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Common Nighthawk Population Decline in the Seven County Metropolitan Region

Results of the 2001 statewide volunteer nighthawk survey

Carol W. Carter
Laurence N. Gillette

The first Statewide Volunteer Nighthawk Survey was coordinated by the Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District in 1989. Two additional surveys were completed in 1990 and 1991 to resolve questions about sampling methodology. During the summer of 2001, the Park District again coordinated a Statewide Volunteer Nighthawk Survey. The survey was undertaken to determine what, if any, changes had occurred during the past decade. The survey protocol and sampling techniques were the same as in 1991. The 2001 survey showed that Outstate nighthawk populations remained at the same level as ten years ago, but the population in the seven county metropolitan region declined significantly. The Metro Region nighthawk population could well be extirpated within another ten years. Now is the time to determine the cause of this decline and to find a way to reverse the trend.

During the mid-1980s, Larry Gillette, Hennepin Park District Wildlife Manager, noted that Common Nighthawks (*Chordeiles minor*) had disappeared from his western Hennepin County neighborhood and adjacent communities. This observation provoked concern about nighthawks and aroused his curiosity about the status of nighthawks statewide. Gillette's concern provided the impetus for the first statewide volunteer nighthawk survey coordinated by the Park District in 1989. Two additional surveys were completed in 1990 and 1991 to resolve questions about sampling methodology. The 1991 effort included an intensive survey of western Hennepin County conducted by Park District staff.

The objectives of the nighthawk surveys were: 1) to establish an index of relative abundance that would permit comparisons between regions; 2) to compare the abundance of nighthawks in the Metro Region with other regions of the state; 3) to compare the abundance of nighthawks in different parts of the Metro Region; and 4) to compare abundance

and distribution of nighthawks over time.

The results of the 1989 survey provided baseline data concerning Common Nighthawk distribution and abundance in Minnesota. The 1990 survey documented the nighthawk's distinct preference for habitat with flat-roofed buildings. Very few birds were found in open country. The intensive survey conducted by Park District staff in 1991 confirmed the very low frequency of nighthawks that Gillette had noted in western Hennepin County, and established a baseline for abundance and distribution that could be used for comparison with future surveys.

2001 Survey

During the summer of 2001, with partial funding from the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union (MOU) and help from MOU and Audubon Society members, the Park District again coordinated a statewide volunteer nighthawk survey. The survey was undertaken to determine what, if any, changes had occurred during the past decade. The survey protocol and sampling techniques were the same

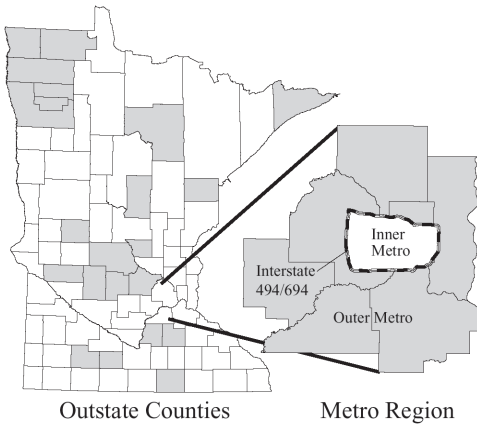


Figure 1. Outstate and Metro regions.

as in 1991, and many of the same routes were resampled. A total of 45 volunteers participated in the 2001 survey. Twenty-eight volunteers surveyed 192 points in the seven county metropolitan region (Metro Region). Seventeen volunteers surveyed 121 points in 22 Outstate counties (outside the Metro Region). In addition to the volunteer surveys, Park District staff repeated the 1991 intensive survey of sites in western Hennepin County. Using the same sampling protocol Park District staff surveyed an additional 156 counts.

Methods

The 1991 and 2001 nighthawk surveys focused on towns and urban areas. Survey sites were located at least one mile apart in areas where there were flat-roofed buildings. Each survey was conducted once between 10 June and 1 July beginning ten minutes before sunset and ending one hour after sunset. Volunteers spent five minutes at each predetermined location counting calling and/or displaying nighthawks. Participants were expected to be familiar with nighthawk behavior and to be able to identify nighthawks by their calls as well as by sight.

The survey was essentially a binomial experiment — an experiment in which there are two possible outcomes. In this

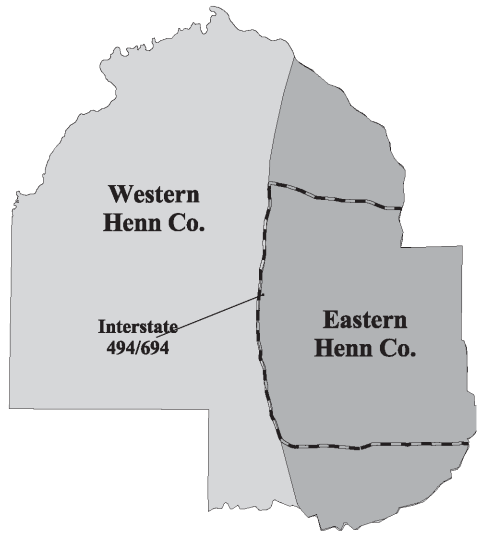


Figure 2. Hennepin County regions.

study, the two possible outcomes were “nighthawks present” or “nighthawks absent.” The population parameter of interest was the sample proportion — the number of successes divided by the number of trials. The sample proportion was calculated as the number of stops at which nighthawks were recorded, divided by the total number of stops surveyed within a region. Statistical comparisons were made between the sample proportions for different regions in the same year and between the sample proportions for the same regions in different years.

The regions of interest were as follows (see Figures 1 and 2): 1) Outstate — all counties except the seven Metro counties; 2) the Metro Region — Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington counties; 3) the Inner Metro — points located within the Interstate 494/694 loop; 4) the Outer Metro — points located outside the Interstate 494/694 loop; 5) Hennepin County — points located in Hennepin County; 6) eastern Hennepin County — points in Hennepin County located east of a north/south line corresponding to the west side of the In-

Region	1991*	2001*	p-value
Outstate	33.7 %	28.9 %	not significant
Metro Area	23.8 %	8.9 %	p < .01
Inner Metro	30.0 %	11.2 %	p < .01
Outer Metro	20.6 %	7.5 %	p < .01

*Includes results of both staff and volunteer surveys

Table 1. Comparison of 1991 and 2001 statewide survey results (proportion of stops at which Common Nighthawks were recorded).

Region	1991*	2001*	p-value
Hennepin County	21.6 %	7.7 %	p < .01
Eastern Hennepin	34.4 %	11.8 %	p < .01
Western Hennepin	6.5 %	1.3 %	p < .10

*Includes results of both staff and volunteer surveys

Table 2. Comparison of 1991 and 2001 Hennepin County surveys (proportion of stops at which Common Nighthawks were recorded).

terstate 494/694 loop; and 7) western Hennepin County — points in Hennepin County located west of a north/south line corresponding to the west side of the Interstate 494/694 loop.

Results

Common Nighthawks were recorded at 28.9% of Outstate locations in 2001 compared with 28.2% in 1991. These results suggest that Outstate nighthawk populations may be stable. However, the Outstate samples were comparatively small in both 1991 and 2001. Ninety-five (95) Outstate points were sampled in 1991 and 121 points in 2001. Few of the 1991 points were resampled in 2001. This makes a definitive statement concerning the status of Outstate nighthawk populations problematic.

The Metro Region surveys that were conducted in 1989, 1990, and 1991 had shown similar numbers of nighthawks at Inner Metro locations and Outstate locations. Reduced numbers of nighthawks were apparent only in the outer suburbs — especially in western Hennepin County. The 2001 survey showed an alarming trend *throughout* the seven county metropolitan region (Figure 3). Common Nighthawks declined significantly in the Metro Region as a whole; in the Inner Metro region; in the Outer Metro region; in Hennepin County as a whole; in eastern Hennepin County and in western Hennepin County.

The number of Metro Region sites where Common Nighthawks were re-

corded dropped from 23.8% in 1991 to 8.9% in 2001. Inner Metro sites with nighthawks declined from 30.0% in 1991 to 11.2% in 2001. Outer Metro sites with nighthawks dropped from 20.6% in 1991 to 7.5% in 2001 (Table 1). The surveys completed in Hennepin County showed similar declines (Figure 4). Nighthawks were recorded at only 11.8% of eastern Hennepin County sites in 2001 compared to 34.4% in 1991. Sites in western Hennepin County where nighthawks were recorded dropped from 6.5% in 1991 to only 1.3% in 2001 (Table 2).

Discussion

The 2001 survey revealed dramatic declines in the numbers of nighthawks recorded in the Metro Region compared to ten years ago. We place a high degree of confidence on the survey results because, unlike the Outstate sample, the Metro sample was large, and many of the original points were resampled. Two hundred sixty-five (265) points were sampled in 1991 and 316 points in 2001. One hundred seventy-eight (178) points were sampled in both years. The magnitude of the change alone suggests that the survey results represent an actual decline. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence supports the conclusion that this is not simply a one-year anomaly, but a steady downward trend. At the present rate of decline, the entire Metro population may be extirpated within the next decade. Any efforts to determine the cause of the decline or to correct it must occur in the

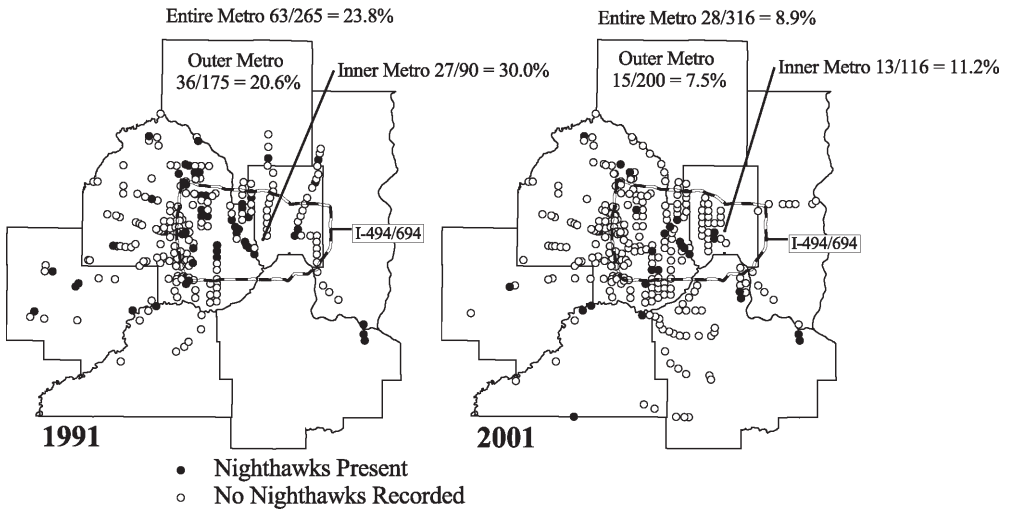


Figure 3. Comparison of 1991 and 2001 Metro region surveys.

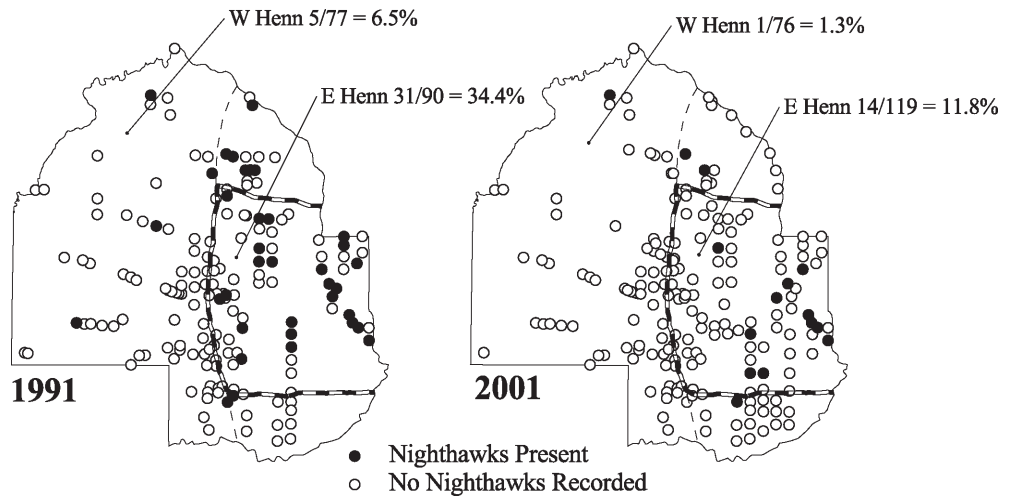


Figure 4. Comparison of 1991 and 2001 Hennepin County surveys.

very near future.

Logically, a population decline would result from increased mortality and/or reduced nesting success. Increased mortality could result from inclement weather and other hazards during migration, or from events on the wintering grounds. Reduced nesting success could be caused by a reduction in the number of suitable

nest sites, by increased predation on eggs or young, by reduction of the prey base, or by a combination of these and other factors. Since the Outstate nighthawk population appears to be stable, we hypothesize that the decline is a result of problems on the breeding grounds rather than during migration or on the wintering grounds.

Several observers commented that Common Nighthawks seemed to be present only in older sections of towns or cities where buildings are more than 50 years old. It is apparent from the data collected in this study that Metro Region birds are confined almost exclusively to downtown areas. It seems possible that newer flat-roofed buildings are unsuitable for nighthawks in some way. Both crow and gull populations have increased dramatically within the Metro Region, and these species are notorious nest predators. It is conceivable that increased predation on the eggs and/or the young of nighthawks may be a factor in their apparent decline. No assessment has been done on changes in flying insect populations over the past ten years.

Conclusion

The results of this study document a precipitous decline in the Common Nighthawk population within the seven county metropolitan region since 1991.

The population could well be extirpated within another ten years. Now is the time to determine the cause of this decline and to find a way to reverse the trend. The continued presence of birds in the inner city provides some optimism that a solution can be found. It is our hope that this report will stimulate individuals or agencies to pursue this vital research before it is too late.

Acknowledgments

The authors extend their personal thanks to each and every volunteer who participated in the Statewide Volunteer Nighthawk Surveys. Without their help, this study could not have been completed. We also thank the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union for providing additional funding for the project.

Suburban Hennepin Regional Parks, Department of Natural Resources Management, Wildlife Section, 3800 County Road 24, Maple Plain, MN 55359.

First Minnesota Nesting Record of the Eurasian Collared-Dove

Peder H. Svingen¹ and Karla A. Kinstler²

Two Eurasian Collared-Doves (*Streptopelia decaocto*) were found by John Gaspard at a municipal park in Caledonia, Houston County, in early June 2001. At this same location on 1 July 2001, Svingen found and photographed Minnesota's first nest of this species. The nest was located on the steel framework of the Tri-County Electric Substation at

the intersection of North Pine and East Lincoln streets, and contained two young. Svingen contacted Kinstler who observed two fledglings preening, stretching, and hopping around on beams near the nest on 3 July. On both 3 and 4 July, Kinstler witnessed an adult feeding the young several times after they made short flights to nearby trees. Based on the dates of

First Seen	Last Seen	Location	County	No.	Comments
25 Apr 1998	late May 1998	Ortonville	Big Stone	2	ph., 70:199–200
14 Nov 1998	9 Mar 1999	Lynd	Lyon	3+	ph., 71:156–159
29 Jan 1999	15 Aug 1999	Jasper	Pipestone	1	ph., 71:156–159
20 Feb 1999	15 Aug 1999	Jasper	Rock	2–3	same as 2001?
29 May 1999	late Jul 1999	Hwy 218	Mower	2	ph., 71:236–237
18 Oct 1999	overwintered	Fairmont	Martin	2–4	v.t.; 72:163–168
31 May 2000	31 May 2000	near Willmar	Kandiyohi	1	not same as Feb
30 Sep 2000	9 Oct 2000	Odessa	Big Stone	1	73:35–38
mid-Dec 2000	17 Mar 2001	Russell	Lyon	2	ph., at feeder
23 May 2001	8 Jul 2001	Springsteel	Roseau	1	ph., first north
early Jun 2001	Sep 2001	Caledonia	Houston	2+	ph., nested
3 July 2001		Renville	Renville	1–3	since 1999?
<hr/>					
15 Dec 1998	15 Dec 1998?	near Alden	Freeborn	1	reconsidered
mid-Sep 1999	late Jan 2000	New Ulm	Brown	?	undocumented
6 Jan 2000	7 Jan 2000	Grand Rapids	Itasca	1	unacceptable
? Feb 2000	28 Feb 2000	Glencoe	McLeod	1	undocumented
15 Feb 2000	16 Feb 2000	Willmar	Kandiyohi	1	unacceptable
15 Mar 2000	15 Mar 2002?	Echo	Y. Medicine	?	undocumented
19 Apr 2000	1 Jun 2000	Leota Twp.	Nobles	2	unacceptable
7 May 2000	7 May 2000	Redwood Falls	Redwood	1	unacceptable
19 May 2001	24 Jun 2001	Jasper	Pipestone	2	undocumented

Figure 1. Acceptable (top) and unacceptable or undocumented (bottom) records of the Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) in Minnesota through July 2001. Key: photographed (ph.), videotaped (v.t.). References are from *The Loon*.

our observations, we estimated that eggs had been laid in this nest during the first few days in June.

Nests are often reused by this species (Cramp 1985), but there are fewer days between broods when a new nest is built. Fred Leshner and others observed a male bringing nest material to the female on 5–7 July, and Kinstler found an adult sitting on a new nest by 8 July. Workers at the substation confirmed two eggs in the second nest 12 July (*vide* D. Martin). Two fledged from this nest on 7 August. The adults then revamped the first nest to begin a third brood in mid-August, which fledged one young in early September. Ron Erpelding, Randy Frederickson, Fred Leshner, Barbara and Dennis Martin, and Carol Schumacher were among the many observers contributing behavioral notes that helped document this first Minnesota

breeding record.

Identification of the Adults

An essential first step was confirming that both adults were Eurasian Collared-Doves, as opposed to the similar-looking, domestic Ringed Turtle-Dove (*S. risoria*) or hybrids between the two. On 1 July, Svingen documented an adult with a dark pigeon-like bill; large, dark irides surrounded by a pale orbital ring; and pinkish legs. Its plumage was tan overall, but its folded primaries were definitely darker than the rest of its upperparts. Its nape showed a narrow, black, transverse nuchal bar that was thinly outlined in white. There were no other markings on its head or neck. Its tail was squared in shape with gray under-tail coverts. The proximal portion of its tail from below appeared black while the remainder was

white, forming a wide terminal band. Photographs of this bird depict the black not only extending onto the outer webs of the outermost pair of rectrices, but also reaching farther down the tail on R6.

When another Eurasian Collared-Dove began vocalizing from across the street, the first dove flew down to the ground. Fortuitously, a much smaller Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) landed nearby and provided direct size comparison until the Eurasian Collared-Dove aggressively flew at it and drove it away. Attempts to see the second dove as it called from its perch in a maple tree were unsuccessful. The first bird then flew across the street and into the same tree. One or both doves repeatedly gave a resonant, slightly harsh, hollow-sounding *coo-koou-coo* that was accented on the second syllable.

Smith (1987), Blackshaw (1988), and Eckert (2000) state that vocalizations and under-tail pattern are most reliable for separation of the Eurasian Collared-Dove from the Ringed Turtle-Dove. Apparent hybrid Eurasian Collared-Dove X Ringed Turtle-Doves have been found in several locations, including Illinois. A Eurasian Collared-Dove X Ringed Turtle-Dove probably would look smaller and paler than a pure *decaocto*, and probably would not give a three-note call in series according to Romagosa and McEneaney (1999). One or both of the adults in Caledonia repeatedly gave the diagnostic *coo-koou-coo* call in series and the two birds looked identical when seen side-by-side on the ground, so there was nothing to suggest that either one was anything but 100% Eurasian Collared-Dove.

Juvenile Eurasian Collared-Doves

At 8:15 A.M. on 1 July, after about 30 minutes of observation, Svingen departed Caledonia in order to meet Ron Erpelding and Randy Frederickson at Beaver Creek Valley State Park. These three observers returned to Caledonia later that morning, and found two adult Eurasian Collared-Doves side-by-side on the ground while the two juveniles remained in the nest. The young were estimated to be 2/3 to



Eurasian Collared-Dove, 1 July 2001, Caledonia, Houson County. Photo by Peder H. Svingen.

3/4 grown in comparison to the adults, but it should be noted that only the heads and tails of birds in the nest were visible at the time. It was interesting that the underside of their tails looked whitish (i.e., no visible black) yet their under-tail coverts were gray. This apparent lack of black was probably due to tail length or positioning in the nest, since black was detected by Kinstler just two days later.

One of the juveniles appeared smaller than the other and had fuzzy feathering on its head. Its bill was dark except near the gape, where it was pinkish; the bill appeared proportionately too large for its face and seemed especially thick at the base. The smaller juvenile's tail looked slightly shorter compared to the other bird, but both had short tails compared to the adults. Kinstler, Leshner, and Martin all observed independently that no black neck collars were visible on either of the two juveniles.

Nest Description

The first nest was located near the top of a steel suprastructure supporting a series of voltage transformers at the Tri-

County Electric Substation in Caledonia. The substation was surrounded by chain link fence topped with triple barbed wire. Very little of the actual nest could be seen from the ground, but the visible portion included small sticks, twigs, and loose debris. The channel iron was bolted as an east-west cross-brace onto the bottom surface of an I-beam. The concave side of this channel iron was facing up, which left the nest surrounded by metal on three sides.

The nest was adjacent to the west end of the channel iron, where it received morning sun but was shaded from the late afternoon sun. There were four open bolt holes in the channel iron beneath the nest, providing drainage in case of rain. At first glance, this seemed like a bizarre nesting location, but the steel construction and security fence probably deterred predators — not to mention the deterrence provided by the high voltage! The second nest was located in another east-west channel iron, this time on the north end of the electrical substation, about 12 feet off the ground. The nest materials were the same as those for the first nest, with some material taken from the first nest and used in the second nest.

Feeding of the Young

Kinstler observed an adult feeding the young on 3, 4, and 15 July, as well as 8 August. On 3 July, an adult called from a nearby tree, flew down to a puddle of water on the ground, then flew up to the nest area and fed two soon-to-be-fledged young. The young were standing on beams just a few feet away from the nest, but the adult walked right past them to the nest. After about a minute, one of the young approached and thrust its head into the open mouth of the adult. The adult's head pumped up and down, while the young bird flapped its wings rapidly during the feeding. Shortly thereafter, the second juvenile approached and thrust its head into the adult's mouth. More head pumping and wing flapping occurred with each bout of feeding.

On 15 July, Kinstler observed one of the juveniles approaching an adult on a branch of the elm tree directly behind the Caledonia City Hall. The adult moved away, but the juvenile approached again. The adult flew away but returned shortly thereafter. Two juveniles approached this adult and were both fed. Assuming that they were at least 15 days old at fledging, they were about 26 days old at the time of this feeding and it occurred when the second brood was already 7 days into incubation.

Allopreening

Allopreening, also known as mutual, reciprocal, or social preening, has been reported in a wide variety of birds including herons, parrots, pigeons, crows, and certain songbirds (Harrison 1965). It is thought to help maintain and strengthen pair bonds, though Goodwin (1956) also suggested that it sublimates aggressive impulses in mated pairs of pigeons.

Kinstler witnessed mutual preening by the pair of Eurasian Collared-Doves on 8 August. The adults were sitting next to each other on a branch of a maple tree at 124 North Pine Street, directly east of the substation. Each bird preened itself, then they touched bills a few times, and one began to preen the head and nape of the other bird. After about one minute, they switched roles. This time the bird being preened sat down on its haunches. The session of allopreening ended with one adult calling and flying to the substation to feed a recently fledged young.

Nesting Ecology

Baicich and Harrison (1997) provide a terse description of the Eurasian Collared-Dove's nest, "a thin platform of fine twigs and plant stems" usually built 10–40 feet up in a tree, especially in an evergreen, but sometimes on a ledge on a building. Nest-building is primarily by the female, and mostly between dawn and 10:00 A.M. over a period of about three days; the male gathers the nest material and brings it one piece at a time for the female to

arrange (Cramp 1985).

Triple-brooding (sometimes up to six per year!) and two eggs per clutch are typical. Incubation is provided by both sexes for 14–16 days. The female sits through the night and the male relieves her in the morning for about eight hours (Cramp 1985). Fledging occurs about 17 days after hatching (range 15–19) though the young are capable of short flights at 15–16 days (Cramp 1985). Fledged young are attended and fed by both parents at first, but then only by the male. Feeding has been reported as late as 44 days after hatching, but most become independent by 31–40 days (Cramp 1985).

Regional Status

Smith (1987) documented the arrival of the Eurasian Collared-Dove in Florida, presumably from Bermuda in the early 1980s, and predicted its expansion in North America. An update since Smith's paper was furnished by Romagosa and McEaney (1999). Based on experience in Europe, Hengeveld (1993) urged that nestlings be banded to help monitor this species' expansion in North America. Its spread in Florida (Romagosa and Labisky 2000) provided a template for understanding its population dynamics.

South Dakota's first Eurasian Collared-Dove was at Bowdle in Edmunds County, 29 August through 11 September 1996 (Zimmer 1997). First state records in Iowa (Grinnell, Poweshiek County) beginning 29 August 1997 (Brock 1998, Fuller 1999), Minnesota (Ortonville, Big Stone County) 25 April through late May 1998 (Eckert 1998), Wisconsin (West Bend, Ozaukee County) 19 May – 27 June 1998 (Frank 1999), and North Dakota (by Rock Lake, Towner County) 18 July 1999 (Martin 1999) soon followed. Additional reports rapidly accumulated, especially in South Dakota (12+ records in 5 years), Minnesota (10+ records in 3 years), and North Dakota (12+ records in 2 years!). In the province of Saskatchewan, a pair of Eurasian Collared-Doves at Weyburn since April was first identified on 18 November



Eurasian Collared-Dove on nest, 1 July 2001, Caledonia, Houson County. Photo by Peder H. Svingen.

1999; meanwhile, another pair showed up at Regina in September (Koes and Taylor 2000).

This species has been found nesting as far northwest as Joplin in Liberty County, Montana (Martin 1997) and recently for the first time in North Dakota, at Mayville in Traill County (Martin 2001). Nesting was attempted but ultimately failed in Manitowoc County, Wisconsin in June 2001 (Jan Hanson *in lit.*). Breeding has probably occurred at Grinnell, Iowa (Doug Harr and Ann Johnson, pers. com.) but thus far has been confirmed for that state only in Kossuth County, where a nest with two young was found on 17 July 2001 (Brock 2001).

Conclusion

This occurrence in Houston County represents (depending on the definition of a record) either the tenth or eleventh for Minnesota, though some unacceptable and undocumented reports (Figure 1) were probably correct. It also represents the first documented nesting in the state. Nest-building by the Eurasian Collared-

Doves at Ortonville, Big Stone County was reported in late May 1998, but a lack of nesting documentation precluded its consideration as a breeding record. It will be interesting to see whether this species nests again at Caledonia in 2002. As this issue of *The Loon* was going to press, we learned that Eurasian Collared-Doves had returned to Caledonia in spring 2002.

Acknowledgments

We thank John Gaspard for reporting the doves, and the city of Caledonia for its hospitality towards visitors. Kudos to the employees of Tri-County Electric who went out of their way to avoid disturbing these birds during nesting. Thanks to Ron Martin (North Dakota), David Swanson (South Dakota), Ann Johnson and Doug Harr (Iowa), and Jan Hansen and Bob Domagalski (Wisconsin) for answering inquiries about records. We are grateful to Fred Leshner and Dennis Martin for sending documentation, and Philip Chu and Randy Frederickson for comments on earlier drafts of this article.

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¹2602 East Fourth St., Duluth, MN 55812; ²19268 Perkins Valley Dr., Houston, MN 55943.

The Summer Season (1 June to 31 July 2001)

Terry P. Wiens

*Highlights for the season included a **White-faced Ibis**, a mid-summer **Ross's Goose**, multiple **Eurasian Collared-Doves**, and both **White-eyed Vireos** and **Yellow-throated Warblers** successfully nesting. Also noteworthy were the **Merlins** breeding for the second consecutive year in the Twin Cities and the record number of nesting **Northern Hawk Owls**. Alarming was a further decline in **Sharp-tailed Grouse** and **Piping Plover**.*

A total of **268** species was observed during the summer 2001 season in Minnesota, tying the previous ten-year average. Seasonal reports and/or breeding information were submitted by 156 individuals, tying the record high set last year. (Despite this, note that many species were not reported in the Southwest region; only one observer based in this area sent in a seasonal report, and coverage there by other observers was sparse.) Contributors sent in 715 nest or brood cards, the fewest since 1991. Breeding data were collected for 150 species (near average). Top contributors of breeding information included Jean Segerstrom & Mark Newstrom (197 nest/brood cards), Jon Little & Jacob Langeslag (138), Michael R. North (68), and Eve E. Freeberg (60). Thanks to all contributors for your excellent efforts!

Despite the recent trend, no **Red-throated Loons** were found in June; however, four in breeding plumage were off Park Point in Duluth on 8 July. Although this represents only the fifth July record for the state, it is not too surprising considering the number of migrants lingering into late June in recent years. Reports of **Horned Grebe** have declined over the past decade, and this summer only two individuals were found in the extreme Northwest. Does this species still breed anywhere in Minnesota? Notable by its absence was **Clark's Grebe**, a species found in each of the past four sum-

mers (and at five separate locations last year!). The closest contender was a probable hybrid (Western x Clark's) in Lyon County.

Also unusually scarce were **American White Pelican**, **Double-crested Cormorant**, and **Cattle Egret**. The latter was especially surprising following the best spring showing (17 counties) since 1993. One **Snowy Egret** was found this summer, about average in comparison to recent years. Of concern was the lack of reports for **Black-crowned Night-Heron**. Observations have been down for seven years, and this year's tally was less than half the typical total for the late 1980s and early 1990s. On the other hand, single **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** appeared at three locations, including a first for Waseca County — in recent years, one or two sightings per season has been the norm. A **White-faced Ibis** was photographed near Austin in the Southeast. Although still classified as Casual, this species has recently been annual in either spring or fall. Observers should note that both White-faced and Glossy Ibis are expanding their ranges on the continent (see, for example, the Spring 2001 issue of *North American Birds*) — a good reason to study up on distinguishing these two species!

Waterfowl of note included two **Snow Goose** reports and a mid-summer **Ross's Goose** in southern Minnesota, the latter representing only the third summer re-

port. **Trumpeter Swans** continued a strong showing; the Minnesota DNR estimates that just over 900 now reside in the state. **Mute Swans** were found at three sites in the Twin Cities metro area — how “wild” these birds are is always the question. The DNR regularly conducts statewide game bird surveys, and for the first time in decades the **Canada Goose** count declined. However, goose counters were surprised by the substantial number found in Minnesota’s forested regions. More troubling were survey results for **Blue-winged Teal**; numbers were down about 24% from last year, and 39% below the long-term average. For the second consecutive summer, a late migrant **Cinnamon Teal** made a brief appearance, but unlike last year the bird was found in the more expected western edge of the state.

For unknown reasons, **Northern Harriers**, **Red-shouldered** and **Swainson’s hawks**, and **American Kestrels** were scarce this summer (though a wandering Swainson’s Hawk in early June provided Carlton County with its first record). Two **Rough-legged Hawks** were reported in northern Minnesota. It is not too unusual for this species to summer in the state, especially in the Northwest. The remarkable jump in **Merlin** reports continued, with even more nesting in the Twin Cities metro area and scattered reports from no fewer than ten additional counties elsewhere in the state! As recently as five years ago, this species was only reported on a regular basis from the boreal-forested counties in the far north. It now appears that a significant number of “Richardson’s” Merlins (**seven** adult “Richardson’s” were involved in the metro area breeding) has pushed into the state, presumably from the population base in the northern Great Plains and south-central Canada. Birders north and west of the Twin Cities are encouraged to keep an eye out for nesting Merlins, especially in urban areas.

A significant population decline for **Ruffed Grouse** finally occurred this year, a bit later than expected. Recent mild winters may have extended the peak of

their ten-year cycle. Very disturbing was the DNR report that **Sharp-tailed Grouse** were “down to almost the lowest population level they’ve ever been in our recorded history.” More encouraging were prospects for the **Greater Prairie-Chicken**. Recent reintroduction efforts in Lac Qui Parle and Big Stone counties (over 200 have been released) have led to the establishment of two new booming grounds.

The most impressive **shorebird** concentrations of the season were reported in mid to late July, primarily in western Minnesota. Peak counts included 2687 (14 species) at Big Stone NWR on 20 July, roughly 2000 in western Lyon County on 28 July, and over 1700 (16 species) on 14 and 15 July at Agassiz NWR (19 species were present at the same location a week later). Most alarming was the report from Minnesota’s only remaining nesting location for **Piping Plovers**. Extremely high water levels and a late spring storm at Lake of the Woods flooded or damaged the nesting habitat on Pine-Currys Island, and no evidence of breeding could be found. Should this situation continue, we must face the unpleasant possibility that Piping Plovers may become extirpated as a breeding species in the state. Several small groups of **American Avocets** were found at six separate locations (no fewer than 20 individuals total). **Wilson’s Phalaropes** were reported in 17 counties, well above the recent average of about 10 counties. Several gull and tern species were notably scarce this year, including normally common species such as **Ring-billed Gull** and **Black Tern**.

Eurasian Collared-Doves continued their invasion, with an unprecedented three reports from literally one end of the state to the other. The first state nesting record was documented in Houston County, and additional birds were found in Roseau and Renville counties. Several observers noted increased numbers of **Black-billed Cuckoos** in the Northeast, which is to be expected following the recent outbreak of forest tent caterpillars.

Statewide, however, the number of reports was average, and well below the last population boom recorded from 1986 through 1992. Following the record influx of **Northern Hawk Owls** during the winter (see *The Loon* 73:135–143), it was not surprising that a few lingered in northern regions to breed — but nesting evidence was documented at no fewer than six widely dispersed locations, certainly an unprecedented number for the state. Numerous **Short-eared Owls** were reported for the second consecutive year, all in the north and especially the Northwest. For the sixth year in a row, **Boreal Owl** was not reported during the summer period, but please note that their presence as a resident in northeastern Minnesota has been well documented (see *The Loon* 73:43–48).

