes feed daily in Montgomery and sometimes in northern Virginia. In the past decade migrating flocks of 7, 12, and 20 have also been seen in the county. Their current status is best described as rare migrant and rare but frequently seen winter visitor. Still only a very few records between April and November.

Older records (all found) pre 2013

May 2, 1987 Little Bennett Park flyover. MD/DCRC, MB43:75

May 25, 1988 - Dec 16, 1990 Partnership Rd. eBird, MD/DCRC, MB44:126, MB47:43

August 12-26, 1995 Two, Patton Turf. MB53:13

November 25 - December 26, 2004 Willard Rd, Poolesville. eBird photo

March 1-26, 2010 NIH Animal Center. eBird

Notable newer records, 2013 to present

January 26, 2020 Four, Violette's Lock eBird

February 6 - April 24, 2013 Violette's Lock/River Rd/Algonkian Park VA. eBird photo

March 17, 2015 Twelve flying north over Little Seneca Res. eBird

May 29 and June 1, 2023 Two Laytonsville and Blue Mash. eBird photos

September 14-15, 2018 Three, Patton Turf. eBird photo
November 27, 2014 Seven flying south over Greencastle Rd. eBird photo
December 18, 2016 —20 feeding in field off Damascus Rd. eBird

Stilts, Avocets

American Avocet

Casual spring migrant with two records. Rare fall migrant from late June to early October, with at least 32 records, 21 records from Violette's Lock. Other records from Triadelphia Reservoir, Lake Needwood, Lake Whetstone, Wheaton, and Summit Hall turf. American Avocets showed a remarkable increase in records beginning in 2010. There were only three county records before the year 2000.

Spring, all records found

April 16, 2011 —12 at Violette's Lock. Swimming in rapids! eBird photo
May 2, 1971 Seneca. MB27:105

Fall Notable Records

Early Fall

June 24, 2021 Flew downriver, Violette's Lock. eBird photo
June 26, 2024 Flew downriver, also Loudoun. Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High Counts

July 28, 2022 Six flying downriver past Sycamore Landing , Violette's Lock and Fletchers Boathouse (DC). eBird photos
August 11, 2015 —11 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo
August 19, 2022 —13 flyby at Violette's Lock. Likely the same flock later at Hunting Creek, VA. eBird photo
September 27, 2019 —11 Potomac River off Sugarland Run. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 5-6, 2024 Seven, (one OCT 6) Violette's Lock. eBird photo
October 7, 2001 Triadelphia Res. eBird

Plovers

Black-bellied Plover

Rare spring migrant from late April to early June. Rare fall migrant from late July to early October. Once in November. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 26-27, 2017 Four at Patton Turf. eBird photo

Spring High Count

May 26, 2009 —30 Patton Turf. eBird

Late Spring

June 3, 2011 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

June 5, 2010 Summit Hall Turf. eBird

Early Fall

July 23, 2013 Two, Violette's Lock. eBird

Fall High Count

September 6, 2011 Seven, Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Fall

October 30, 2020 Greenbridge Rd-Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird photo

November 24, 1957 Triadelphia Reservoir. MB14:26

American Golden-Plover

Casual spring migrant with five records from late March to early May.

Uncommon fall migrant early from August to late October. Twice in November.

Most records on the Turf farms. The first county record was October 4, 1964.

(MB21:23)Notable records:

Spring, all records found

March 22, 1983 Laytonsville MB39:78

March 26, 1988 Summit Hall Turf. MB44:95

March 26, 2023 Flyover, Blue Mash. eBird photo

March 27, 1996 Homestead Farm. eBird photo

March 28 - May 2 1970 Flock of 20-30 (continuously?) at Summit Hall Turf.

MB26:71, AN25:138

Fall Notable Records

Early Fall

August 9, 2009 Nine at Patton Turf. eBird

August 9, 2014 Summit Hall Turf. eBird

Fall High Counts

September 15, 1967 —26 at Summit Hall Turf. eBird

September 17, 1971 —23 at Summit Hall Turf. NAB 26:1:43

September 26, 1987 —30 at Summit Hall Turf. MB44:18

Late Fall

November 8, 1970 Summit Hall Turf. MB27:47

November 11, 1988 Summit Hall Turf. MB45:27

Killdeer

Uncommon year-round resident, common late summer and fall migrant.

Sometimes quite scarce in mid-winter. Notable records:

Fall High Counts

August 15, 2020 —300 Hughes Road Polo. eBird

August 26, 2018 —270 Summit Hall Turf. eBird

September 11, 1985 —161 Summit Hall Turf. MB42:14

Semipalmated Plover

Uncommon spring migrant from early May to early June. Uncommon fall migrant from late July to late September. Once in late October. Notable records:

Early Spring

May 4, 2009 Whites Ferry. eBird

Spring High Counts

May 20, 2022 —29 Patton Turf. eBird

May 22, 2017 —26 Triadelphia Reservoir-Greenbridge Rd. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 3, 2022 Four at Patton turf. eBird photo

June 5 2011 —11 at Violette's Lock. eBird

June 8, 2012 Six at Violette's Lock. eBird

June 11, 2023 Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird photo

Early Fall

July 21, 1980 Hughes Hollow. eBird

July 22, 2012 Summit Hall Turf. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 17, 2010 Lake Needwood. eBird

October 21, 1993 Two, Hughes Hollow. MB51:70

Sandpipers, Curlews, Turnstone, Woodcock, Dowitchers etc.

Upland Sandpiper

Casual spring migrant from late April to early June. Rare fall migrant from early July to early September. Once in October. Upland Sandpipers were formerly rare breeders in the county. S&R (1958): "Breeding...in the vicinity of Dickerson,

Poolesville, Whites Ferry, and (formerly) Sandy Spring.” The last definite Montgomery breeding record was in 1961? Notable records:

Historical

May 14, 1955 Two, White’s Ferry area. AN11:34

June 24, 1961 One non-flying young with adult. MB18:68

September 26, 1919 Late fall departure date. S&R

Modern Early Spring

April 16, 2022 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird photo

Modern Spring High Count

April 18-24, 1986 Five, King Farm. eBird, MB42:71

Modern Late Spring

May 22, 2014 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird photo

June 10, 1978 Glen Rd. eBird

Modern Early Fall

July 4, 2023 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird

July 21-25, 2013 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird photo

Modern Fall High Counts

August 15-22, 1976 Nine, Summit Hall. eBird, MB32:121

August 2, 2009 Three, Patton Turf. eBird

Modern Late Fall

September 7, 2018 Violette’s Lock. eBird photo

October 10, 2023 Darnestown. Night flyover. eBird audio

Whimbrel

Casual spring and fall migrant, with a distinct peak in the last week of May. All records found:

May 14, 1999 Violette’s Lock. eBird

May 23, 2019 Violette’s Lock. eBird photo

May 24, 2022 Two at Patton turf. eBird photo

May 28, 1991 Violette’s Lock. MB47:117

May 29, 2019 Three at Violette’s Lock. eBird photo

May 30, 2024 Violette’s Lock. eBird photo

July 27, 2005 Violette’s Lock. eBird

August 22, 2023 Violette’s Lock. eBird photo

Hudsonian Godwit

Casual fall migrant. One record:
September 26, 1975 One at Summit Hall Turf. NAB 30:1:48

Marbled Godwit

Casual fall migrant. One record:
August 4-5, 1984 Summit Hall Turf. Photographed. MB 41:15

Short-billed Dowitcher

Rare spring migrant in May, rare fall migrant from mid July to late September. The flock of 58 at Homestead Farm on May 12, 2019, was remarkable because almost all the birds were of the western subspecies *hendersoni*, and because of the size of the flock. The next highest count is 15, and most sightings are of single birds. Notable records:

Early Spring

May 5, 2017 Patton Turf. eBird

Spring High Counts

May 12, 2019 Fifty-eight, Homestead Farm. Nearly all subspecies *hendersoni*. eBird photo

May 21, 2012 Twelve, Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

May 31, 1995 Two, Hughes Hollow. eBird

Early Fall

July 10-16, 2010 Three, Blue Mash. eBird

July 26, 2009 Summit Hall turf. eBird

Fall High

August 18, 2010 Eight, Triadelphia Lake Rd. eBird

Late Fall

September 20, 2014 Blue Mash. eBird photo

September 30, 1978 Summit Hall Turf. MB35:23

Long-billed Dowitcher

Casual spring and fall migrant, with five records. Any dowitcher after September is more likely to be a Long-billed, but distant birds are difficult to identify. All records found:

May 4-5, 2012 Germantown Soccerplex. eBird photo

May 14, 1995 Rt 108 pond, Laytonsville. eBird photo

July 30-31, 2023 Adult at Blue Mash. eBird photo, audio

October 6, 2019 Blue Mash. eBird photo

October 28, 1951 Triadelphia Reservoir. S&R

American Woodcock

Uncommon year-round resident but seldom detected except during the display season, which peaks February through March. There is a slight peak late October through mid November as more migrants from the north pass through. Migrants are sometimes found in odd places where they do not breed, parking lots, backyards, etc.

Spring High Counts

February 24, 1974 —24, Hughes Hollow. AN29:174

March 9, 1997 —14 near Shady Grove. MB54:42

May 1, 1971 —55, Hughes Hollow. AN16:132

Wilson's Snipe

Uncommon spring migrant from late February to mid May. Once in June and once in July. Uncommon fall migrant from late September (or rarely from early August) to late October. Rare winter visitor, numbers depending on amount of open water and snow cover. New migrants, presumably from the north, sometimes show up in mid winter if conditions worsen. Notable records:

Early Fall

July 16, 1967 Hughes Hollow. AN22:232

August 5, 1979 Summit Hall Turf. MB36:32

August 8-25, 2020 Up to three, Hughes Rd Polo. eBird photo

Fall High Count

November 29, 1998 —20, Hughes Hollow. MB55:97

Winter High Count

January 19, 1948 Four, Unity. MB4:12

Spring High Counts

March 7, 1992 —42, Sycamore Landing. MB48:92

March 14, 1970 —75, Hughes Hollow. AN25:138

Late Spring

June 14-28, 1959 Pennyfield. NAB13:423

Wilson's Phalarope

Casual spring and fall migrant. All records found:

Historical

May 12, 1929 Dickerson. S&R

September 8, 1947 Triadelphia Reservoir. S&R

October 5, 1963 Near Pennyfield. MB20:70

Modern

May 4, 1974 Lake Needwood. MB30:113

June 16, 2011 Two at Violette's Lock. eBird

August 4-5, 1984 Summit Hall Turf Farm. MB41:16

August 8-9, 1980 Four at Hughes Hollow. MB36:150, eBird

August 10, 1971 Two at Summit Hall. MB27:4:190

August 25, 1984 Summit Hall Turf Farm. MB41:16

September 8, 2011 Summit Hall Turf Farm. eBird

Red Phalarope

Casual Fall migrant. All records found:

September 13, 1980 Hughes Hollow. NAB 35:2:168

September 26, 1991 Two at Sycamore Landing. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

October 2, 2024 With Red-necked Phalarope. Violette's Lock. eBird photo

October 3, 2015 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

October 4, 1897 Specimen. White's Ferry. S&R

October 30, 2012 Violette's Lock. Hurricane Sandy. eBird

November 1, 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Red-necked Phalarope

Rare spring migrant, with a tight peak in late May. Casual fall migrant from late August to early October. Most Red-necked Phalaropes turn up on the Potomac River, where they are very hard to spot due to their tiny size. Other records are from Lake Frank, Lake Needwood, Hughes Hollow, and Summit Hall. Notable records:

Early Spring

May 8, 2013 Violette's Lock. eBird

Spring High Counts

May 22, 2012 Two at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 23, 1972 Two at Hughes Hollow. Ringler

Late Spring

June 1, 2019 Lake Frank. eBird photo

Early Fall

August 30, 1973 Summit Hall Turf Farm. AN29:127

Fall High Counts

September 2, 2006 Three at Violette's Lock. Hurricane Ernesto. eBird

September 24, 2023 Two at Summit Hall and (same two?) later at Violette's Lock.
eBird photos

Late Fall

October 3, 1956 Pennyfield. AN12:121

October 5, 1963 Near Pennyfield. MB20:70

October 30, 2012 One at Violette's Lock. Hurricane Sandy. eBird

Spotted Sandpiper

Common spring migrant from early April to late May. Common fall migrant from late June to late October. Rarely lingering into early winter, with three January records. Rare summer breeder, none recent? Post-breeding southbound or wandering birds begin showing up at the end of June, making confirmation of breeding difficult. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 10, 2018 Riley's Lock. eBird

March 21, 2016 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird

Spring High Count

May 18, 1997 —50 Pennyfield to Violette's. MB54:41

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in one block. MB34:18

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: None.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: None.

Winter

January 3, 1971 Seneca. NAB25:247

January 3, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird video

January 6, 2001 Blockhouse Point. MB58:27

January 7-27, 2024 Potomac River at Bear Island. eBird photo

Solitary Sandpiper

Common spring migrant from early April to early June. Common fall migrant from early July to late October. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 17-31, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

March 26, 1968 MB24:74

Spring High Counts

April 26, 1953 —30 near Seneca. S&R

May 7, 2022 —19 Patton, 12 Summit Hall. eBird

Late Spring

June 1, 2019 Lake Frank. eBird photo

June 1, 2021 Blue Mash. eBird

June 3, 2023 Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird

Early Fall

June 28, 1959 Pennyfield. AN14:276

July 3, 2020 Lake Frank. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 20-22, 2022 Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird photo

November 3, 2018 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Lesser Yellowlegs

Uncommon spring migrant from late March to late May. Uncommon fall migrant from early July to late October. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 7, 1965 Hughes Hollow. AN20:98

March 19, 2006 Four, Hughes Hollow. eBird

Late Spring

May 26, 2012 Two, Blue Mash. eBird

Early Fall

June 28, 2024 Opposite Riley's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High Count

August 11, 1990 —29 Summit Hall Turf. MB47:15

Late Fall

November 5-14, 1980 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Willet

Casual spring and fall migrant, with six records, It is likely that most or all birds are the western subspecies *inornatus*, migrating between western breeding grounds and south Atlantic coast wintering grounds. All records found:

April 15, 1997 Rt 108 pond, Laytonsville. MB54:41

May 9, 1959 C&O Canal, location? AN14:193
July 15, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird photo
August 9, 2024 Seven at Violette's Lock, TS Debby rain. eBird photo
August 18, 1973 Hughes Hollow. eBird
August 20, 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird photo
August 25-29, 2024 Potomac at Sugarland Run/Riley's Lock. eBird photo

Greater Yellowlegs

Uncommon Spring migrant from mid March to late May. Uncommon Fall migrant from mid July to late November. A few northbound or southbound birds in June make it hard to specify late spring and early fall migration dates. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 1, 2001 Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird
March 3, 2011 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Late Fall

November 24, 2004 Triadelphia. MB61:62
November 30 - December 1, 2023 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Ruddy Turnstone

Rare spring migrant from early May to early June. Rare fall migrant from early August to late September. More records in recent years. All records found:

Historical

September 7, 1957 Triadelphia Res. MB 14:26
September 14, 1953 Seneca. S&R

Modern

May 7, 2022 Patton Turf. eBird photo
May 12, 2019 Homestead Farm. eBird photo
May 13, 2022 Violette's Lock. eBird
May 21, 2023 Violette's Lock. eBird photo
May 26, 2010 Violette's Lock. eBird
May 27-31, 2021 Blue Mash. eBird photo
May 31, 2009 Violette's Lock eBird
June 1, 2009 Summit Hall Turf farm. eBird
August 1, 2004 Violette's Lock. eBird
August 9, 2024 Violette's Lock. TS Debby. eBird photo

August 18, 2010 Triadelphia Res-Greenbridge Rd. eBird photo
August 30, 2009 Summit Hall Turf farm. eBird
September 1-2, 2006 Lake Needwood, north end. eBird
September 4-5, 2001 Triadelphia Res-Greenbridge Rd. eBird
September 18, 2004 Patton Turf. eBird
September 25, 2008 Violette's Lock. eBird

Ruff

Casual vagrant, two records:

May 4, 2016 One photographed at Summit Hall. eBird
September 5, 1971 One at Summit Hall. MB 27:4:190

Stilt Sandpiper

Casual spring migrant, with one April record. Rare fall migrant from late July to mid October.

Spring, all records found

April 26, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

Fall Notable Records

Early Fall

July 26-27, 2009 Two, Summit Hall Turf. eBird
July 25, 2018 Two, Summit Hall Turf. eBird

Fall High Counts

September 1, 2000 Six, Summit Hall Turf. eBird
September 9, 2004 Nine, Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Fall

October 2-16, 2010 Four, Triadelphia Lake Rd. eBird
November 2, 1991 Two, Hughes Hollow. MB48:19

Buff-breasted Sandpiper

Rare to uncommon fall migrant from early August to early October. Not found every year. Rare unless turf conditions are ideal. Historically unknown for Maryland. The first Montgomery record was of two at Summit Hall September 15-22, 1967(MB23:94). Notable records:

Early Fall

August 7, 2009 Patton Turf. eBird
August 13, 2004 Summit Hall Turf. eBird

Fall High Counts

August 25 - September 21, 1971 Summit Hall Turf. **Peaking at 14** on the 14th. MB 27:4:190

September 1-11, 1980 Seven, later four, Summit Hall Turf. MB37:32, eBird

September 3, 2015 Seven, Summit Hall Turf. eBird photo

September 23-30, 1978 Seven, Summit Hall Turf. MB35:24

Late Fall

September 29, 2016 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird photo

October 4, 1987 Two, Summit Hall Turf. eBird

Sanderling

Casual spring migrant, four records, from late April to late May. Rare fall migrant from early August to early November.

Spring, all records found

April 26, 2017 Summit Hall Turf. eBird

May 24 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 31, 2009 Two Summit Hall Turf. eBird

May 31, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird

Fall Notable Records

Early Fall

July 26, 2024 Adult, BlueMash. eBird photo

August 1, 2004 Three, Violette's Lock. eBird

August 22, 2009 Summit Hall Turf. eBird

Fall High Counts

August 28 - September 10, 2011 Up to four, Summit Hall Turf. eBird

September 7, 2011 Five, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 10, 1981 Pennyfield. eBird

October 20, 2011 Violette's Lock. eBird

November 10, 2017 Two, Violette's Lock. eBird

Dunlin

Rare spring migrant from late April to early June. Twice in March. Uncommon fall migrant from early October to late November. Notable records:

Early spring

March 1, 2001 Black Hill RP. eBird

March 23-24, 2009 Two, Violette's Lock. eBird

April 23, 2020 Blue Mash. eBird photo

Spring High Count

April 24-26, 2020 Four, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 1, 2009 Patton Turf. eBird

Early Fall

October 1, 1998 Meadowside Nature Center. eBird

October 12, 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High

October 30, 2012 Three flocks totaling 45. Hurricane Sandy. eBird

November 3-19, 2023 Up to 14 on Nov 8, Blue Mash. eBird photo

Late Fall

November 21, 1991 Five, Hughes Hollow. MB48:19

November 23, 2023 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

November 24, 1957 Triadelphia. MB14:26

Baird's Sandpiper

Casual spring migrant with one May record. Rare fall migrant from early August to late September. Once in October.

Spring, all records found

May 11-15, 1974 Five, Lake Needwood. AN30:30

Fall Notable Records

Early Fall

August 6-12, 2007 Summit Hall Turf. eBird

August 22, 2012 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird photo

Fall High Counts

September 14, 1971 Five at Summit Hall Turf. NAB 26:43

September 22, 1967 Three, Summit Hall Turf. MB23:94

Late Fall

September 30, 1978 Summit Hall Turf. MB35:24

October 11, 2013 Two, Summit Hall Turf. eBird

White-rumped Sandpiper

Casual Spring migrant from late April to early June. Rare fall migrant from early August to mid November. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 30, 2023 Three near White's Ferry. eBird photo

May 6 - 18, 2010 Germantown Soccerplex. eBird photo

May 11-14, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 7, 2010 Four, Blue Mash. eBird

Early Fall

August 2, 1953 Triadelphia. AN9:92

August 4, 2020 Triadelphia-Greenbridge Rd. eBird

Fall High Counts

September 8-10, 2011 Summit Hall. Peaking at 14 on the 10th. eBird photo

September 8-24, 2018 Hughes Rd Polo. Peak of 11 on the 15th. eBird photo

September 23-24, 2023 Up to 57 on September 23, Summit Hall. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 3, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

November 7-9, 2023 Two at Blue Mash. eBird photo

November 10, 2023 Two at Triadelphia Res. eBird photo

November 18-21, 1991 Two, Hughes Hollow. MB48:19

Least Sandpiper

Uncommon spring migrant from mid April to early June. Common fall migrant from early July to mid October. Once in November. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 27, 2021 Blue Mash. eBird

April 6, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Spring High Counts

May 7, 2022 —40 Summit Hall Turf. eBird

May 22, 2017 —40 Triadelphia Reservoir-Greenbridge Rd. eBird

Late Spring

June 5, 2011 Five at Violette's Lock. eBird

June 9, 2024 Violette's Lock. eBird

Early Fall

July 4, 2014 Four at Blue Mash. eBird photo

Fall High Count

September 10, 2023 —65 Triadelphia Reservoir-Big Branch. eBird

September 21, 2010 —54 Triadelphia Lake Rd. eBird

Late Fall

October 17, 2009 Seven at Summit Hall turf. eBird

November 11, 2020 Blue Mash. eBird

Pectoral Sandpiper

Rare spring migrant from mid March to late May. Uncommon fall migrant from mid July to early November. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 3, 2020 Hughes Hollow. eBird

March 12, 2023 Patton Turf. eBird

March 17, 1991 Hughes Hollow. MB47:118

March 22, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

Late Spring

May 27, 2012 Violette's Lock. eBird

May 29, 2022 Patton turf. eBird photo

Early Fall

July 17, 1965 Hughes Hollow. AN:20:217

High Fall Counts

August 26, 1973 —200 at Summit Hall Turf. MB29:111

September 23, 2023 —110 at Summit Hall Turf. eBird photo

Late Fall

November 11, 2013 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

November 14, 1991 Seven at Hughes Hollow. MB48:19

November 16, 1980 Hughes Hollow. MB37:32

Western Sandpiper

Casual fall migrant from mid July to late September. Once in November. Adults still in breeding plumage and fresh juveniles are easy to identify up close, but typical views are of distant birds, and they are often unidentifiable. Possible as a spring migrant, but there are very few spring records with photos from anywhere in the region. All records found:

July 17, 1972 Three, Summit Hall Turf. MB28:156

July 29 - August 1, 1991. Breeding plumage, Rt 108 pond. eBird, MB47:141, MB48:19

August 9, 2002 Triadelphia Lake Rd. eBird

August 11, 2012 Two adults, worn breeding, Browns Bridge. eBird

September 2, 2006 Lake Needwood. eBird
September 5, 1997 Laytonsville Landfill pond. eBird
September 13-14, 2018 Two, Hughes Rd Polo. eBird photo
September 15, 1967 Seven, Summit Hall Turf. MB23:94
September 17-25, 2010 Two, Triadelphia Lake Rd. eBird
November 15, 1980 Summit Hall Turf. MB37:32

Semipalmated Sandpiper

Uncommon spring migrant from early May to early June. Uncommon fall migrant from late July to late September. One late October record, when very rare in the region. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 26, 2020 Two, Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

June 5, 2019 Four at Violette's lock. eBird photo

June 5, 2023 Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird photo

June 7, 2010 Two, Blue Mash. eBird

Early Fall

July 11, 2010 Four Lake Needwood. eBird

July 22, 2016 Triadelphia Lake Rd. eBird

July 25, 2015 Triadelphia Lake Rd. eBird photo

Fall High Count

August 11, 2012 Flock of 62, Browns Bridge. eBird

September 23, 2023 —25 at Summit Hall Turf. eBird

Late Fall

October 4, 2023 Two at Blue Mash. eBird photo

October 23, 2018 Two, Jones Farm-Laytonsville Pond. eBird photo

Jaegers, Skuas

Long-tailed Jaeger

Casual vagrant, one record. A bird migrating overland from Arctic breeding grounds to the Atlantic Ocean.

