

FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY Bird Mortality list through November 9, 2023

A list of known birds killed by window-strikes—since one observer began keeping records-- with species, date, and, in most cases, the link to the actual eBird checklist. Many are accompanied by comments here; full comments are on the eBird checklists. Most are documented with photos and can be viewed via the checklists.

Almost all dead birds have been found on the north side of the Hammond Building, even some of the spring migrants that would have been flying in from the south. The area of highest mortality is in the vicinity of the trees. The highest season of mortality is fall migration, a period that extends from late August through October.

An analysis of estimated time of bird death is practically impossible. (It would be wonderful if someone could study the data and try to pinpoint the most likely time of bird deaths.) However, the theory that makes the most sense is that birds are coming in to rest where there are trees. Very likely these are very tired birds, since the urban landscape would probably not be a first choice as migratory stop-off. Thus they seek out trees. The bird/window strikes may be happening in the evening when birds are coming in to rest for the night. Or the strikes are occurring when the birds become active in early morning and attempt to resume their flights. (Both of these possibilities can also apply to non-migrants that rest in the trees at night and resume activity in early morning.) The angle of the sun at this time of day and season may be a factor.

The bottom line: the birds see what they think is open sky reflected in the large, unbroken window surfaces and fly into the windows.

All birds below were found deceased except the one noted with an asterisk (not likely to survive). This list most likely represents only a small fraction of actual bird/window collisions for a few reasons: 1) Very few birders visit FSU and make observations; 2) Almost all observations were submitted by one birder. 3) Other observers may have noted dead birds but not reported to eBird, since general directions indicate that dead birds should not be reported on checklists. The local eBird reviewer made an exception in this case.

2017

Red-eyed Vireo **2017 08 18** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73901899>

Red-eyed Vireo **2017 08 28** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73902517>

American Redstart **2017 09 10** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73902001>

Reason for gap in data unknown

2020

White-throated Sparrow **2020 09 21** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73948493>

Magnolia Warbler **2020 09 21** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73948493>

Red-breasted Nuthatch **2020 09 23** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73977461>

Common yellowthroat **2020 10 01** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S128619262>

Common yellowthroat **2020 10 02** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74336687>

Swainson's thrush **2020 10 03** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74381168>

White-throated sparrow **2020 10 03** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74381168>

Common yellowthroat **2020 10 03** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74381168>

White-crowned sparrow **2020 10 09** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74616681>

Northern parula **2020 10 10** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74663178>
Swamp sparrow **2020 10 12** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74755728>
Swamp sparrow **2020 10 13** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74788303>
Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond Building; not present yesterday, so certainly killed overnight or during the day today. This is the second Swamp Sparrow found dead here in the last two days. (The previous bird was still on the ground under the trees where I left it yesterday.)
Black-capped chickadee* **2020 10 14** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74825773>
Cedar waxwing **2020 10 26** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S75450547>
Black-capped Chickadee **2020 10 27** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S75500631>
Red-breasted Nuthatch **2020 11 02** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S75759934>
Ruby-crowned kinglet **2020 11 06** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S75908656>
American robin **2020 12 26** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S78034602>
Black-capped chickadee **2020 10 27** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S75500631>

2021

White-throated sparrow **2021 05 04** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S87130877>
Nashville Warbler **2021 05 09** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S87701447>
Dead under the windows on the N side (not the S side) of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. My first record of this species for the campus. (Bird found freshly dead on 9 May 2021; accompanying photo taken the next day, 10 May 2021.)
Red-breasted nuthatch **2021 05 12** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S87913638>
House finch **2021 06 18**
Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. A recent fledgling that had apparently not yet learned the local hazards. (Accompanying photo taken the next day, 19 June 2021.) <https://ebird.org/checklist/S90404896>
Red-eyed vireo **2021 06 26** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S90841597>
Yellow-bellied sapsucker **2021 07 04** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S91267386>
House Finch **2021 07 04**
Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. A recently fledged individual that had not yet learned the local hazards.
<https://ebird.org/checklist/S91770154>
Ruby-throated hummingbird **2021 07 06** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S91375088>
Gray catbird **2021 07 20** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S92069580>
Dead on the ground under the front windows of the campus recreation center on North Street, a place I have not found dead birds before. Presumably a bird of the year that did not know the local hazards, but not obviously a recent fledgling.
Common yellowthroat **2021 09 04** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S94193851>
Ruby-throated hummingbird **2021 09 10** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S94350549>
(The bird was found dead on 7 September 2021; it was placed in a protected location and the accompanying photo was taken three days later, on 10 September 2021.)
Ruby-throated hummingbird **2021 09 11** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S94534436>
Ruby-throated Hummingbird **2021 09 12** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S94584287>
American Redstart **2021 09 12** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S94584287>
Indigo bunting **2021 09 25** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S95170162>
Blue-headed vireo **2021 10 06** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S95693007>
Common yellowthroat **2021 10 08** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S95783692>
Common yellowthroat **2021 10 20** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S128617095>