For unknown reasons, **Eastern** and **Western kingbirds** were reported in record low numbers. The state's second breeding record for **White-eyed Vireo** was confirmed at Rice Lake State Park, with four young observed in the nest (no cowbirds!). Two **Northern Mockingbirds** were found in June, about average for the season. No **Yellow-throated Warblers** were found at Sibley State Park in central Minnesota, where they had been seen in five of the previous seven summers. Perhaps to make up for this absence, a pair appeared in Dakota County and provided the state's second nesting record (*The Loon* 73:236–240). Possible nesting by the **Cerulean Warbler** was reported at Tamarac NWR in Becker County, well away from this species' traditional range in the Southeast. There have been several Cerulean Warbler reports in recent years from the middle of the state, and nesting was documented in Otter Tail County in 1978.

For the second consecutive summer, single **Kentucky Warblers** were at two separate locations. **Mourning Warblers** continue to be found farther south each year — this summer's reports included mid-June observations in Winona County and a singing bird on 1 July in Brown County. Recently, a remarkable number

of **Hooded Warblers** has been nesting at Murphy-Hanrehan Park just south of the Twin Cities. This year topped the last, with roughly **35** territorial males located, the highest number ever documented. June observations of **Yellow-breasted Chat** in Winona and Dakota counties — after several summers during which this species was absent from the state — fits the recent pattern of one to three reports in each of the past five years.

Henslow's Sparrow has been declining on a national level for at least three decades, but observations in Minnesota have been above normal the past five summer seasons. Habitat management at Great River Bluffs State Park in the Southeast has supported good numbers of Henslow's Sparrows in recent years. Two different **Harris's Sparrows** (one photographed) were found in mid-June; this species has been recorded in three of the past four summers. A bit surprisingly, no **Great-tailed Grackles** were reported (but see the spring report). The recent Midwestern range expansion of this species was summarized by Hertzell and Hertzell in *The Loon* 73:108–114.

Weather

June temperatures finished very close to historical averages, with a warm spell at the end of the month offsetting cool early June weather. June rainfall varied widely across the state, with South-central and East-central regions reporting above average precipitation, whereas the northern one-third of the state finished the month well below normal. Much of June's rain came from a sequence of powerful storms that buffeted many communities over the period 11–14 June. Following this unsettled period, the weather turned dry and precipitation was generally light for the final two weeks of the month.

July started with record-setting low temperatures, in sharp contrast to the end of June. On 5 July, the thermometer dipped as low as 27° F in some parts of northeastern Minnesota. The cool weather did not last, as the latter half of the month ushered in some of the most op-

pressive heat and humidity seen in several years. Temperatures for the month averaged 1° F above normal for the state. Precipitation was somewhat below normal statewide, heightening the fire danger in many areas.

Format, Maps, and Acknowledgments

The format for the species accounts is similar to that of recent years. The key to the seasonal reports is located below. Breeding records are classified based on criteria adopted in April 2001 by the Minnesota Ornithologists’ Union Records Committee. Each species having at least one nesting record in 2001 has an accompanying map indicating counties in which these records occurred; **confirmed** nesting records are indicated by dark shading, **possible** nesting records are indicated by lighter shading. Counties for

which confirmed breeding is documented for the first time since 1970 are in italics and identified as such according to updated versions of *County Nesting Records of Minnesota Birds* (Hertzel and Janssen, M.O.U. Occasional Papers: Number 2, 1998). Divisions of the state into regions (e.g. West-central, Southeast) are based on those delineated in *Birds in Minnesota*, p. 25 (Janssen 1987); see also *The Loon* 73:14.

A final thanks to all of the summer season reporters who make it possible to document avian distribution, nesting, and migration. Thanks also to Anthony Hertzel for preparing the breeding maps, and to Peder Svingen, Kim Eckert, and Karl Bardon for their assistance in preparing this report.

3230 Strand Rd., Duluth, MN 55803.

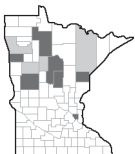
KEY TO SEASONAL REPORTS

1. Upper case (**LEAST TERN**) indicates a Casual or Accidental species in the state.
2. Dates listed in bold (**10/9**) indicate an occurrence either earlier, later or within the three earliest or latest dates on file.
3. Counties listed in bold (**Aitkin**) indicate an unusual occurrence for that county.
4. Counties with an underline (**Becker**) indicate a first county record.
5. Counties listed in italics (*Crow Wing*) indicate a first county breeding record.
6. Brackets [] indicate a species for which there is reasonable doubt as to its origin or wildness.
7. Counts listed in bold (**150**) indicate total within or exceeding the top three high counts for that species.
8. Dagger “†” preceding observer’s initials denotes documentation was submitted.

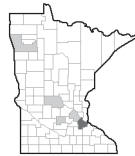
The Season publishes reports of bird sightings from throughout Minnesota. We particularly invite reports from parts of the state that have been neglected or covered lightly in past reports. To become a contributor, request a report form from the Editor of *The Season*, Peder Svingen, 2602 E. 4th St., Duluth, MN 55812–1533.

Red-throated Loon — Only report: 7/8 St. Louis (4 on L. Superior) †SWo.

Common Loon — Observed in 34 counties as far south as a line through Clay, Kandiyohi, Rice, Olmsted; new nesting record in *Carlton* MCBS.

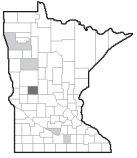


Pied-billed Grebe — Reported in 32 counties statewide.

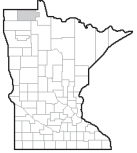


Horned Grebe — Only report: 6/3 Kittson (pair in wetland near Halma) PHS.

Red-necked Grebe — Observed in 13 counties in the Northwest, North-central, West-central, and Central regions; plus St. Louis, Hennepin, Nicollet, Le Sueur, Waseca, Freeborn.



Eared Grebe — Reported in Kittson, Roseau, Marshall, Polk, Clay, Carver, Sibley.

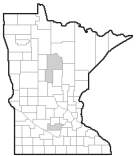


Western Grebe — Seen in 14 counties as far east as a line through Roseau, Becker, Hennepin, Rice, Freeborn. Possible hybrid (Western x Clark's) documented 7/19 Lyon †RJS.



American White Pelican — Few reports, almost half the previous ten-year average. Seen in 25 counties statewide, including a few apparently summering in the Duluth harbor (mob) and 6/17 Cook JWL *et al.*

Double-crested Cormorant — Fewest reports since 1995; seen in 33 counties statewide.

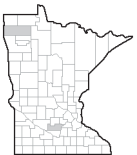


American Bittern — Observed in 13 Northwest, North-central, and Northeast counties plus Morrison, Meeker, McLeod, Hennepin; also 7/24 Freeborn AEB.

Least Bittern — Almost double the usual number of reports; seen in Roseau, Marshall, Becker, Wilkin, Benton, Sherburne, Anoka, Wright, Hennepin, Dakota, Nicollet, Freeborn.



Great Blue Heron — Reported in 53 counties statewide.

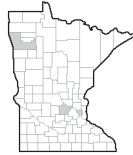


Great Egret — Observed in 21 southern counties (but no reports from the Southwest!) plus Douglas, Otter Tail, Clay, Hubbard.

Snowy Egret — Single report: 6/13 **Meeker** (L. Koronis) DMF.

Cattle Egret — Only reports: 6/18 Steele (5 at Straight River Marsh) AEB, 7/28 Douglas (3) JEL.

Green Heron — Seen in 38 counties statewide.

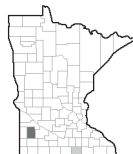


Black-crowned Night-Heron — Even fewer reports than last year's record low. Observed in Roseau, Marshall, Otter Tail, Crow Wing, Meeker, Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington, Dakota.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron — Three reports: 6/13 **Grant** (Pelican L.) GO, 6/21 Houston (Shepherd's Marsh, La Crescent) CBe *et al.*, and 7/3 **Waseca** (Janesville water treatment plant) RBJ.

WHITE-FACED IBIS — First summer record since 1990 (there have been three summer *Plegadis* sp. reports during the interim). Single bird photographed 6/19 **Mower** (about 20 miles east of Austin) JEM, †RNS *et al.*

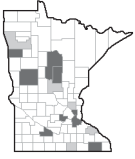
Turkey Vulture — Observed in 46 counties statewide; new nesting record in Lyon RJS.



Snow Goose — Immature white-morph bird reported 6/2 at the Barnesville sewage lagoons in Clay County TAT; remarkably, a blue-morph individual was found 7/15 at the same sewage lagoons TAT, ADS.

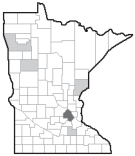
Ross's Goose — Third summer record for the state: 6/27 Kandiyohi (near L. Lillian) †RAE.

Canada Goose — Seen in 49 counties statewide. MDNR counts of nesting geese down 16% from the previous year; this is probably the first time in decades that an increase has not been noted!



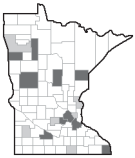
Mute Swan — Reported in three metro-area counties: 6/6 – 7/22 Anoka (2) JEH *et al.*, 6/26–27 Washington (St. Paul Park and Cottage Grove) MiN, 6/30 Ramsey (South St. Paul) *fide* AXH. As with any report from urban areas, the “wildness” of these birds is questionable at best.

Trumpeter Swan — Observed in Polk, Becker, Wadena, Crow Wing, Carlton, Pine, Anoka, Hennepin, Meeker, Rice, Waseca, Freeborn.

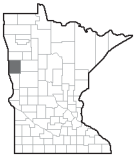


Tundra Swan — Late migrants 6/15 Marshall †EEF, 6/17 Wabasha (near Kellogg) †DFN, 6/5 and 6/23 Carlton MCBS.

Wood Duck — Seen in 46 counties throughout state; new nesting record in *Otter Tail* DDT, SMT.



Gadwall — Observed in 11 counties roughly along a line from Kittson to Rice; new nesting record in *Clay* GEN.

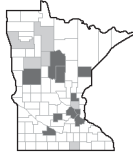


American Wigeon — Reported in Roseau, Lake of the Woods, Clay, Aitkin, and Pine; plus 6/23 Big Stone DMF, 6/28 – 7/31 Meeker (pair) DMF, 7/2–22 Hennepin mob, Lac Qui Parle (no date) FAE.

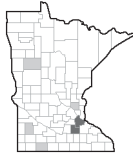
American Black Duck — Reported in

Lake of the Woods, Beltrami, St. Louis, Cook; plus 6/3 Clay TAT.

Mallard — MDNR reports little change in numbers of breeding birds from the previous year; the count remains about 53% above the long-term average. Observed in 56 counties statewide; new nesting record in *Otter Tail* DTT.

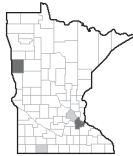


Blue-winged Teal — Fewest reports since 1994. Seen in 33 counties statewide. MDNR reports a marked decline; survey counts were down 24% from last year and 39% below the long-term average.

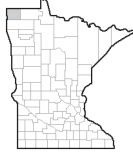


Cinnamon Teal — Late migrant male observed 6/3–4 in a small flooded field two miles north of Ortonville in Big Stone County †RJS *et al.*

Northern Shoveler — Reported in 16 counties in all regions except Northeast, South-central, and Southeast; new nesting records in *Clay* GEN, *Dakota* ADS, SWE.

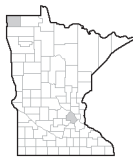


Northern Pintail — Reported in Kittson, Roseau, Lake of the Woods, Marshall, Polk, Clay, Aitkin, Douglas, Big Stone.

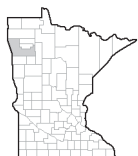


Green-winged Teal — Observed in 13 counties in all regions except Southwest, South-central, and Southeast.

Canvasback — Seen in eight western counties plus Meeker, Carver, Hennepin, Pine.

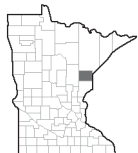


Redhead — Found in 19 counties as far east as a line through Roseau, Becker,



Stearns, Hennepin, Steele.

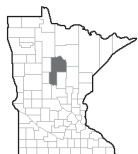
Ring-necked Duck — Reported in 22 counties in all regions except Southwest and Southeast; new nesting record in *Carlton* MCBS.



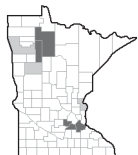
Lesser Scaup — Observed in five Northwest counties plus Douglas, Meeker, Hennepin, Sibley, Rice, Waseca.

Bufflehead — Observed in Kittson, Marshall, Beltrami; plus unusual reports 6/5 Hennepin (Sylvan L.) CRM, 7/13 McLeod RWS.

Common Goldeneye — Seen in Roseau, Beltrami, Becker, Cass, St. Louis, Lake, Cook.



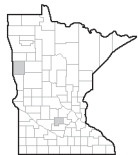
Hooded Merganser — Reported in 20 counties statewide; new nesting record in *Beltrami* DPJ.



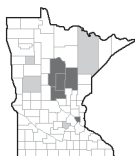
Common Merganser — Observed in Aitkin, St. Louis, Lake; plus 6/3 Chisago (St. Croix R.) FZL.

Red-breasted Merganser — Reported in St. Louis, Lake; plus 6/1 Beltrami (L. Bemidji S.P.) DPJ.

Ruddy Duck — Seen in 19 counties as far east as a line through Roseau, Benton, Dakota, Olmsted.

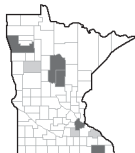


Osprey — Observed in 22 counties as

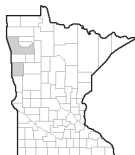


far west and south as a line through Polk, Otter Tail, Stearns, Carver, Houston.

Bald Eagle — Reported in 30 counties in all regions except Southwest; new nesting record in *Polk* EEF.



Northern Harrier — Fewest reports since 1985. Seen in 27 counties in all regions except Southwest.



Sharp-shinned Hawk — Observed in Hubbard, Wadena, Cass, Crow Wing, Aitkin, St. Louis, Lake.

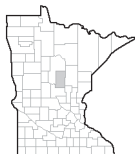
Cooper's Hawk — Reported in 29 counties grouped roughly along a line from Marshall to Houston; no reports from Northeast or Southwest.



Northern Goshawk — Only report from Cass.

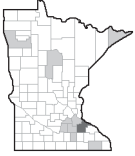
Red-shouldered Hawk — Fewest reports since 1991, and half that of the previous three years. Observed in Beltrami, Aitkin, Stearns, Anoka, Scott, Dakota, Wabasha.

Broad-winged Hawk — Reported in 23 counties as far west and south as a line through Marshall, Otter Tail, Stearns, Rice, Winona.



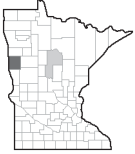
Swainson's Hawk — Observed in Traverse, Douglas, Meeker, Pipestone, Dakota, Steele, Olmsted, Mower; plus county first 6/9 **Carlton** (light-morph adult) TAT.

Red-tailed Hawk — Reported in 52 counties statewide.

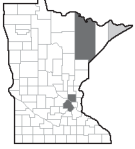


Rough-legged Hawk — Two sightings: 6/3 Aitkin WEN, 6/29 Pennington RBJ.

American Kestrel — Fewest reports since 1994; observed in 47 counties statewide.

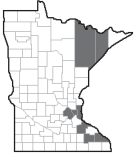


Merlin — An amazing **four** nesting pairs were found in the Twin Cities metro area, three in Hennepin County and one in Anoka MJS. A total of eight young were successfully fledged from these nests.



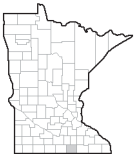
Additional reports from Kittson (fourth consecutive year at this location) PHS and Polk, Red Lake, Lake of the Woods, Aitkin, St. Louis, Lake, Cook; presumed migrants 7/28 Douglas JEL, 7/29 Big Stone PHS.

Peregrine Falcon — Reported in 11 eastern counties. Note that a pair nested in Fargo, North Dakota *vide* BAB.



Prairie Falcon — Reported 6/9 Wilkin (near Rothsay WMA) †CRG, †SDo *et al.*, 6/23 Wilkin (no location) †CAK.

Gray Partridge — Fewest reports in 18+ years. Observed in Stearns, Swift, Lac Qui Parle, Meeker, Lyon, Cottonwood, Jackson, Freeborn, Houston.

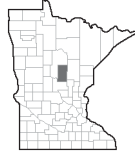


Ring-necked Pheasant — Seen in 32 counties as far north as a line through Roseau, Wadena, and Washington coun-



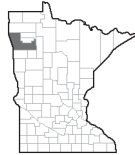
ties.

Ruffed Grouse — Significant population decline of ten-year cycle has begun; MDNR reports spring drumming counts down 40% statewide. Observed in 19 counties as far west and south as a line through Marshall, Douglas, Fillmore.

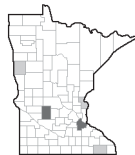


Sharp-tailed Grouse — MDNR lek observations declined sharply, down 43% in the East-central zone and 24% in the Northwest. Reported in Roseau, Polk, Lake of the Woods, Aitkin, and St. Louis counties.

Greater Prairie-Chicken — Reported in Clay; plus new nesting record in Polk CRM. Note that the MDNR recently released over 200 birds in Lac Qui Parle and Big Stone counties.

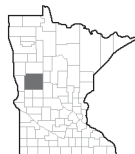


Wild Turkey — Record high number of reports for second consecutive year. Seen in 22 counties within the Central, East-central, South-central, and Southeast regions; plus Douglas, Clay. New nesting record in Kandiyobi RPK.

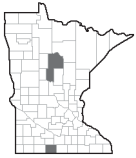


Yellow Rail — Seen or heard in Kittson, Roseau, Aitkin.

Virginia Rail — Very few reports, nearly half the previous ten-year average. Observed in Roseau, Beltrami, Norman, Otter Tail, Sherburne, Meeker, Carver, Freeborn.

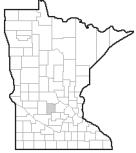


Sora — Reported in 23 counties in all regions except Southeast and Southwest; new nesting records in Cass MRN, Martin

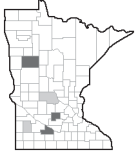


BRB.

Common Moorhen — Only report from Meeker.



American Coot — Seen in 29 counties in all regions except Northeast.



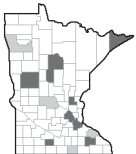
Sandhill Crane — Record high number of reports for second consecutive year. Observed in 26 counties roughly along a line from Kittson to Houston.

American Golden-Plover — Only reports: 7/21 Lac Qui Parle (2) and Big Stone (6) PCC.

Semipalmated Plover — Late migrants 6/1 Meeker, 6/10 Aitkin. Fall migrants seen in eight counties; early migrant 7/7 Marshall. Peak count 7/25 Lac Qui Parle (35) BEO.

Piping Plover — Reported in Lake of the Woods County (where high water levels may have precluded breeding); plus apparent migrants 7/28 Big Stone (3) †PCC.

Killdeer — Recorded in 54 counties statewide. New nesting record in *Watowan* DLB; peak count 7/20 Lac Qui Parle (260) BEO.



American Avocet — Most reports since 1991. Observed 6/2 and 7/15 Clay (2 at

Moorhead sewage lagoons) TAT, ADS, 7/3 Rice (3) FVS, 7/3 Houston (4 at Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge) *fide* AXH, 7/21–29 Big Stone (max. 3) PCC, PHS, 7/21 Marshall (6 at Agassiz NWR) PHS, 7/23–29 Winona (2 at Lewiston sewage lagoons) CBe.

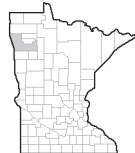
Greater Yellowlegs — Fall migrants seen in 16 counties; early migrants 6/24 Kanabec CAM, 6/25 Clay RHO, 6/26 Dakota ADS. Peak count 7/25 Lac Qui Parle (68) BEO.

Lesser Yellowlegs — Reported in 27 counties, with most observations occurring in July. Late migrant 6/15 Houston; early migrants 6/23 Swift DMF, 6/24 Becker PHS, PCC. Peak count 7/15 Marshall (1128 at Agassiz NWR) PHS.

Solitary Sandpiper — Fall migrants reported from a total of 17 counties; earliest migrant (away from Northeast) 6/25 Clay CRM.

Willet — All reports: 6/3 Marshall (2) PHS, 7/16 Dakota ADS, 7/22 Meeker DMF, 7/28 and 7/31 Lyon DDM *et al.*

Spotted Sandpiper — Observed in 30 counties statewide; peak count 7/20 Lac Qui Parle (35) BEO.



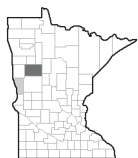
Upland Sandpiper — Very few reports (in contrast to the previous year). Seen in eight western counties plus St. Louis, Aitkin, Stearns, Meeker, Dakota, Mower.



Whimbrel — Exceptional date and first county record 7/1 **Pipestone** †CAK, JJS.

Hudsonian Godwit — Only report: 6/1 Big Stone RJS.

Marbled Godwit — Most reports since 1989. Observed in 11 western counties as



far south as Lyon; plus 6/16 Meeker DMF.

Ruddy Turnstone — All reports: 6/3 Polk PHS, 6/3 Clay TAT.

Red Knot — Only report: 6/3 Polk (Crookston sewage lagoons) PHS.

Sanderling — All reports: late migrants 6/2 St. Louis, 6/3 Marshall; mid-summer report 6/25 Becker †CRM; early migrants 7/15 St. Louis, 7/21 Marshall, 7/28 Lac Qui Parle.

Semipalmated Sandpiper — Reported from 16 counties statewide; late migrants 6/10 Freeborn and Aitkin, early migrants 7/7 Meeker and Marshall. Peak numbers 7/28 Lac Qui Parle (947) PCC, 7/25 Lac Qui Parle (538) BEO.

Least Sandpiper — Seen in 20 counties throughout state. Late migrant 6/8 Aitkin, early migrant 6/25 Becker CRM. Peak counts 7/14 Marshall (809 at Agassiz NWR) PHS, 7/20 Lac Qui Parle (670) BEO.

White-rumped Sandpiper — Migrants reported in eight western and southern counties. Late migrants 6/19 Hennepin SLC, 6/25 Becker CRM; first southbound migrants 7/21 Marshall (2) †PHS and Big Stone PCC. Peak count 6/10 Freeborn (~30) DDT.

Baird's Sandpiper — Record high number of reports, more than twice the previous ten-year average. Seen in 16 counties primarily in the west and south; late migrant 6/10 Freeborn DDT, early migrants 7/14 Marshall PHS, 7/16 Renville DMF.

Pectoral Sandpiper — Only late spring migrant reported 6/2 Clay. July reports from 17 counties statewide; early migrant 7/2 Freeborn. Peak count 7/25 Lac Qui Parle (330) BEO.

Dunlin — All reports: 6/1 Meeker, 6/2 Clay and Wilkin, 6/3 Marshall.

Stilt Sandpiper — Most reports since 1988. Only late migrant reported 6/2 Clay. July reports from 12 counties; early migrants 7/7 Meeker and Marshall. Peak count 7/20 Lac Qui Parle (229) BEO.

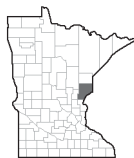
Buff-breasted Sandpiper — One report: 7/21 Meeker (3) DMF.

Short-billed Dowitcher — Fall migrants reported in eight counties; early migrant 6/24 Becker (record early date) PHS, PCC. Peak count 7/8 Marshall (81 at Agassiz NWR) PHS.

Long-billed Dowitcher — Only report: 7/28 Marshall (1) PHS.

Common Snipe — Reported in 19 counties as far south as a line through Wilkin, Meeker, Anoka.

American Woodcock — Record low number of reports, less than half the previous ten-year average. Observed in Marshall, Lake of the Woods, Aitkin, Stearns, Brown; plus new nesting record in Pine CaH.



Wilson's Phalarope — Most reports since 1988. Seen in 12 western counties as far south as Lyon; plus Aitkin, Stearns, Meeker, 6/10 Freeborn DDT, 7/24 Houston FZL.

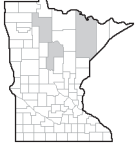
Red-necked Phalarope — Only report: 6/3 and 6/6 Marshall (2 at Warren sewage lagoons) PHS *et al.*

Franklin's Gull — Observed in 11 western counties plus Lake of the Woods, Todd, Meeker, Hennepin, Le Sueur.

Bonaparte's Gull — All reports: 6/1 Dakota, 6/2 Marshall and Roseau, 6/7 Koochiching, 7/22 Beltrami, 7/27 Otter

Tail; plus St. Louis (no date).

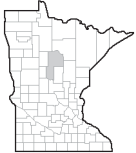
Ring-billed Gull — Fewest reports since 1984; seen in 30 counties statewide.



Herring Gull — Fewest reports in 20+ years; almost half the previous ten-year average. Observed in Lake of the Woods, Beltrami, Cass, Crow Wing, St. Louis, Lake.

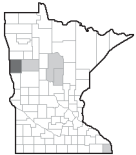
Caspian Tern — All reports: 6/5–13 Dakota, 6/10 Aitkin, 6/16 and 7/22 Cass, 7/8 Otter Tail, 7/25 Hennepin (2); plus two summering in Duluth, St. Louis Co.

Common Tern — Reported near known breeding sites in Roseau, Lake of the Woods, Cass, St. Louis; plus 6/2 Clay, 6/3 Marshall.

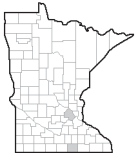


Forster's Tern — Fewest reports since 1985. Observed in 18 counties as far east as a line through Roseau, Stearns, Hennepin, Dakota, Freeborn; however, no reports from the Southwest.

Black Tern — Fewest reports in 20+ years. Seen in 33 counties in all regions (but only St. Louis in Northeast and Houston in Southeast); new nesting record in Clay GEN.



Rock Dove — Observed in 49 counties statewide.

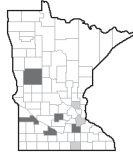


EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE — Seen in widely separated areas of the state. One first discovered in late May was relocated 6/3 and 7/8 at Springsteel Island in Roseau Co. (photographed) †PHS, †PCC;



another was seen 7/3 **Renville** (Renville) DDM, †RBJ. Minnesota's first confirmed nesting record was documented at Caledonia in **Houston Co.** (also a first county record) †PHS, †KAK, †FZL, †DDM (*The Loon* 74:195–200). In addition, there was an undocumented report in June from Jasper in Rock Co., where birds had been originally found in 1999 but could not be relocated in 2000; at least three were eventually documented there in September 2001. Two birds which may have been present during the summer were discovered 8/3 at Russell in Lyon Co. (see Fall 2001 seasonal report).

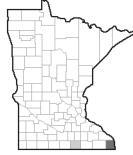
Mourning Dove — Reported in 55 counties statewide; new nesting record in *Yellow Medicine* TAT.



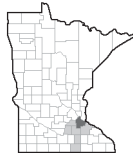
Black-billed Cuckoo — Observed in 32 counties in all regions except Southwest.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo — Near record-high number of reports, similar to 1999. Seen in 25 counties in all regions except Northeast and Southwest.

Eastern Screech-Owl — New nesting record in *Houston* KAK; also observed in Clay, Carver, Freeborn.



Great Horned Owl — Fewer reports than usual; seen in 23 counties in all regions except Northeast.



Northern Hawk Owl — Unprecedented number of reports, following the record influx of the preceding winter (*The Loon* 73:135–143). Nesting confirmed in *Koochiching* (near Little Fork) FJN and at



two locations along the Gunflint Trail in *Cook* (new nesting records) DAG, MSS, KMH; another nest fledged three young in Lake (near Greenwood L.) JWL. Probable nesting reported at the Sax-Zim bog area in St. Louis County (adult feeding fledgling) BAB and near Whitefish L. in Lake County (adult with three fledglings) JWL.

Barred Owl — Observed in 21 counties as far west as Becker, Brown, and as far north as Beltrami, Cass, Aitkin, Carlton.

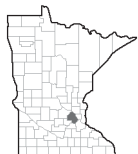


Great Gray Owl — Reported in Lake of the Woods, St. Louis, Lake, Aitkin, Carlton.

Short-eared Owl — Many reports, similar to last year's record high total. Observed 6/4 and 6/10 Roseau (south of Badger) PHS; 6/6 St. Louis (in the Sax-Zim bog area) TAN; 6/9 and 6/29 Marshall (maximum of 3 individuals at Agassiz NWR) JMJ, SAS *et al.*; 6/10 Kittson (2) PHS; 6/21 St. Louis (near Hibbing) BKY; 7/1 Pennington JMJ, SAS; 7/13–14 Polk (2 birds seen at Tympanuchus WMA) CRM; also reported from Lake of the Woods (no date) GMe and Aitkin (at least 6) WEN, KRE.

Northern Saw-whet Owl — Only report from Cook.

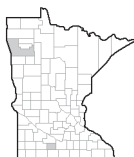
Common Nighthawk — Reported in 31 counties statewide.



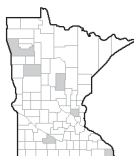
Whip-poor-will — Observed in the counties of Kittson, Roseau, Marshall, Lake of the Woods, St. Louis, Lake, Hennepin, Dakota, Goodhue, and Houston; also recorded 6/4 and 6/20 Freeborn

AEB.

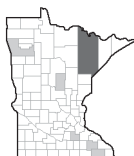
Chimney Swift — Seen in 48 counties statewide.



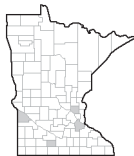
Ruby-throated Hummingbird — Seen in 46 counties in all regions except Southwest.



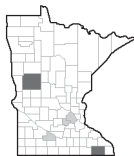
Belted Kingfisher — Reported in 41 counties statewide.



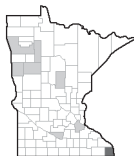
Red-headed Woodpecker — Observed in 32 counties as far north as Kittson in the west and Cass, Aitkin in the east.



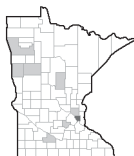
Red-bellied Woodpecker — New nesting record in *Otter Tail* SMT, DDT; reported in 30 counties as far north as Pennington in the west and Aitkin in the east.



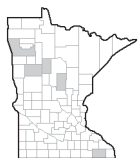
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker — More reports than usual, similar to last year. Seen in 40 counties in all regions except Southwest.



Downy Woodpecker — Reported in 54 counties statewide.



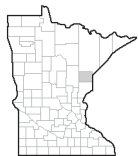
Hairy Woodpecker — Observed in 45



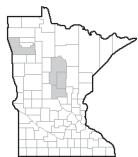
counties throughout state.

Three-toed Woodpecker — Only report: 6/1 – 7/14 Lake (Spruce Rd.) KRE *et al.*

Black-backed Woodpecker — Many reports: seen in Beltrami, Hubbard, Cass, Itasca, Carlton, St. Louis, Lake, Cook.



Northern Flicker — Observed in 48 counties in all regions except Southwest.



Pileated Woodpecker — Reported in 38 counties in all regions except Southwest.



Olive-sided Flycatcher — Observed in six North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau. June migrants seen in six additional counties; late migrant 6/12 Brown.

Eastern Wood-Pewee — Seen in 48 counties in all regions except Southwest; new nesting record in *Dakota* ADS.



Yellow-bellied Flycatcher — Reported in eight North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau, Mille Lacs, Pine; also, late migrant 6/4–5 Brown (calling) JSS.

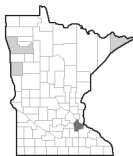
Acadian Flycatcher — Observed in Nicollet, Scott, Hennepin, Dakota, Rice,

Olmsted, Winona, Houston. Nine territories found at Murphy-Hanrehan Park in Scott and Dakota counties BAF.

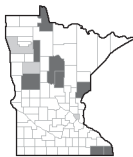
Alder Flycatcher — Reported in 20 counties as far south as a line through Clay, Wadena, Mille Lacs, Washington; plus late migrants 6/5 Brown, 6/7 Hennepin, 6/16 Waseca (song digitally recorded) †JPS, 6/21 Rice †TFB.

Willow Flycatcher — Seen in 17 counties as far north as Roseau in the west and Stearns, Washington in the east.

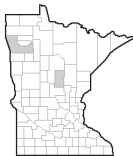
Least Flycatcher — Observed in 41 counties in all regions except Southwest; new nesting record in *Dakota* TAT.



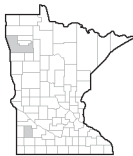
Eastern Phoebe — Reported in 43 counties in all regions except Southwest.



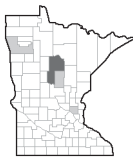
Great Crested Flycatcher — Observed in 50 counties in all regions except Southwest.



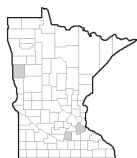
Western Kingbird — Record low number of reports; seen in eight western counties plus Meeker, Benton.



Eastern Kingbird — Record low number of reports; observed in 49 counties statewide.

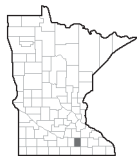


Loggerhead Shrike — Nesting evidence in Clay (max. 4 at Felton Prairie) PHS *et*



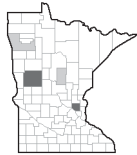
al., Dakota (adults with 3 young in Randolph Twp.) ADS *et al.*, Le Sueur (adults with 2 young near Kasota Prairie) LWF *et al.* Also reported 6/2 Fillmore (Forestville Twp.) DOK; 6/23 and 7/21 Big Stone (Otrej Twp.) DMF, PCC; 6/24 Polk (2 in Liberty Twp.) PCC, PHS; 7/14 Stearns REH; 7/15 Kandiyohi (3 in Roseville Twp.) DMF; 7/15 Wilkin (2 near Rothsay WMA) TAT, ADS.

WHITE-EYED VIREO — Nesting pair originally discovered in May (*The Loon* 74:40–44) observed through 7/1 at Rice Lake S.P. in Steele †AEB, †PHS, mob. This represents the state's second nesting record (4 young observed in nest) AEB.