August 17, 2024 Juvenile flying downriver, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Parasitic Jaeger

Casual vagrant, one record.

April 28, 1974 Light morph adult flying north, Gaithersburg. AN30:30

Pomarine Jaeger

Casula vagrant. Three records, twice during hurricanes, once in July during calm weather.

July 8-9, 1990 Seneca. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

September 2, 2006 Violette's Lock. Hurricane Ernesto. eBird

October 30, 2012 Violette's Lock. Hurricane Sandy. eBird photo

Auks, Murres, Puffins

Thick-billed Murre

Casual vagrant. One record. During the years 1890-1903 unprecedented wrecks of Thick-billed Murres occurred in northeastern North America.

November 24, 1899 Specimen, Garrett Park, Kensington. MD/DCRC

Fleming, J. 1907. The unusual migration of Brunnich's Murre (*Uria lomvia*) in eastern North America. Proceedings of the Fourth International Ornithological Congress, pp. 528-543

Gulls, Terns, Skimmers

Little Gull

Rare spring migrant mid March to late April. All records have been of birds stopping on the Potomac to feed on aquatic insects, usually with Bonaparte's Gulls. All records found:

March 14, 2007 Violette's Lock. eBird

March 21, 2004 Violette's Lock. eBird

March 23, 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

March 24, 2007 Violette's Lock MD/DCRC, eBird photo

April 6, 2001 Sycamore Landing. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

April 6, 2018 Potomac above Riley's Lock. eBird

April 13, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

April 15, 2012 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

April 19, 2018 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

April 21-24, 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

April 27, 2001 Two adults, Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Black-legged Kittiwake

Casual vagrant. Two records:

October 19, 1996 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird

November 11, 2023 Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird photo

Sabine's Gull

Casual fall migrant. It seems likely that some Sabine Gulls pass over without stopping, en route from their Arctic breeding grounds to the Atlantic Ocean, where they will continue on to the southern hemisphere. There are four additional records for the Potomac in DC, Fairfax, and Prince George's, at least eight records between Conowingo and lower Chesapeake Bay, numerous records from Pennsylvania. All between late August and early October except for one May record. Three records for Montgomery, by year:

September 26, 2005 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird

September 8-12, 2012 Triadelphia Reservoir. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

September 7-13, 2017 Sycamore Landing, Edward's, Violette's. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Bonaparte's Gull

Common spring migrant from mid March to mid May. Rare fall migrant, mostly juveniles, from late July to late September. Uncommon fall migrant from mid October to late December. Rare winter visitor, with small groups just passing through, not lingering as they do on the Chesapeake Bay and the coast. The main event is in April, when hundreds may stop on the Potomac each day to gorge on aquatic insects. The fall migration is peculiar, with a very few juveniles passing through July to August, but the bulk of the migration not happening until late October. Notable records:

Early Fall

July 25, 2003 Juvenile, Violette's Lock. eBird

July 27, 2010 Juvenile, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

August 6-17, 2023 Juvenile, Violette's Lock to Sugarland Run. eBird photo

Fall High Counts

November 12, 2019 —51 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

November 12, 2020 —300 Triadelphia Greenbridge Rd. eBird

December 15, 1991 —52 Seneca. MB48:69

Winter High Count

February 6, 2016 —30 Riley's Lock. eBird

Spring High Counts

April 3, 1993 —300 Violette's Lock. eBird, MB51:15

April 17, 2018 —170 Feeding in muddy field, Patton Turf. eBird photo

April 24, 2020 —550 Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

May 23, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Summer lingering

June 20-23, 2022 First summer bird at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Black-headed Gull

Casual visitor with one record.

December 10-11, 2023 Adult at former Patton Turf. Eating earthworms with large flock of Ring-billed Gulls. eBird photo

Laughing Gull

Rare visitor at unpredictable intervals, from mid April to late December. Most of the high counts are due to hurricanes. Most records are of single birds wandering up the Potomac during calm weather. Laughing Gulls are abundant summer and fall visitors to the tidal Potomac, just a few miles downstream. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 11, 2021 Violette's lock. eBird photo

Fall High Counts

August 10, 1991 —21, Oaks Landfill. MB48:20

August 29, 1999 Total of 53 between Laytonsville and Triadelphia. MB56:55

September 17, 2018 —37, remnants of Hurricane Florence. Violette's Lock. eBird photo

October 30, 2012. —45, Hurricane Sandy, Violette's Lock. eBird

November 3, 1991 Four, Oaks Landfill. eBird

Late Fall

December 3, 2023 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

December 10, 2004 Little Seneca Res. eBird

December 29, 2015 Two, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Franklin's Gull

Casual migrant. The 2015 bird was part of a huge flight into northeastern North America. On November 13, 2015, there were eight at Ocean City MD. At least 350 were at Cape May that day. See *North American Birds* 70:1:4 (2017) for an account of this largest flight. Seven Montgomery records:

April 9, 2012 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 6, 2014 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

November 3, 2018 Violette's Lock, two birds. eBird photo

November 6, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird

November 15, 2021 Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

November 22, 2015 Violette's Lock. eBird

November 24-26, 2015 Summit Hall Turf Farm. eBird photo

Ring-billed Gull

Common migrant and winter visitor. Uncommon summer visitor. The peak of spring migration is in late February, with hundreds to thousands stopping each day on the Potomac River to feed on emerging stoneflies (*Plecoptera*).

Southbound adults begin showing up in late June, the first juveniles in late July. Historically, the largest numbers were in winter at the Oaks Landfill, now closed. Notable records:

Historical High Counts Oaks Landfill and elsewhere

January 16, 1993 —4000 Oaks Landfill, Laytonsville. MB49:37

February 21, 1992 —8000 Oaks Landfill, Laytonsville. MB48:70

February 28 1954 —1000 at Seneca. S&R

March 20, 1970 —11,400 Southern Montgomery County. AN25:138

Modern Spring Migration High Counts

February 17, 2020—2530 Violette's Lock. eBird

February 28, 2021 —2800 Patton Turf. eBird

March 15, 2016 —3000 Violette's Lock. eBird

American Herring Gull

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor from mid August to mid May. More common county-wide when the Oaks and Rockville Landfills were in operation.

Notable records:

Early Fall

August 11, 2001 Violette's Lock. eBird

Historical Winter High Counts Oaks Landfill

early November, 1991 —5000 Oaks Landfill. MB48:20

January 15, 1991 —7000 Oaks Landfill. MB47:44

January 16, 1993 —6000 Oaks Landfill. MB49:37

Modern Winter High Counts

December 14, 2014 —104 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

February 28, 2021 —100 Patton Turf (spring migrants) eBird photo

Late Spring

May 27, 1991 Violette's Lock. MB47:119

June 6, 2012 Violette's Lock. eBird

June 19, 2011 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Yellow-legged Gull (Retained on this list pending review by MD/DCRC)

Casual winter vagrant. One adult bird (probably subspecies *atlantis* but subspecies *micahellis* not ruled out) returning to Montgomery and Washington DC for multiple years. This bird was the first U.S. record, following records in Quebec (specimen) and Newfoundland.

One expert has recently proposed that this bird was a hybrid Herring x Lesser Black-backed Gull. The many expert observers at the time considered this possibility first but all concluded that it could not be that hybrid. This was supported by expert opinion for Europe.

All Montgomery records:

January 1 - March 16, 1991 Oaks Landfill/Rt 108 pond. MD/DCRC, eBird, MB47:44,119

January 25 - February 18, 1992 Oaks Landfill/Rt 108 pond. MB48:70

January 9 - March 6, 1993 Oaks Landfill/Rt 108 pond. MD/DCRC, eBird photo February 6

Great Black-backed Gull

Rare, formerly uncommon, winter visitor from early November to mid April. Like the other large gulls has become scarcer since the closing of the landfills. Now less than annual in Montgomery. Notable records:

Early Fall

November 3, 1991 Oaks Landfill. eBird

November 24, 1991 Oaks Landfill. eBird

November 29, 2018 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Winter High Counts

December 14, 2014 Eight, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

January 15, 1991 —300 Oaks Landfill. MB47:44

Late Spring

April 7, 1995 Violette's Lock. MB52:86

April 16, 2006 Two, Violette's Lock eBird

Summer straggler

July 5, 2017 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Glaucous Gull

Casual, formerly rare, winter visitor from mid November to mid March. Like the other large gulls has become scarcer since the closing of the landfills. No county records since 1994, but there are regular winter records from elsewhere in the region. Notable records:

Early Fall

November 12, 1980 - winter 1981 Rockville Landfill. Four on different dates. MB37:23,47

Winter High

December 9, 1981 - February 4, 1982 Two, Rockville Landfill. MB38:47

Late Spring

March 7, 1991 Oaks Landfill. eBird photo

March 16-17, 1983 Oaks Landfill. MB39:79

Most recent Montgomery record

December 5-17, 1994 Oaks Landfill. MB52:70

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Rare winter visitor from late September to early May. Like the other large gulls has become scarcer since the closing of the local landfills. Lesser Black-backed Gulls are recent invaders from Europe. The first record for the region was an adult at Washington DC and Hunting Creek, Virginia in the fall of 1978. They became uncommon but regular visitors in the next two decades, but are less frequent since the landfills closed. Notable records:

First record for Montgomery?

March 20 - April 3, 1980 Two adults. Rockville Landfill. MB36:125

Early Fall

September 29, 1990 Oaks Landfill. MB47:18
September 29, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird photo
October 17, 2001 Carderock. eBird
October 29, 2001 Violette's Lock. eBird

Winter High Counts

January 16, 1993 Eleven, Oaks Landfill. MB49:38
February 28, 2021 Three, Patton Turf and Whites Ferry. eBird photo
March 4, 2024 Five, Patton Turf. eBird photo

Late Spring

April 29, 1992 Violette's Lock. MB48:93
April 30, 2020 Patton Turf. eBird photo
May 9, 1992 Oaks Landfill. MB48:93

California Gull

Casual vagrant. All records found:

January 12, 1995 Laytonsville Landfill. MD/DCRC, MB54:11
January 23, 1993 Laytonsville Landfill. MD/DCRC, MB49:37

Iceland Gull

Casual, formerly rare, winter visitor, from mid November to mid March. Seen much less frequently since the Oaks and Rockville Landfills closed. They were regular at the Oaks Landfill for many years, with several records each winter. Most birds are subspecies or form *kumlieni*, a few are intermediate, and even fewer are subspecies *thayeri*.

Historical Notable Records:

Early Fall

November 17, 1981 Gude Landfill. MB36:125

Winter High

December 18, 1993 Two, Oaks Landfill. MB51:86
January 18, 1982 Two, Rockville Landfill. MB38:47
January 20, 1993 Three, Oaks Landfill. MB49:37
February 5, 1982 Three, Rockville Landfill. MB38:47

Late Spring

March 3, 1982 Rockville Landfill. MB38:100
April 3, 1980 Rockville Landfill. MB36:125

Recent, all records found

November 23, 2017 Violette's Lock eBird photo
November 30 - December 1, 2021 Violette's Lock. eBird photo
December 13, 2005 Little Seneca Res. eBird photo
December 14, 2014 Violette's Lock eBird photo
February 2, 2006 Violette's Lock eBird photo
February 26, 2018 Patton Turf. eBird photo
March 10, 2013 Violette's Lock eBird photo

Black Skimmer

Casual vagrant, one record. There are several records on the Potomac River, from Hunting Creek VA and Washington DC, that are NOT storm related. The only Montgomery record was after Hurricane Sandy:

October 30, 2012 Immature, Violette's Lock. Hurricane Sandy. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Sooty Tern

Casual vagrant, seen only after hurricanes pass nearby. They appear only when the storm track/wind direction/rain conditions are perfect. They are not seen after most hurricanes. All records:

September 2, 2006 Violette's Lock. **Eight**. Hurricane Ernesto. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

September 2, 2006 Lake Needwood. Hurricane Ernesto. MD/DCRC

September 6, 1996 Little Seneca Reservoir. Two, adult and juvenile, on the leading edge of Hurricane Fran. MD/DCRC, eBird

September 6, 2008 Violette's Lock. Hurricane Hanna. eBird

Least Tern

Causal visitor from mid May to late August. Three of the records were of birds wandering up the Potomac, not storm related. They breed, or are at least nearly annual, on the tidal Potomac and/or Anacostia Rivers. All records found:

May 18, 2011 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

June 28, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

July 2, 2020 Two at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

August 13, 1955 Four near Unity after Hurricane Connie. S&R, MB12:26

August 28, 2011 Violette's Lock. Hurricane Irene. MD/DCRC, eBird

Gull-billed Tern

Casual vagrant. One record, of a bird presumably wandering inland from the Chesapeake Bay, on a calm sunny day, not storm related.

August 27, 2014 Flying downriver at Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Caspian Tern

Uncommon migrant and summer visitor from late March to early October. A few post breeding or non-breeding adults pass through regularly in June. Sometimes they loiter for days or weeks. Migrating adults, with begging juveniles in tow, arrive in August. You might see one any day of the summer, but they do not breed here. Almost all are along the Potomac or on the larger lakes. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 30, 2018 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

March 31, 2009 Four at Violette's Lock. eBird

Spring High Count

April 18, 1998 —21 Violette's Lock. eBird

Fall High Count

September 3, 2020 Ten at Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Fall

October 8, 2012 Two at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

October 9, 2019 Potomac River off Algonkian Park. eBird photo

October 30, 1938 Plummer's Island. S&R

Black Tern

Rare spring migrant from late April to mid June. Uncommon fall migrant from late July to late September. Most are along the Potomac River, but they also turn up on lakes and ponds. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 24, 1989 Seneca. MB45:109

April 30, 1989 Five, Violette's Lock. MB45:109

May 5, 1997 Three, Violette's Lock. eBird

May 5, 2017 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 12, 1952 S&R

June 12, 2020 Adult at Violette's Lock. eBird
June 22, 1958 Triadelphia Res. MB14:77
June 23, 1992 Two, Hughes Hollow. MB48:127

Early Fall

July 26, 2009 Violette's Lock. eBird

Fall High Counts

August 1, 2004 —35 Violette's Lock. MB61:65
August 20, 2022 —42 between Violette's Lock and Algonkian. eBird photo
August 21, 2009 —86 Violette's Lock. eBird photo
August 25, 2011 —44 Violette's Lock. eBird
September 6, 1996 —20 Little Seneca Reservoir. Hurricane Fran. eBird

Late Fall

September 21, 1958 Seneca. MB14:99
October 10, 2010 Blue Mash. eBird photo

Forster's Tern

Uncommon spring migrant, peaking in April. Uncommon fall migrant from early July to early October. Like Caspian and Common Terns, non-breeding or post breeding Forster's might appear any day of the summer. Forster's Terns show up roughly twice as often as Common Terns. Large flocks of twenty or more are almost always Common Terns. Listed as "casual in the Piedmont section" by S&R (1958). Now known to be a regular spring and fall migrant, and post breeding visitor, along the Potomac River. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 5, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird photo
April 6, 2022 Violette's Lock. eBird
April 12, 1995 Little Falls. MB52:87

Spring High Count

April 26, 2020 —17 at Riley's Lock. eBird photo

Summer High Count

July 12, 2013 —15 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo
August 1, 2004 —21 at Violette's Lock. MB61:64

Late Fall

October 12, 2019 Seven at Riley's Lock. eBird photo
October 26, 1957 Nine at Seneca. AN13:62
November 15, 2007 Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

Arctic Tern

Casual migrant, with five records from the Potomac River. Presumed to be a rare but regular overland migrant in North America, with individuals rarely stopping en route. Can be very difficult to distinguish from Common Terns. All records:

May 9, 2013 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

May 18, 1999 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

May 21, 2012 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

June 29-30, 2010 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

October 30 2012 Violette's Lock. Hurricane Sandy. **Not photographed.** eBird

Common Tern

Rare spring and fall migrant from mid April to early October, with a slight peak in May and September. A few records into mid November. Like Caspian and Forster's Terns, non-breeding or post breeding Common Terns might appear on any day from June through August. Happens only a few times in any given year. Most days you will see none. Most are along the Potomac River, but they also turn up on lakes and ponds. Notable records:

Spring

April 11, 2021 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

April 12, 1963 —100, flying upriver at Seneca. MB19:75

May 6, 2020 —39 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

"Summer" High Count

June 19, 2021 —11 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

August 20, 2021 —30 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High Count

September 24, 2018 —44 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 30, 2012 Two after Hurricane Sandy, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

November 5, 1992 Riley's Lock. eBird

November 17, 1951 Violette's Lock. AN7:143

Royal Tern

Casual vagrant. At least three of the four records were related to hurricane remnants.

August 25, 1998 Great Falls. MB55:98

August 28, 2011 Violette's Lock. Hurricane Irene. MD/DCRC, eBird photo
September 2, 2006 Violette's Lock. Hurricane Ernesto. eBird photo
September 18, 2004 Two flying downriver at Violette's Lock. Hurricane Ivan.
MB61:64

Grebes

Pied-billed Grebe

Common migrant and winter visitor from early August to mid April. Rare summer resident, breeding proven only at Hughes Hollow. The numbers seen on the Potomac and the larger lakes in spring and late summer are all migrants unless proven otherwise. Pied-billed Grebes did not breed in the county historically. Notable records:

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: "discovered on territory in Seneca-CW an adult was later found with chicks on its back (P. DuMont). This species is a rare summer resident in the Maryland Piedmont. This is the first nesting record for the Piedmont." MB34:9

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: None breeding.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: None breeding.

Recent Breeding

May 14-29, 2016 Adult with chick, Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

June 23, 2018 Adult with five chicks, Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

June 23, 2021 Chick, Hughes Hollow. eBird

Fall High Counts

October 2, 2016 —54 at Violette's Lock. eBird

October 4, 1988 —48 at Violette's Lock. MB45:19

Spring High Counts

March 22, 2000 —42 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Horned Grebe

Uncommon fall migrant and winter visitor, from mid October. Common spring migrant from late February through late April. A few linger into June, and one bird summered through to October. Normally only singles or small parties are seen. Fallouts of large flocks occur during rainy or icy conditions. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 4, 1988 MB45:19

October 18, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High Counts

November 23, 2011 —95 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Winter High Counts

January 10, 2014 —43 at Little Seneca Res. Ice storm fallout. eBird

Spring High Counts

March 31, 1997 —110 at Violette's Lock. Rain fallout. eBird

April 18, 2020 —80 at Violette's Lock. Rain fallout. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 5, 1982 Hughes Hollow. MB38:135

Summering

May 26 - October 5, 2012 Bird in breeding plumage, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Red-necked Grebe

Casual fall migrant with very few records. Rare to uncommon in spring.

Red-necked Grebe is quite rare most years. During a few harsh winters large numbers suddenly appear in February or March, probably related to freeze-up on the Great Lakes. At least in some years they are retreating southwards and are not spring migrants in the usual sense. Some of these birds then linger into late spring or even early summer. Recent "invasion" years when Red-necked Grebes were suddenly widespread were 1994, 2003, and 2014. Stewart and Robbins (1958) gave the highest count for anywhere in the state as eight at Ocean City, December 27, 1955. The recent years with much higher counts are apparently a new phenomenon. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 26, 2014 Five, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

October 27, 1999 Little Seneca Res. MB56:51

October 27, 2022 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

November 26 - December 1, 2023 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Winter High Counts

January 3, 1953 Five at Sycamore Island. S&R

"Spring" High Counts

March 19-21, 1948 Five at Seneca. S&R

March 13, 1959 —23 at Triadelphia Res. MB15:66

February 17, 1994 —26 at Seneca. MB51:82

March 2-6, 2003 —116 at Violette's Lock. MB60:17, eBird

March 2, 2003 —25 at Little Seneca Res. eBird

March 9, 2014 —33 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

June 17 - July 13, 2014 One bird lingering at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Eared Grebe

Casual migrant and winter visitor from late November to early May. Early fall records are also possible. All records found:

November 26, 2004 - January 29, 2005 Two, Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

November 29 - December 6, 2023 Rileys Lock. eBird photo

December 18-28, 2010 Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

December 21-22, 2016 Violette's and Riley's Locks. eBird photo

April 5, 1984 Hughes Hollow. MB40:59

April 6, 1994 Seneca. MB51:111

April 10-18, 2006 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 2-4, 1995 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 5, 2016 Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

Western Grebe

Casual vagrant. One record:

November 22, 1959 - January 1, 1960 Triadelphia Reservoir. MB 16:24, 19:5

Loons

Red-throated Loon

Rare fall migrant from late October to late December. Casual winter visitor, with four January and February records. Uncommon spring migrant from early March to late April. A few into May, once in June. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 21, 1983 Two flying over Rockville. MB40:15

Late Fall

December 7, 2008 Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird photo

December 23-24, 2021 Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

December 26, 1987 Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird

Winter, all records found

January 2, 2011 Riley's Lock. eBird

January 27-28, 2015 Two at Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird photo

February 5-7, 2018 Violette's and Riley's Locks. eBird photo

February 28, 2014 Violette's and Riley's Locks. eBird photo

Spring High Count

March 12, 2019 Three at Riley's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

May 17, 1992 Two at Seneca. MB48:81

May 23, 1959 Triadelphia Reservoir. AN14:275

June 10-22, 2018 Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird photo

Pacific Loon

Casual vagrant, two records. A one-year old bird spent the summer of 2002 at Clopper Lake. An adult made a brief fall migration stop at Violette's Lock.

May 29 - October 2, 2002 Clopper Lake. MD/DCRC, eBird photo, MB59:8,13

November 20, 2024 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Common Loon

Uncommon spring migrant from mid March into June. Uncommon fall migrant from late October into January. Rarer visitor in mid winter, often absent. One-year old birds in non-breeding plumage turn up rarely but regularly June through September, sometimes lingering for weeks, and blurring the spring departure date and fall arrival date for migrants. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 19, 1958 MB14:98

September 26-29, 2015 Violette's and Riley's Locks. eBird photo

September 29, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High Count

November 12, 2009 —18 Triadelphia Res. eBird

Spring High Counts

April 7, 2017 —73 Violette's Lock. Grounded by storm. eBird photo

April 21 1981 —31 flyovers, Upper Watts Branch. eBird

Summer visitor

June 30, 2010 Violette's Lock. eBird

July 11-21, 2002 Clopper Lake. eBird

July 28 - September 6, 2013 Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird

August 4-16, 2016 Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird

Storks

Wood Stork

Casual vagrant. Two records.