Golden-crowned kinglet **2021 10 24** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S96666062>
Indigo bunting **2021 10 25** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S95170162>
Dark-eyed junco **2021 10 29** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S96856990>
White-throated sparrow **2021 10 29** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S95359861>
Lincoln's sparrow **2021 10 29** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S95359861>
Ovenbird **2021 10 29** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S95359861>
Purple Finch **2021 11 02** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S97048835>
Dark-eyed junco **2021 11 27** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S98155853>

2022

American robin (1) **2022 02 05** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S102098196>
Media link: <https://macaulaylibrary.org/asset/413686191> and <https://macaulaylibrary.org/asset/413684951>
American robin (2) **2022 02 06** <https://ebird.org/checklist/S102176519>

April 17, 2022

1 American Robin

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present Friday, so killed either yesterday or today. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S107346984>

May 14, 2022 5:40 a.m.

1 Ovenbird

Freshly dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building.
<https://ebird.org/checklist/S109969492>

May 24, 2022

1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S111220792>

July 3, 2022

1 House Finch, juvenile

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building <https://ebird.org/checklist/S114358161>

July 27, 2022

1 Mourning Dove

Dead under the windows on the **S side (not N side) of the Hammond building**; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S115888446>

August 3, 2022

1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Female or immature male. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S116298200>

August 4, 2022 7:55 p.m.

1 Red-eyed Vireo

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S116349005>

August 6, 2022

1 Northern Waterthrush

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. First record for the campus and quite a surprising find. Underparts uniformly washed with yellow, eyeline yellowish, legs beige but not pink. Both Waterthrush species have now been recorded from the campus as window kills.

August 13, 2022

1 Louisiana Waterthrush

Dead under the windows on the S side (not N side) of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. First record for the campus, and quite surprising at this time of year. Perhaps an individual engaging in post-breeding dispersal? Underparts mostly white with yellowish flanks; eyeline white.

August 19, 2022

1 House Sparrow

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. House Sparrows are abundant in the vicinity of the Hammond building but they are resident birds that know the local hazards and so are not often found as window kills.

September 4, 2022

1 Northern Waterthrush

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Underparts all washed with yellow, supercilium uniformly yellowish from front to back, legs brownish (but not light pinkish).

**September 8, 2022**

1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S118357175>

September 15, 2022

1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S118816332>

September 23, 2022

Three dead birds outside the Science Center found this a.m. by another person on campus



Lincoln's Sparrow



Yellow Warbler



Common Yellowthroat

September 25, 2022

1 Common Yellowthroat

Dead under the windows on the **South side** (not N side) of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Immature male with some black on the face.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S119435333>

September 26, 2022

1 Tennessee Warbler

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Very plain, dark greenish above, lighter yellow-green below, eyeline, very faint wing bars; confirmed as Tennessee rather than Orange-crowned by white undertail coverts. A new species for the campus. Specimen was fresh and still pliable but it had been on the ground in a heavy downpour over the previous hour and so was already in poor condition. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S119497172>

September 27, 2022

Communication from anonymous eBird reporter:

"I've . . . found birds all along that north glass wall from one end to the other – they haven't been concentrated in any particular zone. I've found very few birds on the south side, even in spring; almost all the window kills are on the north side in the fall. "

September 29, 2022

1 Common Yellowthroat

Dead under the windows on the **S side (not N side) of the Hammond building**; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Immature male with some black on the face.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S119680159>

October 8, 2022

1 Lincoln's Sparrow

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees); not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. A previous window strike for this species occurred a year ago on 29 September 2021.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S120271142>

October 12, 2022

1 Palm Warbler

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Second record for the campus.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S120568768>

October 16, 2022

1 Palm Warbler

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today.