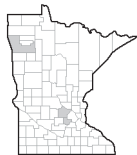
Bell's Vireo — Reported 6/7 – 7/2 Dakota (Black Dog L.) TAT *et al.*; 6/9–11 Blue Earth (one singing at Minneopa S.P.) DFN, MJF; 6/11 – 7/14 Olmsted (Chester Woods Park) JDu *et al.*; plus an early June report at Great River Bluffs S.P. in Winona Co. *fide* AXH, and one present the entire season at Frontenac S.P. in Goodhue Co. †CMJ.

Yellow-throated Vireo — Many reports for the third consecutive year. Seen in 40 counties roughly along the diagonal from the southeast to north-west corner; new nesting record in *Otter Tail* SMT.



Blue-headed Vireo — Observed in nine North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau.

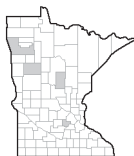
Warbling Vireo — Reported in 36 counties in all regions except Southwest.



Philadelphia Vireo — Only report from

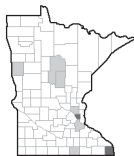
St. Louis.

Red-eyed Vireo — Observed in 46 counties statewide.



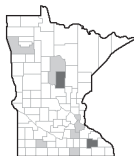
Gray Jay — Seen in eight North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau.

Blue Jay — New nesting record in *Houston* JGL; reported in 60 counties throughout state.

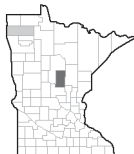


Black-billed Magpie — Observed in six Northwest counties plus Lake of the Woods, Aitkin, St. Louis.

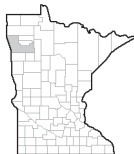
American Crow — Seen in 57 counties statewide.



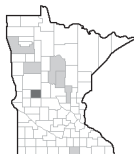
Common Raven — New nesting record in *Crow Wing* JPR. Reported in ten additional North-central and Northeast counties plus Kittson, Roseau, Marshall, Becker, Mille Lacs, Pine, Anoka.



Horned Lark — Fewest number of reports in 18+ years; seen in 22 counties as far north and east as a line through Roseau, Cass, Anoka, Fillmore.



Purple Martin — Seen in 37 counties statewide.





White-faced Ibis, 19 June 2001, Mower County. Photo by Dick Smaby.



American Bittern, 25 June 2001, Anoka County. Photo by Anthony Hertzell.

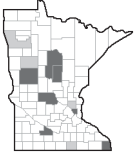


Great Crested Flycatcher, 3 June 2001, Carver County. Photo by Stan Tekiela.



Young Blue Jay, 24 June 2001, Caledonia, Houston County. Photo by Craig Menze.

Tree Swallow — New nesting record in *Houston* KAK; observed in 51 counties statewide.



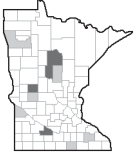
Northern Rough-winged Swallow — Reported in 31 counties in all regions except Southwest.



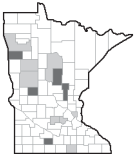
Bank Swallow — Seen in 26 counties in all regions except Southwest.



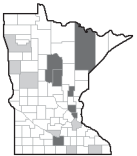
Cliff Swallow — Fewest reports since 1985. Observed in 41 counties statewide; new nesting record in *Douglas* REH.



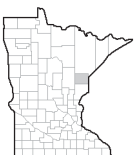
Barn Swallow — Fewest reports since 1994. Seen in 50 counties statewide; new nesting record in *Norman* GEN.



Black-capped Chickadee — Reported in 58 counties throughout the state.



Boreal Chickadee — Observed in Roseau, Itasca, Aitkin, St. Louis, Carlton, Lake.

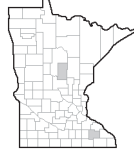


Tufted Titmouse — All reports from the Southeast; seen in Goodhue, Winona,

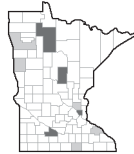


Fillmore, and Houston counties.

Red-breasted Nuthatch — Observed in 18 counties as far west and south as a line through Roseau, Hubbard, Ramsey, Washington; plus possible nesting in **Olmsted** JGL, JWH.



White-breasted Nuthatch — Seen in 53 counties statewide; new nesting record in *Beltrami* DPJ.

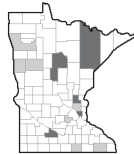


Brown Creeper — Reported in Cook, Lake, St. Louis, Itasca, Cass, Carlton, Pine, Hennepin, Goodhue; plus 6/2 Freeborn AEB.



Carolina Wren — Fifth consecutive summer report: one present from 7/6 through end of period in Hennepin PG.

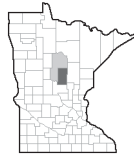
House Wren — Seen in 57 counties statewide; new nesting record in *Isanti* DMP.



Winter Wren — Reported in nine North-central and Northeast counties plus Pine.

Sedge Wren — Observed in 38 counties throughout state.

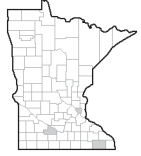
Marsh Wren — Reported in 28 counties in all regions except Southwest (and only Carlton in Northeast); new nesting record in *Crow Wing* JS, MN.



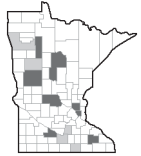
Golden-crowned Kinglet — Seen in Roseau, Itasca, Aitkin, St. Louis, Carlton, Lake.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet — Reported in St. Louis, Lake, Cook.

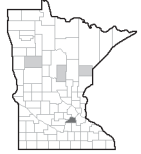
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher — Observed in 29 counties as far west and as far north as Brown, Kandiyohi, Douglas, Polk (second county record, 7/14 †CRM), Hubbard, Cass (pairs at 8 locations) MRN, and Aitkin.



Eastern Bluebird — Seen in 49 counties in all regions except Southwest.

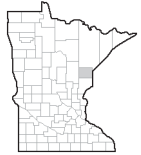


Veery — Reported in 36 counties as far west and south as a line through Marshall, Norman, Clay, Pope, Nicollet, Houston.



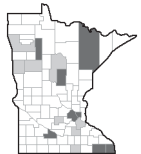
Swainson's Thrush — Reported in Itasca, St. Louis, Carlton, Lake, Cook.

Hermit Thrush — Seen in ten North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau, Mille Lacs, Kanabec, Pine.

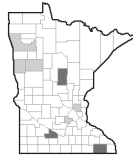


Wood Thrush — Observed in 31 counties as far west as a line through Roseau, Cass, Stearns, Brown, Freeborn.

American Robin — Seen in 58 counties statewide.



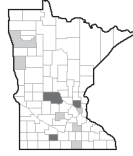
Gray Catbird — Reported in 55 counties



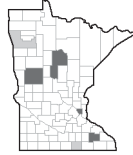
throughout the state.

Northern Mockingbird — Two reports: 6/17 Cook (photographed at Tofte) JWL *et al.* and 6/28–30 Olmsted (Chester Woods Co. Park) JGL.

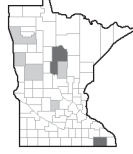
Brown Thrasher — Seen in 39 counties statewide; new nesting record in *Watonwan* DLB.



European Starling — New nesting records in *Otter Tail* DTT, *Cass* MRN, JS, MN; observed in 48 counties statewide.



Cedar Waxwing — Seen in 51 counties throughout the state.



Blue-winged Warbler — Reported in 14 counties extending from Fillmore and Houston to Meeker, Sherburne, and Anoka; plus Nicollet, Brown. “Lawrence’s” Warbler reported in Brown (male?) JSS; “Brewster’s” Warbler observed 6/23 Sherburne RBJ.



Golden-winged Warbler — Seen in nine North-central and Northeast counties plus Becker, Mille Lacs, Pine, Stearns, Sherburne, Anoka; also, new nesting record in *Kanabec* CAM.



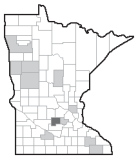
Tennessee Warbler — Fewest reports since 1985, and none from the breeding

range! Observed 6/2 Rice, Marshall and Clay; 6/14 Dakota †JEL, 7/14 Clay GEN.

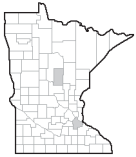
Nashville Warbler — Reported in 18 counties as far west and south as a line through Kittson, Todd, Stearns, Anoka; plus late migrants 6/4 Scott, 6/10 Douglas and early migrants 7/26 Clay, 7/28 Douglas.

Northern Parula — Seen in eight North-central and Northeast counties plus Mille Lacs; first county record 6/10 **Kittson** (Lake Bronson S.P.) †PHS.

Yellow Warbler — Reported in 48 counties in all regions except Southwest.



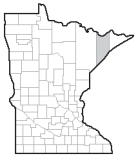
Chestnut-sided Warbler — Record high number of reports. Observed in 23 counties as far west and south as a line through Kittson, Polk, Becker, Morrison, Hennepin, Dakota; plus 6/1 Olmsted, 6/2 Scott, 6/3 Goodhue and Wabasha NRRI, 6/4 Steele NFT and Winona NRRI.



Magnolia Warbler — Reported in Lake of the Woods, Itasca, Aitkin, St. Louis, Lake, Cook, Carlton, Pine; plus 6/2 Meeker.

Cape May Warbler — Observed in Cass, St. Louis, Lake; peak count 6/9 and 6/23 Aitkin (at least 22) WEN.

Black-throated Blue Warbler — Singing males found at 35 to 40 locations along the Superior Hiking Trail in Lake and Cook counties MWS; circumstantial evidence suggests defoliation by caterpillars in June had a negative impact on overall numbers. Also reported in St. Louis.



Yellow-rumped Warbler — Seen in

nine North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau, Marshall, Becker, Mille Lacs, Isanti, Pine.

Black-throated Green Warbler — Reported in ten North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau, Becker.

Blackburnian Warbler — Many reports, similar to 1995; seen in ten North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau, Mille Lacs, Pine.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER — A pair discovered 6/11 at Acacia Cemetery in Dakota Co. †JMa, †TAT, †BAF remained into July, were observed and photographed by many, and provided the state's second nesting record (3 young fledged).



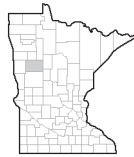
Pine Warbler — Most reports since 1994. Seen in 16 counties as far west and south as a line through Beltrami, Becker, Otter Tail, Ramsey, and as far northeast as Lake; plus 6/3 Kittson PHS.

Palm Warbler — Observed in Beltrami, Itasca, St. Louis, Cass, Carlton, Mille Lacs.



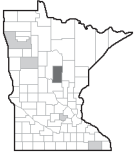
Bay-breasted Warbler — Only report from Cook.

Cerulean Warbler — Possible nesting in **Becker** (female carrying nesting material) DDM, BJM. Also observed in Nicollet, Rice, Goodhue, Olmsted, Fillmore, Houston; plus 15 known pairs at Murphy-Hanrehan Park in Scott and Dakota counties BAF.



Black-and-white Warbler — Observed in 17 counties as far west and south as a line through Kittson, Becker, Anoka; plus 6/1 Fillmore, 6/2 Meeker, 6/3 Goodhue.

American Redstart — Seen in 44 counties in all regions except Southwest.

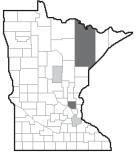


Prothonotary Warbler — Reported in Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington, Dakota, Le Sueur, Goodhue, Houston.



Worm-eating Warbler — Second summer record for the state (the first was in 1998), an individual documented **7/28 Anoka** (near Carlos Avery WMA) †CF.

Ovenbird — Observed in 41 counties as far west as a line through Kittson, Becker, Douglas, Meeker, Nicollet, Freeborn.

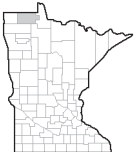


Northern Waterthrush — Record high number of reports; seen in eight North-central and Northeast counties plus Kittson, Kanabec, Pine, Anoka.

Louisiana Waterthrush — All reports: 6/18 Houston (Beaver Creek Valley S.P.) CRM, 6/23 Washington (near Copas) TAT, Fillmore (no date) NBO.

Kentucky Warbler — Holdover from spring observed through 6/17 at Nelson Fen in Olmsted Co. JDu *et al.* Another male was defending territory at Murphy-Hanrehan Park in Scott Co. (same site as last year) BAF.

Connecticut Warbler — Most reports since 1980. Seen in eight North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau, Mille Lacs, Pine; late migrant 6/10 Hennepin BBB.

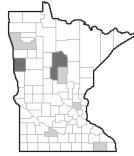


Mourning Warbler — Most reports since 1995. Observed in 20 counties as



far west and south as a line through Roseau, Otter Tail, Scott, Dakota; plus 6/2 and 7/1 Brown (singing) JSS, 6/6 and 6/12 Rice TFB, 6/15 and 6/18 Winona (Great River Bluffs S.P.) FZL, CRM.

Common Yellowthroat — Seen in 54 counties statewide; new nesting record in *Clay* GEN.



Hooded Warbler — Approximately 35 territorial males found at Murphy-Hanrehan Park in Scott and Dakota counties (8 nests located, of which 5 known to be parasitized by cowbirds; 6 additional pairs fledged broods) BAF. This represents the largest nesting concentration of this species ever recorded in the state.



Wilson's Warbler — Only report: 6/6 Lake SES.

Canada Warbler — Record high number of reports, almost double the previous ten-year average. Observed in seven North-central and Northeast counties plus Mille Lacs, Pine; also found 6/2 Meeker, 6/23 Anoka (Boot L.) TAT.

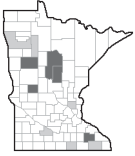
Yellow-breasted Chat — Two reports: 6/13–15 Winona (Great River Bluffs S.P.) CBe, FZL and 6/29 Dakota (Lebanon Hills Co. Park) TAT.

Scarlet Tanager — Most reports in 20+ years; seen in 43 counties in all regions except Southwest (and only Douglas in West-central).

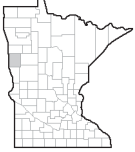


Eastern Towhee — Observed in ten East-central and Southeast counties plus Marshall, St. Louis, Cass, Wadena, Scott, Rice, Blue Earth, Freeborn.

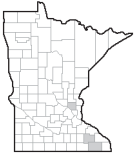
Chipping Sparrow — Reported in 56 counties statewide.



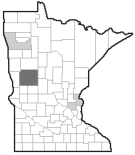
Clay-colored Sparrow — Seen in 38 counties in all regions, including 6/18 Freeborn RBJ.



Field Sparrow — Observed in 28 counties as far north as a line through Clay, Crow Wing, Chisago.



Vesper Sparrow — Record low number of reports; seen in 29 counties as far north and east as a line through Lake of the Woods, Crow Wing, Chisago, Winona.



Lark Sparrow — Observed in Kittson, Polk, Pennington, Crow Wing, Sherburne, Anoka, Dakota, Wabasha, Blue Earth; plus 7/28 Rock (migrant?) TAT.



Savannah Sparrow — Fewest reports in 18+ years; seen in 35 counties statewide.

Grasshopper Sparrow — Reported in 21 counties in all regions except North-central and Northeast.

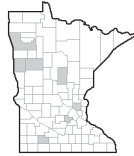
Henslow's Sparrow — Many reports, similar to the previous four years. Observed 6/2–24 Clay (2 at Buffalo River S.P., song recorded) †RJS *et al.*; 6/2–9 Hennepin (Crow-Hassan Park) SLC; 6/4–21 Douglas (2 at Odens Waterfowl Production Area) †EJE; 6/10 and 7/14 Washington (3 at Afton S.P.) †DFN, CF; 6/11 Le Sueur (no location) RBJ; 6/15–18 Winona (3+ at Great River Bluffs S.P.) FZL,

†DFN *et al.*; 6/17–18 **Crow Wing** (first county record, but no location) WEN *et al.*; and throughout the summer season near Old Frontenac in Goodhue County †CMJ, RBJ.

LeConte's Sparrow — Reported in 12 counties as far south as Clay, Becker, Aitkin, Carlton.

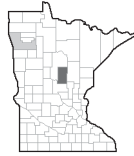
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow — Seen in Roseau, Marshall, Polk, Clay, Aitkin.

Song Sparrow — Found in 56 counties statewide.



Lincoln's Sparrow — Seen in Roseau, St. Louis, Lake, Cass, Carlton, Mille Lacs.

Swamp Sparrow — Observed in 39 counties throughout state.

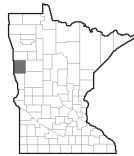


White-throated Sparrow — Reported in nine North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau, Marshall, Mille Lacs, Kanabec, Pine.

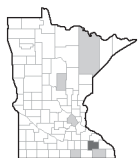
Harris's Sparrow — One of two birds in yard near Hartland photographed 6/19 Freeborn †AEB.

Dark-eyed Junco — Observed in St. Louis, Lake, Carlton.

Chestnut-collared Longspur — Nested at traditional Felton Prairie site in Clay Co.

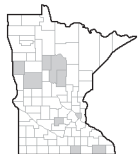


Northern Cardinal — Seen in 36 counties as far north as Clay, Becker, Crow Wing, Aitkin; plus possible nesting at



Eveleth in St. Louis Co. KRS, BAB.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak — Reported in 51 counties in all regions except Southwest.



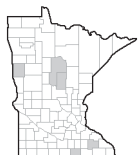
Blue Grosbeak — Only report from Rock.

Indigo Bunting — Observed in 49 counties in all regions except Southwest.

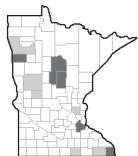


Dickcissel — Relatively few reports, similar to 1997–1999. Seen in 27 counties as far north as a line through Polk, Red Lake, Cass, Crow Wing, Dakota.

Bobolink — Reported in 43 counties statewide; peak count 7/15 Wilkin (178) TAT, ADS.



Red-winged Blackbird — Observed in 59 counties throughout the state.

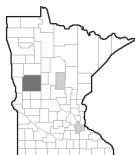


Eastern Meadowlark — Reported in 21 counties as far west and north as a line through Blue Earth, Meeker, Aitkin, Lake; also 6/23 Otter Tail SPM, 6/24 Norman PCC, PHS.

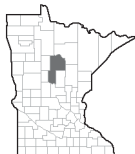


Western Meadowlark — Fewest reports in 20+ years; seen in 27 counties in all regions except Northeast.

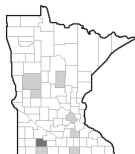
Yellow-headed Blackbird — New nesting record in *Otter Tail* DTT; seen in 40 counties in all regions (but only St. Louis in Northeast).



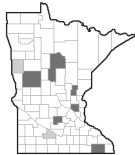
Brewer's Blackbird — Fewest reports in 18+ years. Observed in 17 counties as far south as a line through Clay, Douglas, Meeker, Dakota, Wabasha; plus 6/7 Freeborn AEB. New nesting record in *Cass* JS, MN.



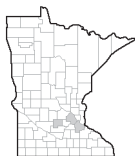
Common Grackle — Reported in 52 counties statewide.



Brown-headed Cowbird — Observed in 53 counties throughout the state; new breeding record in *Kanabec* CAM. Parasitized species included Eastern Phoebe, Yellow-throated Vireo, Golden-winged Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Hooded Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, and Red-winged Blackbird.



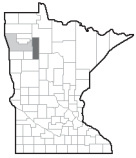
Orchard Oriole — Reported in 19 counties as far north as Polk in the west and Washington in the east; no reports from the Southwest.



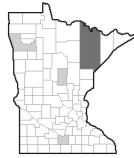
Baltimore Oriole — Seen in 50 counties statewide.



Purple Finch — Observed in 11 North-central and Northeast counties plus Roseau, Polk, Becker, Benton, Mille Lacs,



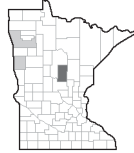
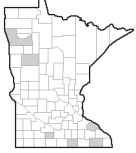
Kanabec, Pine.



ChH.

House Finch — Reported in 43 counties throughout state.

American Goldfinch — Reported in 57 counties statewide.



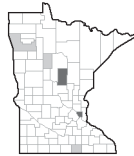
Red Crossbill — Many reports: mid-summer observations in Lake, St. Louis, Itasca, and Cass plus 6/7 Stearns (8 at Collegeville) RPR, 6/29 Wilkin SPM, 7/2 Otter Tail SPM.

Evening Grosbeak — Seen in Becker, Lake of the Woods, Cass, Itasca, Aitkin, St. Louis, Lake, Cook; flocks observed moving south along the North Shore of L. Superior in late June and late July.



White-winged Crossbill — Only report: early June through 6/22 at Sax-Zim bog area in St. Louis Co. KRE *et al.*

House Sparrow — Reported in 50 counties throughout state.



Pine Siskin — Reported from nine North-central and Northeast counties plus Kittson and Polk; possible breeding in Blue Earth (nest-building in mid-April)

Contributors

AAB Al A. Bolduc
 ADS Andrew D. Smith
 AEB Al E. Batt
 ALE Audrey L. Evers
 AS Annette Sandberg
 AXH Anthony X. Hertzell
 BAB Betsy A. Beneke
 BAF Bruce A. Fall
 BAP Bruce A. Pannkuk
 BBB Bruce B. Baer
 BD Bob Dick
 BEO Bridget E. Olson
 BJM Barbara J. Martin
 BKY Ben K. Yokel
 BLA Betty L. Ammerman
 BMa Brady Mattsson
 BRB Brad R. Bolduan
 BRK Byron R. Kinkade
 CaH Cal Harth
 CAK Chuck A. Krulas
 CAM Craig A. Menze
 CBe Chris Benson
 CF Cole Foster

ChH Chad Heins
 CHo Carol Hoppe
 CMJ Charles M. Juhnke
 CRG Colin R. Gjervold
 CRM Craig R. Mandel
 DAG David A. Grosshuesch
 DB Doug Buri
 DBz Dedrick Benz
 DC Don Carroll
 DCT Dianne C. Tuff
 DCZ Dave C. Zumeta
 DDM Dennis D. Martin
 DDT Daryl D. Tessen
 DFN David F. Neitzel
 DLB Diane L. Brudelie
 DMA Diane M. Anderson
 DMF Dan M. Floren
 DMP Daphne & Meyers Peterson
 DOK Don O. Kienholz
 DPJ Douglas P. Johnson
 DRB David R. Benson
 DTT Dan T. Thimgan
 EEF Eve E. Freeberg

EFP	Ethan F. Perry	MSS	Mark Sparky Stensaas
EJE	Eddy & Judy Edwards	MWS	Mike W. Steffes
ES	Erika Sitz	MWY	Mary Wyatt
FAE	Fred A. Eckhardt	NAJ	Nancy A. Jackson
FVS	Forest V. Strnad	NAW	Ned A. Winters
FZL	Fred Z. Leshner	NBO	Nancy B. Overcott
GA	Gustave Axelson	NFT	Nels F. Thompson
GBr	Glenn Browne	OLJ	Oscar L. Johnson
GEN	Gary E. Nielsen	PAN	Patricia A. Newman
GMe	Gretchen Mehmel	PBD	Pat & Bob Dewenter
GO	Gary Otnes	PC	Pat Clements
HHH	Herb H. Dingmann	PCC	Philip C. Chu
HJF	Herbert J. Fisher	PEB	Paul E. Budde
JBa	Jim Barrett	PG	Peter Getman
JBr	Jean Brislanche	PHS	Peder H. Svingen
JDu	Joel Dunnette	PJB	Paul J. Binek
JEH	Jay E. Hamernick	PSP	Pam S. Perry
JEl	Jesse Ellis	RAE	Ron A. Erpelding
JEM	John E. Morrison	RBJ	Robert B. Janssen
JEP	Jim E. Pomplun	RCK	Rose C. Knees Kern
JGL	Jon G. Little	RCS	Rolf C. Smeby
JJS	Jeff J. Stephenson	RDK	Ron D. Knees Kern
JJW	Jim & Jude Williams	REH	Robert E. Holtz
JLa	Jacob Langeslag	RHO	Robert H. O'Connor
JLF	Jeanette L. Fisher	RJF	Randy & Jean Frederickson
JLH	James L. Howitz	RJS	Richard & Jeanne Specht
JMa	Jim Mattsson	RJS	Roger J. Schroeder
JMF	Jason M. Frank	RMD	Robert M. Dunlap
JMJ	Jeanie M. Joppru	RNS	Richard N. Smaby
JMU	Janice M. Uden	RPK	Richard & Patricia Kulisheck
JN	Jeanne Newstrom	RPR	Robert P. Russell
JPR	John P. Richardson	RS	Robert Scherzer
JPS	Julian P. Sellers	RWS	Robert W. Schroeder
JR	Jim Ryan	SAS	Shelley A. Steva
JS	Jean Segerstrom	SDo	Sam Dotzler
JSS	Jack S. Sprenger	SES	Steven E. Schon
JWH	John W. Hockema	SLC	Steve L. Carlson
JWL	James W. Lind	SMT	Sandy M. Thimgan
KAK	Karla A. Kinstler	SPM	Steve P. Millard
KAR	Kathryn A. Rivers	STW	Sylvia T. Winkelman
KIM	Kim I. Metz	SWe	Steve Weston
KJB	Karl J. Bardon	SWo	Scott Wolff
KRE	Kim R. Eckert	SWS	Susan W. Seymour
LAU	Larry A. Uden	TAN	Tom A. Nelson
LWF	Lawrence W. Filter	TAT	Tom A. Tustison
MAJ	Murdoch A. Johnson	TFB	Tom F. Boevers
MHF	Marilynn H. Ford	TPB	Terry P. Brashear
MiN	Mike Nelson	TPW	Terry P. Wiens
MJF	Merrill J. Frydendall	WEN	Warren E. Nelson
MJS	Matthew J. Solensky	WMS	William M. Stauffer
MME	Molly M. Evans	MCBS	MN County Biological Survey
MN	Mark Newstrom	MDNR	MN Dept. of Natural Resources
MRN	Michael R. North	NRRI	Natural Resources Research Inst.
MSP	Mitchell Scott Paul	mob	many observers

Proceedings of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee

Kim R. Eckert, MOURC Chairman

On 30 November 2001, the Board of Directors of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union approved changing the name of the Minnesota Ornithological Records Committee (MORC) to the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (MOURC). This Committee had made this request primarily to emphasize that MOURC is a standing committee of the MOU, has always operated under the auspices of the MOU, and is not an independent entity.

Also note that Bruce Fall's term on MOURC ended at the end of 2001, and he was replaced in January by former Alternate Member Philip Chu. Drew Smith was then chosen to replace Phil as an Alternate.

The following records were voted on August – December 2001 and found to be Acceptable:

- Yellow-billed Loon, 4 November 2001, Mille Lacs Lake, Mille Lacs County (record #2001-70, vote 7-0).

Note that only the documentation from the original observers on 4 November was accepted. Although there were reports of this loon by other observers on other days, none of these was substantiated or documented.

- White-faced Ibis, 19 June 2001, near Dexter, Mower County (record #2001-38, vote 7-0).

A photo of the individual confirms the identification as a White-faced.

- White-faced Ibis, 26 April 2001, Spring Lake Township, Scott County (record #2001-40, vote 7-0).

Accepted on the basis of the bird's red iris and the white feathering beginning to show around the base of the bill.

- *Plegadis* ibis, 15 April 2001, near

Rochester, Olmsted County (see Unacceptable record #2001-45).

- *Plegadis* ibis, 17-18 October 2001, near Camden State Park, Lyon County (record #2001-59, vote 7-0).

Field identification of immature ibis as White-faced or Glossy in fall is very difficult, and most will remain and be filed as unidentified *Plegadis*, sp.

- Black Vulture, 28 August 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2001-63, vote 10-0).

All ten MOURC members vote on potential first state records, and this was accepted unanimously as species number 427 on the Minnesota list. The documentation includes clearly identifiable photos.

- Barrow's Goldeneye, 17 November 2001, Reno, Houston County (record #2001-65, vote 7-0).

The documentation of this adult male includes a photo. The observer also made a special effort to make sure the bird was in Minnesota waters, something to consider when finding an unusual species on any river or lake bordering another state.

- Western Sandpiper, 26-27 October 2001, Lake Byllesby, Dakota County (record #2001-69, vote 7-0).

Excellent written descriptions and sketches by three experienced observers results in this being only the fourth accepted state record.

- Pomarine Jaeger, 19 September 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2001-55, vote 7-0).

Jaeger identification is typically difficult, but this individual was an adult with a fully grown tail and seen at relatively close range.

- Long-tailed Jaeger, 5-7 September

2001, Bayport, Washington County (record #2001-52, vote 7-0).

Also an adult with a fully grown tail, and seen by many observers.

- Little Gull, 16 September 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2001-53, vote 7-0).

This individual was in first-winter plumage. Note there was a juvenile Little Gull reported the same day in Duluth (see unacceptable record #2001-54).

- Black-headed Gull, 6 October 2001, Spirit Lake, Jackson County (record #2001-66, vote 7-0).

Note that all accepted records of this species have been from Jackson County.

- California Gull, 26 May 2001, Fairview Township, Lyon County (record #2001-29, vote 7-0).

Three individuals were seen and photographed, two adults and one second-year immature, but only one of the adults was documented and photographed clearly enough to be accepted. The second adult was also probably correctly identified, but the vote on it was 4-3, with a 5-2 vote needed to accept reports of this species. The identification of immature California Gull is much more difficult, and the vote on this individual was 0-7 (most felt it was probably a Ring-billed Gull).

- California Gull, 22 May 2001, Breckenridge, Wilkin County (record #2001-35, vote 7-0, *The Loon* 74:50-54).

Three subadults were involved, and all three were clearly photographed.

- Sabine's Gull, 16-19 September 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2001-64, vote 7-0).

One or more juveniles were seen by many observers during this time.

- Common Tern, 4 November 2001, Vineland, Mille Lacs County (record #2001-71, vote 6-1).

The most convincing feature indicative of this species was the black wedge seen about halfway out on the upper surface of the primaries. The lone dissenting voter felt that Forster's Tern is not entirely precluded.

- Band-tailed Pigeon, 18-20 October

2001, Golden Valley, Hennepin County (record #2001-60, vote 7-0).

Seen and photographed by many observers.

- Eurasian Collared-Dove, December 2000 - August 2001, Russell, Lyon County (record #2001-13, vote 7-0).

This record was accepted on a second-round vote after the first vote was an inconclusive 4-3; close examination of a photograph shows the diagnostic under tail pattern of this species.

- Eurasian Collared-Dove, 3 July 2001, Renville, Renville County (record #2001-39, vote 7-0).

A good description of the under tail pattern was included in the documentation.

- Eurasian Collared-Dove, June-July 2001, Caledonia, Houston County (record #2001-42, vote 7-0, *The Loon* 74:7-13).

A nesting pair seen by many observers and photographed, representing the first confirmed breeding record of this species in the state.

- Eurasian Collared-Dove, 8-9 September 2001, Jasper, Rock / Pipestone Counties (record #2001-50, vote 7-0).

Seen, heard, and photographed by many observers.

- White-eyed Vireo, 12 May 2001, Bloomington, Hennepin County (record #2001-34, vote 6-1, *The Loon* 74:54-55).

The lone dissenting voter felt the documentation should have mentioned more about the bird's size, its song (it was heard singing, but the song was not described), and plumage.

- White-eyed Vireo, 25-28 October 2001, near Lutsen, Cook County (record #2001-68, vote 7-0).

Seen and photographed by many observers.

- Sprague's Pipit, 21 September 2001, Mendota Heights, Dakota County (record #2001-51, vote 7-0).

Excellent written description and sketches by an experienced observer.

- Yellow-throated Warbler, 11 June - July 2001, Acacia Park Cemetery, Dakota County (record #2001-43, vote 7-0, *The Loon* 73:236-240).

A nesting pair seen, documented, and photographed by many observers. This represents the first confirmed breeding record in Minnesota, although it is likely the species nested in recent years in Kandiyohi County.

- Yellow-throated Warbler, 24 August 2001, Fort Snelling State Park, Dakota County (record #2001-48, vote 7-0).

This individual might have been one of the nesting adults from nearby Acacia Park Cemetery.

- Black-throated Sparrow, 7 October 2001, Knife River, Lake County (record #2001-67, vote 7-0).

Seen and photographed by many observers.

- Great-tailed Grackle, 12 May 2001, Rochester, Olmsted County (record #2001-41, vote 7-0).

Seen by many observers, but only one of them provided documentation.

- Great-tailed Grackle, 4 April 2001, Black Rush Lake, Lyon County (record #2001-44, vote 7-0).

This represents one of the few records of this species outside of Jackson County.

- Great-tailed Grackle, 17 October 2001, Minneota Township, Jackson County (record #2001-58, vote 6-1).

The lone dissenting voter felt the possibility of Boat-tailed Grackle was not eliminated.

The following records were voted on August–December 2001 and found to be Unacceptable. (It is important to note that an Unacceptable vote on a record only means the provided documentation was not complete or convincing enough to include the sighting in *The Loon* or in the MOU's archives of bird records. An Unacceptable vote does not necessarily mean the observer misidentified the bird.)

- White-faced Ibis, 15 April 2001, near Rochester, Olmsted County (record #2001-45, vote 2-5).

It was unanimously agreed that the digital photograph shows a *Plegadis* ibis. The photo also seems to show reddish color on the facial skin, but such color

does not appear on the eye, and it does appear in places elsewhere in the plumage where no red should be. Since the observer could actually see no color on the facial skin, it was thought the reddish color was an artifact of the camera or computer.

- Mississippi Kite, 28 May 2001, Kaskaskia Prairie, Le Sueur County (record #2001-36, vote 0-7).

The observer, who had no experience with this species, makes a point of stating he clearly saw reddish color on the rump and tail. However, no Mississippi Kite at any age would show such color.

- Mississippi Kite, 28 May 2001, near North Mankato, Nicollet County (record #2001-37, vote 0-7).

The same reddish color was also reported on this individual. It was also thought highly unlikely a single observer could find two individuals of such a rare species on the same day at two different locations.

- Mississippi Kite, 23 September 2001, Brawner Lake, Lyon County (record #2001-56, vote 1-6).

The sketch of the underwing shows black outer primaries, uniformly pale inner primaries and secondaries, and dark gray coverts. However, such a pattern is not consistent with this (or any?) species of raptor. The overall size of this bird as described suggests it was too large to be a Mississippi Kite. Also apparently inconsistent with this species was the bird's aggressive behavior and strong and rapid flight.