June 20, 2018 Poolesville. Complete range of dates unknown. Photo. MD/DCRC

August 25 - September 21, 2021 Pennyfield. eBird photo

Anhinga

Anhinga

Casual but increasing spring vagrant from April through May. Once in late summer. All records found:

April 8 - May 15, 2022 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

April 16 - May 18, Hughes Hollow. eBird photos

April 20-22, 2022 Lake Needwood. eBird photo

April 21, 2023 Sycamore Id. eBird

April 24 - May 15, 2022 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

April 30, 1994 Great Falls. MD/DCRC, MB51:112

May 3, 1980 C&O Canal. MB36:109

May 14, 2023 Violette's Lock. eBird

May 15, 2018 Darnestown Rd ponds. eBird photo

May 23, 2020 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

July 28 - August 28, 2020 Lakeforest Mall and Lake Whetstone. eBird photo

Cormorants

Great Cormorant

Casual vagrant with at least two records. Great Cormorants are rare but regular on the tidal Potomac in Washington, DC. All records found:

April 22, 1994 Little Seneca Reservoir. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

September 26, 1989 Sycamore Landing. MD/DCRC, MB46:6

Double-crested Cormorant

Common migrant and summer resident from early March to late November. The peak of spring migration is in April. Uncommon to rare winter visitor.

Historically Double-crested Cormorants did not breed in Maryland and were rare migrants on the piedmont. They first bred in Maryland, in Chesapeake Bay, in 1991. The first reported breeding in Montgomery was of a pair building a nest June 13, 1997, on an island in the Potomac opposite Turkey Run (MB54:77). On April 27, 1998 a nest was observed at Watkins Island (MB54:71). By 2010 there was a large colony on Conn Island, above Great Falls. They seems to be still increasing as migrants.

High counts

April 1, 2020 —450 Potomac River at Glen Echo. eBird.

June 25, 2021 —240 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

November 5, 2017 —170 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Neotropic Cormorant

Casual Vagrant. Six records from the Potomac River. The 2005 bird was the first record for Maryland and the first record east of the Appalachians. There are now many records for the east coast. Records arranged by year:

2005, August 12 - November 2 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

2009, June 17 - July 7 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

2011, May 18 Violette's Lock. eBird

2014, July 22 - September 9 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

2015, May 9 - August 23 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

2021, August 28 - September 18 Upstream from Rileys. eBird photo

Ibises, Spoonbills

White Ibis

Rare summer visitor, from mid June to mid September, not present every year.

All records are of wandering immatures. Does not breed in Montgomery. Notable records:

Early Fall

June 15, 1972 **Five**, Hughes Hollow. MB28:112

June 26, 2002 Riley's Lock MB59:9

June 30, 2017 **Four**, crossing river northbound, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

High Counts

July 16 - August 8, 1972 **Three** at Summit hall Turf. MB28:152

July 13, 1980 **Four**, Silver Spring. MB36:142

July 31, 1980 **Three**, Hughes Hollow. eBird

Late Fall

September 11-16, 2016 Two, Browns Bridge. eBird photo

September 12-18, 2004 Blue Mash. eBird

September 18, 2018 Flying Southeast, Violette's Lock. eBird

Glossy Ibis

Rare spring migrant from late March to mid June. Rare fall migrant and/or summer straggler from early August to mid September. There is one early July record. The highest count was an astonishing flock of 57 flying up the Potomac on June 4, 2020. White Ibis is generally rarer and seen in fewer years than Glossy, but there are actually more September records of White Ibis. White-faced Ibis is a rare spring visitor to the mid Atlantic coast. There is one record west of Chesapeake Bay, at Huntley Meadows, in April. There are two records from central Pennsylvania, in March and in May. Glossy Ibises should be looked at very carefully, especially in spring. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 29 - April 9, 1971 Two to four, Hughes Hollow. MB27:143

March 31, 1968 MB24:74

Spring High

April 23, 1967 —20 at Germantown. MB23:75

May 21, 1971 —17 at Sycamore Landing. MB27:143

Late Spring to Early Summer

June 3, 1962 Cedar Grove. MB18:24

June 19, 2020 Three, Violette's Lock. eBird

High Counts

June 4, 2020 —57 flying up the Potomac, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

July 1, 2019 —21 flying up the Potomac, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Fall

September 3-6, 2017 Blue Mash. eBird photo

September 12, 2010 Nine flying downriver, Violette's Lock eBird photo

Roseate Spoonbill

Casual vagrant. Five or six recent records:

August 14-15, 2018 Pennyfield. MD/DCRC, eBird photo
July 19, 2021 Violette's Lock. Also on Loudoun shore. eBird photo
July 19, 2021 Sligo Creek Golf. Possibly same as Violette's bird. eBird photo
July 26, 2021 Violette's Lock, different bird than July 19. eBird photo
August 2, 2021 Lake Frank. photo To MD/DCRC
July 12 - October 9, 2023 Potomac River between Violette's Lock and Sugarland Run. Also on Lowe's Id Golf Course in Virginia. eBird photo

Bitterns, Herons, Egrets

American Bittern

Uncommon spring migrant from early March to late May. Casual in summer at Hughes Hollow, a few records, but breeding apparently never proven. Rare fall migrant from late September to early November. Casual winter visitor or lingerer, four records. Notable records:

Early Fall

August 31, 2023 Night flyover, Sycamore Landing
September 20, 2020 Hughes Hollow. eBird
September 22, 2016. Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

Late Fall

November 2, 2008 Hughes Hollow. eBird
December 7, 1952 Pennyfield. S&R

Winter, all records found

December 30, 2012 - January 11, 2013 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo
January 13, 1983 Hughes Hollow. eBird
February 8, 1986 Hughes Hollow. eBird
February 10, 2018 Oaks Landfill. eBird photo

Spring High Counts

April 16, 2013 Eight at Hughes Hollow. eBird
April 22, 1989 Six at Hughes Hollow. MB45:96

Summer, all records found

June 1-23, 2020 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo
June 7- July 5, 2019 Hughes Hollow. eBird
July 23, 2010 Hughes Hollow. eBird
July 11, 2021 Riley's Lock. eBird
August 4, 1963 Hughes Hollow. eBird

August 14, 1993 Two at Hughes Hollow. MB51:65

Least Bittern

Uncommon summer resident at Hughes Hollow from early April to mid August. Least Bitterns have not been found breeding anywhere else in the county. There are very few records of migrants. Most records in eBird, away from Hughes Hollow, have no description, or obviously describe immature Green Herons. Reports of birds from runoff ponds that have zero aquatic vegetation, just bare mud, are not believable. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 3, 1995 Hughes Hollow. MB52:82

April 19, 2023 Hughes Hollow. eBird audio

April 23, 1949 Seneca. MB5:30

May 26, 2019 Three, night migrant flyovers, Layhill. eBird

Summer

June 1968 Five nests at Hughes Hollow. All unsuccessful. MB25:48

June 8, 2001 Three at Hughes Hollow. MB58:31,44

August 6, 2020 Wheaton Branch Stormwater Ponds. Migrant or post-breeding wanderer? eBird

Late Fall

September 4, 2022 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

September 15, 2022 Night flyover Sycamore Landing. eBird audio

September 25, 1954 S&R

November 7, 1954 Seneca. S&R, AN10:153

Yellow-crowned Night Heron

Uncommon summer resident from mid March to early October. Only a handful breeding birds are involved. Pairs often nest in isolation, not at a rookery with other herons. Current sites are Hughes Hollow and Sycamore Landing, Sligo Creek, Lake Whetstone, Grosvenor Ponds, and Hurst St Bethesda. The “recently fledged juvenile” photographed in April at Blue Mash was actually a one-year old bird and does not indicate nesting at that site. Notable records:

Historical

S&R (1958) “A small colony, comprising 7 nests in 1939, 5 nests in 1940, 2 nests in 1946, and 3 nests in 1953, is located in Montgomery County near the junction of Seneca Creek and the Potomac River.”

Early Spring

March 11, 2016 Two, Sligo Creek. eBird photo

March 16, 2013 Cedar Lane. eBird

High Counts

March 28, 2002 Seven, and two nests, Sligo Creek. MB59:28

June 24, 2014 Eight, two nests, seven immatures, Sligo Creek. eBird

Late Fall

October 25, 2019 Adult at Grosvenor Place. eBird

October 30, 2022 Adult at Grosvenor Place. eBird

Black-crowned Night Heron

Uncommon summer resident from early March to late October. Casual winter visitor or lingerer. Regularly winters in numbers in Washington DC. Historically Black-crowned Nigh-Herons were not known to breed in Montgomery, but they have a long history of breeding in Washington DC. The Lake Whetstone Rookery has greatly increased in size in recent years. Notable records:

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: None.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed breeding at Riley's Lock and at Lake Whetstone.

Summer High Count

April 12, 2021 —86 at Lake Whetstone Rookery. eBird photo

Winter

December 27, 2020 - January 31, 2021 Lake Whetstone. eBird photo

January 9, 2013 Sycamore Landing. eBird

January 19, 2021 Watkins Ponds. eBird

Little Blue Heron

Rare spring migrant or overshoot from mid April to early June. Uncommon summer visitor, post breeding birds, from early July to early October. Once in November. Little Blue Herons are generally a bit more likely than Snowy Egrets. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 13, 1990 Hughes Hollow. eBird

April 14-22, 2018 Green Hills Wetland. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 4-6, 2011 Hughes Hollow. eBird

June 16, 2009 Adult at Hughes Hollow. eBird

Early Fall

July 2, 2017 Immature at Violette's Lock. eBird

High counts

July 13, 2021 Seven, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

July 24, 2010 Nine, Hughes Hollow. eBird

Late Fall

October 9, 1955 Seneca. AN11:137

November 5, 1988 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Tricolored Heron

Casual spring overshoot, from late April to late May. Rare summer visitor from late July to early September. All records found:

April 25, 1996 Flyover, Sycamore Landing Rd. eBird

April 25-29, 2023 Great Falls. eBird photo

May 8, 1972 Blockhouse Point. MB28:109

May 28, 2021 Violette's Lock flyby. eBird photo

July 26, 2009 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

July 28 - August 4, 2013 Pennyfield. eBird photo

July 28 - August 9, 2024 Sharp Shin to Van Deventer Islands. eBird photo

August 1, 1970 Sycamore Landing. MB26:117

August 5, 2013 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

August 6, 1974 Lake Needwood. AN30:78

August 21, 2000 Violette's Lock. eBird

August 28, 1987 Dickerson. MB44:9

September 2, 2004 Potomac River at Lock 10. eBird

Snowy Egret

Rare spring migrant or overshoot from mid April to early June. Uncommon summer visitor, post breeding birds moving north, from late July to late September. Generally scarcer than Little Blue Heron. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 10-12, 2016 Violette's and Riley's Locks. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 3, 2016 Two at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Early Fall

July 9, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

July 21, 2010 Violette's Lock. eBird

High Count

August 14, 1980 Four at Hughes Hollow. eBird

Late Fall

September 23 - October 17, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

September 26, 1965 Seneca. MB21:113

October 5-17, 2019 Riley's and Violette's Locks. eBird photo

Green Heron

Common summer resident from early April to late October. A few into early winter. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 20, 2024 Night Flight Call, Darnestown. eBird audio

April 2-4, 2022 Bentley Park stormwater ponds. eBird photo

April 4, 1999 Hughes Hollow. MB56:35

High Count

August 31, 2022 —97 coming from roost, Hughes Hollow. eBird

Early Winter

December 6-26, 2014 Riley's Lock. eBird photo

January 2, 1966 Seneca. NAB20:179

Western Cattle-Egret

Rare spring migrant or overshoot, from mid April to late May. Once in March.

Casual and erratic summer visitor and fall migrant, from June to early

November, with only a few records for each month. Thirty to fifty years ago

Cattle Egrets were more common in Maryland and were more likely to turn up in the Washington DC area, in flocks, in April and May. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 20, 1971 Summit Hall. MB27:75

April 12, 1962 Seven, Wheaton. MB18:76

April 13, 2020 Two at Patton Turf. eBird photo

Spring High Count

May 22, 1985 —25 at Rockville. MB41:59

Late Spring

June 13, 1989 Hughes Hollow. MB45:139

June 29, 2008 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Early Fall

July 18, 1974 Lake Needwood. AN30:78

July 21-26, 2007 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Fall High Count

October 30, 2021 Nine, Summit Hall turf. eBird photo

Late Fall

November 1, 1981 Near Comus. MB38:18

November 6-9, 2021 Three, Rt 118 near Rt 28. eBird

Great Egret

Common migrant and summer resident, from mid March to late November.

Additional post breeding wanderers from the south turn up in summer. A few linger into early winter. Great Egrets historically did not breed in Montgomery.

In 2017 and 2018 a colony of about 20 nests was on Harrison Island, just below White's Ferry. In 2021 one nest was on Conn Island at Great Falls. It seems likely that there are other nest sites along the Potomac, given the numbers of birds that are present in early summer. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 11-12, 2013 Hughes Hollow. eBird

March 18, 2017 White's Ferry eBird

March 19 2018 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

High Counts

April 28, 2018 —25 with 19 nests, White's Ferry. eBird

June 5, 2024 —26 feeding at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

July 2, 2017 —29 with 20 nests, White's Ferry. eBird

July 24, 2021 —65 at Violette's Lock. eBird

August 9, 2022 —99 roosting on Sharpshin Island. eBird

August 16, 2010 —75 at Hughes Hollow. eBird

Early Winter

January 8, 1974 Two at Hughes Hollow. AN29:173

December 4, 2012 - January 13, 2013 Violette's Lock and Pennyfield. eBird photo

Great Blue Heron

Common year-round resident, more in migration. Historically Great Blue Herons did not breed in Montgomery County. They were not found during the first or

second Atlases. In April 1998 thirty nests were observed at Watkins Island, Potomac River, and twelve nests at Lake Whetstone (MB54:71). Since then there have been other rookeries along the Potomac, and there is a very large rookery at Conn Island, Great Falls.

High Count

June 10, 2012 —75 at Great Falls. eBird photo

Pelicans

American White Pelican

Casual vagrant. Three records:

March 1, 1998 Violette's Lock. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

April 24, 2024 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

August 10, 1999 Great Falls. MB56:51

Brown Pelican

Casual vagrant. Two records:

August 27-28, 2019 Edward's Ferry and Violette's Lock. eBird photo

September 26, 1965 One mile downriver from Edward's Ferry. MB22:108

New World Vultures

Black Vulture

Common year-round resident. More pass through in migration. With no major hawk watching sites in the county it is difficult to determine migration dates.

Black Vultures were historically rare in Maryland and greatly increased in the 20th century. Notable records:

Historical

Cooke 1929 "Casual visitant from southern Maryland." Lists only ten records for the Washington DC region.

S&R 1958 "Alexander Wetmore states that this species was rare in Maryland until about 30 years ago."

High Counts

February 11, 1945 —100 at Plummers Island. S&R

February 19, 2019 —50 probably migrating, Violette's Lock. eBird

March 28, 1948 —75 at Carderock. S&R

April 12, 1992 —45 at dead cow, Boyds. MB48:89

October 13, 2007 —170 at Riley's Lock. eBird

December 15, 1988 —82 at Brinklow roost. MB45:71

Turkey Vulture

Common year-round resident. More pass through in migration. With no major hawk watching sites in the county it is difficult to determine migration dates.

High Count

December 1, 1987 —100 migrating, Germantown. MB 44:60

Osprey

Osprey

Common migrant and uncommon breeder (Only a few pairs? Not every year?) from early March until mid November. A few linger into early winter, rarely an early migrant will arrive in late January or February, so has been seen in every month of the year. Ospreys historically did not breed in Montgomery County (S&R 1958). The 1984 nest at Conn Island may have been the first. Ospreys are seen all summer along the Potomac, but apparently there are no recent reports of nests on the river. They may be using cell towers away from the river in nearby Virginia and in Montgomery to nest. Notable records:

Early Spring

January 25, 1997 Old Angler's Inn. MB54:29

January 31, 1998 Hughes Hollow. eBird, MB55:15

February 1, 1918 Plummer's Island S&R

Breeding

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in one block, Conn Island.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Not breeding.

June 1984 Conn Island, successful nest. MB40:96

June 1993 Triadelphia Res, successful nest. MB51:23

April 15, 2013 Building nest in tower, River Rd east of Hughes. eBird

May 28, 2018 Occupied nest, Sterling VA. 1.7 miles from the river. eBird

April 11, 2020 Building nest in tower, Redgate Park. eBird

Late Fall

December 8, 1995 Ruppert's Island. MB53:33

December 13, 2011 Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird

December 20, 1952 S&R

Kites, Eagles, Hawks

Swallow-tailed Kite

Casual migrant, most in April and May. All records with details:

April 28, 2021 Berryville Rd. eBird

May 12, 2023 Two, Rockville. eBird

May 14, 1993 Seneca Creek SP near Clopper Rd. MD/DCRC

May 16, 1998 Hughes Hollow. MD/DCRC

May 17, 2019 Wheaton Regional Park. eBird photo

May 29, 2017 Blue Mash. eBird photo

August 3, 1895 Specimen. S&R

September 4-5, 2009 Hughes Hollow and Hughes Rd. eBird photo

Golden Eagle

Casual spring migrant, from early March to early April. Rare fall migrant from early October to mid December. At least two winter records. Almost all are birds passing through, not stopping. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 1, 2023 Moyer Rd Park, Damascus. eBird

October 16, 2010 Flyover, Violette's Lock. eBird

Fall photos

October 30, 2022 Hughes Hollow. **eBird photo**

November 8-9, 1991 Laytonsville. MB48:16, **eBird photo**

November 12, 2021 Homestead Farm. **eBird photo**

Late Fall

December 8, 1887 Two, one specimen, Gaithersburg. Cooke 1929

December 12, 1995 Chevy Chase. MB53:33

December 13, 1990 Flyover, Glen Echo. MB47:42

December 19, 1999 Near Dawsonville. MB57:23

Winter, all records found

January 2, 2016 Little Seneca Res. eBird

February 5, 1950 Triadelphia. AN5:185

Spring, all records found

March 9, 2003 Hughes Hollow. eBird

March 25, 2018 Violette's Lock. eBird
April 1, 2013 Flyover, Pennyfield. eBird
April 3, 2012 Flyover, Blue Mash. eBird
April 7, 2019 Flyover, Hughes Hollow. eBird
April 7, 2024 Moyer Rd Park Damascus. eBird
May 13, 2024 eBird

Sharp-shinned Hawk

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor, from late August to late May. There is a noticeable peak in October. Sharp-shinned Hawks historically bred in the area: "rare, (formerly more numerous) in the Piedmont section" (S&R 1958) There is a 1891 nest record for Montgomery. Thought to have bred in 1971: "This species has nested in the county in previous years; however, only one bird was observed (Germantown quadrangle)" MB27:133 There are a few reports from June through mid August. There are no convincing photos in eBird for these months from anywhere in the region. Notable records:

Historical

May 31, 1891 Nest with eggs. S&R

Early Fall

August 7, 1995 Ashton. MB53:10

September 16, 2017 Huntmaster Rd. eBird photo

Fall High

September 22, 1951 —89 over Seneca. S&R, AN7:90

October 5, 1981 —36 over Rockville. MB38:20

Late Spring

May 8, 2023 Two at Blue Mash. eBird photo

June 16, 2018 Brookeville. eBird

Cooper's Hawk

Uncommon year-round resident. More in fall migration. Probably nesting in every suburban neighborhood with sufficient trees and bird feeders.

American Goshawk

Casual, formerly rare, migrant and winter visitor, from early October to late April. Northern birds irrupt southwards about once in ten years. (birdsoftheworld.org) Goshawks seem to have greatly declined as a visitor to the

region, with only three Montgomery records since 2000. The majority of the older records were in December and January. Immature birds are difficult to identify.

Notable records, especially of adults:

Early Fall

October 5, 1980 Rockville. MB37:29

October 20, 1971 Immature, Hughes Hollow. MB28:35

October 27, 1972 Pennyfield. AN28:68

Winter

December 15, 1991 Adult, Seneca. MB48:68

December 27 1887 Captured, Sandy Spring. Cooke

January 1, 1896 Specimen, Takoma Park. Cooke

January 9, 1982 Adult, Gude's Nursery, present for some time. AB36:282, eBird

January 30, 1999 Adult, Olney. MB56:30

Late Spring

March 31, 1991 Adult, Ten Mile Creek. eBird photo, MB47:116

March 31, 1991 Adult, near Poolesville. MB47:116

April 26, 1991 Adult, Germantown. MB47:116

21st Century, all records found

October 10-12, 2000 Immature, Bethesda. MB57:54

October 23, 2002 Hughes Hollow. eBird

February 11, 2013 Adult, Hughes Rd. MD/DCRC

Northern Harrier

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor from mid August to late May. A few June records, of birds not (?) breeding. Notable records:

Early Fall

July 31, 2016 Patton Turf. eBird

August 15, 2020 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird

August 26, 2021 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

Winter High

January 25, 1947 —50 plus near Seneca. S&R

March 19, 1972 —20 Poolesville HighSchool. eBird

Late Spring

June 7, 2015 West Offut Rd. eBird

June 18, 2017 Oaks Landfill. eBird

June 22, 2018 Woodfield Rd. eBird

Bald Eagle

Common year-round resident, more in migration. Some birds depart the region: "Another nestling banded in Montgomery County on April 23, 1936, was recovered in northeastern Ohio in August 1936." (S&R)

At least some adult pairs seem to remain within a mile of their nests on the Potomac year round. Some older immatures also seem to hang around the area where fledged for a few years, in the off season roosting with the adults who are their probable parents. Bald Eagles breeding in the county have fluctuated greatly: rare mid 20th century, none in the 1970s, only one nest in the early 1980s, many nests today. Along the Potomac there seems to be an active nest about every three miles. They also nest at Triadelphia Reservoir, Little Seneca Reservoir, Lake Bernard Frank, and at least one location along Seneca Creek. Notable records:

Historical

February 20, 1897 Nest with eggs, Great Falls. Cooke
"rare in the piedmont... definite nest records" S&R (1958)

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: None breeding.

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Only nest was at Great Falls.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed in several blocks.

High Count

December 31, 2016 —21 Triadelphia Res. eBird

Mississippi Kite

Rare but increasing spring migrant, from early May to mid June. Rare summer resident. Casual fall migrant from mid August to mid September. Once in October. Mississippi Kites began showing up in the northeastern US as spring overshoots in the 1980s. The first Montgomery record was in May 1990. Mississippi Kites have now been breeding in northern Virginia for many years. They bred successfully (for the first time?) in Montgomery in 2021. They remain an extremely rare bird after September, with only a handful of records for the entire northeastern US. Notable records, emphasizing photos:

Early Spring

May 2, 2014 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

May 11, 1990 Upper Watts Branch. MD/DCRC, MB46:95

May 16, 2015 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

High Counts

May 6 - June 4, 2023 Daily feeding concentration over the Potomac between Violette's Lock and Algonkian Park. Peaking at **fourteen** May 25-26. eBird photos
May 11, 2024 **Twenty** feeding at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

June 7-24, 2020 Up to **four** at Violette's Lock, mostly over VA. eBird photo

Breeding

June 12-August 25, 2021 Successfully fledged one bird. Rockville. eBird photo

May 5 - August 14, 2022 Successfully fledged one bird. Rockville. eBird photo

August 30 - September 28, 2023 Two adults, two young, late nesting, Rockville.