October 17, 2022

1 Dark-eyed Junco

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. First record of the season.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S120864597>

October 19, 2022

1 Black-throated Blue Warbler

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. First fall record for the campus and a somewhat late record for the region.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S120970826>

October 20, 2022

1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (NW section along the plaza). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Specimen had already been stepped on and was in poor condition; no red on crown. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S121019572>

October 22, 2022

1 Black-capped Chickadee

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (NW section along the plaza). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S121149571>

October 27, 2022

1 Swainson's Thrush

Dead under the entryway windows on the **W side of the recreation center**. Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Back and tail uniformly brown, not rusty as in a Veery nor two-toned as in a Hermit Thrush; distinct eye ring. This is the first window-strike I have found at this particular (small and random) location. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S121420911>

October 28, 2022

1 Ruby-crowned kinglet

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (NW section along the plaza). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. No red on crown.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S121470169>

October 31, 2022

1 Black-capped Chickadee

One stunned but still-living individual under the windows of the Hammond Building. It was sitting upright and breathing, but not moving.

UPDATE: Bird was found dead the next day, 1 November 2022, in the same spot under the Hammond windows (E section under the trees). <https://ebird.org/checklist/S121655342>

November 9, 2022

1 White-breasted Nuthatch

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S122141467>

2023**April 11, 2023**

2 American Robin

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (central section by the entrance). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. I have seen Pigeon remains on the Hammond plaza before that were probably Cooper's Hawk leftovers, but this is the first time I have seen an intact bird that appeared to be a window strike.

April 13, 2023

1 Rock Pigeon

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (central section by the entrance). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. I have seen Pigeon remains on the Hammond plaza before that were probably Cooper's Hawk leftovers, but this is the first time I have seen an intact bird that appeared to be a window strike.

May 3, 2023

1 Black-and-white Warbler

Dead under the windows on the N side (not S side) of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Still quite pliant so likely killed earlier in the day today. First warbler of the year and first Black-and-white found as a window strike (if I remember correctly).

May 15, 2023 7:00 PM

Fitchburg State University Campus

1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird Adult male

Dead under the windows on the N side (not S side) of the Hammond building (NW section along the plaza). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today.

May 19, 2023 5:50 a.m.

1 Veery

Dead under the windows on the N side (not S side) of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. First record for the campus.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S138451272>

June 4, 2023 7:55 PM

Fitchburg State University Campus

1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird Adult male

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (central section by the entrance). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today.

June 8, 2023

1 Cedar Waxwing

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today.

June 11, 2023

1 House Finch, juvenile

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Fledgling; not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S141302922>

June 19, 2023

1 American Robin

A speckled fledgling, dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today.

August 2, 2023

1 Ovenbird

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (central section by the entrance). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Quite surprising and unexpected, especially at this time of year. I have two other window-strike records (May and September) . . .An instance of unsuccessful post-breeding dispersal perhaps? (The bird did not appear to be a juvenile.)

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S146310762>

August 18, 2023

1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird

A female-plumaged individual, dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (central section by the entrance). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. (It had already been stepped on and damaged and so was not suitable for a photograph.)

August 20, 2023

1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (central section by the entrance). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Another female-plumaged individual, the second one in the past three days.

September 17, 2023

1 Red-eyed Vireo

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S150167533>

September 22, 2023

1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Immature male with just a spot of ruby on the throat.

September 27, 2023

1 Palm Warbler

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today; already stepped on and damaged, so not suitable for a photograph.

September 28, 2023

1 Red-eyed Vireo

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S150965048>

October 9, 2023

1 Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (central section by the entrance). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. A late record for the campus and late for the region.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S151845322>

October 12, 2023

1 Cedar Waxwing

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Immature with some streaking on the underparts.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S152051411>

October 13, 2023

1 Common Yellowthroat

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today.

A memorial conifer in the main quadrangle that had died and was cut down a few weeks ago was replaced today with a new small conifer. I put the remains of this Yellowthroat under its lower branches.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S152121186>

October 15, 2023

1 White-throated Sparrow

Dead under the windows on the S side of the Hammond building (not the N side, as is usual at this time of year). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S152353374>

October 25, 2023

1 Common Yellowthroat

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Female or immature; specimen had already been stepped on and was in poor condition. A late record for the campus.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S153068493>

ADDENDUM post 10/27/23

November 2, 2023

1 White-throated Sparrow

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (central section by the entrance). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S153618773>

November 6, 2023

1 Orange-crowned Warbler

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. A new species for the campus and a relatively late record for the region. Note grayish face with weak thin line through eye; yellowish breast with faint streaking; lower belly white but undertail coverts distinctly yellow; dark legs; no markings on tail or wings.

November 9, 2023

1 Hermit Thrush

Dead under the windows on the N side of the Hammond building (E section under the trees). Not present yesterday, so killed overnight or during the day today. Specimen was already in poor condition from today's weather.