- Little Gull, 16 September 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2001-54, vote 2-5).

There was no direct size comparison of this juvenile gull with any other bird. Also the complete wing and tail patterns were not seen or described since the gull was never seen preening or in flight. Numerous observers were present but only one wrote any documentation, and this apparently only from memory a few days later. The identification may well have been correct, but the incomplete description leaves too many doubts.

- California Gull, 26 May 2001, Fairview Township, Lyon County (see Acceptable record #2001-29).

- California Gull, 4 November 2001, Bloomington, Hennepin County (record #2001-61, vote 1–6).

The identification of this apparent adult was based heavily on its dark iris, but the distance and light conditions at the time were not clearly indicated, suggesting this may well have been a pale-eyed gull, which often appear dark-eyed at a distance. Similarly, the darker mantle color of this gull as described may not have been accurately seen. The inexperience of the observer is also a problem, since his analysis of similar species includes several inaccuracies. Field notes taken at the time of the observation would have strengthened the record.

- Lesser Black-backed Gull, 4 October 2001, near Camden State Park, Lyon County (record #2001-57, vote 2–5).

The leg color of this gull was never seen, which is a key field mark of this species. The mantle is only described as dark gray, but this would also fit California Gull. Also, the overall size is described as about the same as nearby Ring-billed Gulls, which is not consistent with Lesser Black-backed. The mention of “bright white secondaries” in the documentation is equally inconsistent and puzzling.

- Common Tern, 11 June 2001, Lake Byllesby, Dakota County (record #2001-62, vote 1–6).

The observer did not consider or preclude the possibility of this being an Arctic Tern. In addition, the features used to preclude Forster’s Tern (bill color and wing vs. tail extension) are only secondary field marks. A more complete description was not possible since the bird was not seen in flight.

- Orange-crowned Warbler, 24 August 2001, Carver Park, Carver County (record #2001-47, vote 2–5).

Although this warbler may have been correctly identified, the description is not complete enough to preclude other species. The observer did not address the

possibility of this being an immature female Yellow Warbler, which can appear very similar to an Orange-crowned and would be much more likely in August. Also, the described call note (“stick!”) could be interpreted to fit Yellow Warbler better than Orange-crowned. Reading the documentation another way shows that Palm Warbler would also fit the description.

- MacGillivray’s Warbler, 31 August 2001, Cottonwood, Lyon County (record #2001-49, vote 1–6).

The experienced and careful observer took field notes at the time of the observation, and it may well have been correctly identified. In fall, however, field identification of female-plumaged MacGillivray’s vs. Mourning warblers is very difficult, and it may not be possible out of range without a specimen, photo, or a banded bird carefully measured. Bold eye-arcs are mentioned, suggesting this may have been a male, but there is no description of blackish lores, which would have been indicative of a MacGillivray’s. The call note was described as “oick,” but this would actually fit a Mourning Warbler’s note better.

- Painted Bunting, 12 May 2001, Cottonwood, Lyon County (record #2001-46, vote 3–4).

This bird was almost certainly correctly identified, since it is hard to confuse a male Painted Bunting with anything else. However, the inexperienced observers only provided a photo in which it is hard to see anything on the bird, and the entire plumage description only mentions blue, green, and “burnt orange” colors being seen without saying where these colors were on the plumage.

The efforts of all those observers who document reports of unusual species are appreciated, whether or not those records are accepted. Accordingly, the Committee acknowledges with thanks those who provided documentation for the records listed in this article: Karl Bardon, Dedrick Benz, Paul Budde, Dave Cahlander (2 records), Philip Chu (4

records), Joel Dahl, Bob Dunlap (2 records), Kim Eckert (3 records), Paul Egeland, Bruce Fall, Colin Gjervold (3 records), Karol Gresser, Chad Heins, Anthony Hertzell (4 records), Bob Janssen (2 records), Paul Jantscher (2 records), Chuck Krulas, Fred Leshner, Jim Lind, Craig Mandel (4 records), Fr. Tom Margevicius, Frank Nicoletti, Thomas Ramsay, Roger Schroeder (6 records), Richard Smaby, Drew Smith (3 records), Jeff Stephenson (3 records), Peder Svin-

gen (15 records), Tom Tustison (2 records).

There were also other observers who documented records which were not submitted for a vote to the Committee; although these records are not cited here, their documentations are also appreciated. Summary: 40 records voted on; 29 Acceptable (73%), 11 Unacceptable (27%).

8255 Congdon Blvd., Duluth, MN 55804.

White-eyed Vireo Nesting in Steele County

Norma Swanson¹
Al Batt²

On 6 May 2001, a White-eyed Vireo was reported at Rice Lake State Park by Steve Stucker. On 9 May a pair of White-eyed Vireos was spotted by Avis and Arvid Anderson from Fort Myers, Florida, and this observer. The pair was wrapping fibers around two branches of a fork in an absurdly small sapling, apparently starting to construct a nest.

By 12 May there was definitely a nest, conical with a rough exterior, about four feet up in a choke cherry sapling. The site was about 12 feet west from the path. Due to the slope of the land toward the lake, the nest was actually below eye level as viewed from the path.

Both birds worked at constructing the nest and shared the incubating of the eggs and the feeding of the young.

The male rarely sang. The first time I heard him was 16 May, and I did not

hear him again until 8 June.

On 5 June, I observed, for the first time, feeding of young. From then on the activity really increased. There were as many as 15 nest visits in 48 minutes. By 9 June the parents were leaving the nest unattended for up to 1/2 hr. Close and frequent observations were made from 9 May to 17 June by this observer and by Darryl Hill.

On 15 June, four young were seen in the nest. That night there was a hard westerly wind and on the afternoon of 16 June the nest was empty, but intact. Neither adults nor chicks were seen, nor was there any evidence of predation. An unidentified birder reported seeing what he thought was a young White-eyed Vireo.

It had been 10–11 days from hatching on 5 June to the empty nest of 16 June.

1744 East School St., Owatonna, MN 55060.



White-eyed Vireos at nest, 16 May 2001. Photo by Norma Swanson.



White-eyed Vireo, 16 May 2001. Photo by Norma Swanson.

On 6 May 2001, I heard the song of a White-eyed Vireo while volunteering at Rice Lake State Park. That is, I was volunteering at Rice Lake, the vireo wasn't. Or perhaps it was — who knows about vireos?

The vireo was singing often and loudly, occasionally throwing in the song of the Gray Catbird. After further investigation, I was able to spot the bird, thanks to its incessant singing, and was able to confirm that it was indeed a White-eyed Vireo. I had heard a White-eyed Vireo singing in this same area on 8 May, 2000.

On 12 May 2001, Norma Swanson observed copulation and nest building by the vireos, taking pictures of the nest and the birds. The nest was located in appropriate habitat for the bird — in a sapling near the vegetated shore of Rice Lake.

On 18 and 19 May, eggs were seen in the nest by Nels Thompson, Darryl Hill, and me. On a number of occasions I watched as one bird fed the other on the nest. I visited the nest site on 21, 22, and 27 May and again on 6 and 9 June. I did see young birds in the nest, as did Norma Swanson when she visited on 5 June.

On 15 June, a severe storm hit the area. On 16 June, Darryl Hill and I, birding independently, checked the nest and found it completely empty. The nest was not destroyed, but the young birds were gone. Incubation for White-eyed Vireo is 12–15 days with the young fledging in 9–

11 days. The birds could have and should have fledged.

On 18, 22, 29, and 30 June and 2 July, I was fortunate enough to have been blessed with more patience than ambition that allowed me to observe parent White-eyed Vireos feeding fledged young. I watched the young vireos begging and the parents carrying food to them. This activity was accompanied by much scolding. On 18 June, Phil Chu observed a vireo bringing food to a thicket. On 30 June, Peder Svingen, Ron Erpelding, and Randy Fredrickson spotted a White-eyed Vireo in the same area. The bird was extremely vocal.

There were many other birders who saw the birds and the nest. I might add that the park officials were amazed with the number of birders who visited the park to see the vireos and were very much impressed with the behavior and caring attitudes of those birders.

I would like to give special thanks to the park manager, Roger Heimgartner, for his enthusiastic encouragement of birding activities in the park. The folks at Rice Lake State Park are hoping for many more birds to attract birding visitors. As this was the second year for a White-eyed Vireo in this same location, perhaps it will book a return engagement next year. I hope so.

²71622 – 325th St., Hartland, MN 56042.

BIRDING BY HINDSIGHT

A Second Look at Painted Buntings and Scissor- tailed Flycatchers

Kim R. Eckert



So, your dream has always been to be on MORC! No, not the Mean Old Rejections Committee, but the other MORC — the Minnesota Ornithological Records Committee. But note that recently MORC has morphed and become MOURC: the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee. Or, as the members like to call it: Merciful, Omniscient, Understanding, and Really Cool.

Whatever you call it, it's really no big deal. But the name change was made primarily to emphasize that this committee is not just some independent group driving you crazy and rejecting your records. Instead, it has long been a standing committee of the MOU, and accountable to the MOU's Board of Directors, as it drives you crazy and rejects your records.

To paraphrase Shakespeare (run for your lives! — he's about to expose his roots as an English major), a records committee by any other name would smell as sweet. So your dream can still come true as a member of MOURC. To qualify, though, you have to pass the entrance examination. It's in two parts and pretty easy. After all, what could be easier than identifying a male Painted Bunting or a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher?

Part One: Painted Bunting Identification

Here are two records of male Painted Buntings which MOURC looked at recently. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to say how MOURC voted

on each record. Did we find both acceptable, were both not accepted, or was there one of each? (Hint: the vote on one of these records was unanimous, with all seven members voting the same way; the other vote was much closer, with four voting one way and three the other.)

Record #1 was from a yard in western Minnesota in May 2001. The entire written description was: "Dark blue on back of head tapering down the back to a greenish color. Red under the neck tapering to orangish color under the stomach." The observers had never seen the species before, no similar species were mentioned or considered, no field notes or photos were taken, and it was not mentioned if any optics were used.

Record #2 was from May 2001, also from a western Minnesota yard. The entire written description was: "a very colorful bird. . .bright blue, green and burnt orange. . .approx. 5-6 inches." A distant photo was taken, but it is out of focus, and it is difficult to see the bird or any plumage details. As with Record #1, the observers had never seen the species before, no field notes were taken, and it was not mentioned if optics were used. American Goldfinch and Purple Finch were mentioned as similar species.

Again, a male Painted Bunting is hardly an identification challenge, and it would be difficult to misidentify some other species as one. Accordingly, there is little, if any, doubt in my mind that both birds were correctly identified. But

— you guessed it! — MOURC was unable to accept either record. The vote on Record #1 was 0–7, and the vote on Record #2 was 3–4.

Now, before you run off and send an irate letter to your congressman, please be sure to take note of two things. First, considering records such as these is about the most difficult task MOURC has; not being able to accept a record of a bird you know or suspect was correctly identified. And second, you have to realize there is an important distinction between the identification of something and its documentation. MOURC does not evaluate anyone's bird identification ability; it only evaluates the documentation he or she submits.

In these two cases, no one thinks anyone misidentified anything. But at the same time, no one provided enough evidence of what they saw. If you reread the first description, you don't know if there was any blue on the top or sides of the head, or if any was on the back. What did the wings, rump, tail and bill look like? How big was it? We don't know. What if the wings had wing bars, the rump and tail were yellow, the bill was six inches long, and the bird stood three feet tall? (All of these things are entirely possible; the description provided doesn't say.) Would it still be a Painted Bunting?

Look again at the second record, and the description is even less specific. (But it was at least accepted by some of us who thought we could barely see some details on the photo.) Where were the blue and green and orange colors? We don't know. What if we asked the observers about this, and they reported that the head was red, the back was blue, and the underparts were green? Would it still be a Painted Bunting?

There may be nothing to be learned here about Painted Bunting identification. Again, I'm confident these observers know how to identify this species and actually did so correctly. They are certainly also to be commended for taking the time and effort to respond to our request for docu-

mentation. But there is something to be learned about reporting the good birds we find, often it's harder to document them than it is to identify them.

Part Two: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher Identification

Similarly, here are two sets of details recently submitted on another very distinctive and easy-to-identify species: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher. The interesting thing about these records is that one is a May 1987 record and the other is from May 1993. Birding by hindsight, indeed! They were found by chance in the MOU's archives of bird records, and neither had ever been considered by the Committee. One had been in the Acceptable file, while the other had been filed as not acceptable.

In this case your assignment for each record is two-fold. First, figure out which record came from which file; and second, did the Committee concur or disagree with how the records were filed.

Record #1 was entirely from a news item by a local reporter in a newspaper. The reporter, who did not see the bird, wrote that the observers said it was a "pearly gray bird" with an "extremely long tail." They identified it based on the "pale orangish-red spots on the wings and the unusually long tail." There was no other information about similar species, how long it was seen, the distance involved, whether binoculars were used, or the observers' experience.

Record #2 was a description by an observer who wrote the following: "The bird was sitting on a telephone wire and its very long forked tail was clearly visible. Its back, head and chest were white/gray and its wings dark. The pinkish sides were not noted (I was too busy admiring its tail)." The observer also writes why it was not a Western Kingbird ("its tail was far too long") or a Fork-tailed Flycatcher ("its head was light-colored"), that he or she had seen this species many times before in other states, and that the bird was on a wire about 15 feet away and observed with 10X binoculars.

The answers? The first record had been in the acceptable file and the second in the not-accepted file. However, MOURC reversed that, not accepting the first record and accepting the second.

So, what happened? One possibility is that the records were simply misfiled, which can happen with any files. Another possibility is the records were filed that way because the first mentioned the pinkish color and the second didn't. As with the Painted Bunting records, there is little or no doubt that both birds were actually seen and correctly identified. And the majority went on to say the second description, though incomplete, provides enough evidence to adequately document the sighting.

However, the problem with the first record is not the description, but from whom it came. It's what we call a second-hand report: the only description, as accurate as it may be, is provided by someone who did not see the bird. By its nature, such evidence leaves too many doubts and is open to question. It's the same way in the courtroom, by the way; hearsay testimony is disregarded. If those who actually saw the flycatcher wrote the description, rather than the reporter, the record may well have been accepted.

Well, how did you do on the entrance exam? Actually, your answers are not all that important. What is important is to

remember:

- MOURC evaluates the birder's documentation, not the birder's ID skills.

- Accordingly, correctly identified birds will sometimes end up not being accepted.

- Accordingly, correctly identified birds seen by MOURC members will sometimes end up not being accepted. (Example: Years ago, before MOURC was around, I had good looks at male MacGillivray's Warblers in spring on two occasions in western Minnesota. Neither was documented at the time, and MOURC did the right thing with them. Neither was accepted.)

- Documenting the exceptional birds you find is not a chore; it's not punishment. If you found something special, it deserves special treatment. Write it up and tell us all about it!

- If you think you'd be better off without MOURC, there are two alternatives. One is to accept nothing without tangible evidence, like a specimen or photograph. (One way or another, you'd have to shoot everything.) The other is to accept everything without question. (So, if I said that I saw Elvis standing by an Ivory-billed Woodpecker nest in my back yard, then without a doubt you could rest assured that Elvis and Ivory-bills still exist.)

8255 Congdon Blvd., Duluth, MN 55804.

Unusual Observation of Foot Color in the Pine Warbler

David A. Grosshuesch

By mid- to late-October, few warblers are captured at Hawk Ridge, Duluth, St. Louis County, so when the nets were opened on 23 October 2001, I didn't anticipate catching

anything unusual. But while checking nets, I observed a small warbler-like bird fly into a mist net and become ensnared. After extracting the warbler, I noticed the bird looked quite drab and was certainly



Pine Warbler, 23 October 2001, Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve, Duluth, St. Louis County. Photo by David A. Grosshuesch.

unusual. The bird was fairly large and had a brownish crown, auricular, and nape, a brownish back, slightly tinged olive/greenish with no black streaking. The wing-bars were washed buff to buffy-white. It had a white crescent eye-ring, and a large bill with a paler lower mandible. The throat was white and the upper breast was slightly washed with yellow. The sides were whitish/buffy and the flanks a clean white. The bird had darkish-colored legs. But the soles of the feet caught my eye. They were yellow! This bird was obviously a Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*); however, it had the sole color of a Blackpoll Warbler (*D. striata*). The bird was aged and sexed as a hatch-year female, and it was the first time this species has been banded at Hawk Ridge.

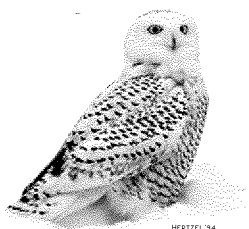
I began to think this was clearly a unique bird and could find no other birders/banders who had observed a similar foot trait, until I heard of a bird

Bob Russell observed at Grand Portage State Park, Cook County, on 24 November 2001. Bob observed the bird around 11:00 A.M. from point blank range to ~100 m away for more than ten minutes. The following is Bob's description: "The bird had bright yellow underparts (as brightly plumaged as any winter or spring male Pine Warbler that I've ever seen), yellow eye-ring, no streaks on the back, large size, white sides to the tail, and two olive green side streaks on each side; not little pencil streaks like a Blackpoll Warbler. The legs were dark but the feet were strongly yellow on the soles and maybe a bit on the sides of the feet; giving them a bit of a 'booted' appearance."

Considerable confusion can exist between the identification of Pine, Blackpoll and Bay-breasted (*D. castanea*) warblers throughout much of the year, especially during fall migration. Blackpoll and Bay-breasted warblers molt into very different Alternate and Basic plumages

and can look very similar to Pine Warblers in the fall. Often Pine, Blackpoll, and Bay-breasted warblers can be separated by the black streaking or dusky black centers of the back feathers or lack thereof, by size and (but mostly) shape of the bill, by the length of the tail, and by the color of the **legs** and **feet** (including soles). Bay-breasted Warblers have black legs and feet with grayish soles, and Blackpoll Warblers often have yellowish legs and the soles of the feet are yellow. According to Whitney (1983), Curson *et al.* (1994), Hough (1996), Pyle (1997), and Rodewald *et al.* (1999), the legs and soles of Pine Warbler feet are dark or blackish. However, Kaufman (1990) and Dunn and Garrett (1997) cautioned that some fall Pine Warblers may have more pale or yellow soles of the feet, but clarification and references were not given to better explain the statement.

Clearly there is a lack of consensus and understanding in current field guides and peer-reviewed literature regarding the color of Pine Warbler feet and soles. It is obvious that birders and banders alike need to make careful observations regarding the color of feet, soles, and legs for all three species in order to make proper identification and contribute to ornithological knowledge.



BOOK REVIEWS

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT BACKYARD BIRDS, compiled by Jim Williams and Anthony Hertzell in cooperation with the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union, Adventure Publications, Inc., Cambridge,

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Bob Russell for taking the time to make a careful observation, and for providing his description of the Pine Warbler.

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- 5426 Juniata St., Duluth, MN 55804.**

MN, 2001, 135 pages with index and bibliography, \$9.95. All proceeds go to the MOU.

Who eats what? Are we interfering with nature when we feed wild birds?

How should I store my birdseed? Why don't we ever see baby chickadees? Why do we see so many crows around? Do birds play? How long do little birds like goldfinches live?

Several years ago, in recognition of the rapidly expanding interest in birdfeeding and birdwatching, authors Jim Williams and Anthony Hertzler asked the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* if it would be interested in a column featuring short essays and answers to readers' questions about backyard birds. The response from the paper was enthusiastic, so Jim and Tony began to write a weekly column in the paper's "Home and Garden" section. *Questions and Answers* consists of excerpts from that column.

The book targets novice birdwatchers, but will entertain and offer new information to experienced birders as well. For example, how many seasoned birders know that a goldfinch can live as long as 10 years or a Northern Cardinal 25 years? How many know how a nuthatch got its name or that putting seeds in a microwave oven will keep them from sprouting?

Questions and Answers covers six broad topics: Feeding; Housing; Troubles; Species Specific, which focuses on Eastern Bluebirds, hummingbirds, orioles, cardinals, owls, woodpeckers, gulls, bald eagles and loons; Sightings and Questions, which includes excellent tips on species identification; and Birds Throughout the Year, which includes helpful information about migratory birds. Jim Williams's light-hearted introductory essays make this book user-friendly and will spark the reader's interest in learning more about attracting and identifying birds. Here is something he wrote about woodpeckers:

"Woodpeckers, however, are solid citizens of the bird world, hard workers, important members of the community, most of them given the unenviable job of working here in the winter, with no beach break."

The book covers an amazing amount of ground for its size. It contains a good

overall selection of questions and species specific information, although one might ask why gulls, Bald Eagles and loons were included, as they are not generally backyard birds. The book contains an excellent comprehensive index and a good bibliography. The authors are careful to give credit for information gleaned from other birders and writers.

Not least of the book's attractions are its design and graphics. Each section is introduced by photographs of birds and illustrations of feeders that appear in shades of gray behind gray screens. The reader may not consciously notice these graphics at first, but will have a sense of something being there just as happens in the field with birds screened behind leaves or brush; subtle movements of grasses as unseen birds forage on the ground; or glimpses of nuthatches disappearing around trunks.

Questions and Answers provides an informative and entertaining approach to backyard birdwatching and would make a good addition to anyone's nature library.

Nancy Overcott, Route 1, Box 104, Canton, MN 55922.

HANDBOOK OF THE BIRDS OF THE WORLD, VOL. 6. Mousebirds to Hornbills, J. del Hoyo, A. Elliott, and J. Sargatal, editors. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona, Spain, 2001, 589 pp. \$185 (postage and handling included). These and future volumes are available from specialty bookstores or from the publisher: Lynx Edicions, Passeig de Gràcia, 12, 08007 Barcelona, Spain. For more information, inquiries may be sent via email (lynx@hbw.com), or see the publisher's web page (<http://www.hbw.com>).

This volume continues in the excellent tradition so firmly established with the first five volumes of the series. Volume 6 was intended to complete the non-passerines, but the remaining amount of material had to be split into two volumes, so we can expect that volume 7 will complete the nonpasserines instead. This split was necessary because the size of the

project has exceeded the editors' projections. Increases in the amount of information and quality photographs available, coupled with the numbers of avian forms to be illustrated, caused them to make the choice to increase the number of volumes rather than produce a more unwieldy and costly work. This is a commendable choice; they did not choose to cut the material. They are confronting the same problem with the passerine volumes, but, recognizing the problem, they are soliciting the opinions of the readers. As volumes 1–6 have developed, illustrative material (photographs and plates) and text have both increased substantially.

In volume 1 there was an average of 1.6 illustrations per species; in volume 6 it is 2.7. Similarly, the proportion of photographs has doubled, the length of family accounts has more than doubled, and species accounts have gone from an average of 0.4 to 0.7 pages each. If the editors are to continue through to the end of the project with the same thoroughness now exhibited in volume 6, they project that the series will require a total of 16 volumes. This is quite an increase over the originally anticipated 12 volumes for the series, but I for one find it an acceptable adjustment. The high quality and regular appearance of volumes to date demonstrate the editors' and publisher's commitment to delivering on promise — the promise of the subject (birds) and the promise of what many talented people and excellent book publishing have caused to become the definition of quality in bird books. (And then there's the thought of nine volumes for passerines. Wow.)

This volume treats the *Coliiformes* (mousebirds, family *Coliidae*), the *Trogoniformes* (trogons, family *Trogonidae*), and the *Coraciiformes* (kingfishers, todies, motmots, bee-eaters, rollers, ground-rollers, cuckoo-roller, Hoopoe, wood-hoopoes, and hornbills; ten families). Eleven authors have contributed the family accounts; nine artists have painted the 44 plates. The book is 589 pages long; it has 385 photographs and 270 dis-

tribution maps. This is somewhat shorter than previous volumes, but reflects the necessity of splitting what was intended to be the final nonpasserine volume as explained above.

A somewhat surprising but very welcome addition to recent volumes has been an extensive foreword. In this volume the late Luis Baptista and Don Kroodsma give us a wonderful 42 page treatise on "Avian Bioacoustics." It is without question the best piece I've read on bird song. I suspect that its length and importance grew after Luis's untimely and much-lamented death in June 2000. But it is offered as a tribute to Luis by Don Kroodsma, who completed Luis's draft after the latter's death, and it is a very respectable standalone piece on a subject of increasing popularity among ornithologists. It is a very successful tribute to a wonderful person. It is also well-illustrated, and, in a novel approach, highlights (in the margins) questions that researchers in the field would most like to see answered.

Publication of the series is beginning to increase our knowledge of birds (plowing new ground rather than just synthesizing). Photographer Brian Coates was supported to go to Sulawesi to try to photograph species of birds for which no photographs existed. The results are excellent, and the editors suggest that in the future additional sponsorship for surveys and studies of poorly known taxa may occur (page 55). Although I anticipate that publication of the series will have profound effects on bird research by making what is known more accessible, and thus point readers in important directions, it is rare that a publication can mobilize fieldwork on its own behalf.

Mousebirds are weird. An African family, they share with pigeons and doves (*Columbidae*) the ability to drink without tilting the head back. They also do strange things with their toes, being able to point all four forward. And, like hummingbirds (*Trochilidae*) and some nightjars (*Caprimulgidae*), they can go into torpor, lowering their metabolic rate and

body temperature. They also live in tightly-knit groups of about six individuals, sleep in clusters, and have the unique habit of perching by hanging with the feet at upper breast level — a position to which they are well adapted but which looks very awkward. There are just six species in two genera and sub-families.

Trogons to me are the voice of Neotropical forest. There are 39 species across the world's tropics, with the New World dominating at 24 species. The Resplendent Quetzal (*Pharomacrus mocinno*) is perhaps the best-known species in this group; through the ages it has been prominent in Neotropical religious, governmental (e.g., the god Quetzalcoatl and Guatemalan currency), and tourist symbolism. For all their beauty, the group is poorly suited to captivity and thus has failed the cagebird trade, probably much to their benefit, because as cavity nesters they could be quite vulnerable to human exploitation.

Kingfishers, a conspicuous family (*Alcedinidae*) with an almost cosmopolitan distribution, are probably recognizable to most people in the world. The photographs in this family account are, as we've come to expect in this series, exceptional. A long series of photographs of many kingfisher species showing prey capture, handling, and holding prior to eating is particularly impressive. The only thing missing from the photographs of this family is a shot of a nest hole showing the two grooves made by sturdy, shuffling feet disappearing into the darkness of the burrow — a captivating nest characteristic.

I've always wondered how bank-nesting kingfishers began their nest holes on sheer earthen faces. On page 169 P. F. Woodall informs us that several species (including species excavating tree holes) will fly at the intended site and hit it with the bill to begin the excavation process. Apparently these strike flights can be made with such force that occasionally the bird is fatally injured. And in one of those intriguing sentences that capture

the imagination, the author states that "A pair of Stork-billed Kingfishers spent several weeks trying to dig a hole into a brick wall." (p. 169). Unfortunately, all references are given at the very end of the 57-page family account in one telegraphic block, so any urge to learn more about this subject is rendered unnecessarily difficult.

The New World got the short end of the kingfisher stick, having only six of the world's 315 recognized species. Variation in the family is remarkable, in plumage, morphology, and habits. The 49 subspecies recognized in the Collared Kingfisher (*Todiramphus chloris*) of the Old World tropics show that there is considerable variation below the species level as well (fully twenty of these subspecies are illustrated).

For those who do not know them, the todies (*Todidae*) are a wonderful surprise. This old family has just five species, and is endemic to the Greater Antilles. Todies are tiny, brightly colored insectivores, and with their brilliant green backs, scarlet bibs, and spade-like bills are one of the most memorable groups of birds one can encounter.

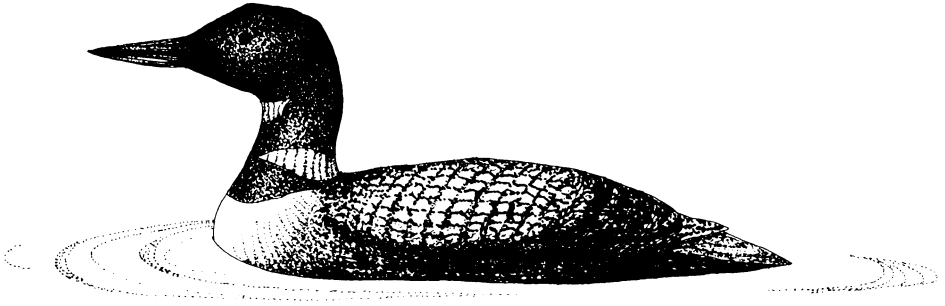
Motmots (*Momotidae*) are another colorful, small Neotropical family of just 10 species. Substantial geographic variation in some of these taxa may indicate the presence of additional species, however, and there are several studies under way to determine species limits in this group. The motmot plates are among the best in the book. Bee-eaters (*Meropidae*) are an Old World family of 25 species and "might be considered a delicate version of kingfishers" (p. 289). All members of this family are represented by photographs in the family account. Rollers (*Coraciidae*) are another small Old World family, with just 12 species. The ground-rollers (*Brachypteraciidae*) and cuckoo-roller (*Leptosomidae*) are both restricted to Madagascar, and are also tiny families with just five and one species, respectively. Although more widespread in the Old World, the family Upupidae is also made up of just one species, the Hoopoe.

The woodhoopoes (*Phoeniculidae*), restricted to Africa, have just eight species and conclude the “small families” in this volume. The last family treated is that of the hornbills (*Bucerotidae*). This group of the African and Asian tropics is one of the most remarkable of all birds and may deserve an order of its own for its distinctiveness. The 51-page family account (for a family of 54 species) is excellent,

as are the plates and species accounts that follow.

As with past volumes, despite the seemingly high per-volume cost they represent good value. If you haven't taken the opportunity to examine them, I would urge you to do so.

Kevin Winker, University of Alaska Museum, 907 Yukon Drive, Fairbanks, AK 99775.



NOTES OF INTEREST

THREE CALIFORNIA GULLS AT BRECKENRIDGE, WILKIN COUNTY — A strong storm moved into Minnesota on 21–22 May 2001, bringing a week of cold temperatures, strong northwest winds, and significant rainfall. At the beginning of this period on 22 May, I ventured to the Breckenridge sewage ponds in Wilkin County where I encountered not just 25–35 mph northwest winds and light drizzle, but a flock of gulls including several dozen Ring-billed Gulls, two Herring Gulls, and at least three California Gulls. The discovery of these California Gulls was the end of a long personal quest to find this species in the state.



During the last ten years, I have made multiple trips each year throughout the western regions of the state specifically looking for California Gulls at various sewage ponds, landfills, and roost sites — many of which are not regularly checked by birders. It is somewhat of an enigma why this species remains Casual in Minnesota, since it breeds regularly near our border in both South Dakota and North Dakota. Bitter Lake, South Dakota, where I have found California Gull nests, lies only 30 miles from Big Stone County, Minnesota!

When I initially walked out to the Breckenridge sewage ponds around noon on 22 May, I found a single California Gull, but since I was without a camera or notebook, I



California Gull #1, 22 May 2001, Breckenridge, Wilkin County. Photo by Karl Bardon.

walked back to my car and got my camera. When I returned, I was able to stalk this California Gull with my tripod and camera by slowly crawling along the dike. As the bird fed on a fish carcass along the shore, I was able to approach within 25–30 feet and take nearly full-frame photos. But by this time I had run out of film, so it was necessary to walk back to my car again and return with more film. On a whim, I also came back with some bread. Once I had resumed my position on the dike, I threw out the bread in hopes of luring the birds closer. Much to my amazement, I soon had all the gulls within a few feet of me, including not just one California Gull, but at least three (and possibly four)!

Features common to all four birds are as follows:

1) About 20% larger size than adjacent Ring-billed Gulls, with direct and prolonged comparison to many individuals of various ages. Several Herring Gulls were also present, but direct comparison was never possible. My feeling was that all four birds matched a small Herring Gull in overall size, and that even an exceptionally large Ring-billed Gull could not match the smallest of these four birds in overall size.

2) All four birds had very long primary extensions, clearly longer than the length of the bill, and significantly longer than a Herring Gull of any age.

3) All four birds were relatively slimmer in the body with a more elongated appearance and a rounder head than a Herring Gull, including both a flatter belly and a flatter back, but without the heavy chest, rounded back, and pronounced tertial step of a Herring Gull.

4) All four birds had deep, brilliant red orbital rings, and blackish eyes (with no visible contrast between the pupil and the iris, even at exceptionally close range).



California Gull #2, 22 May 2001, Breckenridge, Wilkin County. Photo by Karl Bardon.

5) The bills were all very long in proportion to the small heads, and of nearly uniform thickness throughout their length with little appreciable swelling at the gonys.

6) All showed brilliant, blood red at the base of the bill along the commissure (gape line).

Additional features common to the three birds identified as California Gulls but not present on the unidentified individual including the following:

1) one subterminal white mirror on the outermost primary, but assessment of exact primary patterns was impossible due to the exceptionally windy conditions and overcast skies.

2) slightly darker gray mantles and coverts than the adjacent Ring-billed Gulls.

3) some shade of yellow on the legs, which varied from lime green on the youngest appearing bird to deep brilliant yellow on the oldest appearing bird. These three birds were aged as third-summer, since they combined adult-like features, such as gray mantles and blackish primaries, with immature features such as dark subterminal marks on the bill, brown color in the coverts, and limited dark tail bands.

Although the fourth individual was not positively identified as a California Gull when under observation, it resembled the above three birds in overall size, proportions, and especially, in head and bill markings. In my opinion, its deep red orbital ring and commissure probably cannot be matched by any Herring Gull. The legs of this bird were pale flesh or pinkish rather than yellowish, which may only be an indication of its younger age relative to the other three birds positively identified as California Gulls. The unidentified bird was thought to be in second-summer rather than third-summer plumage because it had more dark smudges on the belly than the



California Gull #3, 22 May 2001, Breckenridge, Wilkin County. Photo by Karl Bardon.

other three birds, more heavily marked coverts with less infusion of gray areas, no gray color in the tertials, a wider and more uniform tail band, and more brownish primaries with no white tips and no subterminal white mirror on the outermost primary. Perhaps most significant, the mantle appeared essentially the same shade as the Ring-billed Gulls in direct comparison, and this appearance is confirmed in the photos.