Adults departed September 22, last juvenile on September 28. eBird photo

May 25 - August, 2024 Unsuccessful. Fledged bird killed by car. Rocville. eBird photo

Late Fall

September 5, 2016 Wheaton Regional Park, eBird photo

October 4, 2020 Wheaton Regional Park, eBird

Broad-winged Hawk

Common migrant. Rare, formerly common, summer resident. Rare before mid April or after mid October. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 15, 1969 Three near Triadelphia. AN24:168

March 28, 1981 Upper Watts Branch. MB37:108

Spring High

April 22, 1975 —1700 Rockville. AN31:32

Breeding

April 23, 1893 Nest with eggs. S&R

July 28-29, 2021 Two, Little Bennett. eBird photo, audio

Fall High

September 22, 1971 —3000 Gaithersburg. MB28:35

September 25, 2016 —2434 Darnestown. eBird

September 20, 2021 —2270 Headed southwest over Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 14, 2018 Green Hills Farm Wetland. eBird photo

November 11, 2015 Violette's Lock. eBird

November 27, 1891 Specimen USNM124751, Sandy Spring. S&R

Red-shouldered Hawk

Common year-round resident, more in migration. At hawk watching sites the migration peaks are in March and November. These movements often not noticeable in the county. Notable records:

Spring High

March 26, 1954 —36 at Bethesda. S&R

Red-tailed Hawk

Common year-round resident. More in migration and winter. At hawk watching sites the migration peaks are in March and November. These movements often not noticeable in the county. Notable records:

Spring High

March 20, 1980 —27 over Rockville. MB36:122

Fall High

November 1, 1980 —14 over Upper Watts Branch. eBird

November 9, 1980 —57 over Rockville. MB37:28

Rough-legged Hawk

Casual migrant and winter visitor. Historically less rare. The southern limit of the winter range is slowly shifting northwards, away from our area. Wintering birds prefer tall grass areas of very large extent, such as the Oaks Landfill or Konterra in PG county. Today there is less of this habitat in the county than there was 30-50 years ago. Corn and soybean fields seem to have little appeal to Rough-legged Hawks. All records found:

Older

October 24, 1954 Wilson Lane. eBird

November 1, 1990 River Rd east of Violette's. eBird

November 5, 1983 Sycamore Landing. eBird

December 17, 1972 **Seven** on the Seneca CBC. (Likely some were on the VA side.)

December 25, 1999 Hughes Hollow. eBird

January 30, 1978 Hughes Hollow. eBird

February 20, 2000 Ashton. MB57:23

March 2, 1968 Three at Poolesville. AN23:155

March 4, 1950 Silver Spring. AN5:227

March 5, 1978 Black Rock Rd and Rt 28. eBird

March 16, 1968 Hughes Hollow. AN23:155

March 17, 1888 Specimen, Sandy Spring. AUK35:351

Recent, by year

February 21, 2010 Oaks Landfill. eBird

January 23-29, 2011 Oaks Landfill. eBird

November 23, 2011 Violette's Lock. eBird

February 15, 2014 Crossing into VA at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

January 31 - March 9, 2015 Oaks Landfill and Blue Mash. eBird photo

February 4-9, 2021 Oaks Landfill and Blue Mash. eBird photo

February 15-16, 2021 Prices Distillery Rd. eBird photo

January 29-31, 2022 Homestead Farm and Patton Turf. eBird photo

Barn Owls

American Barn Owl

Rare, formerly uncommon, year-round resident. May not be present every year. Formerly at least, additional birds wintered at places like Gude's Nursery, in dense pines. Historically they bred in Washington DC and there they fledged young at any time of the year. As in the case of Rough-legged Hawks there is much less of their preferred meadow habitat today. Many of the reports of heard birds are actually the begging calls of young Barred and Great Horned Owls. Migrants pass over the county, detected by calls they give in flight, in locations where they do not nest. Spring Migration dates range from February 27 to April 20.

Notable records by year:

April 11, 1930 Nest with eggs. S&R

Jun 17, 1939 "A nestling banded in Montgomery County ... was recovered on September 7 of the same year just across the Pennsylvania line from Grantsville, Garrett County, Maryland." S&R

Montgomery County Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in three blocks.

January, 1981 Six wintered at Gude's Nursery. MB37:48

April 5-30, 1981 Nest with eggs, later young. Near Davis Airfield. MB37:118

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in two blocks.

June 22 - July 6, 1989 Nest with young, Poolesville. MB45:144

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Probable in one block.

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-23: Confirmed in at least one block.

Typical Owls

Eastern Screech-Owl

Uncommon year-round resident. More are detected, by call, August to October. These are likely young birds dispersing into areas where they don't necessarily breed. They will call in broad daylight.

Snowy Owl

Casual winter visitor. Irruptive and not present in most years. Washington DC has had far more records in recent years than Montgomery County. All documented records found, by year:

November 27, 1949 Near Seneca. MB6:14

December 31, 1949 Brookmont. MB6:14

December 5, 1953 Seneca. AN9:202

December 1960 Near Rockville. MB17:59

February 16, 1963 Seneca. MB19:52

November 8, 1991 Barnesville. MB48:22

December 27, 1991 - January 1, 1992 first in Rockville then in Bethesda. eBird, MB48:70

February 14, 2014 Darnestown. eBird

Great Horned Owl

Uncommon year-round resident. Detected more often, by call, from fall through late winter, when they are breeding. After the Second Maryland Atlas of 2002-06 there was a very sharp decline in calling birds. In some locations Barred Owls moved in to replace them. This decline was possibly due to West Nile Virus. The number of calling Great Horned Owls has increased again in the past few years.

Barred Owl

Common year-round resident.

Long-eared Owl

Casual winter visitor, declining, or at least wintering farther north, no recent records. For several years wintering birds were reliably found in dense stands of pines at Gude's Nursery, which no longer exist. The location is now an office

park. Long-eared Owls historically bred in Montgomery in the 19th century. They also nested near Olney in 1950.

All records found, by year:

Prior to 1874 Nesting near Rockville. S&R

June 1892 Nesting near Brighton. S&R

May 1 - June 1, 1950 Nest with eggs, Olney. S&R

January 1 - February 5, 1978 Two, Gude's Nursery. eBird, MB34:82

January 21 - February 4, 1979 Two, Gude's Nursery. eBird, MB35:59

January 24, 1980 Gude's Nursery. MB36:63

March 21, 1981 Gude's Nursery. MB37:118

November 27, 1981 Near Rockville. MB38:24

February 20 - March 20, 1982 Two, Gude's Nursery. eBird, MB38:101

December 18, 1983 - January 4, 1984 Three, Hughes Hollow. MB40:36

February 2 - March 30, 1991 Little Seneca Res. eBird photo

January 25, 1994 Western Montgomery Co. MB51:87

December 10, 2000 Seneca Creek. eBird

February 24-28, 2002 Five, Gregg Rd roost. eBird

December 14, 2002 - March 22, 2003 Three, Gregg Rd roost. eBird, MB60:25

December 28, 2003 - March 27, 2004 Gregg Rd roost. eBird

January 13, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

Short-eared Owl

Rare winter visitor from mid October to late April. Possibly formerly more common in winter when there was more tall grass meadow habitat available.

May have bred near Poolesville in 1972: "An adult was observed dropping food and performing distraction display in an extensive open agricultural area.

(MB34:18, 28:114) Notable records:

Early Fall

October 19, 2013 Willard Rd. eBird photo

Winter High

January 3, 1971 —11 Poolesville. NAB25:248, MB27:77

January 16, 1974 —11 Poolesville. AN 29:176

Late Spring

April 2, 2008 Two, Blue Mash. eBird

June 7-10, 1972 Lone bird displaying near Poolesville. MB28:114

Northern Saw-whet Owl

Casual, formerly rare, migrant and winter visitor from mid October to early May. Saw-whet Owls have become much harder to find in recent decades. Wintering birds roost in a preferred tree, a dense spruce, cedar or sometimes pine, occasionally in vine covered tangles. Migrant birds resting for a single night might be found in more exposed places. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 17, 1918 Banded, Potomac. MB38:24

October 31, 1980 Two banded, Sandy Spring. MB37:33

Winter High Counts

December 30, 1967 Two, Old River Rd. eBird

January 21, 1979 Four at Gude's Nursery. MB35:59

Late Spring

April 8, 2024 Willard Rd. eBird audio

April 25, 1962 Takoma Park. MB18:79

May 10, 1984 Hughes Hollow. MB40:68

June 14, 1969 Whites Ferry. Injured, died, specimen. MB25:134

Kingfishers

Belted Kingfisher

Common year-round resident, but never seen in large numbers. Very scarce in winter if water bodies freeze over.

Woodpeckers

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Common winter visitor from late September to late April, a few into May.

Notable records:

Early Fall

September 8, 1959 Woodside. MB15:108

High Count

October 10, 1953 —15 near Seneca. S&R

Late Spring

May 24, 1974 Hughes Hollow. AN30:32

May 24, 2019 Darnestown. eBird

Red-headed Woodpecker

Uncommon year-round resident, with large fluctuations in numbers. The years 2018-19, following the die-off of ash trees, saw larger than usual numbers in many places where they normally did not nest. Numbers dropped in subsequent years. When they have a concentrated stand of dead trees, as at the Hughes Hollow impoundments and formerly at Little Seneca Reservoir, they don't travel far and are easily found. At other times they seem to have very large home territories, using scattered dead trees in the forest. They are much less detectable then. There is a noticeable flight, mostly of young birds, in late September. I don't know if these are long distance migrants or birds dispersing locally. I also don't know if there are additional visitors from the north in winter. Notable high counts:

March 29, 2020 —22 at Hughes Hollow. eBird

April 13, 1939 Fifty near Seneca. S&R

November 13, 1955 Fifty from Pennyfield to Seneca. MB12:27

Red-bellied Woodpecker

Common year-round resident.

Downy Woodpecker

Common year-round resident.

Hairy Woodpecker

Common year-round resident, a bit less common than Downy Woodpecker.

Pileated Woodpecker

Common year-round resident.

Northern Flicker

Year-round resident. Common in the winter, even more common in fall migration. Uncommon as a summer breeder. Notable high counts:

January 17, 2011 —57 feeding in one field, River Rd. eBird

April 6, 2020 —111 in one hour, flying north over east Parkhill. eBird

Falcons

American Kestrel

Uncommon year-round resident. More in winter.

Merlin

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor, from mid August to early May. Before the 1980s Merlins were strictly migrants, with no winter records. Now regular in small numbers through the winter. Notable records:

Early Fall

July 27 , 2013 Triadelphia Res. eBird photo

August 11, 2018 Washington Grove Forest. eBird photo

Winter, earliest report

February 21, 1983 Hughes Hollow. MB39:44

Late Spring

May 10, 1997 Violette's Lock. eBird

May 12, 2024 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Gyr Falcon

Casual vagrant, an immature gray morph bird at Violette's Lock in December.

Two wild Gyrfalcons have been trapped and banded near Montgomery County.

One at Short Hill, Loudoun County, November 27, 1991, 25 miles distant. (Photos of that bird at VARCOM.) One on New Design Road, Frederick County MD, February 1994, 15 miles distant. Both were immature gray morph birds.

December 13, 2017 Violette's Lock and Lowe's Island Golf. VARCOM photo

Peregrine Falcon

Rare year-round resident, very uncommon migrant. Peregrine Falcons historically bred in Montgomery. S&R: "during the period 1932-1953 10 occupied nest sites found were in Harford, Montgomery, Frederick, Washington, and Allegany Counties" They were later extirpated from the entire eastern United States. During the Second Maryland Atlas, 2002-2006 reintroduced birds were breeding at the Wilson Bridge in DC and possibly bred at the American Legion Bridge in 2007. Today, adults seen occasionally year round at Violette's and other parts of the county may be roaming far from nest sites in DC or Reston, VA.

Notable records:

Breeding

July 2, 2008 Three fledged young, American Legion Bridge. eBird

Tyrant Flycatchers

Olive-sided Flycatcher

Rare spring migrant, from early May to early June. Uncommon fall migrant from mid August to late September. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 30, 1971 Sycamore Landing. AN26:135

May 6, 2019 Pennyfield. eBird photo

May 9, 2023 Long Branch Stream Valley Park. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 1, 1964 Silver Spring. AN19:245

June 10, 1991 Little Bennett. MB47:143

Early Fall

August 12, 1998 Pennyfield. MB55:99

August 13, 2022 Little Bennett. eBird photo

Fall High

September 5, 1953 Three near Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

September 30, 1950 S&R

October 3, 2018 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

Eastern Wood-Pewee

Common migrant and summer resident from early May to mid October. Rare in April. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 6, 1975 Hughes Hollow. AN31:35

April 9, 1955 Chevy Chase. AN11:34

April 20, 1930 S&R

April 27, 2022 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Fall High

September 5, 1953 —16 near Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

October 14, 2019 Redgate Park. eBird photo

October 21, 1993 Pennyfield. MB51:73

October 21, 2022 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Genus *Empidonax* Flycatchers

Yellow-bellied, Acadian, Alder, Willow, Least Flycatchers

These birds are very hard to identify. The songs are easy, the calls (they are often silent in fall) are more similar but useful. **Alder** and **Willow** cannot usually be identified by plumage. **Yellow-bellied** and **Acadian** are very similar, especially in fall. **Alder** and **Least** can also be surprisingly similar, except for size. **Acadian** and **Willow** are the only species breeding here. **Least** is usually the most common migrant. Some photos of *Empidonax* in eBird are actually of Pewees. Many photos are unidentifiable with certainty. A photo of a bird in poor light or at a bad angle is often worthless, with even experienced birders unable to reach agreement on what species it is. Recordings of songs and calls made with phones are sometimes too faint or of too low quality to be identifiable. The dates I took from eBird are not comprehensive. I picked a few that had good photos, audio, or descriptions.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

Rare spring migrant from early May to early June. Uncommon fall migrant, from mid August to late September. Many reports in eBird are of the always commoner Acadian Flycatcher. Notable records:

Early Spring

May 7, 1949 S&R

Late Spring

June 8, 1987 Singing, Great Falls. MB43:79

Early Fall

August 11, 2024 Gude Trail. eBird photo

August 18, 2020 Wheaton RP. eBird photo

September 1, 1975 Banded, Potomac. MB31:146

September 2, 2021 Violette's Lock eBird photo

Late Fall

October 9, 1974 Banded, Potomac. MB31:39

Acadian Flycatcher

Common migrant and summer resident from late April to late September. Still common, but noticeably fewer breeding birds in the county in the last decade.

Notable records:

Early Spring

April 19, 1958 Two at Pennyfield. AN13:187

High Count

May 9, 1953 Thirty along the C & O canal. S&R

Late Fall

September 25, 2021 Little Bennett. eBird audio

September 28, 2023 Lake Needwood. eBird photo

October 7, 1988 Banded, Potomac. MB45:33

Alder Flycatcher

Uncommon spring migrant, based on singing birds, from mid May to early June. Rare (but probably actually uncommon) fall migrant, from mid August to late September. Only calling birds can be identified with certainty. One possible breeding attempt at Hughes Hollow in 1971. Alder Flycatchers have a pattern of rare breeding attempts on the Maryland piedmont. Notable records:

Spring

May 13-14, 2018 Dry Seneca Creek. eBird audio

May 29-31, 2021 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird audio, photo

June 1, 2008 Singing, Sycamore Landing. eBird

June 2, 2023 Crabbs Branch Stream Park. eBird audio

June 1971, Song, pair on territory, Hughes Hollow. MB34:22

Fall

August 11-12, 2014 Calling, Hughes Hollow. eBird

September 3, 1983 Calling, King Farm. eBird

September 17, 2009 Triadelphia Res. Calling. eBird

September 23, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird audio, photo

September 28, 2020 Cavanaugh Dr. eBird audio

Willow Flycatcher

Uncommon migrant and summer resident, from late April to mid September. Only calling birds can be identified with certainty. Historically Willow Flycatchers did not breed in Montgomery. Became uncommon breeders by the 1970s. Notable records:

Historical

S&R 1958: "Uncommon and local in the piedmont" but not breeding in Montgomery.

Montgomery Co. Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in one block, probable in ten.

Early Spring

April 26, 2020 Singing, Old Bucklodge Ln. eBird

Fall

September 14, 2013 Calling, Wheaton RP. eBird

September 14, 2021 Calling, Moyer Rd Park, Damascus. eBird

October 1, 1990 Rockville. MB47:20

Willow/Alder also called Traill's Flycatcher

Willow and Alder Flycatchers were historically considered one species, called Alder or sometimes Traill's Flycatcher. They were split in 1973. Even birds in the hand are difficult without careful measurements. Here are two extreme dates of birds banded as Traill's:

May 9, 1988 Banded, Potomac. MB44:99

October 8, 1977 Banded. MB34:54

Least Flycatcher

Uncommon spring migrant from late April to late May. Uncommon fall migrant from mid August to early October. Once in January. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 24, 2000 Upper Watts Branch. MB57:35

April 27, 2014 Riley's Lock. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 6, 1953 S&R

June 20, 1992 Singing, Little Bennett. MB48:127

Early Fall

July 27, 1972 Banded, Hughes Hollow. MB28:156

July 27, 1992 Triadelphia Res. eBird

August 10, 2002 Black hill RP MB59(3-4):26

Late Fall

October 5, 1977 Banded. MB34:54

October 12, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

October 17, 2020 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

October 22, 1985 Banded, Potomac. MB43:18

Winter

January 29-30, 2020 C and O Canal at Dickerson. eBird photo

Hammond's/Dusky Flycatcher

An *Empidonax* from the west. A silent bird with a damaged tail, seen briefly and photographed, but not re-found.

October 6, 2019 Woodstock Equestrian Park. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Wintering and western *Empidonax*

Empidonax flycatchers show a pattern of turning up in late November -December, well after normal fall migration. They usually don't survive beyond January. Often they are species from the west. Hammond's, Dusky, and Western have occurred in Maryland. Gray in Delaware. In addition to the Montgomery Least Flycatcher in January, an unidentified *Empidonax* was seen at Riley's Lock on January 8, 1966. (MB22:33) All are exceedingly difficult to identify to species, requiring very good photos and audio recordings.

Eastern Phoebe

Common migrant and summer resident. Uncommon winter visitor, rare or absent during very harsh weather.

Winter High Count

February 28, 1954 —15 at Seneca. S&R

Say's Phoebe

Casual vagrant. One record of a bird present for one day at a horse corral. The first record for Maryland.

September 2, 2007, Hughes Road. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Ash-throated Flycatcher

Casual vagrant, one record for Montgomery. Ash-throated Flycatchers turn up annually on the east coast, usually in November.

January 13-16, 2016 Turkey Foot Rd, Darnestown. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Great Crested Flycatcher

Common migrant and summer resident, from mid April to late September. After October birds are more likely to be Ash-throated than Great Crested Flycatchers.

Notable records:

Early Spring

April 14, 2022 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

April 15, 2024 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

April 17, 2024 Watkins Ponds. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 29, 1952 S&R, AN8:148

November 17, 1973 Hughes Hollow. AN29:129

Western Kingbird

Casual migrant, summer and fall. All records found:

July 1, 1979 Hughes Hollow. MD/DCRC, eBird

September 16, 1991 Rockville. MD/DCRC

September 17, 1972 Near Poolesville. MB28:156

September 27, 1969 Summit Hall Turf. MB 25:135

September 30, 2018 Rachel Carson Park. eBird

November 5, 2001 Layhill Park. MB58:60, eBird

Eastern Kingbird

Common migrant and summer resident, from mid April to late September. Most breeders are gone by September 1. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 9, 2020 Johnson Ponds, Gaithersburg. eBird photo

April 12, 1992 Boyds. MB48:95

Late Fall

October 3, 2019 Bethesda. eBird photo

October 3, 2024 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird photo

October 4, 1976 Ashton. MB33:43

October 5, 1985 Rockville. MB42:18

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher

Casual vagrant. All records found:

May 3, 1997 Blockhouse Point, Potomac River. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

July 3, 1984 (Or July 1) Sycamore Landing. MD/DCRC, MB40:98

Vireos

White-eyed Vireo

Common migrant and summer resident, early April to mid October. A few records of over-wintering birds. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 3, 1994 Near Hughes Hollow. MB51:119

April 5-7, 2024 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 19, 1993 Banded, Potomac. MB51:75

November 8, 2021 Riley's Lock. eBird photo

November 11, 2004 Glen Echo. eBird

November 13-27, 2005 River Rd. eBird

Winter

January 5, 1983 Upper Watts Branch. MB39:45, eBird

February 1 - March 8, 2020 Howard Chapel Rd. eBird photo

Yellow-throated Vireo

Common migrant and summer resident from mid April to early October.

Breeding birds sing into late September. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 8, 1989 Elm Id. MB45:112

April 14, 2022 Hughes Hollow. eBird audio

Late Fall

October 13, 2021 Brookside Gardens. eBird photo

Blue-headed Vireo

Common migrant from late March to mid May and from mid September to mid November. Hardier than the other Vireos, one January record. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 27, 2020 Wheaton RP. eBird

March 29, 2020 River Rd. eBird

Late Spring

May 12, 2021 Kensington. eBird photo

May 19, 2022 Hughes Hollow. eBird audio

Summer straggler

June 28, 1988 Seen singing, Ednor Recreation Center. MB44:129

Early Fall

August 19, 2023 Little Bennett RP. eBird

August 25, 2013 Wheaton RP. eBird

August 25, 2013 Damascus. eBird

September 2, 1951 Pennyfield. S&R

Late Fall

November 3, 2021 Croyden Creek Nature Center. eBird photo

November 15, 2019 Sherwood Forest. eBird

November 24-28, 2020 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Winter

January 3, 1973 Pennyfield. AN28:127

Philadelphia Vireo

Rare spring migrant in May, uncommon fall migrant from early September to early October. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 25, 1970 Hughes Hollow. AN25:140

Late Spring

May 23, 1987 Lake Needwood. eBird

May 26, 1973 Violette's Lock. AN28:176

June 6, 1971 Carderock AN26:179

Early Fall

August 19, 1979 Upper Watts Branch. eBird

August 25, 1951 S&R

Fall High Count

September 16, 1928 Four at Chevy Chase. S&R

Late Fall

October 6, 2017 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

October 6, 2018 Lake Frank. eBird photo

October 23, 1977 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB34:59

October 23, 1988 Rockville. MB45:36

November 9, 1969 Bethesda. MB26:27

Warbling Vireo

Common migrant and summer resident from mid April to late September.

Breeding Warbling Vireos show a strong preference for forest along the Potomac River and along streams. Breeding birds sing into late September. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 16, 2024 Violette's Lock. eBird audio

April 16, 2024 Lake Churchill/Black Hill RP. eBird audio

April 17, 2024 Violette's Lock (different bird). eBird photo, audio

April 18, 1995 Little Falls MB52:89

Spring High Count

May 12, 1956 Nine near Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

October 2, 2019 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

October 18, 2017 Wheaton RP. eBird

Red-eyed Vireo

Common migrant and summer resident from mid April to late October. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 16, 2012 Cabin John.

April 17, 1994 Chevy Chase. eBird

Spring High Count

May 9, 1953 —195 in Montgomery Co. S&R

Late Fall

November 9, 2023 Halbert Hook Rd. eBird photo

November 11, 1888 Specimen. S&R

November 14, 1994 Pennyfield. MB52:63

Shrikes

Loggerhead Shrike

Casual vagrant, with no recent records. Loggerhead Shrikes were historically uncommon to rare summer residents, winter visitors, and migrants, on the Maryland piedmont. (S&R 1958) They were still breeding in western Montgomery 1971-73. They were still regularly found on regional Christmas counts until the early 1980s. They were present in summer at Lilipons in Frederick Co until 2000. There is a recent record of a migrant in DC, October 5-6, 2018. Until recent decades they were the "expected" winter Shrike, more likely than Northern Shrike. The reverse is true today.

Historical notable records:

May 4, 1924 Nest with eggs. S&R
June 29, 1931 Nest with young. S&R
January 1, 1955 Six. Triadelphia Reservoir area of Howard and Montgomery. S&R

Modern, since 1970, all records found, by year

January 3, 1971 Eight, Seneca CBC. NAB25:248
January 22, 1972 West Willard Rd. eBird
February 24, 1973 Hughes Hollow. eBird
June 23, 1973 Elmer School Rd. eBird

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed, 3 blocks western Montgomery.
MB34:26

October 10, 1975 Gude's Nursery. eBird
December 24, 1977 New Hampshire/Brighton Dam Roads. eBird
January, 1980 NW of Olney. MB36:63
December 20, 1981 Boyds. eBird
April 13, 1983 Hughes Hollow MB39:80
March 22, 1992 Boyds. MB48:96
September 16, 1995 Ashton. MB53:19
November 24, 1999 NIH farm. MB56:56
December 12, 2002 Seneca/Spring Meadow Roads. MB60:13

Northern Shrike

Casual winter visitor. All records found:
October 30-31, 2011 Green Hills Wetland. eBird photo
December 16, 2021 - January 22, 2022 Blue Mash. eBird photo
December 17-18, 1994 Sunshine. MD/DCRC
December 23, 1950 Triadelphia Reservoir. MB7:20
January 1-8, 2001 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird photo
January 2, 1958 Seneca. AN13:122
January 2, 2000 Little Seneca Reservoir. MD/DCRC
January 7-18, 2017 Triadelphia Lake Rd. eBird photo
January 18, 1893 Specimen, Sandy Spring. MD/DCRC
January 18, 2013 Patton Turf. eBird
February 4, 1973 Izaak Walton. MB29:58

Jays, Crows, Ravens

Blue Jay

Common year-round resident, with more in migration. Noticeable day-time migration from mid April to mid May and mid September to mid October.

Notable high counts:

April 19, 2013 —930 Crossing the Potomac at Violette's Lock. eBird

September 23, 1959 —1000 Woodside. MB15:109

September 26, 1990 —1150 Rockville. MB47:21

October 4, 1958 —5000 Triadelphia/Rock Gorge. MB15:32

October 5, 1955 — 532 in 1.5 hours along the fall line. SS&R

American Crow

Common year-round resident. My subjective impression is that there was a noticeable decline in numbers in the early 2000s, possibly due to West Nile Virus. Fish Crows did not suffer as much and greatly increased over the same period.

Notable high counts:

January 8, 1987 —25,000 at Rockville roost. See Fish Crow count same date.

MB43:56

November 3, 2012 —14,000 at roost, Neilwood Dr, Rockville. eBird

Fish Crow

Common year-round resident. Fish Crows definitely increased in Montgomery over the past 50 years and apparently increased in the past 15 years. Very large flocks of Fish Crows are now found feeding in fields in the winter. Notable records:

S&R 1958 "uncommon and local in the Piedmont"

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in ONE block, probable in 3.

MB34:24

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in 3 blocks, probable in 7.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed in 7 blocks, probable ~16 blocks.

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-23 — Confirmed in 22 blocks, probable in 6.

January 8, 1987 —400 at Rockville. MB43:56

November 4, 2021 —4000 over Darnestown to/from roost. eBird

Common Raven

Uncommon year-round resident. Historically, before 2003-2004, Ravens were casual visitors to the county, rarely seen. The nearest nest sites were at Sugarloaf (just over the county line) and Point of Rocks. During 2003-2004 they began appearing around the county. This sudden increase may have been correlated with the decline of Great Horned Owls and American Crows at roughly the same time. The decline of the owls and crows was perhaps due to West Nile Virus. Possibly the Ravens were reclaiming breeding range lost when the forest was removed in early colonial times. The earliest nesting record of Raven that I could find was at Cabin John in 2008.

Historical, before 2005, all records found, by year:

July 4, 1938 Rockville. S&R

January 9, 1949 Silver Spring. S&R

April 10, 1949 Two at Unity. S&R

S&R 1958 "occurs as a rare visitor in the Piedmont"

March 23, 1963 South Glen Rd. eBird

August 20, 1972 Summit Hall Turf. eBird

September 10, 1977 Upper Watts Branch. eBird

March 24, 1991 Just south of Sugarloaf. MB47:122

June 21, 1991 Black Hill RP. eBird

November 3, 1996 Beallsville. MB53:117

March 4, 2003 Black Hill RP. MB60:26

January 4, 2004 Three near Dickerson. MB61:14

February 1, 2004 Poolesville. MB61:14

August 29, 2004 Little Bennett. eBird

December 12, 2004 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird

Since 2004, notable:

April 26 - May 27, 2008 Nest with young, Cabin John. eBird photo

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-23 Confirmed in 8 blocks.

October 23, 2021 —14 in sight, Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

Chickadees, Titmice

Carolina Chickadee

Common year-round resident.

Black-capped Chickadee

Rare winter visitor, not seen in most years, but subject to periodic irruptions. Irruptions in the 21st century seem to involve much smaller numbers. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 23 - November 21, 2010 Up to five at Blue Mash. eBird photo

October 24, 1980 Hughes Hollow. MB37:35

October 28, 1975 Banded. MB32:17

November 22, 1964 Four near Seneca. AN20:98

Winter High

November 25, 1983 —14 at Seneca. MB40:23

December 12, 1954 —65 at Gude's Nursery. AN10:214

December 18, 1983 —69 Seneca CBC. NAB38:546

December 21, 1975 —69 Seneca CBC. NAB30:309

January 19, 1955 —90 near Rockville. AN10:216

Late Spring

April 12, 1984 Upper Watts Branch. eBird

May 6, 1984 Rockville. MB40:69

May 17, 1970 Banded, Hughes Hollow. AN25:140

May 18, 1984 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB40:69

Boreal Chickadee

Casual vagrant, once in December.

December 12-19, 1954 Gude's Nursery. MD/DCRC, AN10:214

Tufted Titmouse

Common year-round resident.

Larks

Horned Lark

Uncommon year-round resident. Large flocks from the north sometimes visit corn fields in winter. My subjective impression is that the big winter flocks of Horned Larks are turning up less frequently. The cornfields that used to draw them seem to have less remnant corn, possibly due to changes in harvesting methods. Presumed local breeders sometimes flock together at favored sites, such as the Polo field, in late summer. Notable high counts:

September 12, 2017 —107 at Hughes Rd Polo. eBird
December 13, 2013 —440 in corn at Patton Turf. eBird
January 2, 2006 —200 Patton Turf. eBird
January 8, 2016 —100 at Homestead Farm. eBird
January 11, 2022 —250 in corn at Patton Turf. eBird photo

Swallows, Martins

Numbers of all the swallows, and Purple Martin, fluctuate wildly during migration. Cold rainy weather will force down hundreds or thousands to the river and reservoirs to feed. On pleasant sunny days with favorable winds there will be very few or none at all.

Bank Swallow

Uncommon spring migrant from mid April to late May. Uncommon fall migrant from early July to late September. Confirmed in one block during the Second Maryland Atlas, otherwise no known breeding records for Montgomery. Young Tree and Rough-winged Swallows are often entered as Bank Swallows in eBird. However, real Bank Swallows may be seen any day of the summer: Fall migration begins in July, and there are occasional June records of straggling migrants or of birds foraging from distant and unknown breeding sites. (One possible breeding site in 2021 was on the Moncacy River, just upstream from the Potomac. See Frederick County eBird checklist for July 7, 2021) Migrant Bank Swallows are usually seen in small numbers. Very large flocks much less often, none at all in recent years. Declining? Notable records:

Early Spring

March 21, 2022 Northwest Branch. eBird
March 29, 1995 Two at Hughes Hollow. MB52:88
March 31, 1995 Violette's Lock. eBird

Spring High Count

May 10, 1997 —2000 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Early Fall

July 5, 1992 —58 near Hughes Hollow. MB48:127
July 11, 2021 Six at Little Seneca Res. eBird photo
July 22, 2021 Three, Violette's Lock, in fresh juvenile plumage. Likely migrants, not proving local breeding. They may have come from an unknown nearby

breeding site, which needs to be found. Or they may be long distance migrants.
eBird photo

Fall High

August 1, 1990 —400 at Seneca. MB47:20

August 5, 2005 —1000 at Patton Turf. eBird

September 7, 1953 —250 at Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

October 2, 2010 Three at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

October 29, 1991 Seneca. MB48:23

November 4, 2002 Little Falls. MB59(3-4):27

Tree Swallow

Common migrant and summer resident from mid February to late October.

Historically, Tree Swallows did not breed in Montgomery County, nor anywhere nearby. Historically, spring arrival was normally in March. Every year since 2016

Tree Swallows have arrived in February. Notable records:

Early Spring

January 17, 1971 Near Sycamore Landing. AN26:90

January 26, 1975 Seneca. MB31:96

February 1, 2013 Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

February 13, 2018 Eight at Blockhouse Pt. eBird photo

Spring High

April 10, 2020 —1400 at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Summer

S&R 1958: Not breeding anywhere on the Piedmont. Map page 210.

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in three blocks. MB34:22

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in eight blocks.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed in the majority of county blocks.

Fall High

September 10, 1991 —2900 at Little Seneca Res. MB48:23

October 6, 2006 —2000 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Fall

November 5, 2002 —28 at Little Falls. MB59(3-4):26

Purple Martin

Uncommon spring migrant and summer resident, arriving in mid March. Most common from July through late August as migrants and/or local breeders stage at favorable feeding sites like rapids in the Potomac River. Almost all Purple Martins depart by late August, and they are extremely rare migrants in September and early October. Purple Martins were formerly much more abundant migrants in the region. COOKE (1929): "For the last dozen years large roosts have been formed in the city; for a couple of years in trees opposite the Red Cross building, and since then in the vicinity of New Jersey Avenue and P Street. The local birds begin gathering soon after the young are on the wing, early in July, and are soon joined by migrants from the north, which continue to use the roost until September. At the height of the migration as many as 30,000 birds have been estimated to occupy the roost in a single night." It is likely that Montgomery County had comparable counts then, compared with the much lower numbers today. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 10, 2021 Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird

March 12, 2024 NIH pond. eBird photo

March 16, 1980 Pennyfield. MB36:126

March 22, 2020 Five at Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

Fall High

August 25, 2017 —135 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Fall

September 14, 2015 Six at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

September 17, 2023 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

September 26, 2005 Violette's Lock. eBird

October 4, 1976 Ashton. MB33:44

October 6, 1987 MB44:23

Northern Rough-winged Swallow

Common migrant and summer resident, from mid March to late October. Along the Atlantic coast large flocks of Tree Swallows are the last swallows of the fall. Along the Potomac River, Rough-winged Swallows are just as likely to be the last swallows. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 9, 2023 Riley's Lock. eBird

March 11, 2000 Hughes Hollow. MB57:36

March 14, 2016 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

Spring High

April 17, 1949 — 80 near Cabin John. S&R

Fall High

August 7, 2021 —500 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Late Fall

November 19, 2018 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

November 22, 2021 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

December 3, 2015 Mouth of Monocacy. eBird photo

December 22-24, 2021 Two, Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Barn Swallow

Common migrant and summer resident, from late March to mid October.

Notable records:

Early Spring

March 14, 2010 Hughes Hollow. eBird

March 20, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Spring High

April 15, 2019 —600 at Violette's Lock. eBird

May 3, 2023 —800 at Violette's Lock. eBird

Fall High

July 26, 1953 —1600 in Montgomery County. S&R

Late Fall

October 25, 2019 Three at Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

October 29, 1991 Two at Seneca. MB48:23

November 4, 2002 Little Falls. MB59(3-4):27

November 6-13, 2022 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Attempted wintering

January 3-12, 2016 Three at Violette's Lock. I believe they perished. eBird photo

Cliff Swallow

Uncommon migrant and summer resident, from mid April to late September.

Cliff Swallows have nested regularly at Brighton Dam, Triadelphia Reservoir for decades. Other current or recent sites include Brown's Bridge, the Little Falls Water Intake, Layhill Park, and the Monocacy Aqueduct. (The nests are in

Frederick but approaching birds are in Montgomery.) For a few years in the 1990s they nested at the Riley's Lock Aqueduct, but then gave up. The region is more the less at the very southern edge of their breeding range. Some colonies persist, some wink out after a few years. They seem to be going through a period of expansion, as they are now breeding at several locations in DC. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 21, 2015. Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Spring High

May 8, 1948 —35 near Seneca. S&R

May 10, 1972 —200 Potomac river at Pennyfield. AN27:191

May 10, 1997 —105 at Violette's Lock

Late Fall

September 28, 1969 AN25:50

October 2, 2016 Violette's Lock. eBird Photo

October 3, 2015 Violette's Lock. eBird Photo

Cave Swallow

Casual vagrant, three records:

April 3, 2022 One at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

April 20, 2020 One at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

November 27-28, 2004 Four at Little Seneca Res. Roosted under the Rt 121 bridge overnight. Departed after sunrise. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Kinglets

Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Common migrant and winter visitor from mid September to mid May. Notable records:

Early Fall

August 25, 1951 Pennyfield. AN7:9

August 26, 2023 Wheaton RP. eBird

September 4, 2002 Two at Hughes Hollow. MB59(3-4):27

Late Spring

May 20, 1984 Banded, Potomac. MB40:60

May 30, 2024 Little Bennett RP. eBird photo

June 5, 2022 Dickerson. eBird

June 23, 1992 NAB46:1130

Golden-crowned Kinglet

Common migrant and winter visitor, from late September to mid April. A few into May. Notable records.

Early Fall

September 19, 2020 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird photo

September 19, 2020 Lake Needwood. eBird photo

September 24, 2001 Bethesda. MB58:62

Late Spring

May 10, 1997 MB54:96

May 12, 1956 Cabin John. AN12:33

Nuthatches

White-breasted Nuthatch

Common year-round resident.

Red-breasted Nuthatch

Common to rare migrant and winter visitor, from late August to early May. Irruptive, common in some years. almost none in others. Notable records:

Early Fall

August 19, 2012 Lake Needwood. eBird

August 22, 2007 Triadelphia Reservoir. eBird

August 28, 2020 Near Little Bennett. eBird photo

August 31, 1918 S&R

Late Spring

May 26, 1973 Violette's Lock. AN28:175

June 2, 2020 Goshen View Drive. eBird

June 6, 2020 Laytonsville. eBird photo

Creepers

Brown Creeper

Common migrant and winter visitor from late September to late April. Former rare summer resident, and may breed again in the county. Historically, there were

no breeding records of Brown Creepers for Maryland. The first definite record was in Garrett County in 1958. (MB15:5-12) Between 1971 and 1985 there were scattered breeding records for Montgomery and DC. The July 2021 record in Montgomery suggests they may expand again. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 3, 1981 Bethesda. eBird

September 11, 1911 S&R

Late Spring

May 17, 1967 Pennyfield. eBird

May 18, 2023 Two at Blockhouse Point. eBird audio

Summer Breeding, by year

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in one block. MB34:24

June 22, 1975 Seneca Marsh (Riley's) eBird

June 14, 1980 Nest near Pennyfield. MB36:148

May 9, 1982 Nest at Seneca. MB38:1010

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in 3 blocks.

June 5, 1983 Riley's Lock. eBird

May 5, 1985 Pair nesting at Seneca. NAB 39:284

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: None

June 20, 2015. Hughes Hollow. eBird

July 31, 2021 Pair, Sherwood Forest-NW Branch Park. eBird

Gnatcatchers

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Common migrant and summer resident from late March to early October. A few linger into early winter. Notable records:

Early Spring

February 26, 2020 Riley's Lock. eBird photo

March 11, 2016 Widewater. eBird

March 21, 2012 Bradmoor Drive. eBird

Summer High

August 20, 1949 —17 near Seneca. S&R

Late Fall and Winter

November 22 - December 9, 2015 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

November 22, 2019 Riley's Lock. eBird photo

December 17, 1995 Hughes Hollow. NAB50:524
December 19, 1971 - January 16, 1972 Potomac. NAB26:264
January 2, 2001 Carderock. eBird

Wrens

Northern House Wren

Common migrant and summer resident from early April to early November. Rare but regular winter visitor, with many records. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 4, 2009 Violette's Lock. eBird
March 18, 2020 Wheaton RP. eBird
March 26, 1950 Potomac. S&R

Spring High

May 9, 1953 —75 at Unity. S&R

Winter, a few notable records

January 8, 1966 Hughes Hollow. MB22:50
January 8, 2022 Redgate Park. eBird photo
January 11, 1958 C&O Canal. AN13:122
January 30 - February 9, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

Winter Wren

Common migrant and winter visitor from mid September to late April. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 3, 2015 Wheaton RP. eBird

Late Spring

May 5, 2018 Upper Watts Branch. eBird photo
May 10, 1982 Rockville. MB38:102

Sedge Wren

Casual spring migrant from late April to mid May. Casual fall migrant from mid August to early November. Some evidence of nesting or attempted nesting in the past, but never confirmed. Fall migrants do not necessarily require wetland habitat. They are sometimes found in dense stands of asters and goldenrods in large dry fields. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 29, 1982 Rockville. MB38:102

April 30, 1929 S&R

May 2, 1986 Rockville. MB42:75, eBird photo

Late Spring

May 13, 1995 Layhill Park. eBird

May 17, 1997 Pennyfield. MB54:44

Summer, all records found

S&R 1958: "recorded in summer...from Montgomery County"

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Probable in one block.

July 30, 1978 Pope Farm (Muncaster Rec. Park) Gaithersburg. eBird

August 19 - October 10, 1983 Two, King Farm. MD/DCRC, MB40:24

August 20, 1949 Three, singing, Unity. AN5:29

Late Fall

October 14-15, 2017 Little Bennett . eBird photo

October 23, 2019 Sherwood Forest. eBird

November 9-10, 2020 Burtonsville Park. eBird photo

Marsh Wren

Rare spring migrant from mid April to mid May. Rare fall migrant from mid September to late October. Marsh Wrens were formerly summer residents at Hughes Hollow. Intermittently in the years 1968-2003, but none recently. Like Sedge Wrens they will use dry fields of tall grass in migration. One winter record.

Notable records:

Early Spring

March 7 - April 24, 2023 Ken-Gar Palisades. eBird photo

April 15, 2020 Pennyfield. eBird photo

Summer, by year

May 30 - June 23, 1968 Nest with eggs and young. MB25:49

June 19, 1972 Twenty at Hughes Hollow. eBird

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in one block, 12 pairs. MB34:24

June 5, 1987 Two, Hughes Hollow. eBird

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: None

June 11 - July 5, 2003 Up to four, Hughes Hollow. eBird

July 25 - August 10, 2013 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Late Fall

November 24, 2020 Hughes Hollow. eBird
November 29, 2017 Sherwood Forest. eBird
December 11-13, 2015 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Winter

January 20 - April 28, 2018 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

Carolina Wren

Common year-round resident.

Bewick's Wren

Formerly a casual spring and fall migrant. No recent records. COOKE (1929) for the immediate DC area: "A southern species which straggles to our area...it has never been known to breed." At one time Bewick's Wrens bred as near as Washington County. They retreated westward as a breeding species in the 20th century. The last Maryland breeding records were in Allegany Co in the 1980s. All records found:

Spring

April 3, 1949 Unity. AN4:201
April 6 - May 9, 1953 Unity. MB10:14
April 14, 1963 Tilden Woods MB19:76
April 21, 1952 Banded, Unity. MB9:7
May 1, 1993 Violette's Lock MD/DCRC
May 9, 1953 Unity. S&R

Fall

September 9, 1928 S&R
September 16, 1973 Woodend. AN29:129
October 15, 1971 Banded, Hughes Hollow. MB28:37
October 18, 1948 Chevy Chase. MB4:29
October 30, 1973 Banded, Adventure, Potomac. NAB 28:36, MB30:44
November 22, 1953 Silver Spring. S&R, AN9:146
December 16, 1958 Two, Chevy Chase. AN14:130
December 26, 1954 Derwood. MB11:39

Starlings

European Starling

Common year-round resident, with additional migrants and winter visitors. Introduced in New York City in 1890. The first Maryland record was in Baltimore in 1906. The first Montgomery record was April 25, 1917, Silver Spring, nest with young. S&R, AUK34:338

High Count

January 3, 1970 —169,000 roost at Pyle Junior High, Bethesda. MB26:72

Catbirds, Thrashers, Mockingbirds

Gray Catbird

Common migrant and summer resident, from mid April to late October. Uncommon to rare winter visitor, depending on the harshness of the weather.

Brown Thrasher

Common migrant and summer resident from mid March to mid November, but never as numerous as the Catbird. Rare winter visitor.

Northern Mockingbird

Common year-round resident. Historically, Mockingbirds were much less common. COOKE (1929) for the Washington DC region: "Permanent resident, now common and well distributed. Coues and Prentiss, in both lists, called this a rare summer resident. In the last decade of the last century (19th) it was almost unknown; active collectors might not find one in the course of several years. By 1902 or 1903 a few pairs (probably not over a half dozen) were known, but outside their particular localities the species was never seen. About 1905 it began gradually to increase until it is now common."

Bluebirds, Thrushes

Eastern Bluebird

Common year-round resident, with additional birds in migration, late February to late March and late September to late November. Occasionally there is noticeable daytime migration, often mixed with Robin flocks. **Notable counts**

October 17, 1964 —68 Poolesville. MB21:26

October 21, 2002 —80 Layhill Park. MB59(3-4):28

October 26, 1999 —100 Layhill Park. MB56:57

December 15, 2007 —150 Little Bennett. eBird

Varied Thrush

Casual vagrant, two winter records:

February 1, 1987 Brite Drive, Bethesda. MD/DCRC, MB43:57

December 31, 1965 - January 21, 1966 Ashton. MD/DCRC, MB22:3,54:15

Veery

Common migrant from late April to mid May and from late August to early October. Uncommon and local summer resident, preferring shady and moist situations. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 10, 1992 Pennyfield. MB48:96

Spring High

May 19-20, 1990 Hundreds overhead at night, Rockville. MB46:103

Late Fall

October 16, Chevy Chase. 1952 S&R

October 25, 1984 Potomac, banded. MB41:18

October 31, 2018 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird

Gray-cheeked Thrush

Uncommon spring migrant from mid May to early June. One of the latest of the neotropical spring migrants. Common fall migrant, from mid September to late October. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 10, 1974 Damascus. AN30:32

April 25, 1970 Hughes Hollow. AN25:140

April 30, 1991 MB47:122

May 6, 2021 Hughes Hollow. eBird audio

Spring High

May 27-28, 1990 —25 overhead at night, Rockville. MB46:103

Late Spring

June 14, 1999 Hughes Hollow. MB56:49

Early Fall

August 19, 1977 Banded, Potomac. MB34:59

September 5, 1988 Upper Watts Branch. eBird

September 15, 2021 Pennyfield. eBird photo.

Late Fall

October 26, 1989 Banded, Potomac. MB46:23

October 30, 1927 S&R

Bicknell's Thrush

Casual migrant in May and from mid to late September. Most go undetected due to identification issues. Identified, with difficulty, by song, especially if a series of songs can be recorded. (See Marshall, who thought Bicknell's should be a subspecies of Gray-cheeked.) There is more debate about whether flight and ground call notes are diagnostic. Banding data on the east coast (most can be identified by measurements in the hand) suggests they are likely rare to uncommon annual migrants in Montgomery County. All records found:

Spring

May 7, 2000 Four, night flight call, Upper Watts Branch. MB57:36

May 10, 2003 Night flight call, Rockville. MB60:27

May 11, 2001 Two, night flight call, Upper Watts Branch. MB58:39

May 16, 1993 Banded, Potomac. eBird

May 16-19, 2006 Seen and heard, Upper Watts Branch. eBird.