In a recent paper on the identification of the two subspecies of California Gull (*Larus californicus*), King (2000) indicates overlap in mantle shade between *L. c. albertaensis* and Herring Gull (and thus Ring-billed Gull), but no overlap between *L. c. californicus* and Herring Gull. The relatively large size, the very long bills with little swelling at the gonys, and the relatively paler mantle coloration (for a California Gull) indicate the three identified Breckenridge California Gulls may have been the expected *albertaensis* subspecies, which is the form known to breed in adjacent North Dakota. Detailed observations of the wingtip pattern in fully adult plumage are necessary to confirm this subspecific identification, however.

Since 1975 when California Gull was first recorded in the state, there have been 24 observations of this species found acceptable by the Minnesota Ornithologist's Union Records Committee, including previously at Breckenridge, Wilkin County, on 7 April 1992. Interestingly, this species was not documented by a photograph or specimen until 1985 when a first-winter individual was seen, photographed, and then subsequently died at Lake Harriet, Hennepin County (*The Loon* 58:16–18). Furthermore, until the 2001 Wilkin County gulls, no other records had been convincingly documented by photograph. This species remains an enigma, not only for its sparse occurrence in the state, but also the near lack of verifiable records which is especially



Possible California Gull (bird #4), 22 May 2001, Breckenridge, Wilkin County. Photo by Karl Bardon.

troubling since many previous descriptions are incomplete.

While reviewing the records of California Gull in Minnesota, I noticed all spring records are from western Minnesota (total of 9 spring records between 30 March and 28 May), and that all fall records except a Big Stone County observation (9 October 1993) are from eastern Minnesota (total of 11 fall records between 16 August and 15 December)! This analysis omits three summer records: from Big Stone County on 10–11 June 1989, St. Louis County on 11 June 1997, and Big Stone County on 27 July 1978. All spring observations except the first state record from Pipestone County in 1975, and Lyon County on 13 May 2000 and 26 May 2001, are from Wilkin County northward. Also, most of the spring records have been of adults.

Literature cited

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Karl Bardon, 13073 Hastings St. NE, Blaine, MN 55449.

WHITE-EYED VIREO AND WORM-EATING WARBLER IN HENNEPIN COUNTY —



On 12 May 2001, I was birding a section of the Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Regional Park, located in the city of Bloomington, Hennepin County. I soon heard a loud singing as I approached a dense thicket at the edge of some woods. Because of the habitat and the nature of its song, I thought it might be a White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*). Within seconds, a White-eyed Vireo flew to the top of the thicket and continued to sing. For the next four or five minutes, I

watched it from a distance of 30–50 feet, with the sun at my back, using 7x45 Zeiss binoculars.

My attention was first drawn to its face: the eyes had black pupils, surrounded by white irises and framed in yellow spectacles. The greenish head faded to a lighter gray in the neck/nape region and it had a whitish throat. Two white wingbars and yellowish flanks were also noted. When I left, the vireo was still singing and investigating the thicket.

A couple of hours later, as I was returning to my truck, I heard a faint, distant “buzzing” song which I thought might be a parula. As I hiked closer to the bird, I became convinced that it was the song of a Worm-eating Warbler (*Helminthos vermivorus*). It was a dry, rattling trill, almost insect-like, lasting two to three seconds. Once the Worm-eating Warbler was found, I watched it for ten minutes as it sang and foraged 15–30 feet up in the trees. It was very cooperative, staying in the immediate vicinity and often remaining still, perched and singing. The visual identification was straightforward. It was a relatively large-billed, plain, grayish/caramel-colored warbler, with bold head stripes alternating black and buffy-caramel.

I returned to the same area the following week on 20 May. There was no sign of the White-eyed Vireo but the Worm-eating Warbler was still there singing. **Paul E. Jantscher, 7415 Clinton Ave. South, Richfield, MN 55423.**

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK IN BECKER COUNTY — On 10 May 2001, I watched a male Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) eating sunflower seeds on the ground beneath my feeder, along the east shore of White Earth Lake in Becker County. I watched it for about eight minutes from only 20 feet away. There was a Rose-breasted Grosbeak nearby for dramatic comparison, so I knew right away that it was different. I had seen this species in 1998 in Santa Margarita, California.

It had a thick, conical bill, blackish on the upper surface and pale on the lower mandible. Its head, wings, and tail were black, with rather large, elongated, white feathers in the black wings. The bird's nape, neck, abdomen, and rump were orange. There was no rose color on its breast. I am aware of the Casual status of *melanocephalus* in Minnesota. After observing this bird, I referred to Robert Janssen's *Birds in Minnesota* which I use often. **Byron R. Kinkade, 39053 Dora Lee Rd, Waubun, MN 56589-9382.**



CANADA GEESE ATTACK AND KILL GREAT BLUE HERON — On Sunday, 13 May 2001, I witnessed an attack by Canada Geese on a Great Blue Heron. The attack took place on Lake Judy in Shoreview, Ramsey County, Minnesota at approximately 2:00 P.M. Unfortunately, I did not see the initial attack or the events that triggered it.

While working in my garden, I heard a continued honking, hissing and various distress calls of Canada Geese that attracted my attention to the lake. When I got to the lakeshore I saw a Great Blue Heron sitting on the water, which was unusual since the water is only one foot deep. The heron was being attacked by two geese. After several hits by the wings and feet of the geese the heron extended its wings and laid its neck on the water. While the heron kept still the geese did not attack, but if the heron raised its head or tried to use its wings to row to an island it was attacked.

The calls of the geese attracted several more pairs making it a very raucous event. The additional geese did not directly join in the attacks. The Great Blue Heron slowly



made its way towards the island while being attacked. It could barely raise its head above the water and was gaping when it did. The heron did make the island, but lay there with its wings fully extended and did not move for several hours after that. After about a half-hour the geese dispersed. The Great Blue Heron was not retrieved at the time. The following morning the Great Blue Heron was no longer on the shore of the island.

The island was visited on 27 May 2001. I located the carcass of the Great Blue Heron approximately ten yards from where it was last seen. I did not find any broken long bones in the wings or legs, but the back was broken. I do not know how long after the attack the Great Blue Heron died, but by the condition of the carcass I would estimate it was within a day of the attack.

Canada Geese and Great Blue Heron regularly are seen standing within a couple of feet of each other on the island. I had never observed any aggressive interactions between these two species. I could not find any references that mentioned aggressive interactions between these two species.

John J. Moriarty, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Dept., 2015 N. Van Dyke St., Maplewood, MN 55109.

A SUMMER RECORD OF THE CINNAMON TEAL IN BIG STONE COUNTY — On 3



June 2001 my father, Robert Schroeder, and I were returning from an exceptional birding weekend in northwestern Minnesota. Approaching Ortonville, Big Stone County, at about 8:00 P.M., I was scanning flooded fields along the road when a flash of dark red caught my attention. Wanting to get home, I did not ask Dad to stop immediately, but the more I thought about the possibilities, the more it bothered me that we had not stopped. Two miles down the road I told Dad that we better turn around to check out a bird.

Arriving back at the location, we were surprised to see a bird that we immediately recognized as a Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)!

The size of this bird appeared much larger than Green-winged Teal (*A. crecca*) and slightly larger than Blue-winged Teal (*A. discors*), both of which were available for direct comparison. The head, neck, front, flanks, and sides were entirely crimson red in color, while the coloration on the wings seemed overall brown with fine light-colored markings. Its back was generally dark brown, though the brown feathering seemed to be tipped with buff. The green hind-wing patch was evident at times while the bird fed by dabbling in a flooded field with moderate emergent vegetation.

A red eye was prominent on this bird, as was its very large bill, which was black. The shape of the bill was teal-like, but was much larger than the bill on *discors*, and it had a slight upward arc on the lower mandible near the central part of the bill. In flight, the pale blue fore-wing patch was very wide and distinct. The smaller, green hind-wing patch was also distinguishable, though difficult to see as it flew away from us.

We studied the bird to make certain this was not a hybrid. Hybridization between *cyanoptera* and *discors* would have been the most likely possibility; however, this bird lacked spotting, streaking or other blemishes on the crimson body, which was pure and consistent in color. No abnormal features were observed.

We watched it for about 15 minutes through 10x42 binoculars and 20–60x spotting scopes. After the bird flew we briefly looked for it again, but could not find it — presumably it had moved into heavier vegetation by the side of the road. Not wanting to scare the bird away we decided to leave, thrilled with the reward of our discovery.

Roger Schroeder, 2520 County Road 20, Marshall, MN 56258.

BALD EAGLE KILLS COMMON LOON — During the period 27 June – 7 July 2001, I



observed from shore and sea kayak a single pair of Common Loons on Deeryard Lake, Cook County. Based on observations since 1995 during spring and summer seasons, a single pair is typical for Deeryard. On 8 July 2001 at about 6:30 A.M. I observed a Bald Eagle dive from a large spruce along the shore and strike a bird or animal very close to shore in shallow water no more than one to two feet deep. After 60 to 90 seconds of tremendous thrashing, all was still. The eagle dragged its kill to the shore and fed on it for about 20 minutes. The kill was one of the Common Loons. I observed these activities through binoculars, then kayaked across the lake and observed the dead loon carcass on the shore. The eagle had torn a hole in the belly of the loon and eviscerated it.

I have observed Bald Eagles flying over Deeryard, and occasionally perched high in a white pine or spruce along the shore. I've never confirmed a nest site along or near the shore. I am told there is usually a Bald Eagle nest on Caribou Lake, which is a straight line distance of about a mile or so from Deeryard.

I've never observed a loon so close to shore, except for travel to a nest site. I wonder if the loon was a victim of opportunity, or was the eagle waiting because of some prior observations?

I've had many wildlife experiences during four decades of outdoor travel and birdwatching. This one certainly ranks as one of the most unique and emotional. As a birder, it was sad to see two favorite species locked in mortal struggle. During the rest of the day, the remaining loon searched the lake for its mate, calling and calling.

Dave Morris, Kansas City, Missouri.

AN ADULT POMARINE JAEGER AT PARK POINT — On the morning of 19 September 2001, Chuck Krulas, Jeff Stephenson, and I were scanning Lake Superior from the 12th Street beach access at Park Point in Duluth, St. Louis County, when an adult light-morph Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) came into view. I first spotted the bird flying in from the south and called it to the attention to the others as the jaeger continued to fly past us to the north in the direction of Canal Park.



At its closest, the bird was estimated to be 200–300 yards away from us, and it was in view from about 10:00 to 10:15 A.M. We were generally looking east, but, since it was overcast at the time, light conditions were favorable with no problems from looking into the sun. I mostly watched the jaeger through a Kowa TSN-824 50X spotting scope as it briefly pursued a juvenile Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) near the Canal Park breakwaters, then turned and headed up the North Shore in a generally northeastern direction out over the lake. It was eventually lost from sight and not relocated.

After the jaeger disappeared, I took some field notes on what was seen without consulting any references or discussing with Chuck and Jeff the field marks we observed. Although separation of jaegers in the field is typically difficult, in this case the identification was straightforward since we had a reasonably close view, and this was a full adult Pomarine Jaeger with an impressive, striking, and completely developed tail. The tips of the central rectrices as seen from the side were clearly and consistently oval- or spoon-shaped, and they projected beyond the rest of the tail an estimated five inches or so. White patches were visible on both the upper and under sides of the wings at the bases of the primaries, although the white on the under wings was less noticeable. There was obvious dark brown mottling along the jaeger's

sides directly under the wings and on the under tail coverts. The breast band was solid and dark and complete, not “smooth” grayish-brown or partial as is often seen on adult light-morph Parasitic Jaegers (*S. parasiticus*). It was white on the belly in the area between the dark breast band, sides and under tail coverts. The throat and sides of the neck were also white, and, although I did not see this, Chuck and Jeff noticed a yellowish wash on the neck area. The jaeger’s cap was black. I did not note the color of the nape, bill or legs/feet, but the back, wings and tail were essentially uniform dark brown except for the wing patches described earlier.

The Pomarine’s flight was generally slow, steady and gull-like. Even as it pursued the juvenile Herring Gull at Canal Park, it did not appear as aggressive or maneuverable as the Parasitic Jaegers I have seen in Duluth and elsewhere. Its wings and body were somewhat thinner than the Herring Gull it was after, but its overall wing span appeared perhaps only an inch or two less than the gull’s. I was unable to judge the overall length of the jaeger relative to the Herring Gull, but its wing span alone being close to that of a Herring Gull in direct comparison is consistent with Pomarine and would preclude the other two species.

Although there are over a dozen records of Pomarine Jaeger in Minnesota, this represents only the third or fourth adult, and only the second of a Pomarine with a fully grown tail. The first Acceptable state record was a light-morph adult photographed in Duluth on 15 August 1972, and, according to the documentation, “the projecting tail feathers were two inches long... blunt at the tip, and twisted” (*The Loon* 44:88–89). Another light-morph adult in Duluth on 20 May 1982 was described as having “about three inch long extensions coming from the middle of the tail,” although the shape of the tail tips was not described (*The Loon* 54:244). And the only other Pomarine with an apparently fully developed tail was a dark-morph individual in Duluth described as follows: “The central tail feathers were four to five inches long, and although I didn’t notice a twisted appearance, they were narrower where they left the main portion of the tail, and rounded at their extremities” (*The Loon* 53:57–58).
Kim Eckert, 8255 Congdon Blvd., Duluth, MN 55804.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE IN PINE COUNTY — On 2 December 2001 I was very surprised to discover a Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) along Interstate 35 in Pine County, about one mile northeast of Sandstone. The bird was originally seen flying near the shoulder of the freeway, but the observation was brief, as I was travelling at 70 mph and unable to stop immediately due to traffic. After taking a few minutes to loop back around through a couple of exits, I relocated the bird on top of a deer carcass not more than 20 feet from the freeway. I was able to stop on the shoulder about 100 feet away, and from this vantage point I observed the bird for approximately ten minutes, both on the ground and occasionally in flight, using 10x40 binoculars.

The overall impression given by this bird was that of a medium-sized gull, mostly white with various striking black marks, having long pointed wings and a short tail. I had the impression that the bird was a little smaller than a Ring-billed Gull, but not quite as small as a Franklin’s or Bonaparte’s Gull. (Note, however, that there were no other birds of any kind present for comparison.) The head was mostly white, with a straight, entirely black gull-like bill, and black eyes. Two conspicuous field marks were observed on the head...behind the eye, roughly half-way between the eye and the back of the head, was a distinct black ear spot. Farther back on the head was a larger black hindneck collar, extending from across the base of the nape down to the side of the neck. The back was a uniform light gray. The folded wings were the same light gray color. A distinct black line (somewhat jagged) was visible on the wings,



extending from the wrist in front to the upper back edge of each wing. Also visible on the folded wing was a black border along the edge of the outermost primaries. The tail was pure white with the exception of a thin, black terminal band.

When the bird was on the ground, the folded tail had a definite notch. All of the undersides of the bird that were seen, including the throat, breast, and belly, were pure white with no markings of any kind. The legs were never seen very well. In flight, viewed from above, the bird had a very striking pattern on the back and wings. Most obvious was a distinct black line forming the overall impression of a giant "M" across the back of the bird. More specifically, the leading edge of the primaries were black from wing tip to wrist, and from the wrist a black bar (a "carpal bar") extended down at an angle to the point where the secondaries meet the base of the tail. The black did not extend across the back. Anterior to the carpal bar, the entire mantle of the bird was light gray. All of the wing feathers posterior to the black "M" were pure white. The overall effect was very striking...gray in front, a black "M" in the middle, and white behind. The tail in flight was white with a thin black terminal band.

The kittiwake spent most of the time feeding on the deer carcass, but would occasionally flush (often as cars would speed by), circle around for a short bit, then alight again on the carcass. The temperature that day was in the 30s Fahrenheit, with roughly two to three inches of snow on the ground. The observation occurred late in the afternoon, about one hour before dusk. The most unusual aspect of the entire scenario, of course, was the habitat! To my knowledge, the nearest open water was the Kettle River, about one to two miles east of the freeway.

This record represents the 32nd for the state, and the first for Pine County. Of interest was the sighting of a Black-legged Kittiwake two days earlier (30 November) in the Duluth Harbor area. As both of the birds in question were in similar plumage, there is no way of knowing whether they represent different birds — the distance between each site is approximately 55 miles. Almost all of the previous kittiwake records in Minnesota have occurred near large bodies of water, primarily Lake Superior, but also occasionally inland at sites such as Mille Lacs Lake, Lake Winnibigoshish, Lake Bemidji, and along the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers. Most unusual have been the handful of records in other parts of the state, including one at a sewage lagoon in the middle of Roseau County (*The Loon* 55:123), and a nearly dead bird found near Orwell WMA in Otter Tail County (*The Loon* 68:71). Amazingly, the only Carlton County record for this species (on 20 November 1983; *The Loon* 55:181) was also found not far from the Kettle River, and was also seen close to the highway where it "...appeared to be "hunting" the road"!

As others have noted, sightings of Black-legged Kittiwakes in Minnesota have increased dramatically in recent years, to the point where it may soon be considered a regular species. This may be a result of population increases noted at some of the colonies along the Atlantic coast. [For an excellent summary of the biology of this species, see Baird, P. H. 1994. Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*). In *The Birds of North America*, No. 92 (A. Poole and F. Gill, Eds.). Philadelphia: The Academy of Natural Sciences. Washington, D. C. The American Ornithologists' Union.] However, the presence of a bird well away from water, and scavaging from a road-kill, certainly must be considered aberrant. This species is a marine, surface feeding fish-eater. During the non-breeding season, it is a pelagic bird, and does not normally come to land (although it is the immatures that are more likely to do so). It does occasionally feed on waste from sea-going ships, but does not feed at dumps like other gulls. Most of the kittiwake records in the interior of North America occur from late fall to early spring, with a strong peak in November, and are immature birds (*American Birds* data). This sighting fits well within that pattern. **Terry Wiens, 3230 Strand Road, Duluth, MN 55803.**

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The Minnesota Ornithologists' Union is an organization of both professionals and amateurs interested in birds. We foster the study of birds. We aim to create and increase public interest in birds, and to promote the preservation of birdlife and its natural habitat.

To carry out these aims, we publish a journal, *The Loon*, and a newsletter, *Minnesota Birding*; we conduct field trips;



we encourage and sponsor the preservation of natural areas; we hold seminars where research reports, unusual observations and conservation discussions are presented. We are supported by dues from members, affiliated clubs and special gifts. Any or all phases of the MOU program could be expanded significantly with gifts, memorials or bequests willed to the organization.

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The editors of *The Loon* welcome submissions of articles, Notes of Interest, color slides, and color or black & white photographs. Submissions should be typed, double-spaced and single-sided. Notes of Interest should be less than two pages. Photographs should be 5"x7". Whenever possible, please include a copy of your submission in any standard format on any 3 1/2 inch computer disk.

Club information and other announcements of general interest should be sent to the Newsletter editors. See inside front cover. Bird sighting reports for each season should be sent promptly at the end of February, May, July and November to Peder Svingen. See key to the "Seasonal Report."

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EDITOR OF *The Loon*:

Anthony X. Hertzell, 8461 Pleasant View Drive,
Mounds View, MN 55112.

EDITOR OF *Minnesota Birding*:

Jim Williams, 5239 Cranberry Lane, Webster,
WI 54893.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS OF *The Loon*:

Karl Bardon, Kim Eckert, Bruce Fall, Robert
Janssen, Fred Leshar, Warren Nelson, Peder
Svingen, Harrison Tordoff, Nancy Weber.

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MOU E-MAIL ADDRESS:

mou@cbs.umn.edu

MOU WORLD WIDE WEB SITE:

<http://cbs.umn.edu/~mou>

MOU E-MAIL LISTSERVICE:

For information e-mail Paul Budde at:
pbudde@aol.com

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TREASURER: Anthony Smith, 5345 Irving Ave. S., Minneapolis MN 55419

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RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Robert Janssen, 162 Lakeview Road, Chanhausen MN 55317

SAVALOJA MEMORIAL FUND: Anthony Smith, 5345 Irving Ave. S., Minneapolis MN 55419

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First Minnesota Record of a Black Vulture

Frank J. Nicoletti

On 28 August 2001 while conducting the hawk count from the Main Overlook at Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve in Duluth, St. Louis County, I identified and photographed Minnesota's first Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*). At 11:45 A.M., I observed a large, stocky, dark raptor, about the size of a large Red-tailed Hawk or bigger. It appeared with two Turkey Vultures but was slightly smaller and more compact. It was seen gliding and soaring above the Turkey Vultures with which it loosely associated, and came from the direction of the Lake Superior shoreline. Oddly enough the three birds split up — the two Turkey Vultures headed southwest and continued down the lakeshore, while the Black Vulture headed in a northerly direction.

Knowing the significance of this sighting and hoping that it might head back towards the Main Overlook, I started to call local birders. Meanwhile my wife, Kate Nicoletti, arrived in time to view the vulture directly overhead at 200–300 feet, just before it disappeared to the north. Kim Eckert arrived shortly after noon. At 12:25 P.M., the Black Vulture reappeared in the distance over the ridge northeast of the Main Overlook. Gradually, the bird made its way in our direction, and after about 10 minutes it passed overhead at an estimated elevation of 200–300 feet, and gave the three of us excellent views, at which time I was able to obtain more photographs. As it passed overhead, a bit to the northwest of our position, the light conditions were excellent with bright sun to the south. The vulture then flew in a southwesterly direction, with alternate flapping and gliding, and was lost from



Black Vulture, 28 August 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County. Photo by Frank Nicoletti.

sight at about 12:45 P.M. Before it disappeared, the Black Vulture was also seen from the Banding Station at Hawk Ridge by Dave Grosshuesch, but it could not be relocated thereafter despite extensive searching over the next several days.

Identification of this Black Vulture was straightforward for Kim and me since we both have experience with this species at various places within its range, as well as other species that it might be confused with. All field marks were clearly seen. The white patches on the outer primaries were visible on both the upper and lower wing surfaces (these patches were white and clearly delineated, not like a Turkey Vulture's vaguely paler and brownish area on the upper surface of its outer primaries). Its black head and neck was longer, extending farther forward of the wings, compared with Turkey Vulture. Its short and broad black tail was accented

by the whitish legs which were nearly the same length as the tail. Except for the white patches on its primaries and white legs, the Black Vulture appeared entirely and uniformly black above and below. Its flight style helped separate it from other large, dark raptor-like species. It glided with wings relatively flat or in a shallow dihedral, never rocked side-to-side like a Turkey Vulture, and its flapping appeared more rapid, quick, and choppy than most birds of its size.

Upon examining my photographs of this Black Vulture, I noticed that the bird was in active molt. Taking into account this species' molt sequence (Buckley 1999), it appears to be molting into Basic I plumage. Juvenal plumage is acquired 2–10 weeks after hatching (Jackson 1988) and is held for less than one year (Brian Wheeler, pers. com.). Basic I plumage is acquired during summer and fall of its second calendar year (Jackson 1988). This species molts its primaries from the innermost to the outermost in that order. Older birds have a serially descendent molt (progressing from two molt centers at the same time). This bird's inner primaries were new-looking but its outer primaries looked old. This suggests it was a subadult molting into first basic plumage. Photographs show that primary #7 is about 3/4 grown on both wings.

There are records of the Black Vulture from nearby states and provinces, so this species had been considered overdue in Minnesota. The A.O.U. (1998) says that it "wanders casually north to southwestern Yukon, Saskatchewan (sight report), North Dakota, Wisconsin, southern Ontario, southern Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia..." The Yukon's first was photographed near Kluan Lake, 22 July 1982 (Grünberg 1984). Another provincial first was one near Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, 25 May 1992 (Koes and Taylor 1992).

North Dakota's only report was of one shot about 12 miles north of Sanborn in September 1882 (Boardman 1883). This is best considered hypothetical (Ron Martin, pers. com.). Though mentioned in earlier

texts as a rare summer straggler to South Dakota, there are no documented records and such statements are now considered erroneous (S.D.O.U. 1991). Kent and Dinsmore (1996) list two Iowa records from early fall: a specimen from Dallas County, 17 September 1933, and one shot in Winnebago County, 29 August 1959.

The first Black Vulture for Ontario was collected approximately four miles north of Niagara Falls, Welland County, 21 July 1947 (Hope 1949). Since Duncan's (1990) review of Black Vulture's status in the province, its frequency of occurrence has increased dramatically. Black Vulture has occurred in Ontario at all seasons but most have been April – July.

Wisconsin has six records (one from summer, the others fall or early winter). Robbins (1991) cites a specimen from Janesville, Rock County, November 1925; one photographed at Milwaukee, 2 July 1951; one in Manitowoc County, 26 October 1980; one (possibly the same bird as Manitowoc) photographed in Sheboygan County, 27 October 1980; and one in Sauk County, 7–15 October 1989. The sixth was at Cedar Grove, Sheboygan/Ozaukee counties, 13 November through 29 December 1996.

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Northbound or Southbound? — The Enigma of Summer Shorebird Migration

Karl J. Bardon

Much uncertainty surrounds the timing of migration of many shorebird species in June and July, with the main hiatus between lingering northbound birds and early southbound birds occurring in late June and early July. In many cases, the same dates for the same species have alternately been treated as late spring or early fall migrants. At least a few migrant species of shorebirds can often be seen every week of the summer, which gives the impression that there is overlap between northbound and southbound birds. Nonetheless, there are very few documented cases of Arctic or Subarctic breeding shorebirds over-summering in Minnesota, and when comparing the data for a single species, there is usually a significant gap between the apparent lat-

est northbound individuals and the earliest southbound individuals. Without regular surveys in the same area, isolated dates can be difficult or impossible to interpret. This article attempts to resolve some of this uncertainty, based on shorebird surveys in Big Stone County in 1999 and 2000, and an analysis of all available dates and numbers of shorebirds reported in Minnesota.

Methods

A shorebird census was developed in Big Stone County that covers approximately 60 miles of roads and over 15 sites with suitable habitat. This route did not include any portion of Big Stone NWR. This survey was conducted weekly from 18 June – 26 July 1999, and 7 June – 15 September 2000. Since I was particu-

Table 1. Results of 1999 shorebird surveys in Big Stone County, MN.

	6/18	6/24	6/28	7/1	7/9	7/18	7/21	7/26	TOTAL
Semipalmated Plover	3		1		1	3	1	24	33
Greater Yellowlegs	1	3	9	2	44	25	12	60	156
Lesser Yellowlegs	12	79	114	234	124	142	253	348	1306
Solitary Sandpiper				1		3		3	7
Willet					2	1			3
Sanderling						1			1
Semipalmated Sandpiper	2	1			6	72	115	263	459
Least Sandpiper	2		12	33	79	33	36	19	214
White-rumped Sandpiper	9	2			1				12
Pectoral Sandpiper	3				1	17	33	92	146
Stilt Sandpiper			1	6	14	67	60	133	281
Short-billed Dowitcher			8	5	8	3	1	23	48
Wilson's Phalarope	1	2		8		3		9	23
Red-necked Phalarope					1				1
TOTAL	33	87	145	289	281	370	511	974	2690

Table 2. Results of 2000 shorebird surveys in Big Stone County, MN

	6/07	6/15	6/19	6/23	6/26	7/01	7/07	7/13	7/23	7/31	8/04	8/08	8/15	8/21	8/29	9/7	9/15	TOTAL
BBPL												1				3	3	7
AGPL			4			4									1			9
SEPL								2	3	18	41	38	39	35	22	27	7	232
KILL	22	88	135	186	147	270	112	135	48	138	116	112	196	176	138	138	143	2300
AMAV		7	7	2	11	10	3		2	3								45
GRYE				2	3	11	24	20	39	47	18	12	15	11	2	16		220
LEYE			2	37	87	262	154	361	190	634	336	140	199	210	73	207	210	3102
SOSA					1	1	3	1	8	4	9	10	6					43
WILL									2									2
SPSA	4	3		1	1	1		1	10	16	13	10	4	9	3	1		77
UPSA									3	1	1							5
HUGO	1				1								4	1				7
MAGO								3					1					4
SAND																3		3
SESA	14	4					2	35	217	592	1017	621	271	191	251	360	16	3591
LESA				1		15	13	51	11	33	75	72	28	64	283	252	195	1093
peep, sp.						1	4	33		138							1	177
WRSA	42	25	2	2	2													73
BASA									5	6	10	21	12	12	33			99
PESA	15		2	2	1	3	1	57	78	414	596	1043	1164	920	267	522	155	5240
DUNL			1															1
STSA					1	7	1	31	94	272	268	233	18	54	81	149	115	1324
BBSA									4					1	1			6
SBDO					3	9	15		7	6			2	1				43
LBDO									6	9	27	8	3				3	56
dowitcher, sp.							4		3	12	19	17	9	1	2		1	68
COSN									3	1	1	2				4	5	16
WIPH	7	6	10	5	15	15	8	37	32	95	118	102	101	14	2	1	1	569
RNPH									1	1			9	8	47	53		119
TOTAL	105	126	163	241	259	596	330	791	707	2442	2677	2455	2098	1721	1194	1755	871	18531

Table 3. Distance of breeding range, average latest northbound departure date, average earliest southbound arrival date, and average earliest recorded juvenile of transient species of shorebird regularly recorded in Minnesota.

Species (listed in order of earliest southbound arrival)	Distance of breeding range from Minnesota (in miles)	Average latest north-bound	Average earliest south-bound	Number of years of data	Earliest juvenile	Number of years of data
Lesser Yellowlegs	100	6 Jun	23 Jun	30	4 Aug	6
Greater Yellowlegs	200	26 May	29 Jun	37	16 Aug	2
Least Sandpiper	500	4 Jun	30 Jun	38	1 Aug	6
Short-billed Dowitcher	500	28 May	2 Jul	25	11 Aug	3
Solitary Sandpiper	0	24 May	2 Jul	37	15 Aug	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	700	3 Jun	3 Jul	37	14 Aug	2
Semipalmated Sandpiper	500	15 Jun	5 Jul	36	6 Aug	5
Stilt Sandpiper	500	31 May	8 Jul	37	6 Aug	5
Baird's Sandpiper	1000	4 Jun	14 Jul	30	13 Aug	2
Semipalmated Plover	450	7 Jun	18 Jul	38	12 Aug	3
Sanderling	1000	9 Jun	23 Jul	37	25 Aug	1
Red-necked Phalarope	550	5 Jun	26 Jul	38	17 Aug	2
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	1300	15 May	28 Jul	32	18 Aug	2
Long-billed Dowitcher	1600	19 May	1 Aug	20		
White-rumped Sandpiper	1000	18 Jun	5 Aug	37		
American Golden-Plover	550	10 Jun	8 Aug	40		
Ruddy Turnstone	1200	7 Jun	8 Aug	39		
Black-bellied Plover	1000	11 Jun	9 Aug	38		
Dunlin	500	8 Jun	15 Aug	37		
Hudsonian Godwit	500	30 May	17 Aug	38	11 Aug	1
Red Knot	1000	30 May	19 Aug	37		
Whimbrel	500	31 May	31 Aug	36		
AVERAGE	689	2 Jun	23 Jul	35	12 Aug	3

larly interested in the late June shorebird hiatus, surveys were conducted more frequently (every three to four days) during this period. When several of the sites along the route dried up during July 2000, additional sites were added to compensate for this change in the habitat, but the majority of the route remained unchanged during the two years of survey. During each survey, all shorebirds seen along the route and at the designated stops were counted and identified.

Seasonal reports published in *The Loon* and *The Flicker* from 1961–2001 were searched for data on shorebirds. These data were used in calculating the average northbound departure dates and average southbound arrival dates given in Table 3, but the number of years with usable data varied from species to species. Data were combined from the north

and the south halves of the state by using only the earliest or latest date for the entire state. Many species unexpectedly showed a later northbound departure date and an earlier southbound arrival date in the south than the north, perhaps because of less available habitat and fewer observers in the north; thus, it was felt that combining data from the north and south halves of the state would result in more accurate data. The one exception to this method was Solitary Sandpiper, for which only south dates were used due to limited potential breeding in the north.

All dates published in *The Loon*, *The Flicker*, Green and Janssen (1975), Janssen (1987), and Roberts (1932) were combined to determine the full extent of dates on which each species has been recorded in summer. The original reports submitted by individual contributors to

“The Summer Season” published in *The Loon* were searched for additional and more complete data; these data were only available from 1989–1999, but additional dates and numbers of birds were found that had not been previously published. All seasonal report data from 1989–1999, plus the results of the Big Stone surveys in 2000 were used in making the graphs shown in Figures 1–7 by plotting the number of individuals reported on each date during June and July.

Results

During weekly surveys in Big Stone County from 18 June – 26 July 1999, a total of 2690 shorebirds were counted (Table 1). Although surveys did not begin until 18 June, observers were present in west central Minnesota throughout June. The 1999 effort was considered a pilot for the complete surveys in 2000. From 7 June – 15 September 2000, a total of 18,531 shorebirds was counted along the Big Stone County route (Table 2). The peak period was 31 July – 15 August 2000 when approximately 2000–2500 birds were counted on each of the four Big Stone surveys, and the peak diversity was reached on 31 July when 20 species were seen. Some species (e.g., Dunlin) and age groups (e.g., juvenile Long-billed Dowitchers) are known to peak after the end of the surveys on 15 September.

Some generalizations about shorebird migration can help interpret when birds are northbound or southbound. Species which nest farthest from Minnesota (500–1200 miles) usually come through latest in spring, often commonly seen still northbound in June (Table 3). These late species include White-rumped Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling, Dunlin, and Ruddy Turnstone. Furthermore, this group of species returns latest in fall, since all of them except Semipalmated Sandpiper usually do not return until August. As a result, records of these species in late June are more likely to represent linger-

ing birds from northbound migration than early southbound birds.