May 19-21, 2018 Layhill. eBird photos

May 20-22, 2009 Seen and heard, Upper Watts Branch. eBird.

Fall

September 19, 2021 Black Hill RP. Audio of ground call. eBird

September 25, 2000 Seen and heard, Rockville. MB57:63

September 29, 1972 Banded, Potomac. MB28:157

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Wallace, George J., Bicknell's Thrush, Its Taxonomy, Distribution, and Life History. Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington, Vol. 41, No. 6, p211-402. 1939.

Marshall, Joe T., (2001) The Gray-cheeked Thrush *Catharus minimus*, and its New England Subspecies, Bicknell's Thrush, *Catharus minimus bicknelli*. Publications of the Nuttall Ornithological Club 28.

Swainson's Thrush

Common migrant from early May to early June, and from early September to late October. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 19 2014 Hipsley Mill Rd. eBird

April 22, 1980 Bethesda. MB36:126

April 24, 1948 S&R

Late Spring

June 16, 2021 Upper Watts Branch, Rockville. eBird audio

June 26-27, 1988 Singing, Rockville. MB44:129

Early Fall

August 14, 2014 Wheaton RP. eBird

August 17, 1985 Banded, Potomac. MB42:19

Late Fall

November 2, 2022 Lake Needwood. eBird photo

November 3, 1980 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB37:35

November 8, 1969 Bethesda. AN25:50

December 1, 1968 Seneca. MB25:27

Hermit Thrush

Common migrant and winter visitor from late September to mid May. Notable records:

Early Fall

August 30, 1986 Banded, Potomac. MB43:26

September 20, 2014 Pennyfield. eBird

Late Spring

May 23, 1976 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB32:99

May 24, 1983 Banded, Potomac. MB39:80

Wood Thrush

Common migrant and summer breeder from mid April to mid October. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 15-16, 2022 Wheaton RP. eBird

April 16, 2017 Lake Frank. eBird photo

April 16, 2024 Sycamore Landing. eBird

Late Fall

October 10, 2023 Lake Frank. eBird photo

October 11, 2021 Lois Green Cons Park. eBird audio

October 15, 2021 Wheaton Stormwater Ponds. eBird
October 28, 1987 Banded, Potomac. MB44:24
November 2, 2000 Darnestown. MB57:63
November 21, 1926 S&R

American Robin

Common year-round resident. More in migration. Depending on the weather large flocks may arrive in mid winter to feed on any available fruit. Notable high counts:

January 22, 2016 —3000 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird
January 27, 2022 —7500 flying east after sunrise, Hughes Road Polo. eBird
March 20, 1951 —750 near Rockville. S&R
April 13, 1990 —1500 Rockville. MB46:103
October 23, 2012 —1050 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird

Waxwings

Cedar Waxwing

Common year-round resident, often very scarce in late winter and early spring, until the big May push. More in migration, especially in May. Notable high counts:

May 20, 2020 —440 Violette's Lock. eBird
October 17, 1953 —350 near Seneca. S&R
November 26, 2000 —300 Hughes Hollow. MB57:63

Old World Sparrows

House Sparrow

Common year-round resident. Usually found in urban and suburban settings, and around horse farms. Rarely a few individuals are found feeding with Song and White-throated Sparrows "in the wild." From S&R (1958): "Its first appearance in Maryland was recorded in 1865 at Hancock in Washington County. After this it soon appeared at other locations, including importations which were made in the District of Columbia in 1871 (Cooke, 1929) and in Baltimore in 1874. The establishment of this species in the various sections of the State may be described as having taken place in the following order: Ridge and

Valley section during the period 1865-70; Allegheny Mountain and Piedmont sections during the period 1872-76.”

Pipits

American Pipit

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor, from late October (rarely from early September) to late April (rarely to early June). Notable records:

Early Fall

September 1-5, 2021 Two, Hughes Road Polo. eBird photo

September 10, 1989 Summit Hall Turf. eBird

High counts

October 25, 1952 —2,000 near Seneca. S&R, AN8:148

October 29, 2022 —75 Summit Hall turf. eBird

December 29, 2012 —300 Patton Turf. eBird

Late Spring

May 1, 2015 —70 at Patton Turf. eBird

May 16, 2019 Two at Homestead Farm. eBird

May 17, 2009 Patton Turf. eBird

May 19 - June 4, 2022 Patton Turf. eBird photo, video

Finches, Siskins, Crossbills, Grosbeaks

Evening Grosbeak

Rare and irruptive winter visitor. Evening Grosbeaks have a complex and checkered history in the region. The first records for the Washington DC area were in April-May 1922. (AUK40:130) They became uncommon but irregular visitors to Maryland in the second half of the 20th Century, present in flocks in many irruption years. Note the Seneca CBC total of 647 in 1972. In irruption years they often lingered into May. A noticeable decline began in the 1990s. In the period 2001- 2019 there are very few records in eBird, for only five winters. The winter of 2020-21 saw the first irruption in decades in the county, with records at many locations from late October to early May. For a more detailed account of the changing fortunes of Evening Grosbeak see “Historical Changes to the Distribution” at birdsoftheworld.org

Twentieth Century, notable records:

Early Fall

September 17, 1952 Two at Brookmont. AN8:94

September 21, 1972 Bannockburn. AN28:74

September 28, 1970 Chevy Chase. AN26:48

High Counts

November 11, 1985 —50 Rockville. MB42:22

December 1, 1983 —50 Rockville. MB40:37

January 16, 1980 —28 Hughes Hollow. eBird

January 2, 1972 —647 Seneca CBC. NAB26:264

January 20, 1972 —33 Hughes Hollow. eBird

March 9, 1952 — 50 at Seneca. S&R

Late Spring

April 28, 1960 Banded, Chevy Chase. MB25:12 —Recovered February 12, 1964 in North Carolina.

May 5, 1984 —15 Upper Watts Branch. eBird

May 6, 1922 Three at Cabin John. AUK40:130

May 6, 1978 Five, Watts Branch Park. eBird

May 6, 1978 Ashton. eBird

May 12, 1954 Bethesda. MB11:16

June 7, 1970 Six at Dalecarlia Reservoir. AN25:186

Twenty-first Century notable records:

Early Fall

October 26, 2020 Seven, Hawkins Creamery Rd. eBird

October 28, 2020 Four, Sherwood Forest. eBird

October 31, 2020 Three, Hughes Hollow. eBird audio.

High Counts

November 3, 2020 —13 Bradmoor Drive. eBird photo

November 4, 2020 —18 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird photo

November 7, 2020 —18 Marymont Rd. eBird photo

December 20, 2020 - January 30, 2021 Up to 18, Rileys Lock. eBird photo

February 8, 2021 Seven at Barnesville. eBird

Late Spring

April 30, 2021 Four, Colesville. eBird

May 6, 2021 Springwood Drive. eBird

May 5-8, 2021 Two, Croydon Creek Nature Center. eBird photo

Pine Grosbeak

Casual winter visitor with no recent records. All records found:

November 26, 1903 Bethesda. S&R, COOKE

November 26-27, 1972 Four, Gude's Nursery, Rockville. MD/DCRC,
MB29:30

January 25, 1974 Great Falls. AN29:178

March 3, 1974 Great Falls. AN30:33

House Finch

Common year-round resident. House Finches are most often in suburban settings but some are utilizing wild seed crops in fields with Goldfinches and winter sparrows. House Finches were introduced into the eastern U.S. in the 1940s. The first Maryland record was in 1958. The earliest Montgomery record I found was in 1965. Notable records:

October 10, 1965 First for Montgomery. MB21:113

January, 1966 —100 at Gaithersburg. MB22:51

February 15, 1972 —300 at Rockville. MB28:81

Purple Finch

Uncommon to common migrant and winter visitor, from late September to mid May, with numbers varying from year to year. In many years there is a strong southbound flight from mid October to mid November, then very few to zero birds present during the winter, followed by a weaker spring northbound flight in April. The historical counts of hundreds in April in the 1940s have not been repeated. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 1, 2017 Lake Frank. eBird photo

September 5, 1977 Banded. MB34:51

September 7, 1975 Banded, Potomac. MB31:148

High Counts

December 12, 1972 —70 at Hughes Hollow.

April 6, 1946 — 500 in one flock at Glen Echo. S&R

April 17, 1949 — 750 near Cabin John. S&R, AN4:201

Late Spring

May 13, 2017 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 26, 1907 S&R

May 31, 1971 Three, Seneca. AN26:137

June 1, 2021 Sycamore Landing. eBird

Redpoll

Rare and irruptive winter visitor, usually from early January to late March. Absent most winters. Only small numbers of Redpolls come this far south in most irruption years. Large irruption years were 1972, 1978 and 1994. Notable records:

Early Fall

November 21, 2012 Upper Watts Branch. eBird

November 26-27, 1969 Gaithersburg. AN25:95

November 29, 2020 Black Hill RP. eBird

December 27, 1993 —11 at Comus. MB51:89

High Counts, by year

January 14, 1940 —11 near Rockville. S&R

February 29, 1972 —250 at Dickerson. MB28:81, AN27:134

January 1, 1978 —40 at Gude's Nursery. MB34:79

February 2, 1994 —150 at Germantown. eBird, MB51:89

February 15, 1994 —400 at Germantown. eBird, MB51:89

March 6, 1994 —200 at Germantown. eBird photos

Late Spring

April 1, 1994 —20 at Germantown. Three on April 5. eBird

April 12, 1970 Two at Ashton. MB26:109

The subspecies or forms *exilipes* and *hornemanni* were formerly treated as a separate species, Hoary Redpoll. They are now best thought to be ecomoprhs (along with *flammea*) of one species. Both forms are extremely rare, only appearing in years when there is a huge invasion of Redpolls. *Exilipes* is hard to identify except for adult males. *Hornemanni* is distinctive in all plumages. All records found:

February 27 - March 3, 1972 One, Gude's Nursery AN25:134, MB28:82

February 11-16, 1978 One, Spencerville. MB34:79

January 28 - April 1, 1994 Germantown feeders. A total of 15 *exilipes* photographed on different dates during this period. Highest single day count of *exilipes* was **four** birds. eBird photos

March 6 - 21, 1994 Germantown feeders. A total of possibly four different *hornemanni* photographed on different dates during this period. Highest single day count was **one**. eBird photos.

Red Crossbill

Rare and irruptive winter visitor, from early November until early May, rarely into June. Absent most winters. Size of winter flocks in Montgomery smaller in recent decades. Notable records:

Early Fall

November 6, 2012 Eight, Mowbray Rd. eBird

November 8, 2012 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird audio

Winter - Spring

February 2, 2013 NIH Animal Center. eBird photo

December 8, 1997 —15 Rockville. MB55:18

March 24, 1895 Hundreds. Kensington. Kirkwood 1895

April 12, 1955 —15 Cabin John. AN11:35

May 4, 1953 —50 at Bethesda. S&R, AN9:38

Late Spring

May 26, 1973 Near Seneca. AN28:177

June 15, 1970 Two, Rossmoor. MB26:108

White-winged Crossbill

Rare and irruptive winter visitor, from early November until Late April. Absent most winters. Notable records:

Early Fall

November 4, 2012 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird audio

November 15, 2012 Three, Hughes Hollow. eBird

November 25, 1965 —12 Bethesda. MB22:52

Winter

December 23-25, 2012 —10 at Layhill. eBird

December 28, 2012 Two, Hoyles Mill. eBird photo

February 16, 1982 —12 at Rockville. MB38:49

Late Spring

April 17, 1955 —12 at Silver Spring. S&R, MB11:61

April 18, 1964 Pennyfield. MB20:89

April 26, 1982 Eight, from March 21, Woodend. MB38:103

Pine Siskin

Usually uncommon migrant and winter visitor from early October to mid May. Rarely lingering into June. Irruptive, with small numbers present most winters, and occasionally much larger numbers. The fall of 2020 was unprecedented with record counts all over the county. I have not tried to list them, see eBird. Before 2020 the highest count I could find was 40 in 1952. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 28, 1957 Unity. MB13:78

High Counts

October 11, 2020 —160 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

November 24, 1952 —40 near Olney. AN8:148

Late Spring

May 26, 2013 Silver Spring. eBird photo

June 10, 1978 Bethesda. eBird

June 18, 1988 From eight on May 31, Bethesda. MB44:105,130

American Goldfinch

Common year-round resident. More birds in migration and in winter. Notable high counts:

April 17, 1949 —2000 near Cabin John. S&R

October 28, 1951 —200 near Unity. S&R

September 26, 1991 —500 at Sycamore Landing. MB48:29

December 20, 2020 —500 at Sycamore Landing. eBird

Longspurs, Snow Bunting

Lapland Longspur

Rare winter visitor from early November to early March. Probably present in the county every winter, but not always found. Lapland Longspurs are usually found in close association with Horned Larks. My subjective impression is that they are becoming less frequent. The big cornfields that used to draw the huge Lark flocks seem to have less corn, possibly due to changes in harvesting methods. However, the highest count ever for the county was in 2021. Notable records:

Early Fall

November 9, 1980 Two, Rockville. MB37:37

November 9, 1991 Laytonsville. MB48:28

High Counts

February 14, 2021 —29 Homestead Farm. eBird

February 29, 1980 —15 at Summit Hall Turf. MB36:64

Late Spring

March 9, 1980 Two, Summit Hall Turf. MB36:128

March 23, 2018 Patton Turf. eBird photo

Snow Bunting

Casual, formerly rare, winter visitor, from late October to late March. Size of flocks and number of records much reduced since the 1990s. Unlike Lapland Longspur, Snow Buntings are sometimes found alone, not associating with Horned Larks. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 27, 1957 Triadelphia Res. AN13:122

November 2-5, 1991 Seneca. MB48:28

High Count

December 12, 1981 —50 at Triadelphia Res. eBird

December 26, 1954 —45 at Triadelphia Reservoir. S&R

Dec 26, 1992 - January 30, 1993 Up to 14 on Dec 26, Oaks Landfill.

MB49(1-4):40, eBird

February 21, 1976 —20 at Summit Hall Turf. MB32:75

Late Spring

February 28, 1976 Two at Summit Hall Turf. MB32:75

March 27, 1958 Triadelphia Res. MB14:55

New World Sparrows

Pine-woods Sparrow

The name used for the eastern subspecies through the 4th edition of the AOU Checklist. Former casual summer visitor and migrant, from late April to early October. Stewart and Robbins (1958): "During the period 1896-1954 scattered observations of from 1 to 6 singing males or pairs have been recorded in the District of Columbia and in the area within 12 miles of the District boundary in Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties." Pine-woods Sparrows were confirmed breeding in Prince George's County in 1942. (AUK60:605) It is not

clear that they ever bred successfully in Montgomery, as the records are mostly of lone singing males not present all summer.

Since then extirpated as a breeding bird in the mid-Atlantic region, and no recent records for Montgomery. All records found, by year:

April 29, 1896 Two, Kensington. Specimen. MD/DCRC, AUK14:219

May 9, 1915 Cabin John. MD/DCRC, COOKE

May 2, 1918 Kensington. S&R, COOKE

May 16, 1946 Northwest of Potomac. S&R

April 29, 1953 Near Cabin John. S&R, AN9:38

May 13, 1961 Brickyard Rd, Potomac. AN16:257

May 6, 1967 Brickyard Rd, Potomac. MB23:34

October 7, 1976 Sycamore Landing NAB31:163, MB32:127

Grasshopper Sparrow

Uncommon summer resident from early April to late October. Casual winter visitor. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 2, 2022 Montevideo Rd. eBird

April 4, 1992 Boyds. MB48:99

April 10, 2024 Izaak Walton. eBird audio

Late Fall

October 19, 1952 Five (banded) near Unity. S&R

October 28, 2021 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird photo

November 2, 2014 Oaks Landfill. eBird

November 22-23, 1989 Rockville. MB46:27

Winter, all records found

December 17, 2022 Triadelphia Lake Road. eBird

January 9, 1979 Hughes Hollow. eBird

February 10, 1971 At feeder, Montgomery Village. AN26:91

Chipping Sparrow

Common migrant and summer resident, uncommon winter visitor. Chipping Sparrows were formerly rare winter visitors. They are now regularly overwintering in small flocks. Notable high counts:

February 17, 2020 —43 at Redgate Park. eBird.

October 26, 1999 —70 at Layhill Park. MB56:58

Clay-colored Sparrow

Casual spring migrant, with just five records, mid April to mid May. Rare fall migrant from early September to mid November, peaking in October. One in January was attempting to winter. Clay-colored Sparrows were not known to occur in the region historically. The first record for the county was at King Farm, October 9, 1982.

Spring, all records found

April 11-23, 2022 Gude Trail. eBird photo

April 27 - May 6, 2023 Gude Trail. eBird photo

April 29 - May 1, 2017 Mattie Stepanek Park, Gaithersburg. eBird photo

May 9, 1959 Widewater. AFN13:360

May 9-17, 1984 Edgebrook Rd, Wheaton. MD/DCRC, MB40:72

Fall, notable records

Early Fall

September 6-10, 2015 Layhill Park. eBird photo

September 16, 2012. Wheaton RP. eBird photo

Late Fall

November 14, 1991 King Farm Rockville. NAB 46:1:78

November 22, 2022 Blue Mash. eBird photo

November 26, 2022 Gude Trail. eBird photo

December 2, 2024 Blue Mash. eBird

Winter, one record

January 3, 2021 Little Bennett Golf. eBird photo

Field Sparrow

Common migrant and summer resident, uncommon winter visitor.

Lark Sparrow

Casual migrant and winter visitor. Five records:

May 15, 1966 C&O Canal above Seneca. MD/DCRC

September 2, 1971 Hughes Hollow. MB27:193

September 8-9, 2015 Layhill Park. eBird photo

October 26 - December 3, 2023 Woodstock Equestrian Park. eBird photo

January 18 - February 21, 2016 Hughes Road Polo. eBird photo

American Tree Sparrow

Rare winter visitor from early November to late March. Before about 2015 Tree Sparrows were uncommon winter visitors. Numbers have been dropping over recent decades, as illustrated by the Seneca CBC total of 437 in 1973! (NAB28:276) This trend will probably continue with the milder winters. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 23, 1988 Hughes Hollow. eBird

October 25, 2018 Sherwood Forest. eBird

November 3, 1976 Banded. MB33:37

November 6, 1988 Six, Darnestown to Poolesville. MB45:39

Late Spring

April 3, 2021 Blue Mash. eBird

April 11, 1982 MB38:103

April 14, 1949 Unity. S&R

Fox Sparrow

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor, from mid October to early April. There are noticeable migration peaks in November and March, with fewer birds remaining for the winter. Notable records:

Early Fall

October 9, 1921 S&R

October 9, 1986 Banded, Potomac. MB43:28

High Count

March 14, 1954 —200 near Unity. S&R

Late Spring

April 12, 2018 Bradmoor Drive. eBird photo

April 17, 1984 Banded, Potomac. MB40:72

May 8, 1956 Spring departure date. S&R

Dark-eyed Junco

Common migrant and winter visitor from late September to late April. Casual in summer, does not breed. Birds of western subspecies such as *oreganus*, *mearnsi*, *cismontanus* are sometimes reported in the region. Immatures and females of these forms can be very difficult to identify. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 17, 1979 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB36:36

September 22, 2016 Little Bennett. eBird photo

Late Spring

May 24, 1956 S&R

May 26, 1983 Banded, Potomac. MB39:81

Summer

June 11-18, 2016 Lake Frank. eBird photo

June 28, 1990 Chevy Chase CC. MB46:130

July 11, 2024 Quince Orchard. eBird photo

August 14, 1966 Rockville. AN22:45

Reported as "Oregon" Junco group, subspecies not stated:

January 1970 Silver Spring. AN25:96

January 27 - March 13, 1972 Specimen, Gude's Nursery. AN27:138, MB28:82

February 1961 Trapped, Unity. MB17:94

February 7-13, 1964 AN19:181

February 7-11, 1966 Rockville. MB22:52

White-crowned Sparrow

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor from early October to mid May. There are noticeable migration peaks in late October and late April to early May, with fewer birds remaining for the winter. Sometimes quite scarce in late winter.

Notable records:

Early Fall

September 22, 1984 Banded, Potomac. MB41:20

September 25, 1985 Rockville. MB42:21

Late Spring

May 17, 2016 North Potomac. eBird photo

May 19, 1984 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB40:72

May 21, 1892 Sandy Spring. S&R

Harris's Sparrow

Casual vagrant with six records. Twice during migration, and two long-staying winter birds. All records found:

January 1 - May 9, 1958 Riffleford Rd, Darnestown MB 14:18

January 23 - April 27, 1965 Two at feeder, Clarksville. MB21:52,89

April 7, 1971 Singing, Bethesda. MB27:85

October 7, 1976 Izaak Walton. MB32:127-129

November 1958 Two, Travilah. AN14:130

December 16, 2000, Greg/Zion Roads, Laytonsville. MD/DCRC, MB58:30

White-throated Sparrow

Common migrant and winter visitor, from late September to late May. In some years there is a noticeable big push of migrants in late April to early May. There are records of individuals lingering throughout the summer, some singing. These summer records increasing. There is no evidence that they ever bred in Montgomery.

Summer, a few notable records

August 17, 1962 Kensington. AN18:36

June - August 28, 1974 Banded, Woodend. MB30:116,145

June 1, 1978 Banded, Potomac. MB34:181

June 2, 1984 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB40:72

June 3, 2016 Little Bennett. eBird audio

June 7, 2018 Ken-Gar Palisades. eBird audio

June 19, 2020 Grosvenor Ponds. eBird photo

July 2, 2022 Forest Glen Park. eBird photo

June 22, 2023 Hughes Road. eBird audio

July 11-17, 2023 Jessup Blair Park. eBird audio

Vesper Sparrow

Uncommon migrant and rare summer resident, from mid March to early November. Vesper Sparrows are declining as local breeders, now missing from most former sites. Casual winter visitor. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 16, 1977 Hughes Hollow. MB33:103

March 18, 2023 Great Falls. eBird photo

March 16, 2022 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird photo

Late Fall

November 8, 1947 Five, Triadelphia Res. MB4:2

November 6-10, 2020 Little Bennett. eBird photo

November 24, 2023 Homestead Farm. eBird photo

Winter, all records found

December 15, 2012 Upper Northwest Branch. eBird

December 17, 2005 Patton Turf. eBird

December 18, 1979 - January 2, 1980 One to five birds. MB36:64

December 20, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird
December 23, 1950 Burtonsville. NAB5:87
January 1, 1987 Rockville. MB43:57
January 9-30, 2022 Homestead Farm. eBird photo
January 10, 1975 Hughes Hollow. eBird

LeConte's Sparrow

Casual migrant with one record. Can be secretive and very difficult to detect, much less likely to flush from dense cover than other sparrows.

October 12, 2019 Wheaton-Glenmont MD/DCRC

Seaside Sparrow

Casual vagrant. One spring overshoot record. Seaside Sparrows have turned up in spring in DC and PG county as well.

May 26-27, 2016 Ken-Gar Palisades Park. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Nelson's Sparrow

Casual fall migrant, with six records. The similar looking Saltmarsh Sparrow turns up as a migrant on the west side of Chesapeake Bay and is a remote possibility as a spring overshoot.

September 21-26, 1991 King Farm, Rockville. MB 48:28, eBird photo

October 3, 1988 Banded, Adventure Banding station, Potomac. MB 45:39

October 5, 2017 Upper NW Branch, Trolley Museum. eBird

October 6, 2021 Blue Mash. eBird

October 23-28, 1985 Rockville. MB42:21

October 23, 2021 Gude Trail. eBird

Savannah Sparrow

Uncommon migrant and winter visitor, from late September to late May. Formerly rare summer resident, no recent records. Montgomery is at the extreme southern edge of the breeding range. Spring migrants linger, often singing, into late May or early June. They eventually depart and are not proof of breeding.

Notable records:

Early Fall

September 10, 2024 Selden Island. eBird

September 11, 1948 Triadelphia. MB4:30, S&R

September 19, 2018 Green Hills Farm. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 4, 2017 Hughes Rd Polo. eBird

June 11, 2015 Homestead Farm. eBird

Summer, by year

August 14, 1950 Three, North Woodside. Breeding? MB6:52

S&R 1958 "uncommon and local in the Piedmont"

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in three blocks, probable in 3.
MB34:34

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Probable in one block.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed in one block.

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-23: Possible in one block.

Henslow's Sparrow

Casual migrant in early May and late October. A territorial male was present in June, 2008. Henslow's Sparrows were formerly uncommon migrants and summer residents from late April to late October. They bred across Maryland but began declining in the 1960s (?) The last breeders away from Garrett and Allegany counties held out in Dorchester until 1989. They were still attempting to breed in Montgomery in the 1970s, with occasional territorial males. The last (?) location was on Piney Meetinghouse Road in 1979. That field is now houses. Today they breed in Maryland only in Garrett and Allegany counties.

Historical, pre 1980, notable records

April 29, 1950 Seven, Seneca. MB7:37

S&R 1958 "uncommon in the Piedmont"

May 11, 1974 Two at Woodend. AN30:34

May 18, 1944 Nest with eggs. S&R

July 10, 1965 Two, Quarry Mill Rd. AN20:219

August 4, 1964 Nine, River Road. MB20:108

August 14, 1926 Dickerson. eBird

October 14, 1894 Two, Kensington. KIRKWOOD

Modern, since 1980, all records found

May 3, 2021 Migrant, Lake Hallowell. eBird photo

June 15-25, 2008 Singing, Club Hollow Rd, Poolesville. MD/DCRC, eBird

October 10, 1981 Migrant, King Farm. eBird

October 28, 1989 Migrant, King Farm. MB46:27

Song Sparrow

Common year-round resident. Many more in migration and winter with noticeable peaks late March to early April and mid October to mid November. Relatively low numbers during the breeding season.

Lincoln's Sparrow

Uncommon migrant, from mid late April to mid May, and from late September to early November. Casual winter visitor, lingering into early winter and extremely rare after December. There are no winter photos. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 6, 1993 Banded, Potomac. MB51:77

September 7 2024 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

September 17, 1985 Four, Rockville. MB42:21

Late Fall

November 3, 1980 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB37:37

November 11, 2021 Blue Mash. eBird photo

November 12, 2021 Blue Mash. eBird photo

Winter, records after December.

January 6, 2015 Long Branch Trail. Takoma Park. eBird

January 23, 2024 Kensington. eBird

January 28 - February 3, 2019 Blue Mash. eBird

March 21-28, 1959 Pennyfield. NAB13:360

Early Spring

April 18, 2004 Violette's Lock. eBird

April 20, 2023 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

April 21, 1987 Banded, Potomac. MB43:83

Late Spring

May 19, 2018 Silver Spring. eBird photo

May 16-19, 2023 Blue Mash eBird photo

May 29, 1960 Banded, Brookeville MB16:77

June 1, 1963 Banded, Brookeville MB19:77

Swamp Sparrow

Common migrant and uncommon winter visitor from late September to mid May. Former rare summer resident, at least sporadically breeding in a few locations in the 1970s-1980s. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 16, 1980 Banded. MB37:20

Late Spring

May 24, 1987 Banded, Potomac. MB43:83

Summer, by year

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in Seneca-CW. MB34:34

July 12, 1981 Three, Seneca. MB37:140

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in three blocks.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: None

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-23: None

Spotted Towhee

Casual vagrant, one record.

December 17, 1994 Bowie Mill Rd, Derwood. MD/DCRC

Eastern Towhee

Common year-round resident, more in migration, fewer in winter.

Yellow-breasted Chat

Yellow-breasted Chat

Uncommon migrant and summer resident, from late April to early October. A few linger into late fall and early winter. Notable Records:

Early Spring

April 12, 1998 Black Hill RP. MB55:31

April 14, 1917 Spring arrival date. S&R

Late Fall

October 26, 2016 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird photo

October 27, 1992 Banded, Potomac. MB49:30

Winter, all records found

December 22, 1990 Near Olney. MB47:47

January 2, 1993 Black Hill RP. MB49:40

Blackbirds, Bobolink, Meadowlark, Orioles

Yellow-headed Blackbird

Casual vagrant from the west, most likely at feeders or traveling with large Grackle or Cowbird flocks. Four records:

March 9, 1984 Kensington. MB40:72

May 9, 1999 C&O Canal. MB56:42

November 11, 1991 Rt 108 pond Laytonsville. eBird, MB48:28

December 19, 1985 Sunshine. MD/DCRC, MB42:53

Bobolink

Uncommon migrant, in spring from late April to mid May, straggling into mid June. Fall migration begins in mid July, with just a few birds (failed breeders?) usually heard overhead. Peak of fall migration is August to late September, straggling into October. Once in early November and once in December. The flocks of hundreds seem to be a thing of the past. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 21, 2014 Wheaton RP. eBird

April 22, 1957 MB13:56

April 24, 2021 Montevideo Rd. eBird audio

Spring High Counts

May 10, 1969 —650 near Potomac. AN24:170

May 18-21, 1963 —500 Travilah Road. MB19:76

June 1, 1984 —50 Rockville. MB40:72

Late Spring

June 1, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

June 11, 2002 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Early Fall

July 10, 2019 Four, Selden Island. eBird

July 13, 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird

Fall High

August 5, 1954 —200 Potomac. AN10:95

August 22, 1949 —300 Unity. AN5:29

September 4, 1995 —175 King Farm. MB53:22

Late Fall

October 17, 2020 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird photo

November 3, 1992 Rockville. MB49:31

December 22, 1985 Sugarland Rd south of Rt 107. MD/DCRC, MB42:53

Eastern Meadowlark

Uncommon migrant and summer resident from late February to early November. Rare winter visitor.

Orchard Oriole

Common spring migrant and summer resident from mid April to early August, rare fall migrant through late September. S&R: "The resident birds usually depart during the last half of July, while during some years, small numbers of transients are of regular occurrence during August." One late migrant in early November. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 14, 2022 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird photo

April 15, 2001 Seneca. MB58:43

April 15, 2021 Pennyfield. eBird photo

Late Fall

September 8, 2017 Croydon Creek Nature Center. eBird photo

September 18, 1954 Fall departure date. S&R

September 26, 2018, Damascus. eBird

November 1, 2021 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

Bullock's Oriole

Casual vagrant, one record.

November 24, 2009 Sycamore Landing. MD/DCRC, eBird

Baltimore Oriole

Common migrant and summer resident from mid April to mid October. Rare but regular visitor late fall through winter, often at feeders.

Some late winter records with photos

January 7 - March 17, 2021 Two at feeders, Quince Orchard. eBird photo

January 13- 28, 2019 At feeders, Brookeville. eBird photo

February 12 - April 20, 2021 Up to three at feeders, Olney. eBird photo

February 13-15, 2016 At feeders, Norbeck. eBird photo

February 14 - March 22, 2020 At feeders, Brookeville. eBird photo

March 4-13, 2018 At feeders, Takoma Park. eBird photo

Red-winged Blackbird

Common migrant and year-round resident. Largest flocks in spring migration, late February through May, and fall migration through early winter.

High Counts

February 24, 2011 —5000 Hughes Hollow. eBird

August 28, 1995 —2000 Olney. MB53:22

Shiny Cowbird

Casual vagrant, one of the rarest birds to ever turn up in the county. Visiting lawns and feeders in Parkwood with Brown-headed Cowbirds.

October 22, 2017 - January 15, 2018 Parkwood. MD/DCRC

Brown-headed Cowbird

Common migrant and summer resident. Less common winter visitor. In spring and summer you typically see just a few cowbirds each day, going about their breeding activities. In winter you see them less often, but usually in very large flocks.

High Counts

January 3, 1970 —58,000 roost at Pyle Junior High, Bethesda. MB26:72

November 11, 1991 —1500 Poolesville. MB48:28

November 17, 2013 —1600 Hughes Road Polo. eBird

Rusty Blackbird

Uncommon migrant from early March to early May, and from early October into December. Uncommon to rare winter visitor, depending on the harshness of the weather. Declining, flock sizes smaller in recent years. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 13, 1969 Three, Summit Hall Turf. AN25:50

High Counts

November 5, 2010 —464 at Hughes Hollow. eBird

March 15, 1970 —300 Hughes Hollow. AN25:141

Late Spring

May 14, 2016 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

May 15, 1994 Pennyfield. MB51:121

May 31, 1971 Seven at Seneca. AN26:136

Brewer's Blackbird

Casual vagrant. A difficult ID and there are **no photos for Montgomery**.
Brewer's Blackbirds can be especially similar to Rusty Blackbirds in the fall.
Rusty Blackbirds will join other blackbirds in cornfields, adding to the confusion.
There are a few other reports, not published or lacking any details.
October 22, 1973 Two, male and female, near Hughes Hollow. AN29:131
October 23, 2002 Female, Glen Echo. MB59(3-4):33
October 30, 1971 Three females near Sycamore Landing. AN27:47
December 16, 2001 Male near Laytonsville. MB58:30

Common Grackle

Common year-round resident, with more arriving as winter visitors, sometimes in huge flocks. Some of the winter flocks are a mix of blackbirds and Starlings. Other flocks are almost pure Grackle. Local breeders begin arriving in mid February.

High Counts

January 3, 1970 —129,000 roost at Pyle Junior High, Bethesda. MB26:72
January 4, 1980 —502,000 at Hughes Hollow, eBird

New World Warblers

Ovenbird

Common spring migrant from mid April. Common summer resident.
Uncommon fall migrant through mid October. Only one winter record. There are several winter records of birds lingering through January in DC. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 9, 1974 Damascus. MB30:115

Late Fall

October 24, 2021 Rachel Carson Greenway. eBird photo

October 29, 1981 Banded, Potomac. MB38:27

Winter, all records found

December 31, 1979 - January 2, 1980 Gude's Nursery. MB36:63, eBird

Worm-eating Warbler

Uncommon migrant and summer resident from late April to mid September.
Very few birds are seen in fall migration, which probably begins in late July.
Notable records:

Early Spring

April 14, 1991 Blockhouse Pt. MB47:124

April 19, 2018 Elmhurst Parkway. eBird photo

Early Fall

July 23, 1960 Banded, Brookeville. A migrant there. MB16:97

Late Fall

October 1, 1991 Banded, Potomac. MB48:26

October 2 2023 North Branch and Kengla Trails. eBird photo

October 12, 1998 Black Hill RP. MB55:102

Louisiana Waterthrush

Common spring migrant and summer resident from late March to mid August.

Fall migration begins in late July and most breeders depart by early August.

They are extremely rare migrants in September. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 16, 2016 Rachel Carson Park. eBird

March 18, 2024 Paint Branch. eBird

March 25, 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

High Count

May 9, 1953 —28 along the Potomac River. S&R

Early Fall

July 23, 1960 Banded, Brookeville. A migrant there. MB16:97

Late Fall

September 4, 2021 Lake Frank. eBird photo

September 7, 1984 Banded, Potomac. MB41:19

September 8, 2020 Lake Frank. eBird photo

September 17, 1986 MB43:27

September 20, 1951 Forest Glen. MB8:47

September 30, 1950 Fall departure date. S&R

Northern Waterthrush

Common migrant from mid April to early June and from early August to mid October. Notable records.

Early Spring

April 10, 2017 Widewater. eBird

April 16, 1974 Banded, Woodend. MB30:115

April 17, 1991 Banded, Potomac. MB47:124

April 18, 2020 Riley's Lock. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 2, 1984 Sandy Spring. MB40:70

June 4, 1974 Banded, Woodend. MB30:115

June 6, 2014 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Early Fall

July 28, 2024 Hughes Hollow. eBird

August 1, 1973 Banded, Woodend. MB29:159

August 4, 2021 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird photo

August 6, 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

High Count

September 11, 1955 Nine near Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

October 16, 2016 Ken-Gar Palisades. eBird photo

October 20, 1989 Banded. Potomac. MB46:108

November 1, 1995 Hughes Hollow. MB53:20

November 27, 1970 Pennyfield. MB27:49

Golden-winged Warbler

Rare, formerly uncommon, migrant from late April to mid May and from mid August to late September. Declining in recent decades. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 28, 2019 River Road. eBird photo

May 3, 2015 Little Bennett. eBird photo

High Count

May 3, 1953 —12 near Seneca. S&R

Late Spring

May 16, 2017 King Farm Stream Park. eBird photo

May 19, 1958 Burnt Mills Reservoir. eBird

Early Fall

August 12, 1972 Banded, Hughes Hollow. MB28:157

August 22, 1951 Six near Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

September 17, 2017 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

September 26, 1981 Rockville. MB38:26

October 10, 2021 Damascus. eBird

Blue-winged Warbler

Uncommon migrant from late April to late May and from mid August to late September. Blue-winged Warblers were formerly uncommon summer residents in their preferred habitat of well overgrown fields. They are now rare, almost gone from the county as breeders. One preferred spot was Little Bennett, where they were last reported in summer in 2016. Found breeding along the Patuxent River 2022-24. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 19, 1995 Little Falls. MB52:89

April 19, 2024 White's Ferry. eBird photo

April 20, 1991 Laytonsville. MB47:123

Summer

1951 Nest with eggs, Chevy Chase. S&R

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in two blocks, probable in three. MB34:28

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in one block, probable in 13.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed in one block, probable in two.

July 7, 2021 Howard Chapel Rd. eBird

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-23: Confirmed in one block, possible in two.

Late Fall

September 28, 2019 Lake Needwood. eBird photo

October 1, 1986 Banded, Potomac. MB43:26

October 6, 1974 MB31:40

"Lawrence's", "Brewster's" and other hybrid combinations

Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers frequently interbreed, producing many variations. "Brewster's" Warblers, are regularly seen in migration.

"Lawrence's" Warblers are very rare. Many back crosses are "almost" pure, looking like Blue-winged or Golden-winged, with just a hint of the wrong color.

A few notable records:

April 30 - May 2, 2022 Lawrence's at Violette's Lock. eBird photo

May 12, 1907 Lawrence's at Plummer's Island. S&R

August 22, 1977 Lawrence's banded, Potomac. MB34:59

September 4, 2020 Lawrence's, Little Bennett. eBird photo

Black-and-white Warbler

Common migrant from early April to mid May and from early August to late October. Black-and-white Warblers were formerly uncommon summer residents in the larger tracts of forest. Almost no breeding season records in eBird in the past few years. May be on their way out as a breeding species. Casual winter visitor, lingering into January. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 13, 1955 Chevy Chase. AN10:279

March 31, 1952 Pennyfield S&R

High Count

September 24, 1947 —30 near Cabin John. S&R

Summer

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in four blocks, probable in four.

MB34:34

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in three blocks, probable in four.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed in one to three blocks, Patuxent River.

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-23: Confirmed in one block, possible in three.

Late Fall

November 8, 2018 Lake Frank. eBird photo

November 26, 1953 Seneca. S&R

November 28, 1996 Sycamore Landing. MB53:119

Winter, all records found

December 21, 1997 Hughes Hollow. MB55:18

December 22, 1996 Seneca Creek SP. MB54:32

January 6, 1992 Rockville. MB48:72

January 7, 2017 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

January 26, 2013 Towpath near Dickerson. eBird

Prothonotary Warbler

Common summer resident from mid April to mid September, chiefly along the Potomac River. The few records from later in September into October may be of migrants from the north, not local breeders. Prothonotary Warblers were apparently not breeding in Montgomery in the early 20th century. Cooke (1929): "This is the most recent addition to the list of breeding species...Previous to 1911,

it had been recorded only four times; since then it has occurred nearly every year. It is confined almost entirely to the region between Dyke and Mt. Vernon, only two records being from other localities; Falls Church, Va., and Chevy Chase, Md.” Cooke’s list covered the area within 20 miles of the capitol, up to about Pennyfield. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 2, 1988 Seneca. MB55:31

April 9, 2024 Dickerson. eBird photo

Spring High Count

May 12, 1956 —15 near Cabin John. S&R

Early Fall

August 20, 1960 Banded, Brookeville. A migrant there. MB16:97

Fall High Count

September 3, 1947 —12 near Cabin John. S&R

Late Fall

September 22, 2013 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

September 25, 1949 Seneca. MB5:58

October 5, 2017 Violette’s Lock. eBird photo

October 27, 1976 Banded, Potomac. MB33:45

Tennessee Warbler

Uncommon migrant from early to late May and from mid August to early November. Historically more common. The breeding success of Tennessee Warblers depends on the fluctuating abundance of spruce budworms in boreal Canada, so the number of migrants varies from year to year. There is a recent trend towards more late fall records in Montgomery, and especially in Washington DC. Twice in January. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 24, 1982 Sycamore Landing. MB38:102

May 1, 2022 Wheaton RP. eBird audio

May 5, 2020 Violette’s Lock. eBird photo

High Count

May 9, 1953 —15 at Seneca. S&R

Late Spring

June 1, 1984 Rockville. MB40:70, eBird

Early Fall

August 13, 2022 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

August 14, 2014 Wheaton RP. eBird

August 19, 1988 Banded, Potomac. MB45:36

High Count

September 12, 1954 —50 at Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

November 8, 2020 Blue Mash. eBird

November 14, 2020 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird photo

November 17, 1951 Banded. Unity. MB8:47

Winter, all records found

January 2, 1980 Gude's Nursery. MB36:63

January 20-21, 2021 At feeder, Lake Churchill. eBird photo

Orange-crowned Warbler

Rare spring migrant from early April to mid May. Uncommon fall migrant from early October to mid November, with some lingering as rare winter visitors.

Extremely rare in September. Orange-crowned Warblers are now "expected" winter visitors in DC, uncommon in the right places. It will be interesting to see if this trend expands into the cooler Montgomery suburbs. Notable records:

Early Fall

September 13, 1980 Violette's Lock. MB37:36

September 23, 2015 Wheaton RP. eBird

September 25, 2019 Redgate Park. eBird photo

Late Fall

November 11, 1959 Sycamore Landing. AN15:132

November 19, 2020 Layhill. eBird photo

November 19, 2021 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

November 19, 2022 Montevideo Road. eBird photo

November 30, 2023 Gunner's Lake, eBird photo

Winter, a few record with photos

December 17, 2022 Rachel Carson Conservation Park. eBird photo

January 9 - March 19, 2022 At feeder near Little Bennett. eBird photo

February 17-20, 2023 At feeder, Layhill. eBird photo

Early Spring

March 30, 2021 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Late Spring

April 28, 1984 Banded, Potomac. MB40:71
May 2, 2014 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo.
May 7, 1971 Near Gaithersburg. AN26:137
May 16, 1960 Banded, Brookeville. MB16:77

Nashville Warbler

Uncommon spring migrant from mid April to late May and from late August to early November. One of the more likely warblers to linger into early winter.

Notable records:

Early Spring

April 18, 1989 Seneca. MB45:113
April 18, 1992 Riley's Lock. eBird

Late Spring

May 19, 2020 Garrett Park. eBird photo
May 24, 1917 S&R
May 28, 1967 Seneca. MB23:78

Early Fall

August 23, 2013 Wheaton RP. eBird
August 24, 2011 Wheaton RP. eBird
August 24, 2013 Lake Needwood. eBird
August 26, 1986 Banded, Potomac. MB43:26

Late Fall

November 1, 2019 Redgate Park. eBird photo
November 2, 2019 Wheaton RP. eBird
November 13, 1992 Rockville. MB49:28

Winter, all records found

December 14, 2016 Trolley Museum. eBird
December 17, 2022 Rachel Carson Conservation Park. eBird photo
January 4, 1981 Gude Nursery. eBird

Connecticut Warbler

Casual spring migrant in late May, with only three records. Rare fall migrant from late August to late October, peaking late September to early October.

Spring, all records found

May 17, 1909 Specimen from Plummer's Island. S&R
May 21, 1983 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB39:81

May 21, 1984 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB40:71

Early Fall, notable records

August 25, 1988 Banded. Potomac. MB45:38

August 31, 1991 Banded. Potomac. MB48:27

September 2, 2021 Lake Needwood. eBird

September 4, 2021 Clarksburg. eBird photo

Late Fall, notable records

October 15, 2022 Gude Trail. eBird photo

October 20, 2013 Seneca Schoolhouse. eBird

October 21, 1984 Banded. Potomac. MB41:19

October 22, 2022 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird photo

November 7, 1970 Bethesda. MB27:49

Mourning Warbler

Uncommon migrant in May and from mid August to late September, a few into early October. Notable records:

Early Spring

May 4, 1975 Sycamore Landing. AN31:36

May 5, 1951 Two, Seneca. S&R, AN7:39

May 8, 2014 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Late Spring

May 23, 1989 Banded, Potomac. MB45:115

June 2, 1984 Banded, Sandy Spring, MB40:71

Early Fall

August 11, 1979 Upper Watts Branch. eBird

August 15, 1982 Banded, Potomac. MB39:24

August 23, 2015 Female chip notes, Northwest Branch-Burnt Mills. eBird audio

August 25, 2021 Lake Frank. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 10, 1987 Banded, Potomac. MB44:27

October 18, 1971 Above Sycamore Landing. AN27:45

Kentucky Warbler

Uncommon migrant and summer resident from late April, rare fall migrant to early September. Very few fall records suggest most local breeders depart early. Kentucky Warblers have declined noticeably in the last decade and are now

absent from many former favored Montgomery breeding spots. Could vanish as breeders, as they have already done in DC. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 16, 1999 Lake Frank. MB56:41

April 20, 1960 Brookeville MB16:77

April 30, 2019 Little Bennett. eBird audio

Late Fall

September 11, 1963 Wheaton. eBird

September 17, 2014 Wheaton RP. eBird

September 23, 1987 Banded, Potomac. MB44:27

Common Yellowthroat

Common migrant and summer resident from early April to late October, a few through November. Casual winter visitor, some surviving the winter. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 7, 1992 Sycamore Landing. MB48:98, eBird

March 17, 2023 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

March 31, 2021 Pennyfield. eBird

April 3, 1991 Hughes Hollow. MB 47:125

A few Winter records

December 17, 2017 - February 27, 2018 Bethesda Trolley Trail. eBird photo

December 26, 2018 Hughes. eBird photo

January 4, 1958 Pennyfield. AN13:122

January 22, 1966 Pennyfield. MB22:50

January 7-29, 1980 Hughes Hollow. eBird

January 24, 2021 Elton Farm Rd. eBird photo

Hooded Warbler

Uncommon migrant and very uncommon summer resident from mid April to late September. Hooded Warblers have declined noticeably in the last decade and are now absent from many former favored Montgomery breeding spots. Could vanish as breeders, as they have already done in DC. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 12, 2024 Black Hill RP. eBird

April 16, 1992 Pennyfield. MB48:98

April 20, 1984 Banded, Potomac. MB40:70

April 20, 2019 Wheaton RP. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 5, 1989 Banded, Potomac. MB46:26

October 5, 2019 Wheaton RP. eBird photo

October 11, 1992 Pennyfield. MB49:30

October 12, 2015 Rachel Carson Park. eBird

American Redstart

Common migrant and common but local summer resident from mid April to mid October. Fall migration begins in late July. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 7, 1992 Seneca. MB51:120

Late Fall

October 25, 1985 Banded, Potomac. MB42:20

October 27, 1969 Bethesda. MB26:27

November 7, 1991 Potomac. MB48:26

November 20, 1984 Rockville. MB41:19

Cape May Warbler

Uncommon migrant from late April to late May and from mid August to late October. One winter record, and there are five additional winter records for surrounding counties and DC. The breeding success of Cape May Warblers depends on the fluctuating abundance of spruce budworms in boreal Canada, so the number of migrants varies from year to year. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 21, 2023 Damascus. eBird

April 22-23, 2022 Darnestown. eBird photo, audio

April 24, 1969 C&O Canal. AN24:169

High Count

May 12, 1951— 36 near Seneca. S&R

Late Spring

May 25, 2003 Little Bennett. MB60:28

Early Fall

August 15, 2024 Blue Mash. eBird photo

August 16, 1980 near Potomac. MB37:36

August 20, 2012 Pennyfield. eBird

August 25, 1951 S&R

Late Fall

October 20, 2020 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird photo

October 22, 1947 Cabin John. MB3:81

October 22, 2016 Silver Spring. eBird

Winter, all records found

February 24, 1980 Upper Watts Branch. eBird

Cerulean Warbler

Rare spring migrant from late April to late May. Casual fall migrant from late August to late September, with only six recent fall records. In the second half of the 20th century Cerulean Warblers were common breeders all along the Potomac River in Montgomery County. Also breeding in a few spots along the Patuxent River. They declined quickly in the late 1990s and the last attempted breeding in the county was about 2006.