By contrast, an almost entirely different suite of species returns first in the fall, beginning in late June, or even as early as 17–18 June for yellowlegs. By the 4th of July weekend, shorebird migration is always well developed, with the following usually represented (in order of average first appearance): Lesser Yellowlegs, Greater Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Pectoral Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, and Stilt Sandpiper. These species breed closer to Minnesota (100–700 miles), and are less common as northbound migrants in early June. Baird’s Sandpiper and Semipalmated Plover do not usually return until at least mid-July.

Many adult shorebirds depart from their breeding grounds before the young have fledged. As a result, these species show a distinct bimodal pattern of migration in fall composed of an early peak of adults and a later peak of juveniles. The earliest returnees in late June and July are always adults in breeding plumage, and by late July the adults of many of these earliest species are already reaching peak numbers. Juveniles of Arctic and Subarctic breeding species do not begin returning until late July or early August, and a secondary peak composed mostly of juveniles is not reached until well into August or later.

Many species show an elliptical pattern of migration, moving north in spring through the center of the continent, but then returning south in fall by flying non-stop from northeastern North America across the Atlantic Ocean to South America. Portions of the populations of Semipalmated Sandpipers, American Golden-Plovers, Lesser Yellowlegs and other species use this “Great Circle” route, while almost the entire population of White-rumped Sandpiper and Hudsonian Godwit employ these transoceanic migrations, and as a result these latter two species are rare in Minnesota in fall.

Black-bellied Ploverlatest northbound

26 June 1977 Lyon
 26 June 1986 Duluth
 27 June 1987 Jackson
 27 June 1989 St. Louis
 30 June 1982 Lake of the Woods
 7 Jun-6 Jul 1983 Lake of the Woods
 6 July 1987 Lake of the Woods
 16 Jun-8 Jul 1975-77 Cass

mid-summer (not classified)

11 July 1987 Hennepin
 11 July 1973 Clay
 16 July 1988 Freeborn
 20 July 1977 Duluth

earliest southbound

22 July 1989 Clay
 26 July 1998 Marshall
 27 July 1982 Lake of the Woods
 29 July 1995 Polk
 29 July 1997 Lac Qui Parle
 31 July 1984 Anoka
 31 July 1972 St. Louis

American Golden-Ploverlatest northbound

24 June 1997 Otter Tail
 26 June 1977 Lyon
 29 June 1981 Clay
 1 July 2000 Big Stone
 2 July 1963 Stevens
 4 July 1986 Faribault
 4 July 1985 Lac Qui Parle
 6 July 1966 Lac Qui Parle
 7 June-12 July 1964 Stevens

earliest southbound

17 July 1977 Lac Qui Parle
 20 July 1982 Roseau
 21 July 2001 Lac Qui Parle, Big Stone
 22 July 1995 Jackson
 24 July 1980 northern MN (23 inds.)
 26 July 1991 Traverse
 27 July 1981 Duluth
 30 July 1974 Duluth
 30 July 1998 Dakota
 30 July 1991 Yellow Medicine (16 inds.)
 31 July 1972 Duluth

Semipalmated Ploverlatest northbound

15 June 1946 Duluth
 15 June 1975 Lyon
 16 June 1979 Duluth
 16 June 1970 Duluth
 17 June 1961 Lac Qui Parle
 18 June 1999 Big Stone
 19 June 1992 St. Louis
 20 June 1975-77 Cass
 21 June 1972 Aitkin (7 inds.)

mid-summer (not classified)

26 June 1984 Duluth
 26 June 1986 Duluth
 26 June 1977 Lyon, Hennepin
 27 June 1992 Lake of the Woods
 27 June 1989 Duluth
 28 June 1999 Big Stone
 30 June 1941 Lake of the Woods
 29 Jun-1 Jul 1982 Lake of the Woods

earliest southbound

2 July 1926 Roberts 1932
 2 July 1995 Ramsey (10 inds.)
 4 July 1986 Faribault
 4 July 2000 Lyon
 4 July 1963 Kittson
 7 July 1987 Dakota
 7 July 1980 southern MN
 7 July 2001 Marshall
 8 July 1999 Meeker
 8 July 1986 Dakota

Greater Yellowlegslatest northbound

1 June 1999 Lyon
 4 June 1998 Duluth
 4 June 1994 Duluth
 4 June 1998 Dakota
 5 June 1998 Olmsted
 6 June 1964 Stevens
 11 June 1981 Beltrami
 13 June 1966 Lac Qui Parle

earliest southbound

17 June 1999 Chippewa
 18 June 1999 Big Stone
 18 June 1970 Traverse
 19 June 1998 Lyon
 20 June 1894 Jackson
 21 June 1991 Lyon
 22 June 1895 Jackson
 22 June 1991 Marshall
 23 June 3 diff. years

Lesser Yellowlegslatest northbound

11 June 2000 St. Louis
 11 June 1979 Hennepin
 11 June 1991 Olmsted
 13 June 1993 Murray
 13 June 1993 Stevens
 14 June 1975 Lyon
 14 June 1999 Lac Qui Parle
 15 June 1895 Jackson
 15 June 1977 Clay
 15 June 1977 Lyon
 15 June 1999 Big Stone
 15 June 2001 Houston
 16 June 1988 Rock

earliest southbound

17 June 1983 northern MN
 17 June 1999 Chippewa
 17 June 1976 Washington
 17 June 1961 Lac Qui Parle
 18 June 2000 Polk (10 inds.)
 18 June 1991 Roseau
 18 June 1976 Lyon
 18 June 1987 Hennepin
 18 June 1992 Wright
 18 June 1999 Big Stone (12 inds.)
 18 June 2000 Anoka
 18 June 1964 Stevens

Solitary Sandpiperlatest northbound

2 June 1965 Hennepin
 2 June 1998 Hennepin
 2 June 1999 Meeker
 3 June 1989 Rock
 3 June 1979 Lac Qui Parle
 4 June 1977 Fillmore
 5 June 1979 Lyon
 6 June 1990 Olmsted

mid-summer (not classified)

14-15 June 1975 Nobles
 16 June 1992 Brown
 17 June 1980 Hennepin
 18 June 1977 Olmsted
 20 June 1987 Dodge, Steele
 20 June 1982 no location
 22 June 1991 Nobles

earliest southbound

25 June 1988 Dakota
 26 June 1926 Minneapolis
 26 June 1988 Brown
 27 June 1973 Hennepin
 28 June 1995 Sherburne
 28 June 1986 Fillmore
 28 June 1987 four locations

Table 4. Latest northbound departure dates, earliest southbound arrival dates, and mid-summer dates (not classified as early or late) for various species of shorebirds in Minnesota. Data listed by date and county.

All shorebird species that were recorded on the Big Stone surveys and/or have a problematic hiatus between northbound and southbound birds in summer are included in the following species accounts. All summer dates on file for each species were categorized as late northbound or early southbound, or were not categorized (Table 4). For many species, dates have been recorded throughout the summer with no significant gap between obvious northbound and southbound birds. Subjective decisions were avoided, but in cases where decisions seemed arbitrary, the data were included to allow room for alternative interpretations.

Black-bellied Plover

Significant numbers may still be present in early June: 30 at Duluth on 1 June 1969 (*The Loon* 41:114), and 15 in Aitkin County on 9 June 1972 (*The Loon* 44:108). Since the 7 June-6 July 1983 record from Lake of the Woods involves many dates (7, 17, 25, 28 June, 6 July; *The Loon* 56:54), it likely represents lingering northbound birds (or birds attempting to over-summer), and as a result the other Lake of the Woods records in late June and early July were classified as late migrants. Mid-July records are problematic, and were not classified as early or late. Analysis of seasonal report data 1989–1999 shows only one record (27 June 1989 at Duluth) between 17 June and 22 July, suggesting the earliest fall migrants occur in late July; more typical dates for first fall migrants are in August. The 28 June late north date published in Janssen (1987) probably refers to one of the 1983 Lake of the Woods dates.

American Golden-Plover

As with Black-bellied Plover, non-breeding birds may linger in Minnesota into early July. During the 2000 Big Stone County survey, four were seen on 19 June, one was seen on 24 June, and four were again seen on 1 July. These birds were all in basic plumage, presumably second-year birds that had failed to molt

into first-alternate plumage. Although birds seen in early July have been treated as early fall migrants in the past, they are better classified as late spring migrants for the following reasons: published descriptions of these birds (*The Loon* 36:30, 58:154–158, 60:146–148) indicate they usually are still in basic plumage (and therefore are likely to be second-year birds that failed to travel to the Arctic), the next earliest dates on record for the years in which these early July dates occurred were not until an average of 25 August, and there are only two mid-July dates. Also, analysis of seasonal report data 1989–1999 shows only one report (1 July 2000) between 24 June and 22 July, suggesting the earliest southbound migrants do not appear until late July (normal fall migration begins in August). All this being said, it must be pointed out that the birds seen in Stevens County 7 June – 12 July 1964 (maximum eight on 14 June) included birds in “eclipse” plumage, as well as birds in full alternate plumage on 28–29 June.

Semipalmated Plover

As with Black-bellied Plover, spring migration extends well into June. For example, 25 were still present in Aitkin County on the very late date of 19 June 1972, and seven were there on 21 June 1972 (*The Loon* 44:108). The hiatus between northbound and southbound birds occurs in late June and early July, with eight sightings between 21 June – 2 July alternately listed as early or late by various sources, and therefore not classified here. The prominence of Duluth and Lake of the Woods among these unclassified records suggests some of them represent lingering northbound birds (or birds attempting to over-summer), similar to Black-bellied Plover, in which most late dates have been from these two locations in late June and early July. Fall migration does not normally begin until mid-July (Figure 1); the first influx of migrants on the Big Stone surveys did not occur until 13 July 2000 and 26 July 1999.

Hudsonian Godwitlatest northbound

9 June 1991	McLeod
9 June 1998	Big Stone
11 June 2000	Duluth
12 June 1982	Marshall
13 June 1977	Lake of the Woods
14 June 1992	St. Louis
14 June 1994	St. Louis

mid-summer (not classified)

24 June 1983	Duluth
26 June 2000	Big Stone
4 July 1984	Mower
8 July 1973	Big Stone
11 July 1973	Clay

earliest southbound

14 July 1984	Watowan
17 July 1983	Lake of the Woods
18 July 1993	Yellow Medicine
19 July 1993	Lyon
21 July 1985	Lyon
31 July 1980	Pennington

Ruddy Turnstonelatest northbound

14 June 1984	Lake of the Woods
14 June 1972	Lake
16 June 1940	Duluth
19 June 1938	Duluth
21 June 1942	Traverse
15-22 June 1915	Mille Lacs Lake
7, 9, 25 June 1983	Lake of the Woods
12-26 June 1986	Duluth

mid-summer (not classified)

4 July 1938	Duluth
6 July 1987	Lake of the Woods
6 July 1966	Lac Qui Parle
11 July 1965	Duluth

earliest southbound

18 July 1999	Lake of the Woods
21 July 1982	Lake of the Woods
21 July 1997	Lyon
22 July 1995	Jackson
23 July 1977	Hennepin
24 July 1982	Lake of the Woods
26 July 1990	Pennington
26 July 1999	Lac Qui Parle

Sanderlinglatest northbound

20 June 1990	Goodhue
21 June 1975-77	Cass
24 June 1992	Pennington
24 June 1916	Lake of the Woods
25 June 1982	Lake of the Woods
25 June 2001	Becker
28 June 1975	Lyon
28 June 1962	Duluth
29 June 1964	Duluth

mid-summer (not classified)

2 July 1972	Lyon
3 July 1974	Lyon
4 July 1973	Clay
7 July 1984	Lake of the Woods
9 July 1981	Goodhue
9 July 1983	northern MN
10 July 1982	northern MN
10 July 1971	southern MN

earliest southbound

11 July 1968	Goodhue
11 July 1971	Duluth
12 July 1998	Marshall
12 July 1985	Cook
15 July 1997	Wilkin
17 July 1988	Faribault
18 July	5 diff. years
20 July	2 diff. years

Semipalmated Sandpiperlatest northbound (?)

21 June 1989	Yellow Medicine
21 June 1974	Duluth
22 June 1999	Hennepin
23 June 1963	Duluth (injured)
24 June 1999	Big Stone
24 June 1969	Mille Lacs
24 June 1982	northern MN
25 June 1983	northern MN
25 June 2001	Becker
26 June 1983	southern MN (injured)
27 June 1984	Duluth
17-28 June 1968	Lyon

earliest southbound (?)

27 June 1987	Scott
28 June 1987	Steele
28 June 1972	Aitkin
28 June 1998	Hennepin
29 June 1980	southern MN
1 July 1983	Wilkin
1 July 1999	Hennepin
2 July 1995	Ramsey
2 July 1972	Lyon
3 July 1980	northern MN
3 July 1974	Lac Qui Parle

Least Sandpiperlatest northbound

10 June 1989	Big Stone
10 June 1956	Grant
10 June 1998	Marshall
11 June 2000	St. Louis
11 June 1983	northern MN
12 June 1924	Pipestone
13 June 1994	Anoka
13-14 June 1975	3 south counties
14 June 1971	Aitkin

mid-summer (not classified)

18 June 1999	Big Stone
18 June 1984	Duluth
20 June 1938	Duluth
21 June 1983	northern MN
11-21 June 1980	Houston

earliest southbound

23 June 2000	Big Stone
23 June 1991	Winona
23 June 1977	Lac Qui Parle
24 June 1975-77	Cass
25 June 1972	Chisago
25 June 2001	Becker
26 June 1977	Hennepin
26 June 1977	St. Louis
26 June 1991	Roseau (4 inds.)
27 June 1989	Duluth
27 June 1993	northern MN

White-rumped Sandpiperlatest northbound

21 June 1974	Duluth
22 June 1974	Swift
22 June 1984	Lake of the Woods
24 June 1992	Pennington
24 June 1999	Big Stone
25 June 1983	Lake of the Woods
25 June 2001	Becker
26 June 2000	Big Stone
27 June 1942	Duluth
19-28 June 1972	Aitkin (20 inds.)
29 June 1999	Big Stone

mid-summer (not classified)

1 July 1980	Agassiz NWR
1 July 1894	Jackson
3 July 1974	Lyon
4 July 1986	Faribault
5 July 1985	Norman
6 July 1987	Stearns
6 July 1966	Traverse
7 July 1998	Duluth
8 July 1997	Olmsted
9 July 1999	Big Stone

earliest southbound

10-12 July 1983	Lake of the Woods
13 July 1997	Lac Qui Parle
14 July 1982	northern MN
16 July 1972	Lac Qui Parle
18 July 1993	Lyon
18 July 1897	Lincoln
20 July 1997	Big Stone
21 July 1932	Lake of the Woods
21 July 1989	Clay
22-23 July 1995	McLeod

Table 4, continued.

Migration can be well developed by late July: 26 on 20 July 1997 in Big Stone County, and 50 at Heron Lake, Jackson County on 22 July 1995 (*The Loon* 68:44).

Greater Yellowlegs

Spring migrants lingering into June are exceptional. Although most birds found in the period 17–22 June have been considered late spring migrants in the past, there are at least 32 June dates beginning 17 June and extending to the end of the month in a continuous series, suggesting significant and consistent migratory activity at this time. Thus, all dates beginning 17 June were here classified as early southbound migrants (Figure 1). Southbound migrants arrive in many areas by late June (Elphick and Tibbitts 1998), and the closest breeding areas are only 200 miles from Minnesota. Previously unknown peak migration of adults was documented in July and early August along the Big Stone County survey route during three different years, with nearly all individuals counted along Hwy 28 between Barry and Beardsley: 19 July 1998 (96), 26 July 1999 (60), and 4 August 2000 (47). Large flocks of adults have also been seen recently in the north in early July by P. Svingen: 75 on 7 July 1996 in Roseau County, and 50 on 5 July 1998 in Marshall County.

Lesser Yellowlegs

This species has been recorded on nearly every date in June, so separating northbound and southbound birds is particularly difficult. Nevertheless, the only years found (1961–2000) in which sightings occurred at least once every 6–7 days in June were 1964, 1977, 1983, 1991, and 1999. During many other years, there was a noticeable gap between potential northbound and southbound birds. Those found in the range of 17 June – 2 July have been listed as late migrants or mid-summer birds in the past, but analysis of seasonal reports 1989–1999 shows a sudden spike of birds on 18 June, suggesting

fall migration can begin this early. A flock of 12 on 18 June 1999 during the Big Stone County survey route, 10 in Polk County on 18 June 2000 (*The Loon* 73:20), 14 counted by H. Towle on 21 June 1993 in Pennington County, eight in Kittson County on 22 June 1929 (Roberts 1932), and a total of 37 on 23 June 2000 during the Big Stone County survey all indicate flocks of southbound birds, rather than lingering northbound birds — which haven't been documented in flocks greater than two.

As further examples of how high the level of migratory activity can be this early in June, note that 50 were seen in northeastern North Dakota on 22 June 1991, and 385 (all adults) were present in the vicinity of Sand Lake NWR, South Dakota on 22 June 1999! Also, flocks of 150–600 adults were encountered in Big Stone County on 26 June 1926 (Roberts 1932). The nearest portion of Lesser Yellowleg's breeding range lies only 100 miles from the Minnesota border. Although it is conceivable that lingering northbound birds may occur later than 17–18 June, those found this early were classified as early fall migrants if there was a prior gap in sightings that year, or if a flock was reported. During the Big Stone surveys, migration of adults peaked on 31 July 2000 (634) and juveniles on 15 September 2000 (210).

Solitary Sandpiper

Very limited breeding makes determination of early and late dates in the north difficult (nested in Aitkin County in 1973, and in Cook County in 1982, 1983, 1984, and 1987), so only south dates were analyzed. Lingered northbound migrants in June are exceptional. Dates from 14–22 June have been considered late, early, and mid-summer by various sources and thus were not classified here. Some of these may represent early southbound birds since there is a gap in sightings between 6–14 June (Figure 2) and since this species' regular breeding range lies along the Minnesota-Canada border.

Baird's Sandpiper

latest northbound

10 June 1983 Lac Qui Parle
10 June 1971 Hennepin
10 June 2001 Freeborn
11 June 1988 southern MN
11 June 1966 Clay
12 June 1984 Duluth
12 June 1977 Clay
12 June 1974 Lyon
14 June 1989 Duluth
20 June 1938 Duluth

earliest southbound

28 June 1975 Lyon
29 June 1980 southern MN
1 July 1995 Anoka
3 July 1974 Lyon
4 July 1963 Marshall
4 July 1980 northern MN
5 July 1999 Stearns
6 July 1966 Traverse
6 July 1996 3 south counties

Pectoral Sandpiper

latest northbound

10 June 3 diff. years
3 12 June 1971 Aitkin
12 June 1977 southern MN
13 June 1988 southern MN
13 June 1966 Lac Qui Parle
13 June 1056 Lake
14 June 1989 Duluth
15 June 1973 Otter Tail
15 June 1946 Duluth

mid-summer (not classified)

7, 17 June 1983 Lake of the Woods
18 June 1976 Lyon
18 June 1999 Big Stone
19 June 1938 Duluth
19, 30 June 1972 Aitkin
20 June 1897 Grant
21 June 1997 Lyon
17 25 June 1968 Lyon
19 Jun 7 Jul 2000 Big Stone
7 Jun 12 Jul 1964 Stevens

earliest southbound (?)

23 June 1900 Marshall
24 June 1982 northern MN
25 June 1989 Big Stone
25 June 1981 southern MN
26 June 1977 Lyon, Yellow Med.
27 June 1983 Clay
27 June 1988 northern MN
27 June 1999 St. Louis
28 June 5 diff. years

Dunlin

latest northbound

13 June 1977 Roseau, L. of Woods
13 June 1966 Lac Qui Parle
13 June 1942 Duluth
14 June ?? southern MN
15 June 1979 Lake of the Woods
17 June 1951 Duluth
20 June 1978 northern MN
24 June 1982 Duluth
27 June 1984 Duluth

mid-summer (not classified)

13 Jun-13 Jul 1983 Duluth
3 July 1971 Duluth
5 July 1982 southern MN
6 July 1966 Traverse
10 July 1972 Lyon

earliest southbound

18 July 1937 Duluth
19 July 1976 Cass
19 July 1984 Anoka
19 July 1993 Lyon
20 July 1986 Murray, Yellow Med.
21 July 1974 Rock
21 July 1983 Nicollet
22 July 1983 Clearwater
23 July 1972 Lake

Stilt Sandpiper

latest northbound

8 June 1977 Clay
8 June 2000 St. Louis
10 June 1964 Stevens
10 June 1992 Roseau
12 June 1982 Lake
13 June 1966 Lac Qui Parle
13 June 1971 Clay
15 June 1973 Otter Tail
18 June 1997 Winona

earliest southbound

26 June 2000 Big Stone
27 June 1991 Roseau
28 June 1999 Big Stone
28 June 1975 Lyon
1 July 1964 Stevens
1 July 1983 northern MN
2 July 1986 southern MN
2 July 1977 Grant
2 July 1977 northern MN

Short-billed Dowitcher

latest northbound (Short-billed)

1 June 1969 Duluth
2 June 1999 Meeker
2 June 1989 Wilkin
6 June 1999 Swift
7 June 1998 Marshall
9 June 1998 Wilkin

earliest southbound (Short-billed)

24 June 2001 Becker
25 June 1989 Big Stone
26 June 1991 Roseau
28 June 1999 Big Stone
28 June 1975 Lyon
28 June 1987 Steele
29 June 1991 Sibley
29 June 1989 Clearwater
29 June 2000 Marshall
30 June 3 diff. years

Dowitcher, sp. (June only)

2 June 1972 Aitkin
5 June 1924 Lincoln
8 June 1946 Duluth
10 June 1973 Clay
10 June 1929 Kittson
13 June 1942 Duluth
26 June 1926 Big Stone
28 June 1964 Stevens
29 June 1980 southern MN

Red-necked Phalarope

latest northbound

12 June 1929 Kittson
12 June 1965 Clay
12 June 1966 Lac Qui Parle
14 June 1986 Watonwan
16 June 1986 Agassiz NWR
17 June 1983 Polk
18 June 1992 Wright
26 June 2000 Norman
20-28 June 1992 three NW co.s
7 June - 1 July 1964 Stevens

earliest southbound

9 July 1999 Big Stone
12 July 1980 Pennington
12 July 1986 Clay
12 July 1987 Clay
13 July 1975 Lyon
14 July 1979 Wilkin
15 July 1990 Big Stone
16 July 1977 Grant
16 July 1956 Wilkin
18 July two years

Table 4, concluded.

Note, however, that southbound migrants normally arrive in early July, later than Lesser Yellowlegs. None were recorded during the Big Stone surveys prior to 1 July.

Willet

Although this species has not been found nesting in the state since 1931-1932, regular breeding still occurs within 30 miles of the western Minnesota border. Post-1960 summer dates are scattered throughout June and July with little discernable pattern; however, during most years, large gaps between potentially late spring and early fall sightings made classification of these dates possible, yielding an average late spring date of 7 June, and an average early fall date of 23 July.

Hudsonian Godwit

Lingering migrants in June are unusual, and this species is rare in fall at any time.

Ruddy Turnstone

This species is one of the common migrants in early June: for example, 100 were counted at Duluth on 1 June 1963 (J. Green), and 50 on 7 June 1965 (*The Loon* 35:11). The gap in sightings on seasonal reports (1989-1999) between 13 June and 18 July suggests a regular beginning and end to migration. The following data were left unclassified: "rare southbound visitor" at Leech Lake, Cass County 16 June - 25 July 1975 - 1977 (*The Loon* 56:28).

Sanderling

Heavy migration can occur in early June, with record high counts at Duluth of 500 on 1 June 1969 (*The Loon* 41:116) and 300 on 7 June 1965 (*The Loon* 38:12). Northbound migration extends well into mid-June (e.g., 30 at Duluth on 11 June 1969), but determining late dates from early dates in late June and early July is impossible. Analysis of seasonal reports 1989-1999 shows no records be-

tween 24 June and 12 July (Figure 3), suggesting the normal beginning and end to migration, but there are 14 observations between these dates prior to 1989 which defy classification. By 18 July, migration can be well developed again (e.g., 40 at Duluth on 18 July 1970).

Semipalmated Sandpiper

In Minnesota, peak migration often extends into early June: 500 at Duluth on 1 June 1969 (*The Loon* 41:116) and 600 in Pipestone and Lincoln counties on 1 June 1928 (Roberts 1932). Northbound birds regularly linger into mid-June, and occasionally late June; for example, through 27 June 1984 at Duluth (*The Loon* 57:43), and 17-28 June 1967 in Lyon County (*The Loon* 40:121). Early fall migrants begin to arrive like clockwork around 5 July (Figure 3), but lingering northbound birds may overlap with early southbound birds in late June and early July. There are at least 18 late June records on file, some of which have variously been treated as early or late migrants. Migration can be well developed by 5-6 July (25-30+ noted three years in a row 1996-1998 by L. Ellwanger in Big Stone County). Very large numbers have been found moving through west central Minnesota during recent falls: e.g., 986 at Big Stone NWR on 3 August 2000 (*The Loon* 73:90) and 1017 on the 4 August 2000 Big Stone County survey, with no overlap between these two sites. Peak migration of juveniles on the Big Stone surveys was 7 September (360).

Least Sandpiper

Only very small numbers are present in early June, so many of the late spring dates on file may be the result of confusion with Semipalmated Sandpiper, which is considerably more likely in June. For example, published counts of 200 in Lyon County on 4 June 1979 (*The Loon* 52:129) and 100 in Lac Qui Parle County on 11 June 1983 (*The Loon* 56:55) almost certainly pertain to Semipalmated Sandpipers. The potentially latest date on

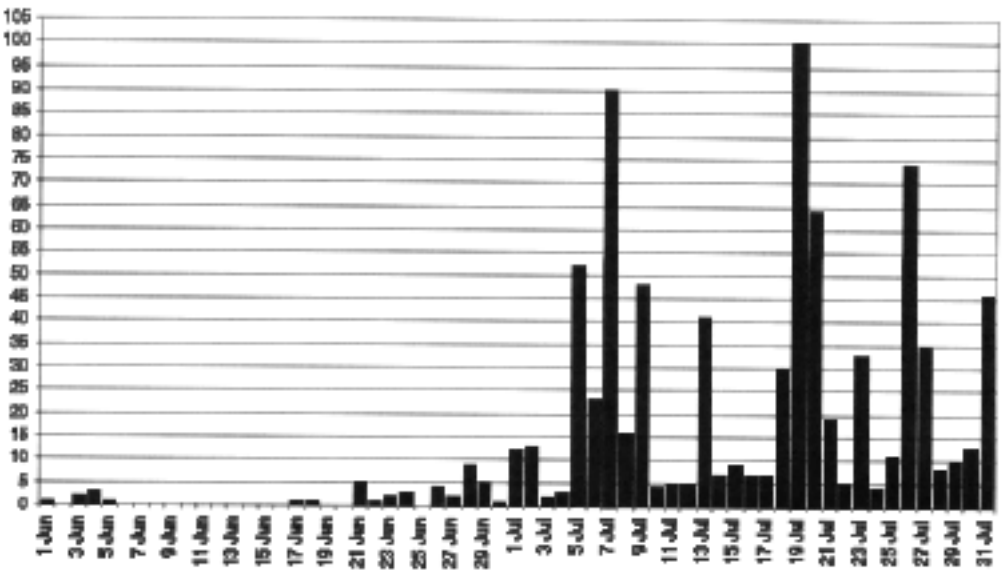
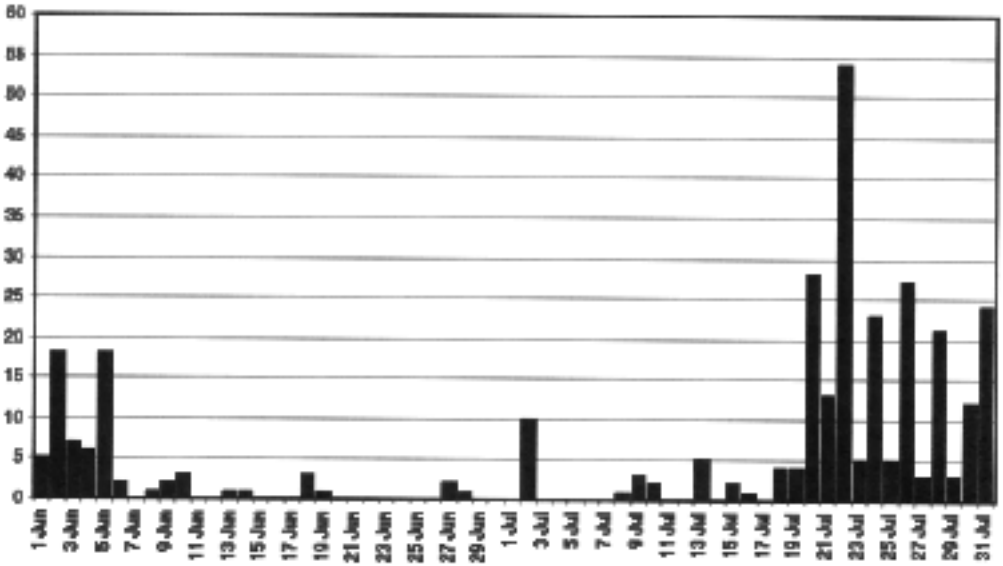


Figure 1. Semipalmated Plover and Greater Yellowlegs.

record (11, 18, 21 June 1980, lingering in Houston County, *The Loon* 53:137) was not included in Janssen (1987). Many dates from 18–27 June have been alternately listed as early or late, but migration can be well developed by 28–30

June (Figure 4): for example, 12 counted on the Big Stone survey route on 28 June 1999, 45 counted in four counties 28–30 June 1999, and 15 at Duluth on 30 June 1998. Migration of adults peaked during 2000 surveys on 13 July (221 in Lac Qui

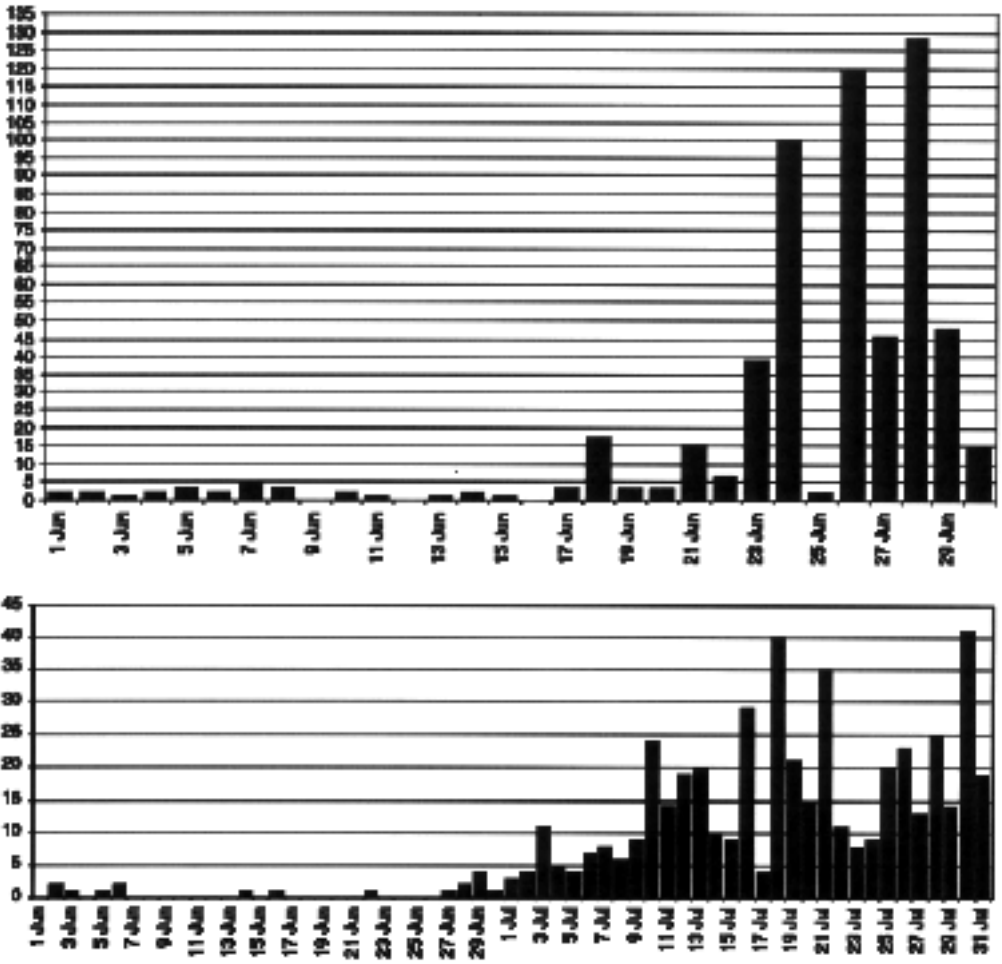


Figure 2. Lesser Yellowlegs and Solitary Sandpiper.

Parle County) and juveniles on 29 August (283 on the Big Stone survey route).