Equally interesting, Cerulean Warblers were not breeding in the region in the early 20th century. Their breeding range expanded eastward from the Ohio Valley. Cooke (1929): "Very rare, or accidental in migration." Stewart and Robbins (1958): "Fairly common breeder" along the Potomac in Montgomery and DC. Did Cerulean Warblers breed in our region several hundred years ago, before the forest was cut? We will never know.

Notable records:

Early Spring

April 18, 1964 Pennyfield. AN19:181

April 20, 2023 Hughes Hollow. eBird

April 27, 2019 Block house Point. eBird

April 28, 2012 Black Hill RP. eBird photo

Late Spring

May 8, 2020 Violette's Lock. eBird audio

May 8, 2024 Wheaton RP. eBird audio

May 9-15, 2020 Lake Frank. eBird

High Count

May 1, 1955 —11 Great Falls. AN11:34

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in three blocks, probable in two.

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in three blocks, probable in six.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Confirmed in two blocks, probable in four.

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-24 Possible in one block. July 19, 2022 Little Monocacy. eBird

Fall

August 27, 2012 Wheaton RP. eBird

August 31, 2023 Lake Needwood. eBird photo

September 4, 2021 Wheaton RP. ebird

September 9, 2017 Wheaton RP. eBird

September 25, 1955 Seneca. S&R

September 29, 2012 Meadowside Nature Center. eBird

Northern Parula

Common migrant and summer resident from early April to late October. Three December - January records. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 27, 1999 Kensington Heights Park. MB56:41

March 29, 1989 Seneca. MB45:113

April 2, 1998 Seneca. MB55:31

Historical High Counts

May 8, 1954 —102 in Montgomery County. S&R

September 18, 1954 —35 near Cabin John. S&R

Late Fall

November 4, 1979 C&O Canal. MB36:35

November 8, 2020 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird photo

Winter, all records found

December 19, 2021 C&O Canal, Brookmont. eBird

December 28, 2020 Cabin John. eBird

December 29, 1974 - January 2, 1975 AN30:187

Magnolia Warbler

Common migrant from late April to late May and from mid August to mid October. Once in late July, presumably a very early fall migrant. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 17, 1949 Cabin John. AN4:233

April 20, 2011 Carderock. eBird

April 26, 2022 Northwest Branch Tr-Burnt Mills. eBird photo

April 30, 2017 Little Bennett. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 1, 1985 Banded, Potomac. MB41:68

June 2, 1984 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB40:70

June 5, 1977 Sandy Spring. MB33:143

Early Fall

July 23, 1960 Banded, Brookeville. MB16:97

August 6, 2021 Blue Mash. eBird

August 22, 1951 Seneca. AN7:91

High Count

September 25, 1989 —15 banded, Potomac. MB46:108

Late Fall

November 2, 1974 Silver Spring. MB31:40

November 2, 2017 Blue Mash. eBird

November 8, 2018 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird photo

Bay-breasted Warbler

Uncommon migrant from early to late May and from late August to mid October. The breeding success of Bay-breasted Warblers depends on the fluctuating abundance of spruce budworms in boreal Canada, so the number of migrants varies from year to year. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 29, 1990 Pennyfield. MB46:105

April 30, 2020 Croydon Creek Nature Center. eBird

May 1, 1932 S&R

Late Spring

May 28, 1987 Banded, Potomac. MB43:82

June 1, 1967 MB23:79

June 2, 1973 MB29:123

Early Fall

August 16, 2024 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

August 19, 2012 Two, Wheaton RP. eBird

August 31, 2021 Two, Lake Frank. eBird photo

Historical High Count

September 12, 1954 —18 at Seneca. AN10:95, S&R

Late Fall

October 8, 2016 Little Bennett. eBird photo
October 24, 1965 Banded. Colesville. AN21:42
October 25, 2021 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird

Blackburnian Warbler

Uncommon spring migrant from late April to late May. Common fall migrant from mid August to mid October. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 22, 2005 Hughes Hollow. eBird
April 23, 1920 S&R
April 28, 2021 Berryville Rd. eBird photo

Late Spring

May 25, 2020 Darnestown. eBird photo
June 2, 2020 Hughes Hollow. eBird
June 4, 2022 Cabin John RP. eBird

Early Fall

August 12, 2015 Two, Wheaton RP. eBird
August 16, 1991 Black Hill RP. MB48:26
August 21, 2021 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

Historical High Count

September 25, 1949 —12 near Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

October 8, 2019 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird photo
October 26, 1974 MB31:40
November 11, 1980 Rockville. MB37:36

Yellow Warbler

Uncommon migrant and summer resident from mid April to early October. Fall migration begins in late July. One wintering record. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 7, 1992 Hughes Hollow. MB48:97

Late Fall

October 4, 2020 Blue Mash. eBird photo
October 4, 2021 Redgate Park. eBird photo
October 6, 1927 S&R

Winter, all records found

January 16 - February 1, 2022 At feeder, Silver Spring. eBird photo

Chestnut-sided Warbler

Common spring migrant from late April to late May. Common fall migrant from mid August to mid October. Once in December. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 24, 2022 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo, audio

April 25, 1949 Westmoreland Hills. AN4:201

April 28, 2021 Berryville Rd. eBird photo

Late Spring

May 30, 1998 Hughes Hollow. MB 55:31

May 30, 2022 Blue Mash. eBird

June 4, 2023 North Potomac. eBird audio

Early Fall

August 10, 2014 Lake Needwood. eBird

August 14, 2024 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

August 15, 2000 Upper Watts Branch. MB57:64

August 18, 2021 Ken-Gar Palisades. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 21, 2020 Potomac. eBird

October 26, 2014 Lake Needwood. eBird

November 1, 2024 Redgate Park. eBird

Early Winter

December 20, 2015 - January 3, 2016 Stonebridge Valley Drive. eBird photo

Blackpoll Warbler

Common spring migrant from late April to early June. Uncommon fall migrant from early September to late October, a few lingering into early winter. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 20, 2001 Brookside Gardens. eBird

April 20, 2020 Rockville. eBird

April 25, 1970 Above Pennyfield. AN25:140

April 26, 2022 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Historical High Count

May28, 1949 —100 at Sycamore Island. S&R

Late Spring

June 7, 2014 Takoma Park. eBird
June 8, 1975 MB31:115
June 12, 2005 Little Bennett. eBird
June 27, 1951 Rock Creek. AN7:39

Early Fall

August 26, 2022 Wheaton RP. eBird
August 28, 2015 Wheaton RP. eBird
August 30, 1999 Colesville. MB56:57
September 3, 1990 Banded, Potomac. MB47:23

Late Fall

October 30, 2021 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo
November 2, 2018 Lake Hallowell. eBird
November 4, 2015 Sandy Spring. eBird
November 10, 2012 Two, Violette's Lock. eBird
December 9, 2017 Sligo Creek. eBird photo

Black-throated Blue Warbler

Common migrant from late April to late May and from late August to late October. Rarely lingering into December. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 15, 2024 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo, audio
April 20, 2017 Rock Creek. eBird
April 22, 1995 C&O Canal. MB52:89
April 24, 2022 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Historical High Count

May 9, 1953 —40 at Unity. S&R

Late Spring

May 30, 1998 Ashton. MB55:31

Early Fall

August 19, 1988 Banded, Potomac. MB45:37
August 20, 2000 Meadows Park. MB57:64
August 23, 2015 Little Bennett. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 31, 1953 Chevy Chase. AN9:146
November 4, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

November 8, 2015 Croydon Creek Nature Center. eBird

Winter, all records found

December 18, 1994 Seneca. NAB

December 21, 1997 Hughes Hollow. MB55:18

Palm Warbler

Common migrant from late March to mid May and from mid September to mid November. A few linger into early winter and may attempt to over-winter. Two usually recognizable subspecies pass through. The "Yellow" Palm, subspecies *hypochrysea*, migrates earlier in the spring, and later in the fall, than the "Western" Palm, subspecies *palmarum*. They overlap, especially in fall. S&R: "The bulk of the Western Palms pass through before October 10; the bulk of the Yellow Palms after that date." Notable records:

Early Spring

March 11, 2023 Riley's Lock. eBird

March 15, 1998 Rileys Lock. MB55:31

March 18, 2024 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

March 21, 2020 Yellow Palm, Hughes Road. eBird photo

Late Spring

May 11, 2002 Triadelphia. MB59:41

May 13, 1923 Yellow Palm, Plummer's Island. S&R

May 19, 2022 Little Bennett Golf Course. eBird photo

Early Fall

August 30, 1939 S&R

September 2, 2016 Evans Parkway. eBird photo

September 9, 1949 Woodside. MB5:58

Winter

November 25, 1949 - February 5, 1950 Yellow Palm, Unity. MB6:14,33

December 19, 1954 Six Western, one Yellow, near Rockville. S&R

January 1, 1955 Two Yellow Palms, Great Falls. AN10:216

January 24-30, 1999 Yellow Palm, Olney. MB56:32

February 5, 2021 Yellow Palm, Colesville. eBird

Pine Warbler

Uncommon migrant and summer resident from late February to late October. Rare winter visitor, usually at feeders. Breeding birds are found in pine groves,

sometimes in deciduous forest where there is a loose collection of Virginia pines. Spring migration peaks early to mid April. Fall migration peaks late September to mid October, based on data at non-breeding sites like Violette's Lock. Migrants are found anywhere, not tied to pines.

Yellow-rumped Warbler

Common migrant from early April to mid May and from late September through late fall. Uncommon winter visitor, sometimes quite scarce by late winter. The yellow-throated western subspecies has been reported once, April 4, 1959 at Cabin John, (AN14:202) Notable records:

Early Fall

August 25, 2023 Blue Mash. eBird photo

August 31, 2023 Lake Frank. eBird

September 4, 1999 Two, Rocky Gorge Watershed. MB56:57

Historical High Counts

October 18, 1976 —134 banded at Potomac. MB 33:45

May 13, 1950 —300 along the C& O Canal. S&R

Late Spring

May 25, 2016 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

June 20, 1970 Hughes Hollow. AN25:186

Yellow-throated Warbler

Uncommon migrant and uncommon to rare summer resident, from early April to early October. Yellow-throated Warblers have noticeably declined as breeders along the Potomac River in the last twenty years. They usually breed only along the Potomac River, but were confirmed along Little Bennett Creek and probable along the Patuxent during the first atlas. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 20, 2021 Two at Blue Mash. eBird

March 22, 2020 Triadelphia-Greenbridge Rd. eBird

March 23, 2012 Billy Goat Trail. eBird

March 27, 1997 Violette's Lock. MB54:46

Montgomery Co Atlas 1971-73: Confirmed in three blocks.

First Maryland Atlas 1983-87: Confirmed in three blocks, probable in six.

Second Maryland Atlas 2002-06: Probable in six blocks.

Third Maryland Atlas 2020-24: Confirmed in one block, probable in four.

Late Fall

September 26, 1953 S&R

October 5, 2017 Two at Violette's Lock. eBird photos.

October 9, 2014 Hughes Hollow. eBird

October 12, 2018 Wheaton RP. eBird

Prairie Warbler

Uncommon migrant and summer resident from mid April to early October. Once in December. Breeding birds are tied the successional stage between field and forest, especially with cedars. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 1, 2010 Riley's Lock. eBird

April 4, 2019 Hughes Hollow. eBird

April 11, 1987 Hughes Hollow. MB43:81

Early Fall

August 12, 2000 Upper Watts Branch. Migrant at this location. MB57(1-4):64

Late Fall

October 19, 1994 Pennyfield. MB52:64

October 31, 2023 Redgate Park. eBird photo

November 3, 2024 Hughes Hollow. eBird

Winter, all records found

December 16, 1995 Fairland Park. NAB50:525

Black-throated Gray Warbler

Casual vagrant from the west, with two records.

October 15, 2005 Little Bennett Park. MD/DCRC

January 9-23, 2013 Forest Glen. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Townsend's Warbler

Casual vagrant from the west, with one record. The American Ornithological Society is in the process of replacing the English name, new name TBD.

March 10, 2006 Sycamore Landing. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Black-throated Green Warbler

Common spring migrant from mid April to late May. Common fall migrant from late August to late October. Two records of singing birds in late June and in late July. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 6, 2019 Riley's Lock. eBird photo

April 7, 1995 Hughes Hollow. MB52:89

April 16, 1950 Glen Echo. S&R

Late Spring

June 6, 1992 Gaithersburg. MB48:128

June 9, 2013 Clopper Lake. eBird photo

"Summer"

June 26, 1948 Cabin John. S&R

July 20, 1947 Singing at Cabin John. MB3:51 S&R

Early Fall

August 14, 2022 Little Bennett. eBird

August 19, 2018 Wheaton RP. eBird photo

Historical High Count

September 24, 1948 —40 near Unity. AN4:62

September 25, 1949 —30 near Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

October 30, 2016 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo

October 31, 1953 Two, Chevy Chase. AN9:146, S&R

November 1, 2024 Blue Mash. eBird photo

November 21, 2020 Martinsburg Road. eBird photo

Canada Warbler

Common spring migrant from early to late May. Common fall migrant from mid August to late September. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 27, 1984 Banded, Potomac. MB40:70

April 30, 1996 Violette's Lock. eBird

April 30, 2019 Wheaton RP. eBird

Historical High Count

May 13, 1950 —42 C&O canal. AN6:21

Late Spring

June 1, 1984 Upper Watts Branch. eBird

June 3, 1984 Banded, Sandy Spring. MB40:71

June 19, 1971 Sycamore Landing. MB27:148

Early Fall

August 9, 2016 Silver Spring. eBird

August 11, 1963 MB19:101

August 16, 2021 Wheaton Stormwater Ponds. eBird photo

Historical High Count

August 29, 1948 —14 near Great Falls. S&R, AN4:24

Late Fall

October 12, 2021 Croydon Creek Nature Center. eBird

October 18, 1976 Banded, Potomac. MB33:45

October 23, 1921 S&R

Wilson's Warbler

Uncommon spring migrant from early to late May. Uncommon fall migrant from late August to late October. Rarely lingers into December. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 25, 1994 Kensington. MB51:120

April 28, 2024 Sycamore Landing. eBird photo, audio

Historical High Count

May 12, 1951 —10 along the C and O Canal. S&R

Late Spring

May 26, 2020 Wheaton Branch Ponds. eBird photo

May 31, 1951 S&R

Early Fall

August 16, 2012 Wheaton RP. eBird

August 18, 1976 Banded, Potomac. MB32:125

August 22, 2015 Little Bennett. eBird photo

Historical High Count

September 12, 1954 —10 at Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

October 11, 2020 Lake Frank. eBird photo

October 22, 2018 Blue Mash. eBird

November 6-8, 1965 Bethesda. MB22:11

November 11, 1992 Violette's Lock. MB49:30

November 14, 2014 Thornhill Rd. eBird

Early Winter, all records found

December 21-28, 1975 NAB30:309, eBird

December 21, 1986 Hughes Hollow. MB43:57

Cardinal, Tanagers, Grosbeaks, Buntings, Dickcissel

Scarlet, Summer, and Western Tanagers are now placed in the family *Cardinalidae*. They are no longer considered true Tanagers, family *Thraupidae*.

Summer Tanager

Uncommon migrant and summer resident from late April to early October. Two at feeders in winter. Summer Tanagers are at the edge of their breeding range in Montgomery County. They are more common on the coastal plain. The population in Montgomery has fluctuated, from more in the 1980s to very few by 2000, then increasing again. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 18, 1896 Cooke

April 20, 2001 Brookside Gardens. eBird

April 21, 2013 Damascus. eBird photo

Historical High Count

May 9, 1953 Six near Seneca. S&R.

Late Fall

September 19, 1983 Banded, Potomac. MB40:26

October 1, 2020 Gaithersburg. eBird photo

October 5, 2019 Sudbury Rd. eBird

October 11, 1976 Silver Spring. MB33:46

October 14, 1969 MB26:23

Winter, all records found

December 16, 2013 - April 11, 2014 Bethesda. eBird photo January 16, 2014.

January 19 - March 7, 2015 Gaithersburg. eBird photo

Scarlet Tanager

Common migrant and summer resident from late April to mid October. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 13, 1993 Pennyfield. eBird

April 16, 1999 Lake Frank. MB56:42

April 17, 2024 Violette's Lock. eBird photo, audio

Historical High Count

May 9, 1953 —42 along the C and O Canal. SR

Late Fall

October 15, 2020 Blue Mash. eBird photo

October 23, 1965 Banded. MB22:7

October 27, 1959 Two, Darnestown. MB16:26

November 4, 2022 Lake Hallowell. eBird photo

Western Tanager

Casual vagrant, with six records, three in spring, once in fall, twice in December.

April 22 - May 6, 1978 Takoma Park. Photographed. MD/DCRC, MB34:163

April 24, 1973 Chevy Chase. AN28:177

May 12, 2012 Black Hill Regional Park. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

September 2, 2002 Darnestown. MD/DCRC, MB59(3-4):31

December 6-9, 2024 At feeder, present "a few days" before the 6th. Little Seneca Reservoir. eBird photo

December 15-22, 2001 Sandy Spring. MD/DCRC, eBird photo

Northern Cardinal

Common year-round resident. Like many "permanent" residents, individuals sometimes travel. S&R: "An adult banded in Montgomery County on March 10, 1939, was recovered in western Pennsylvania (New Kensington) on July 20, 1940. An immature bird banded in Montgomery County on August 20, 1943, was recovered in south-eastern Pennsylvania on November 2, 1943."

Rose-breasted Grosbeak

Common spring migrant from late April to late May. Common fall migrant from early September to late October. Once in July. A few into November and December. Once in February. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 15, 2022 Hughes Hollow. eBird

April 16, 1980 Darnestown. MB36:127

April 22, 1950 Forest Glen. S&R

April 22, 2017 At feeder, Gaithersburg. eBird photo

Late Spring

June 2-3, 2001 Violette's Lock. MB58:43

Summer

July 24, 2015 Male at feeder, Chevy Chase. eBird

Early Fall

August 8, 2023 Hughes Hollow. eBird

August 18, 2022 Wheaton RP. eBird

August 21, 2024 Redgate Park. eBird photo

Late Fall

November 22, 1987 At feeder, Silver Spring. MB44:27

November 23, 1952 Takoma Park. S&R, AN8:148

November 23, 1969 Hughes Hollow. AN25:50

November 18 - December 3, 2015 Violette's Lock. eBird photo

Winter, all records found

February 20, 1964 At feeder, Bethesda. NAB18:345, AN19:181

Black-headed Grosbeak

Casual vagrant, one bird repeating at a feeder for two winters. This bird crossed the line into Washington, DC as well.

February 3 - April 8, 1963 Westmorland Hills. MD/DCRC, AN18:118, MB20:89

December 7, 1963 - April 10, 1964 Westmorland Hills. MD/DCRC, AN19:127, MB20:89

Blue Grosbeak

Uncommon migrant and summer resident from early May to mid October.

Notable records:

Early Spring

April 16-18, 2022 Male at feeder, Boyds. eBird photo

April 26, 1970 Carderock. AN25:141

April 28, 2017 At feeder, Layhill. eBird photo

Late Fall

October 15, 2019 Sherwood Forest. eBird photo

October 16, 2021 Lake Needwood. eBird audio

October 25, 1985 Rockville. MB42:21

Indigo Bunting

Common migrant and summer resident from late April to late October. Once in December. Notable records:

Early Spring

March 21, 2020 Hughes Hollow. eBird photo

April 4, 1983 MB39:70

Historical High Counts

May 12, 1951 —112 near Seneca. S&R

September 25, 1949 —35 near Seneca. S&R

Late Fall

October 22, 1972 Banded. MB29:25

November 2, 2014 Oaks Landfill. eBird photo

November 4, 2021 Woodstock Equestrian. eBird

November 22, 2022 Blue Mash. eBird

Winter, all records found

December 16, 1977 South Glen Rd. eBird

Painted Bunting

Casual vagrant, with four records, all adult males.

April 18-23, 1972 Male, Franklin St, Kensington. Photo. MD/DCRC, MB28:146

October 30, 2024 Male at feeder. Muddy Branch. eBird photo

December 25, 2020 Male at feeder, Gaithersburg. eBird photo

December 30, 2020 - February 12, 2021 Male, Great Falls NP. eBird photo

Dickcissel

Rare migrant and summer resident from mid April to mid October. Fall migration begins in August. Casual winter visitor. Dickcissels were formerly more common as breeders. Fewer breeding sites in recent years as their preferred meadow habitat disappears. Also fewer records of wintering birds. In our area Dickcissels prefer lush tall meadows with a variety of wildflowers. In recent years territorial birds have also been found in overgrown horse pastures with hedgerows, and once in the soybean fields at Patton. I don't know if they succeed in those situations. Notable records:

Early Spring

April 7, 1980 Rockville. MB36:128

April 15-16, 1968 Bethesda. AN23:157

Historic High Count

June 7, 1952 —25 in the Dickerson area. S&R

S&R: Bred near Dickerson 1928.

Fall Migration

August 20, 2005 Germantown Soccerplex. Migrant at this location. eBird

September 4-12, 2021 Woodstock Equestrian. Migrant at this location. eBird
photo

September 24, 2013 Flyover, Wheaton Branch Ponds. Migrant at this
location. eBird

October 4-5, 2021 Redgate Park. Migrant at this location. eBird photo

November 22-24, 1951 Banded, Unity. S&R

November 30, 1980 Rockville. MB37:37

Winter, all records found

December 3-6, 2023 Redgate Park. eBird photo

December 12, 1989 - March 4, 1990 MB46:58,106

December 16, 2000 Near Brookeville. MB58:30

January 2, 1966 Near Seneca. NAB20:180

January 8, 1964 Travilah. AN19:130

February 1 - March 24, 1972 Chevy Chase. MB28:81

February 28, 1962 Near Travilah. MB18:43

March 2, 2015 Hughes Hollow. eBird

March 13, 1973 Germantown. MB29:59

March 17, 1957 Silver Spring. NAB11:254