White-rumped Sandpiper

Peak spring movement of the White-rumped Sandpiper may extend into early June, and migrants commonly linger into mid-June, with some occasionally still present in late June. Examples beyond the Big Stone County survey data include 100 in Traverse County on 10 June 1979 (*The Loon* 52:129), 15 in Clearwater County on 14 June 1969 (*The Loon* 41:116), and 20 in Aitkin County on 28

June 1972 (*The Loon* 44:108). Nine other late June records presumably represent additional lingering migrants. July migrants are particularly unusual, with only ten records on file for early July, seven on file for mid-July, and 19 on file for late July. Early July records probably represent lingering northbound birds (or birds attempting to oversummer), and late July records probably represent the beginning of southbound movement, but mid-July dates were arbitrarily left unclassified. This species is not expected as a fall migrant until at least August; for ex-

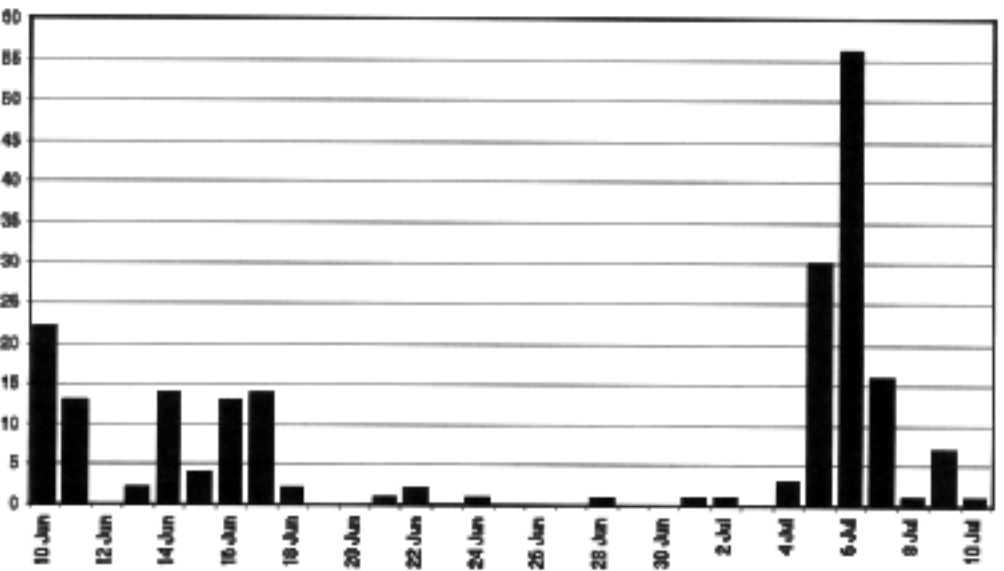
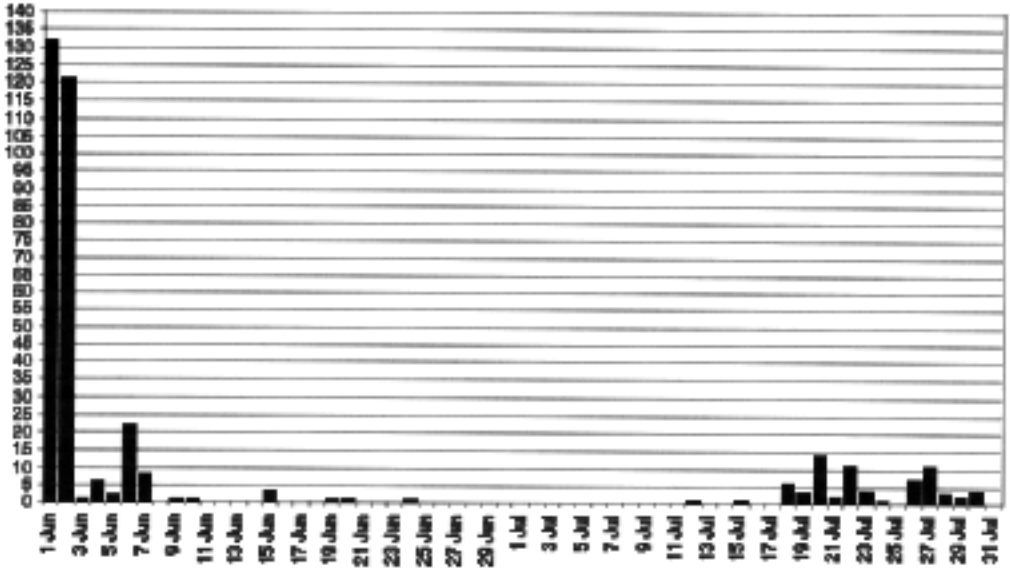


Figure 3. Sanderling and Semipalmated Sandpiper.

ample, the average early arrival date in southern Michigan based on six years of regular surveys by P. Chu is 14 August. Many of the July records in Minnesota may be erroneous, and additional July

observations should be documented. Migrants are rare in fall at any time, with only singles or very small groups ever seen (fall maxima seven on 9–20 October 1986, Duluth, *The Loon* 59:83).

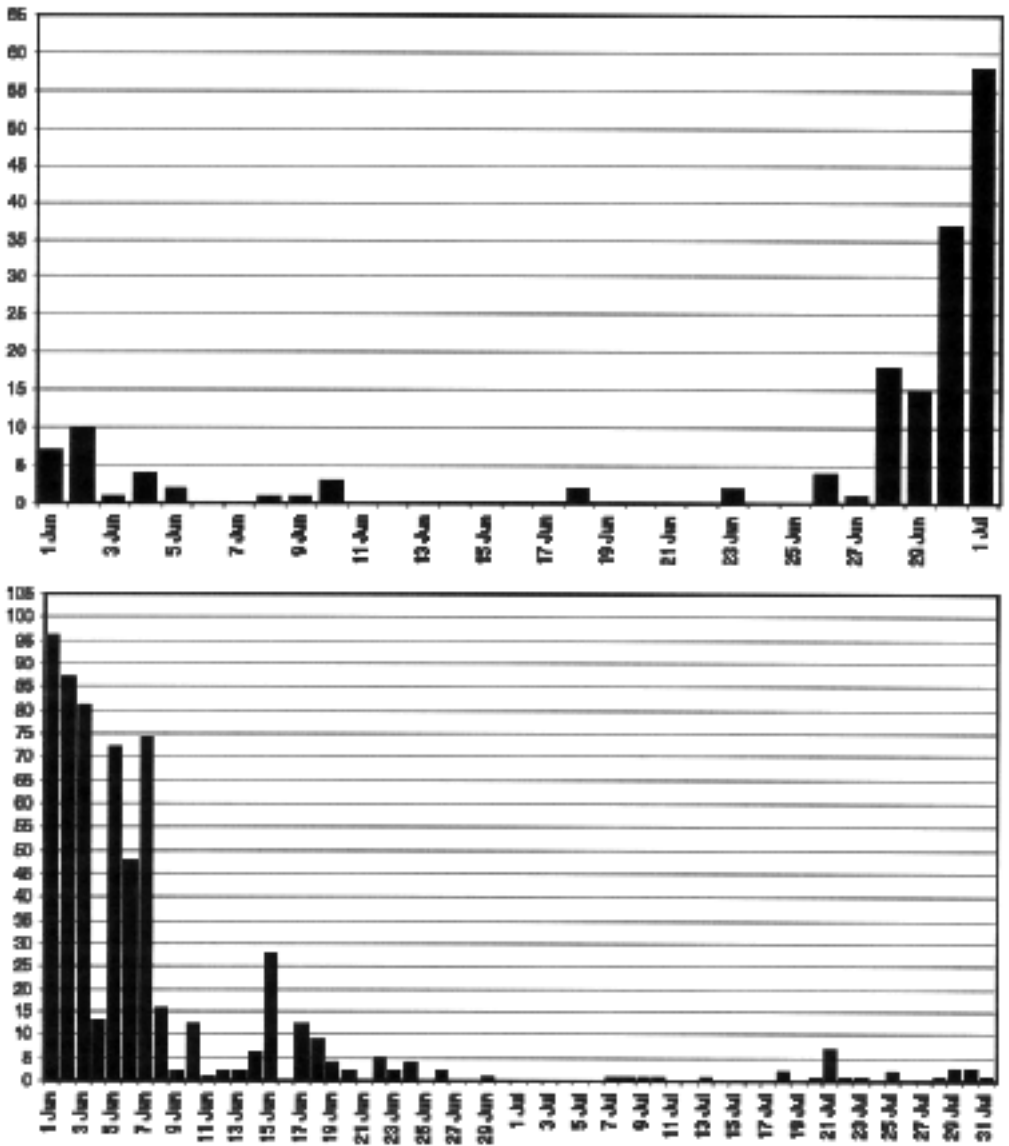


Figure 4. Least Sandpiper and White-rumped Sandpiper.

Baird's Sandpiper

Lingering northbound migrants in early June are less common than other small sandpipers. Analysis of seasonal reports 1989–1999 shows only two dubious observations between 7 June – 5 July (Figure 5); Least, Semipalmated and

White-rumped Sandpipers are all more likely during this period and additional sightings should be documented. Erroneous reports likely exist in the literature (e.g., 100 on 4 June 1979 in Lyon County, *The Loon* 52:129). A series of sightings in Aitkin County on 3, 19, and 28 June 1972

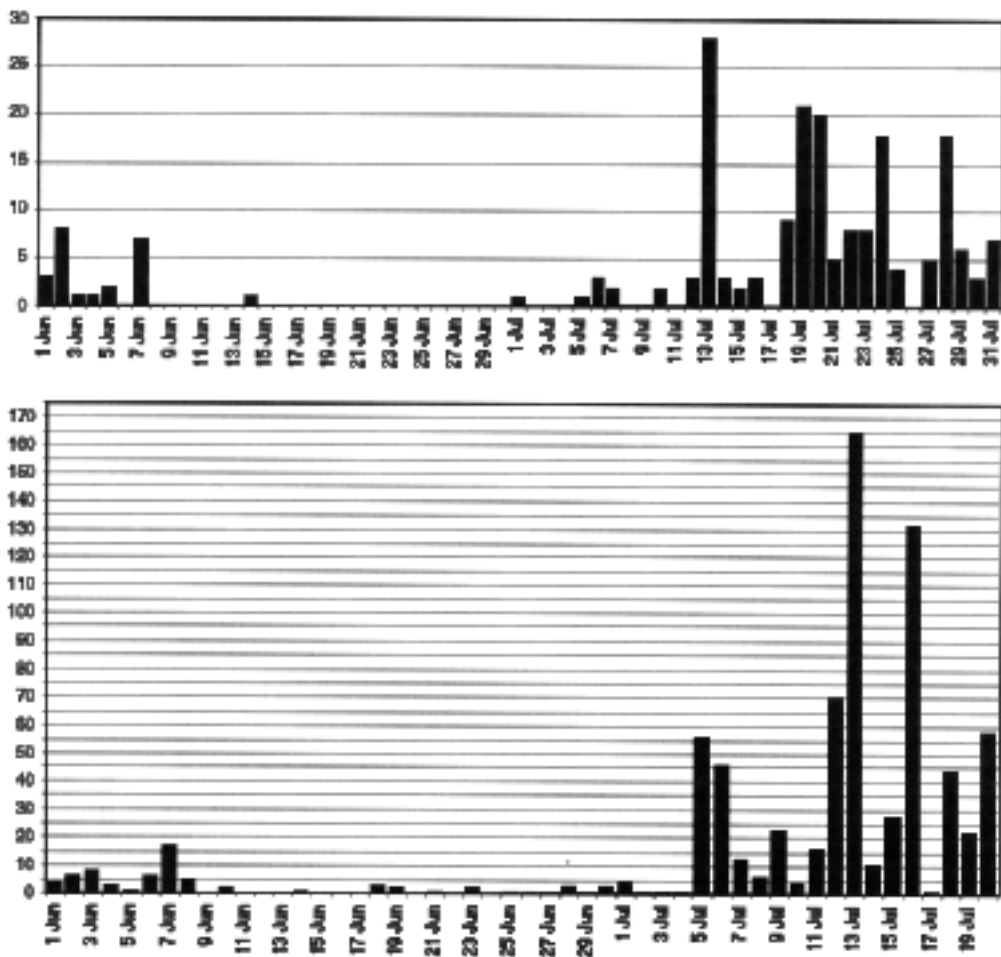


Figure 5. Baird's Sandpiper and Pectoral Sandpiper.

(*The Loon* 44:108) were left unclassified. The 19 and 28 June dates were split into early and late migrants by Janssen (1987), which seems counter-intuitive, since this would represent the second latest northbound date and the earliest southbound date seen from the same location separated by only nine days! This species was missed on the 1999 Big Stone County surveys (18 June – 26 July) and did not appear on the 2000 surveys until 31 July.

Pectoral Sandpiper

Lingering northbound migrants are un-

common in early June, with the latest flock being 15 birds on the Big Stone survey route on 7 June 2000 (Figure 5). Ten mid-summer dates during the seven day period 16–22 June were not classified as early or late migrants because they appeared to be over-summering birds, or because the single date fell mid-way between the next earliest and latest dates reported for that season. For example, one to three birds were present at the same site along the Big Stone survey route during each survey 19 June – 7 July 2000. In contrast, there are 18 dates dur-

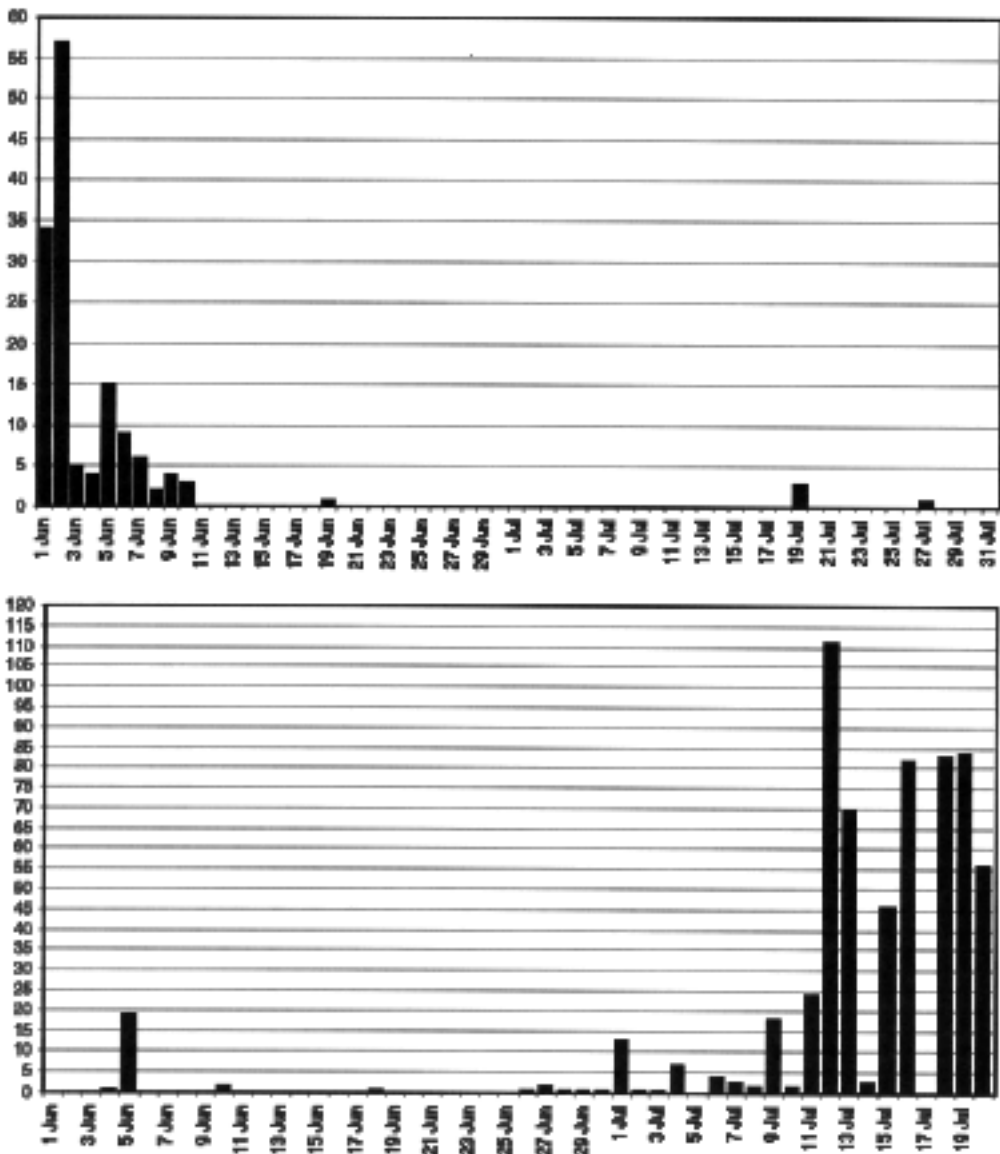


Figure 6. Dunlin and Stilt Sandpiper.

ing the seven day period 24–30 June, which suggests early fall migration may begin during this time, but it is impossible to distinguish the earliest migrants from lingering or summering birds, especially when isolated observations of single birds are considered. During the

Big Stone County surveys, a significant influx of fall migrants did not begin until 13 July 2000 and 18 July 1999, but flocks can occur earlier (e.g., counts by L. Ellwanger of 40 in Big Stone County on 5 July 1998 and 6 July 1997). Migration peaked during the Big Stone surveys on

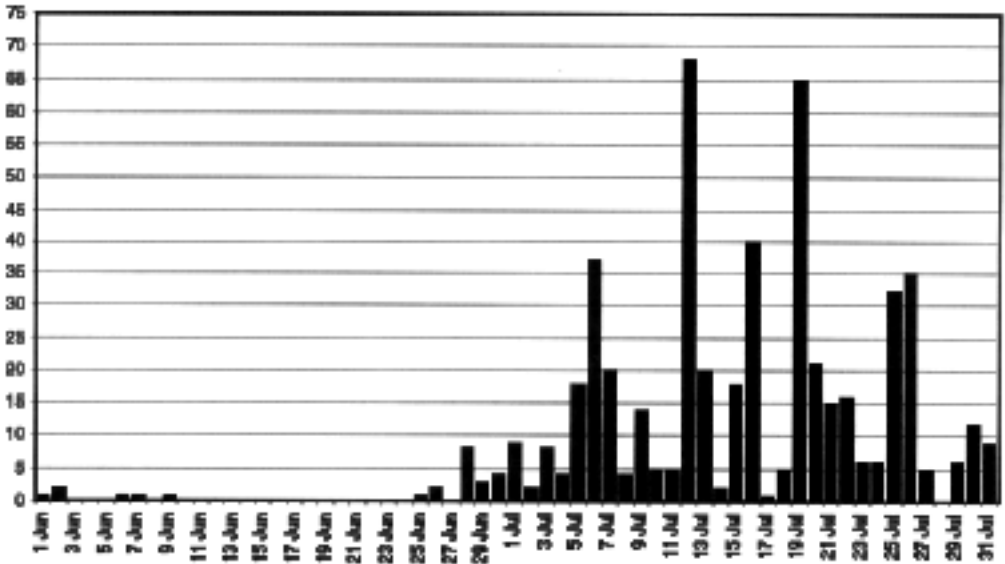


Figure 7. Short-billed Dowitcher.

4 August 2000 (1043).

Dunlin

Large numbers can be seen in early June, such as 40 in Renville County on 2 June 1998 (*The Loon* 71:28), but any migratory activity after mid-June is exceptional (Figure 6), and returning fall migrants cannot be expected until August or even September. For example, from 1987–1992, there were apparently no reports of this species anywhere between 10 June and 12 August. In 1983, over-summering was reported from 13 June – 13 July at Duluth (erroneously listed as 1985 in Janssen, 1987). The cluster of 14 dates from 18–29 July probably represents early fall movement, but this species is scarce even in August, and numbers do not peak until October. Migrants depart the breeding grounds later than most other shorebirds, after completion of the prebasic molt (Warnock and Gill 1996), although occasional early southbound birds in late July and August are still mostly in alternate plumage.

Stilt Sandpiper

Lingering spring migrants in June are only Casual, but fall migrants in July are common in western Minnesota (Figure 6). During the Big Stone surveys, adults peaked on 31 July 2000 (272) and juveniles on 7 September 2000 (149).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper

This species is casual in the spring, with only 22 records 1961–2001. Fall migrants arrive consistently in the last few days of July. The latest spring migrant on 6 June 1964 (Lac Qui Parle County) is widely separated from the earliest fall migrants observed on 12 July 1984 (Anoka Co.), 20 July 1974 (Anoka County), and 20 July 1991 (north), but note that the following three records were overlooked or deleted in previous compilations (e.g., Janssen 1987): 25 June 1980 at Agassiz NWR, Marshall County (*The Loon* 53:137; details on file by J. Mattsson), 3 July 1943 at Duluth (Audubon Magazine), and 10 July 1979 in Lyon County (*The Loon* 52:129).

Short-billed Dowitcher

Lingering birds in June are uncommon, while southbound adults are common throughout July (Figure 7). All June dates of dowitchers were categorized. Although some of the June dates listed under dowitcher, sp. were claimed as Long-billed Dowitcher, there is no evidence to support this. Even specimens need reaffirmation to species. Note the absence of any reports of dowitchers 13–24 June.

Long-billed Dowitcher

Understanding of dowitcher migration is still incomplete in Minnesota. Although most birders are aware that the Long-billed Dowitcher arrives earlier in spring migration and returns later in fall than the Short-billed Dowitcher, documented evidence of early and late dates is still lacking. The default species in summer is Short-billed Dowitcher, and all June–July observations of Long-billed Dowitcher should be documented.

Data since 1989 suggest Long-billed would be exceptional in June, and cannot reasonably be expected in fall migration until late July. During the last 12 years, there have been only eight published summer reports, all of them 22–30 July except 10 July 1991 (Polk County). Nineteen additional July observations prior to 1989 occur throughout the month. By comparison, the average early fall arrival date in southern Michigan based on six years of regular surveys by P. Chu is 4 August.

Red-necked Phalarope

This species is rather scarce and local in summer, with most migratory activity in western Minnesota, especially at sewage ponds. Exceptional lingerers include multiple birds in three northwest counties 20–28 June 1992 (*The Loon* 65:92), and observations on 7, 11, and 27 June, and 1 July 1964 in Stevens County (*The Loon* 36:90). Early south dates published in Janssen (1987) begin as early as 27 June and 1 July, but these dates undoubtedly

refer to the 1964 Stevens County observations, which were more properly treated as late spring migrants in Green and Janssen (1975). The only observations reported on seasonal reports 1989–1999 between 11 June – 15 July are the 1992 sightings, plus a female seen on the Big Stone survey route on 9 July 1999. Adults showed no significant peak during the Big Stone surveys, but juveniles peaked at 53 on 7 September 2000.

Acknowledgments

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**13073 Hastings Avenue St. NE,
Blaine, MN 55449.**

The Fall Season

(1 August to 30 November 2001)

Paul E. Budde

Long anticipated but exciting nevertheless was Minnesota's first Black Vulture, at Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve. Observers appreciated several accidental and casual species that lingered more than one day, including such gems as Long-tailed Jaeger, Black-headed Gull, Arctic Tern, and Band-tailed Pigeon.

Three **Red-throated** and up to six **Pacific loons** on Lake Superior gave birders something to look for on the big lake for much of the season. Most of these were reported for periods between several days and a few weeks. Unfortunately, the juvenile **Yellow-billed Loon** on Mille Lacs Lake could not be relocated after its initial discovery. All records of this species in the state have been in late fall and the last one was also on Mille Lacs. There were few reports of **Eared Grebe** or **Western Grebe**, and none of **Clark's Grebe** this season.

An immature **Snowy Egret** in Houston and a juvenile **Little Blue Heron** in Carver were found in August, while four reports of **Cattle Egret** were spread out through the entire period. Two **Plegadis** in western Minnesota were unidentified. Long-overdue was the first state record **Black Vulture** photographed at Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve on 28 August.

Possibly overwintering was an early **Greater White-fronted Goose** at Big Stone N.W.R., 19 August. White-fronteds rarely arrive before the end of September, especially in southern Minnesota (recent median 3 October, and earliest ever 21 September 1990). On the other hand, this species has occurred no fewer than five times in the summer season: Marshall County 11 July 1984, St. Louis County 9 June 1990, Roseau County 4 July 1992, one possibly injured in Rock County 24 July 1999, and Meeker County 2 July 2000. **Ross's Geese** were reported from five counties, including a first county

record in Wabasha. On the early side was a **Tundra Swan** in the Northwest region during late August.

Eight **Harlequin Ducks** were found at four locations along the North Shore of Lake Superior — a good number for this species in any year — but one on Mille Lacs Lake was most surprising. **Scoters** were relatively scarce on Lake Superior, but there were more reports than usual from “inland” bodies of water. All three species were found on Mille Lacs Lake and at Prairie Island in Winona. Scoters were also found at many other locations away from Lake Superior, including the first **Black Scoter** ever recorded in Pope County. Only two **Long-tailed Ducks** were found away from Lake Superior, one on Lake Winnibigoshish and the other in Olmsted County. An adult male **Barrow's Goldeneye** was photographed at Pool #8, Houston County.

A **Northern Goshawk** in Hennepin County was the only south report this season. At Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve in Duluth, four **Red-shouldered Hawks** was up from only one last fall, but six **Swainson's Hawks** was down from last year's fourteen. **Golden Eagle** numbers were truly impressive; daily and seasonal records were established at Hawk Ridge. An immature gray-morph **Gyr Falcon** thrilled observers there in late October. Two **Prairie Falcons** were discovered, both in the extreme western part of the state. **Yellow Rail** was found for the third consecutive September in Jackson County. A **Common Moorhen** family

delighted observers at Minnesota Lake, Meeker County through late September; one at Swan Lake, Nicollet County, was the only other report.

A **Piping Plover** in Big Stone County during late August may have been a holdover from the summer season. Most **American Avocet** reports were from the West-central region, but others were in Dakota and Winona counties. Unusually high numbers of **Hudsonian Godwits** were present during August in the West-central region. The shorebird highlight of the season was a **Western Sandpiper** found in late October at Lake Byllesby. It provided the first acceptable Minnesota record of this species since 1991! Early August brought record high numbers of **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** into eastern and western Minnesota. For the season, 550+ was scattered among 12 counties, compared to almost 300 last fall. Sixty-two **Red-necked Phalaropes** at the Browns Valley sewage lagoons was noteworthy, but this location was erroneously attributed to Traverse County by several observers — these lagoons are situated in neighboring Big Stone County.

All three jaeger species were found in the state this season! An adult **Pomarine Jaeger** at Park Point in Duluth provided the state's 15th record. Between five and eight **Parasitic Jaegers** were at Duluth, all in September. Most surprising was the Minnesota's eighth **Long-tailed Jaeger**, discovered on the St. Croix River in Washington County, where it lingered for three days. An extremely early jaeger on Cass Lake, Cass County, and two other jaegers in Duluth could not be identified to species.

Much more likely in spring but found there for the second consecutive fall was a **Little Gull** in Duluth. For the fourth consecutive October, **Black-headed Gull** was documented at Spirit Lake, Jackson County. Four different **Iceland Gulls** were observed along Lake Superior, but none anywhere else. Perhaps two, but possibly only one **Lesser Black-backed Gull** occurred in the Twin Cities this season. Multiple **Sabine's Gulls** were re-

ported at the Superior Entry and Park Point in Duluth, while a juvenile at the Paynesville sewage lagoons furnished the first Stearns County record. Juvenile **Black-legged Kittiwakes** were observed during mid-November in Cook County and later in the month at Duluth. Tardy **Common Terns** were documented at Lake Bemidji and Mille Lacs Lake. At least one but probably two **Arctic Terns** were found at the Superior Entry in Duluth. This was only the second fall report of this species in the state — the first was last September, at the same location!

The state's eighth **Band-tailed Pigeon** was very cooperative for a few days in a Minneapolis suburb. **Eurasian Collared-Doves** were found in three counties. The pair in Houston fledged their third brood this season, so watch for them soon in your neighborhood! **Snowy Owls** began appearing in mid-October; unfortunately, many were found starving or dead. At least five **Northern Hawk Owls** were discovered in the Northeast region, while **Great Gray Owls** were confined to the northern tier counties along the Canadian border. An unusually high number of **Black-backed Woodpeckers** was found in the Northeast, but only two **Three-toed Woodpeckers** were reported.

Two **Western Kingbirds** along the North Shore in mid-October were a month and a half later than any others in the state this fall. **Loggerhead Shrikes** were found in five counties, but only as late as the end of August. **Northern Shrikes** first appeared in mid-October. A first-fall **White-eyed Vireo** at Lutsen was a first for Cook County while a **Warbling Vireo** in the same county was record late. Meanwhile, a **Red-eyed Vireo** in McLeod County tied the record late date for that species. Two **Tufted Titmice** showed up at a feeder in Chisago County and stayed most of November. **Carolina Wrens** made appearances in Houston, Mower, Washington, and most unusual, Cook County. Almost two months later than any other report of **Blue-gray Gnat-catcher** this fall was one found along the North Shore of Lake Superior in Knife

River. It furnished the fourth November record; others were in 1994 and 2000 (2).

Only one **Mountain Bluebird** but as many as twenty **Townsend's Solitaires** were reported! Most of the solitaires were along Lake Superior's North Shore, but first county records in Kandiyohi and Rock were notable. Seventeen reports of **Gray-checked Thrush** were more than usual. In contrast to the high number of solitaires, **Varied Thrushes** were found in only four locations. Four **Northern Mockingbirds** were neatly distributed among the four quadrants of the state. Proving the axiom "anything is possible" was the **Sprague's Pipit** at Resurrection Cemetery in Dakota County.

Lingering species included **Nashville Warbler**, **Northern Parula**, and **Pine Warbler**. It was a great migration for **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, with multiple reports from seven south counties, including five birds at one Anoka County location. Sightings of **Yellow-throated Warbler** may have been related to their successful nesting in Dakota County (*The Loon* 73:236–240). Unusual numbers of **Hooded Warblers** lingered at Murphy-Hanrehan Park, their best known nesting location in the state, and one was record late in St. Cloud.

A **Spotted Towhee** in Rochester was the only one reported. Twenty-one **Clay-colored Sparrows** near East Grand Forks was a high count for fall. Late and unexpected along the North Shore of Lake Superior were no fewer than four **Field Sparrows**. Providing Minnesota's fifth state record was a first-year **Black-throated Sparrow** at Knife River, Lake County. More than usual were six reports of **Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow**, two from the north and four from the south. **Harris's Sparrows** were abundant in the Southwest during mid-October. **Smith's Longspurs** were found in Cottonwood, St. Louis, and Traverse counties. As many as 50 **Great-tailed Grackles** in Jackson County were near the location where this species was found breeding in June 2000. A few winter finches appeared south of their normal winter range in the East-cen-

tral region, including **Pine Grosbeak**, **Red** and **White-winged crossbills**, and most unusual of all, **Evening Grosbeak** in two locations.

Weather Summary: August was drier and warmer than normal in all Minnesota regions, except for slightly above normal precipitation in the Northwest and near normal in the Southeast. Five heat-related deaths occurred in Duluth during a 5–8 August heat wave as temperatures spiked 10–15°F above normal in several locations. On the heels of this heat wave, a strong cold front dropped temperatures as much as 20°F from the previous day and winds >100 mph were reported in the Grand Forks-East Grand Forks area.

September was fairly unremarkable. Except for warmth in the Northwest (2.7°F above normal) and persistence of dry conditions in the Northeast (2.01 inches below normal), most of the state experienced near normal temperatures and precipitation. A series of three low pressure systems during 19–25 September brought significant rainfall to much of the state and temperatures plunged to 25°F at International Falls on the morning of the 24th, and even colder (19°F at Embarrass and 20°F at Tower) the next morning.

Except for near normal temperatures and below normal precipitation in central and southern regions, October was cool and wet, not only in northern Minnesota but also in much of the Midwest, where it was the fourth wettest October in 107 years. A powerful system in late October brought very strong winds (>50 mph) to several locations including St. Cloud and Rochester, and the first measurable snow. Snowfall was heaviest in the Northwest region, where the greatest amounts were at Argyle (14 inches), Hallock, and Thief River Falls (11 inches each).

Like much of the Midwest, Minnesota enjoyed warmth in November — in fact, it was the warmest November in 107 years! All nine regions reported double digit above normal temperatures for the month, except the Northeast which was "only" 9.1°F above normal. Record high temperatures were set in Minneapolis on

the 5th and St. Cloud on the 6th. Dry and warm conditions continued through the third week of the month, until a stormy 21–30 November ushered in significant precipitation and returned temperatures to near normal. Willmar set an all-time record for snowfall within 24 hours (21 inches) as a total of 30.4 inches fell 26–28 November. Significant amounts were also recorded in Minneapolis and other cities as a band of snowfall stretched across southern Minnesota. By the end of the month, all regions except the Northwest reported above average precipitation.

Acknowledgments: I thank Molly and Dave Evans, Frank Nicoletti, and Duluth Audubon Society for data from Hawk

Ridge Nature Reserve. Karl Bardon and Peder Svingen reviewed this report and offered many helpful suggestions. Peder compiled loons through woodpeckers. Besty Beneke, Dave Benson, Kim Eckert, and Anthony Hertzell provided transcripts of weekly birding reports. Earliest and latest migration dates were compiled by Robert Janssen. Medians of recent arrival and departure dates were calculated from published and unpublished data used for seasonal reports from 1985 through 2000. Finally, many thanks to the hundreds of dedicated observers who submit data and documentation each season.

4612 Colfax Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55409.

KEY TO SEASONAL REPORTS

1. Upper case (**LEAST TERN**) indicates a Casual or Accidental species in the state.
2. Dates listed in bold (**10/9**) indicate an occurrence either earlier, later or within the three earliest or latest dates on file.
3. Counties listed in bold (**Aitkin**) indicate an unusual occurrence for that county.
4. Counties with an underline (Becker) indicate a first county record.
5. Counties listed in italics (*Crow Wing*) indicate a first county breeding record.
6. Brackets [] indicate a species for which there is reasonable doubt as to its origin or wildness.
7. Counts listed in bold (**150**) indicate total within or exceeding the top three high counts for that species.
8. Dagger “†” preceding observer’s initials denotes documentation was submitted.

The Season publishes reports of bird sightings from throughout Minnesota. We particularly invite reports from parts of the state that have been neglected or covered lightly in past reports. To become a contributor, request a report form from the Editor of *The Season*, Peder Svingen, 2602 E. 4th St., Duluth, MN 55812–1533.

Red-throated Loon — Singles reported 9/15–23 St. Louis (Park Pt. in Duluth) †PHS, †PCC, m.obs., 10/9–21 St. Louis (Duluth) m.obs., 10/26–29 Cook (Five Mile Rock) DRB, †PHS, m.obs.

Pacific Loon — Documented 9/15–22 St. Louis (Duluth) m.obs., 10/13–29 St. Louis (Duluth) †CRG *et al.*, 11/3 Lake (Iona’s Beach) †KRE *et al.* Also reported without details 11/3 Cook, 11/3 L. Pepin, 11/5–8 St. Louis (2).

Common Loon — Reported from 17 north and 19 south counties, but none in Southwest. Late north 11/28 Becker BRK; also see winter report. Peak count 11/4 (1163 at Mille Lacs L.) PCC, PHS.

YELLOW-BILLED LOON — Juvenile seen 11/4 Mille Lacs (Mille Lacs L.) †PHS, †PCC. Fifth Minnesota record.

Pied-billed Grebe — Reported from 14 north and 36 south counties. High count

9/3 Hennepin (**301** at French L.) SLC. Late north 11/15 Douglas REH and St. Louis JRN. Also see winter report.

Horned Grebe — Reported from nine north and eight south counties. Early north 8/29 Lake JWL, 9/2 Cook DFJ. Early south 8/26–27 Olmsted (East Landfill Reservoir) JGL, PWP, 9/3 Hennepin SLC. Late north 11/23 Aitkin AXH. Late south 11/30 Goodhue ADS.

Red-necked Grebe — Reported from 13 north and 10 south counties, including 10/4 Dakota (L. Byllesby) CR. Late north 11/23 Aitkin AXH. Late south 11/10 Hennepin PEB. Also see winter report.

Eared Grebe — Relatively scarce for the third consecutive year. Late north 10/7 Beltrami DPJ, 10/28 Otter Tail DPS; also reported from Clay, Pennington, Polk, Wilkin. Late south 9/29 Dakota (180th St. marsh) CRG, 10/27 Dakota (L. Marion) JMa. Only other south reports: Pipestone, Renville, Rock.

Western Grebe — Few reports. Unusual location 10/14 St. Louis (Duluth) MH. Late north 10/20 Douglas REH, 10/31 Todd HHD. Late south 10/27 Hennepin PEB, 11/12 Meeker DMF.

Clark's Grebe — No reports.

American White Pelican — Observed in 10 north and 33 south counties. High count 8/8 Jackson (1100 at Heron L.) MJC. Numbers up in St. Louis, especially at H.R.N.R. in Duluth, where a peak of 60 on 9/3 was probably the same flock seen 9/3 Lake (Two Harbors) TRo. Late north 10/23 Polk EEF. See winter report for late south dates.

Double-crested Cormorant — Seen in 12 north and 37 south counties. Late north 11/18 Lake JWL. See winter report for additional late migrants.

American Bittern — Reported from 12 counties. Late north 10/12 Aitkin PEJ, no



Immature Little Blue Heron, 17 August 2001, Carver Park, Carver County. Photo by Dennis Martin.

others in October. All south reports: 8/6 Meeker RJS, 11/6 Waseca JEZ.

Least Bittern — Only report: 8/17 Lac Qui Parle (2) BEO.

Great Blue Heron — Reported from 18 north and 39 south counties. Late north 10/31 Carlton LAW. See winter report for late south migrants.

Great Egret — Late north 9/30 Wadena PJB, also reported from Douglas, Otter Tail, Polk (9/6, EEF). Late south 11/7 Steele NFT, 11/16 Lac Qui Parle BEO. Peak count 9/14 Faribault (101) RBJ.

Snowy Egret — Immature seen 8/7–8 Houston (near Reno) FZL, RZ *et al.*

Little Blue Heron — An immature was observed 8/16–24 **Carver** (Carver Park) RMD *et al.*

Cattle Egret — All reports: 8/14–21

Faribault (4 near Minnesota L.) DBz *et al.*, and single birds 8/25 Big Stone (Toqua Twp.) DPJ, 10/19 Cook (Grand Marais) BRL, **late November** Cook (Colville) *fide* AXH. Though undocumented, the latter was described as associating with horses.

Green Heron — Reported from 12 north and 33 south counties. High count 9/7 Washington (27) WHL. Late north 9/16 Wadena PJB, 9/28 Lake JWL. No reports after 10/11 Hennepin SLC and Isanti REH, 10/23 Meeker DMF.

Black-crowned Night-Heron — Three reports from St. Louis, including (late north) 10/7 (Duluth) DFJ; also seen in Polk, Roseau. Observed in seven south counties, none after September except 10/28 Hennepin (3) SLC.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron — No fall reports since 1993.

PLEGADIS, sp? — Singles reported 9/28 Clay †MO, 10/17–18 Lyon †RJS *et al.*

BLACK VULTURE — One photographed 8/28 **St. Louis** (H.R.N.R. in Duluth) †FJN, †KRE *et al.* First state record (*The Loon* 74:63–65).

Turkey Vulture — Reported from 14 north and 32 south counties, and in all regions. Late north 11/2, 11/4, 11/8 St. Louis (H.R.N.R. in Duluth) FJN *et al.* Late south 10/16 Houston MHF.

Greater White-fronted Goose — Only north observations: 9/25–27 St. Louis FJN, 10/27–28 Otter Tail DPS, 11/30+ St. Louis DAG, JWL. Apparently healthy and not detected during earlier surveys was one seen **8/19** Lac Qui Parle (Big Stone N.W.R.) PCC, PHS. No subsequent south reports until 10/9 Rice TFB, 10/12 Lac Qui Parle BEO. Late south 11/18 Brown (20) JSS, 11/21 Lac Qui Parle (9) PCC.

Snow Goose — Reported from 14 north and 16 south counties. Overwintering bird at Barnesville through 8/25 Clay

TAT; possible overwintering bird 8/14 Nobles (Graham Lakes Twp.) CRM, NED. Early north 9/12 St. Louis (8) FJN, 9/16 Wadena PJB. Early south 9/19 Dakota ADS, 9/24 Meeker DMF. Late north 11/28 Morrison MRN, 11/29 St. Louis JRN, also see winter report.

Ross's Goose — All observations: 10/17 Olmsted (Rochester) JWH, CMJ, 10/24 Rice TFB, 11/3–26 St. Louis (Duluth) CRG *et al.*, †PHS, 11/21 Big Stone (eight adults and five first-fall birds in Toqua Twp.) †PCC, 11/23–24 **Wabasha** TAT, RBJ.

Canada Goose — Reported throughout the state and all season long.

Mute Swan — One found 10/14 Wright (Cokato Twp.) DFJ was relocated 10/17 Meeker (Swan L.) PHS. Also seen 11/4 Rice (Mud L., Shieldsville) TFB. Obvious escapees 9/1 Washington (Tanners L., Oakdale) DFN, 9/22 Blue Earth (pair at county road 3/state highway 22) CBe.

Trumpeter Swan — Reported from 9 north and 14 south counties, including 30 adults with 10 young 11/22 Stearns PME. Peak count 10/14 Becker (44 on Black-bird L., Tamarac N.W.R.) *fide* BAB. Many reports from Meeker (5 locations) and Wright (6 locations). Reported for the first time (since status became Regular) in **Steele** (8/13, RBJ) and **Lyon** (11/21 near Cottonwood, PME).

Tundra Swan — Reported in all regions. Early north **8/27** Pennington JMJ, 9/3 Polk DRu. Early south 9/28 Ramsey JJS. High count 11/15 Houston (4000+ at Pool #8, includes birds in Wisconsin) FZL, but see winter report for peak concentration at this location, and also for late migrants north and south.

Wood Duck — Seen in 15 north and 42 south counties. Also see winter report.

Gadwall — Reported from 7 north and 29 south counties. Late north 11/19 St. Louis JRN. Please refer to winter report

for late south migrants.

American Wigeon — Reported from 7 north and 18 south counties. Small flock lingered until 11/21 St. Louis (11) JRN with one still present 11/30+ (Duluth) DAG, JWL. Peak count 10/12 Lac Qui Parle (234 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO.

American Black Duck — Possible overwintering bird 8/12 Polk DRu. All other north reports: Aitkin, Beltrami, Cook, Lake, St. Louis. Early south 8/16 Hennepin PEB. Unusual location 11/9–21 Lac Qui Parle (2) BEO, PCC. Also seen in Meeker, Stearns, and eight locations in East-central and Southeast.

Mallard — Reported throughout the state. High count 11/9 Lac Qui Parle (32,494 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO.

Blue-winged Teal — Reported from 14 north and 35 south counties. High count 8/17 Lac Qui Parle (268 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO. Late north 11/15 Douglas REH. Late south 11/9 Lyon RJS.

Northern Shoveler — Reported from 8 north and 32 south counties. Late north 11/21 St. Louis JRN. High count 11/21 Big Stone (923 at East Toqua L.) PCC. See winter report for late south migrants.

Northern Pintail — Reported from 4 north and 13 south counties. Late north 11/21 St. Louis JRN. See winter report for late south migrants.

Green-winged Teal — Reported from 9 north and 20 south counties. High count 10/12 Lac Qui Parle (4851 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO. Late north 11/19 St. Louis CRM, but see winter report.

Canvasback — Reported from 9 north and 17 south counties. Two reports from Cook (10/12, 11/4) where unusual. High count 11/12 Houston (10,000 on Minnesota side of Pool #8) PEJ, DFN. Please see winter report for late migrants north and south.

Redhead — Reported from 11 north and 20 south counties. No significant high counts. Please see winter report for late migrants north and south.

Ring-necked Duck — Reported from 15 north and 20 south counties. No significant high counts. See winter report for late migrants north and south.

Greater Scaup — Reported from five north and five south counties. Early north **9/15–18** (record early) St. Louis SWe, TPW, 10/12 Cook JWL. Early south 10/26 Meeker DMF. High count 11/25 Houston (180) PEJ. See winter report for lingering migrants north and south.

Lesser Scaup — Reported from 10 north and 18 south counties, and in all regions. No significant high counts. See winter summary for late migrants.

Harlequin Duck — Unusual report 11/5 Mille Lacs (Mille Lacs L.) †CRM *et al.* All other reports were along the North Shore of L. Superior: 10/26–27 St. Louis (3) WCM *et al.*, 11/17 Cook (3 at Artists Pt., Grand Marais) NAW, 11/24+ Cook (adult male at Paradise) DPJ *et al.*, 11/30+ St. Louis (Duluth) DAG, JWL.

Surf Scoter — Scarce on L. Superior for second consecutive fall. Early north **9/17** Lake (2) and St. Louis (2) PHS, 10/12–13 Cook (2–4) m.obs. All reports away from L. Superior: 10/22–23 Polk (East Grand Forks) EEf, 10/27 Meeker (L. Ripley) †RJS, 11/14 Mille Lacs (Mille Lacs L.) RLE, 11/17+ Winona (Prairie Is.) DBz *et al.*

White-winged Scoter — Scarce on L. Superior for second consecutive fall. Early north 9/19 St. Louis JJS, 10/19 Cook CAM. All reports away from L. Superior: 11/10 Dakota SWe, 11/12 Aitkin (2, Mille Lacs L.) PHS, 11/18–22 Wright (max. 2 at Swart Watts L.) DFJ *et al.*, 11/19+ Winona (Prairie Is.) DBz *et al.*, 11/29–30 Olmsted PWP, m.obs.

Black Scoter — Scarce on L. Superior

(max. 4 in any location) but more reports than usual from “inland” counties. Early north 10/8 St. Louis CRM *et al.* All north reports away from L. Superior: 10/22 Mille Lacs (1) CRM *et al.*, 11/4 Mille Lacs (4) PCC, PHS, 11/4–12 Aitkin (max. 4) m.obs., 11/11 Cass (2, L. Winnibigoshish) PHS. All south reports: **10/13** Dakota (Lakeville) ADS *et al.*, 10/27 Meeker (L. Ripley) DMF, 11/3 Wabasha (5, L. Pepin) RLE, 11/10 Dakota SWE, 11/17+ Winona (max. 6 at Prairie Is.) DBz *et al.*, 11/18 **Pope** (Villard L.) RPR.

Long-tailed Duck — Early north 10/13 St. Louis (6) AXH. High counts 11/4 Cook (100 at Croftville) CRM, 11/17 Cook (150 at Five Mile Rock) NAW. Only reports away from L. Superior: 11/11 Cass (L. Winnibigoshish) PHS, 11/29 **Olmsted** (East Landfill Reservoir) PWP *et al.*

Bufflehead — Reported from 13 north and 21 south counties. Early south **9/2–3** Dakota TAT, ADS, 9/25 Renville CRM. No significant high counts.

Common Goldeneye — Reported from 11 north and 16 south counties. Early south 10/29 Freeborn RBJ and Rice TFB. High count 11/25 Houston (4500 on the Minnesota side of Pool #8) PEJ.

BARROW’S GOLDENEYE — Adult male photographed 11/17 **Houston** (Pool #8 near Reno) †PEJ (*The Loon* 74:118–119).

Hooded Merganser — Reported from 13 north and 22 south counties. High counts 10/30 Hennepin (178) SLC, 11/30 Olmsted (150) PWP.

Common Merganser — Reported from 12 north and 13 south counties, though none in Northwest or Southwest. Early south 10/27 Meeker DMF. Unusual local concentration 11/30 Beltrami (1000+ on L. Bemidji) DPJ.

Red-breasted Merganser — Early north (away from L. Superior) 10/14 Wadena PJB. Early south 11/2–3 Hennepin TAT,

PEB; only other south reports from Dakota. Also see winter report.

Ruddy Duck — Reported from only four north counties; late north 11/12 Polk EEF. Observed in 27 south counties; please see winter report for late south migrants.

Osprey — Reported from 12 north and 26 south counties, including 5 in Southwest where none seen last fall. Departed well before recent medians north (10/29) and south (11/13). Late north 10/21 Cook BRL. Late south 10/24 Washington RBJ.

Bald Eagle — Reported from 21 north and 35 south counties. See Table 1 for high count.

Northern Harrier — Reported from 19 north and 34 south counties. November sightings in seven north counties, including 11/18 St. Louis (H.R.N.R. in Duluth) FJN. Also see winter report.

Sharp-shinned Hawk — Found in 17 north and 29 south counties. Early south 8/15 Brown MJF, 8/27 Big Stone CRM.

Cooper’s Hawk — Reported from 14 north and 26 south counties. Late north 11/3 St. Louis (H.R.N.R. in Duluth) FJN, 11/21 St. Louis (Hoyt Lakes) ALE.

Northern Goshawk — All north reports: Aitkin, Becker, Clay, Douglas, Kittson, Lake, St. Louis. Only south reports: 11/5, 11/10 Hennepin CMM, OLJ.

Red-shouldered Hawk — Reported north from Becker, Otter Tail, Todd, and St. Louis (total of 4 at H.R.N.R. in Duluth, where last seen 10/26). Observed in eight south counties, all within usual range.

Broad-winged Hawk — Reported from 14 north and 23 south counties, though only Otter Tail in West-central region and Cottonwood, Lyon in Southwest. Late north 10/14–16 St. Louis (Duluth) FJN. Late south 10/14 Steele NFT, 10/27 Carver RMD.

Table 1. Fall 2001 Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve composite totals

Species	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	Peak	Peak#
Black Vulture	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Turkey Vulture	31	519	864	5	-	1419	10/06	231
Osprey	70	310	7	-	-	387	9/19	42
Bald Eagle	24	415	1231	1354	283	3307	11/04	244
Northern Harrier	50	233	151	38	-	472	9/21	43
Sharp-shinned Hawk	587	7863	3817	46	1	12,314	9/09	1019
Cooper's Hawk	20	150	37	2	-	209	9/12	21
Northern Goshawk	4	29	605	487	45	1170	10/26	149
Red-shouldered Hawk	-	-	4	-	-	4	10/26	2
Broad-winged Hawk	213	14,490	33	-	-	14,736	9/12	4587
Swainson's Hawk	1	4	1	-	-	6	9/12	2
Red-tailed Hawk	56	493	6213	2243	59	9064	10/26	1842
Rough-legged Hawk	-	2	130	163	42	337	11/01	36
Golden Eagle	-	-	87	81	22	190	10/26	29
American Kestrel	197	1650	178	-	-	2025	9/21	223
Merlin	10	117	73	3	1	204	10/14	15
Gyr Falcon	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1
Peregrine Falcon	-	37	8	-	-	45	9/20	7

Swainson's Hawk — Only north reports: 9/29 Douglas REH, plus six at H.R.N.R. in Duluth including dark morph 9/10 (FJN). Multiple reports from six Southwest counties; also seen 8/14 Big Stone WOB, 8/30 Steele RBJ, 9/23 Mower RDK, RCK, and (late south) 10/13 Dakota ADS.

Red-tailed Hawk — Reported from 22 north and 43 south counties statewide.

Ferruginous Hawk — No reports.

Rough-legged Hawk — Reported from 14 north and 6 south counties. Early north 9/26, 9/27 St. Louis (H.R.N.R. in Duluth) FJN. Early south 10/16 Rice FVS, 10/20 Redwood RBJ.

Golden Eagle — All north reports: Aitkin, Cook, Lake, Otter Tail, St. Louis, Todd. Early north 10/1 St. Louis (H.R.N.R. in Duluth) FJN. Record high count 10/26 (**29**) and record high season (**190**) at H.R.N.R. (FJN *et al.*). All south reports: 10/29 Hennepin TAT, 11/20 Renville PME.

American Kestrel — Reported from 14 north and 38 south counties. See winter report for late north migrants and over-wintering birds.

Merlin — Reported from 14 north and 18 south counties. No reports from Southeast. Early south 8/18 Renville PHS, 8/26 Nobles AXH, PHS; numerous reports early September through mid-October. See Table 1 and winter report for late north migrants. "Richardson's" Merlin (*F. c. richardsonii*) seen 8/18 Renville †PHS, 10/14 St. Louis (adult male at H.R.N.R. in Duluth) FJN, 11/3 Dakota TAT.

Gyr Falcon — Immature gray morph seen 10/28 St. Louis (H.R.N.R. in Duluth) FJN *et al.*, photographed by BKW.

Peregrine Falcon — Reported from only four north and seven south counties. Early north (away from known breeding locations) 9/18–19 Becker *fide* BAB; all other north reports from Northeast. Early south (away from Twin Cities area) 8/7 Houston FZL, 9/2 Swift PHS. Late north

10/13 Lake RJS. Late south 11/23 Waseca JEZ, also see winter report.

Prairie Falcon — Only reports: **8/26** Rock (Mound Twp.) AXH, PHS, 9/15 Wilkin (Rothsay W.M.A.) MO.

Gray Partridge — No north reports. Seen in 11 south counties, all in South-west except Freeborn, Martin, Meeker, Waseca. Peak count 11/4 Lyon (13) RJS.

Ring-necked Pheasant — North reports from Douglas, Pine, Todd, Wadena, plus escapee 10/26 Lake (Two Harbors) JW. Seen in 36 south counties.

Ruffed Grouse — Reported from 15 north but only 4 south counties.

Spruce Grouse — Reported from Cook (Lima Mt. Road) PHS, Koochiching (peak 4, near Big Falls) DPS, and Lake of the Woods (three locations) GMM, JMF, MHK. None could be found at usual Lake County locations.

Sharp-tailed Grouse — Only reports of this declining species: Aitkin (peak 16) m.obs., Kittson (no data) *fide* BAB, Lake of the Woods (1) MHK.

Greater Prairie-Chicken — Reported from usual locations in Polk, Wilkin. No significant counts.

Wild Turkey — Reported from Becker, Pine (7 along St. Croix Trail), and Todd (7), plus 25 south counties. Reportedly breeding in the vicinity (*fide* CRM) was an adult with two young 8/15 **Pipestone** (Pipestone National Monument) CRM, NED. Peak count 9/21 Lyon (35) RJS.

Northern Bobwhite — No reports.

Yellow Rail — Third county record 9/24 **Jackson** (Toe W.M.A.) †BRB.

Virginia Rail — Reported from Otter Tail in north, plus four south counties. No representative dates (all in August).

Sora — Reported from 8 north and 18 south counties in all regions. Late north (recent median 9/30) 10/12 Cook JW, 10/22 St. Louis JRN. Late south 10/12 Dakota ADS, 10/14 Hennepin SLC.

Common Moorhen — All reports: through 9/28 Meeker (pair with 7 young, Minnesota L.) DMF *et al.*, 9/28 Nicollet (Swan L.) RWS.

American Coot — Reported from 14 north and 37 south counties. Late north 11/28 Becker BRK, 11/29 St. Louis JRN, but see winter report. High count 10/26 Lyon (7800) RJS.

Sandhill Crane — Observed in 10 north and 11 south counties. Many reports from Polk (Glacial Ridge project) through 11/4, including peak count 1800 on 10/10 (*fide* BAB). Injured bird 11/28+ Clay RHO. Late south 11/25 Houston PEJ.

Black-bellied Plover — Early north 8/25 Wilkin (1) TAT, 9/9–10 St. Louis (2) m.obs. Early south 8/5 Lac Qui Parle (1) FZL, 8/10 Big Stone (6) RJS. Late north 11/4 Aitkin PCC, PHS and St. Louis JRN, **11/17** St. Louis (Duluth) AXH. Late south 11/5 Steele (6) NFT, 11/16 Lac Qui Parle (1) BEO. High count 10/12 Lac Qui Parle (16 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO.

American Golden-Plover — Reported from all regions except North-central. Early north 8/25 Wilkin (138) TAT. See summer report for early south migrants. High count 10/9 Marshall (800 at Warren) BAB. Unusual local concentration 9/23 Dakota (142) SWe. Late north 10/23 Polk EEf. Late south 10/27 Dakota CRM and Watonwan (20) ADS, TAT.

Semipalmated Plover — See summer report for early migrants. First juvenile identified 8/12 Big Stone PCC. High counts 8/8 (136) BEO and 8/25 (128) PCC at Big Stone N.W.R., Lac Qui Parle County. Late north 10/22 St. Louis JRN, though reported from only three north counties. Late south 10/23 Jackson CRM

and Dakota ADS.

Piping Plover — Possibly one of three birds at same location 7/28 (see summer report) found 8/12–27 Big Stone (Toqua Twp.) †PCC, †PHS *et al.*

Killdeer — Reported from 13 north and 40 south counties in all regions. High count 8/8 Lac Qui Parle (338 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO. Late north 11/9 Wadena PJB, but see winter report.

American Avocet — No north reports. Numerous observations through 9/9 Big Stone (county road 61/state highway 28) including peak count 8/30 (11) KJB. All other reports: 8/22 Big Stone (4 at Clinton) DDM, BJM, Lac Qui Parle (max. 3 in August at Big Stone N.W.R.) m.obs., 10/1 Dakota (2 at L. Byllesby) ADS, 10/13 Winona (Lewiston) CBe, JJS.

Greater Yellowlegs — Reported from 13 north and 40 south counties. See summer report for first fall migrants. First juvenile 8/12 Lac Qui Parle PCC. High count 10/5 Lac Qui Parle (58) BEO. Late north 10/26 St. Louis JRN, 11/8 Polk EEF. Late south 11/7 Rice TFB, 11/17 Winona PWP.

Lesser Yellowlegs — Observed in 11 north and 35 south counties. See summer report for first fall migrants. High count 8/8 Lac Qui Parle (349 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO, but note 1128 at Agassiz N.W.R. in July. Departure dates within two days of recent medians north and south. Late north 10/23 Polk EEF. Late south 11/1 Brown JSS.

Solitary Sandpiper — Reported from all regions. Please see summer report for first fall migrants. High count 8/7 Rice (7) JGL. Late north (recent median 10/2) 9/22 St. Louis JJS. Late south 10/5 Lac Qui Parle BEO, 10/11 Dodge RBJ.

Willet — All north reports: 9/11 St. Louis (3 at Park Pt., Duluth) FJN, 9/22 St. Louis (40th Avenue West, Duluth) m.obs. Many reports of one or two 8/8–21 Lac Qui

Parle (Big Stone N.W.R.) and 8/12–27 Big Stone (Toqua Twp.) m.obs. First juvenile 8/25 Big Stone PCC. All other reports: 8/1 Dakota (7 at L. Byllesby) ADS, 8/10 Lyon (same bird as late July?) RJS.

Spotted Sandpiper — High count 8/8 Lac Qui Parle (33 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO. Late north 10/4 Lake JWL, 10/20 St. Louis JMJ, SAS, PHS. Late south 10/11 Hennepin SLC, 10/26 Dakota ADS, TAT.

Upland Sandpiper — No north reports. August reports from four counties in Southwest region, plus 8/21 Dakota TAT, 9/21 Lac Qui Parle (3) BEO.

Whimbrel — Only report: 8/23 St. Louis (Park Pt., Duluth) TPW.

Hudsonian Godwit — All north reports: 8/25 Wilkin (3) CRG and Otter Tail (3) †DTT, †SMT, 9/22 – 10/3 St. Louis (40th Ave. West in Duluth) m.obs. This species normally occurs in very small numbers during fall migration but in August, double digit counts were routine in Big Stone (maxima 27 on 8/16, Toqua Twp., and 17 on 8/25, Odessa) and Lac Qui Parle (maximum 15 at Big Stone N.W.R.) counties. Also seen 8/13 Lyon JJS, 9/28 Lac Qui Parle (2) BEO, 10/26–27 Dakota (1) ADS *et al.*

Marbled Godwit — No north reports. High count 8/8 Lac Qui Parle (48 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO, DB. Also reported from Lyon, Meeker, and (late south) 8/27 Big Stone PHS.

Ruddy Turnstone — Scarce along North Shore of L. Superior. Early north 8/25 Lake JWL. Late north 9/22 St. Louis CAM, PCC. All south reports: 8/4–5 Lac Qui Parle m.obs., 8/25 Big Stone CRG.

Red Knot — Juveniles reported 8/23 St. Louis (Park Pt., Duluth) MS, 8/27 St. Louis (Interstate Is.) PHS — same bird?

Sanderling — Scarce along North Shore of L. Superior, where high count 9/15 St.

Louis (20) TPW. Late north 9/23 Lake JWL. Reported from eight south counties, including (early south) 8/6 Meeker RJS. No reports later than 10/23 Jackson CRM, 10/27 Dakota SWe.

Semipalmated Sandpiper — Please see summer report for first fall migrants. Record high count 8/8 Lac Qui Parle (**1722** at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO, DB. Additional high counts at same location 8/12 (1160, PCC), 8/17 (1043, BEO), 8/23 (1368, BEO). First juvenile 8/12 Lac Qui Parle PCC. Mostly undated reports from six north counties; last seen 9/12 St. Louis. Observed in 21 south counties, late south 10/23 Watonwan CRM.

WESTERN SANDPIPER — Providing the first acceptable record of this Accidental species since May 1991 was one at L. Bylesby 10/26–27 **Dakota** †ADS, †TAT *et al.*

Least Sandpiper — Please see summer report for first fall migrants. Record high count 8/8 Lac Qui Parle (**2105** at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO, DB. First juvenile seen 8/12 Lac Qui Parle PCC. Mostly undated reports from seven north counties; last seen 9/7 St. Louis. Observed in 25 south counties; late south 10/23 Watonwan CRM.

White-rumped Sandpiper — Only north reports: 9/21 Mille Lacs WHL, 10/9 Polk BAB. All south reports: 8/10 Carver †RMD, 8/19–27 Big Stone (max. 2) PCC, †PHS *et al.*, 9/8 Rock CRM and Big Stone PCC, PHS, 9/20 Freeborn AEB, 10/2 Chisago JJS. **Note:** Undocumented reports of fall migrant White-rumped prior to September are no longer published.

Baird's Sandpiper — Refer to summer report for first fall migrants. Reported from only five north counties; late north 10/23 Polk (62) EEF. Seen in 17 south counties, including first juvenile 8/12 Lac Qui Parle PCC. Late south 10/23 Jackson and Watonwan CRM, **11/16** (record late) Lac Qui Parle BEO.

Pectoral Sandpiper — Please consult summer report for earliest fall migrants. Found in 7 north and 30 south counties. First juvenile 8/25 Big Stone PCC. Highest reported count 9/2 Big Stone (492) PHS. Late north 10/27 Lake JWL, 10/29 St. Louis JRN. Late south 11/7 Anoka RBJ, TAT, 11/16 Lac Qui Parle BEO.

Dunlin — Only north reports: 10/6 Lake JWL, 10/13, 10/29 St. Louis m.obs. Seen in only six south counties; latest 11/4 Lyon RJS. All counts single digits.

Stilt Sandpiper — See summer report for first fall migrants. Observed in 8 north and 15 south counties. First juvenile 8/12 Lac Qui Parle PCC. High counts 8/8 (**615**) and 8/23 (503) Lac Qui Parle (Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO. Late north 8/30 Lake JWL. Last observed 9/28 Watonwan RBJ, **10/23** Watonwan CRM.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper — One of the best fall migrations ever for this species, with multiple reports from Big Stone N.W.R., various sewage lagoons in western Minnesota, and sod farms in Dakota County. Statewide total 550+ individuals in 12 counties (293+ in 16 counties last fall), including 8/10 **Watonwan** JJS. Record high counts 8/6 Dakota (**164** at Empire sod farm) CRM, 8/8 Lac Qui Parle (**162** at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO, DB. Early north 8/9 Otter Tail (6) DTT, SMT. Early south 8/2 Dakota, but see summer report. Late north 9/20 St. Louis PHS. Last reported 9/28 Lac Qui Parle BEO.

Short-billed Dowitcher — See summer report for first fall migrants and high count. First juvenile 8/12 Big Stone PCC. Reported from four north counties; late north 9/9 St. Louis PHS. Seen in seven south counties; late south 9/8 Big Stone PCC, PHS.

Long-billed Dowitcher — Only north reports: 9/16 St. Louis m.obs., 10/23 Polk EEF. Early south 8/10 Big Stone RJS. High count 10/18 Big Stone (95, Akron Twp.) PHS. Late south 11/4 Wright DFJ, 11/5

Steele (30) NFT.

Common Snipe — Seen in 9 north and 27 south counties. High count 8/31 Lac Qui Parle (34) BEO. See winter report for overwintering birds north and south.

American Woodcock — Observed in only 10 counties. Late north 10/26 Pine DPS. Last reported 11/2 Steele NFT.

Wilson's Phalarope — Only two north reports: 8/13 Polk (12) PHS, 9/2 Wilkin (3) m.obs. Found in 10 south counties, primarily in August. Statewide total 255+ individuals. Late south 9/9 Pipestone CRM, 10/2 Rice (4) FVS. High counts 8/12 Big Stone (46 at Graceville) PCC, 8/22–25 Big Stone (87–92 at Clinton) m.obs.

Red-necked Phalarope — Only north reports: 8/13 Polk (2) PHS, 8/18 Beltrami (2) DPJ, 8/27 Pennington JMJ. Observed in 11 south counties. Many reports from the Browns Valley sewage lagoons. Early south 8/5 Big Stone CBe, CRG, 8/11 Wright (2) DFJ, DDM. High count 9/2 Big Stone (62 at the Browns Valley lagoons) PHS. Late south 9/9 Big Stone.

POMARINE JAEGER — Fifteenth state record 9/19 St. Louis (Park Pt. in Duluth) †KRE *et al.* (*The Loon* 74:57–58).

Parasitic Jaeger — More reports than usual from St. Louis County, especially at the Superior Entry where three Parasitics arrived 9/7 (SP). Sorting ages and morphs resulted in seasonal total of five to eight Parasitics (four adults) at Duluth, plus unidentified jaegers (see below). No Parasitics identified after 9/30.

LONG-TAILED JAEGER — One observed 9/5–7 **Washington** (Bayport) †TRa, NG, mobs. Eighth state record but the first since 1981!

jaeger, sp? — Exceptionally early jaeger 8/1 **Cass** (Cass L.) †SCH was submitted as a probable Parasitic, but the submitted description did not completely eliminate

Long-tailed. A distant jaeger at the Superior Entry 9/23 St. Louis †RPR showed characteristics of Pomarine, but the bird was prudently left unidentified. Another unidentified jaeger was late at Duluth 10/14 St. Louis JRN.

Franklin's Gull — Reported from 8 north and 30 south counties, none in Northeast and only Houston (8/1, JJS) in Southeast. High count 9/27 Freeborn (5000+) RBJ. Departed earlier than recent medians north (10/23) and south (11/7). Late north 10/18 Otter Tail DFN. Late south 11/1 Brown JSS.

Little Gull — Only report: 9/16 St. Louis (Hearding Is., Duluth) †CRG, JWH.

BLACK-HEADED GULL — Adult in basic plumage 10/6–24 Jackson (north shore of Spirit L.) †AXH *et al.*, †BRB. Fourth consecutive October at this location along the Iowa/Minnesota border.

Bonaparte's Gull — Reported from 13 north and 15 south counties, and in all regions. Early south 8/18 Carver RMD. High count 11/11 Cass/Itasca (**3175** at L. Winnibigoshish) PHS. Late north 11/30 Beltrami DPJ, but see winter report. Eight November reports south, including 11/30 Benton (30) HHD.

Ring-billed Gull — Reported from 19 north and 36 south counties, and in all regions. High count 9/15 Dakota (7000) KJB.

Herring Gull — Reported from 10 north and 19 south counties, mostly in eastern and central regions. High count 11/24 St. Louis (2400) PHS.

Thayer's Gull — Only north reports from Cook beginning 10/19 (*fide* DRB). Early south **9/23** Hennepin (adult at L. Calhoun) †PEB, tying last fall's record early arrival. First juvenile 10/7 Dakota TAT. High count 11/10 Hennepin (5) PEB. No south reports away from Twin Cities area.

Iceland Gull — Based on size, bare parts, and plumage characteristics, four different juvenile/first-winter birds found along North Shore of Lake Superior. All reports: **10/12–14** Cook (Grand Marais) †KRE *et al.*, **10/27+** Cook (2 on 11/18, at Grand Marais) †PCC, †PHS, m.obs., 11/22 Lake (Two Harbors) †PHS.

Lesser Black-backed Gull — One or two adults 9/29 Dakota (Pine Bend) TAT, 10/16+ Hennepin (L. Calhoun) †PEB and elsewhere in Twin Cities in November.

Glaucous Gull — Only report: 11/25 St. Louis (immature, Duluth) KRE.

Great Black-backed Gull — No reports.

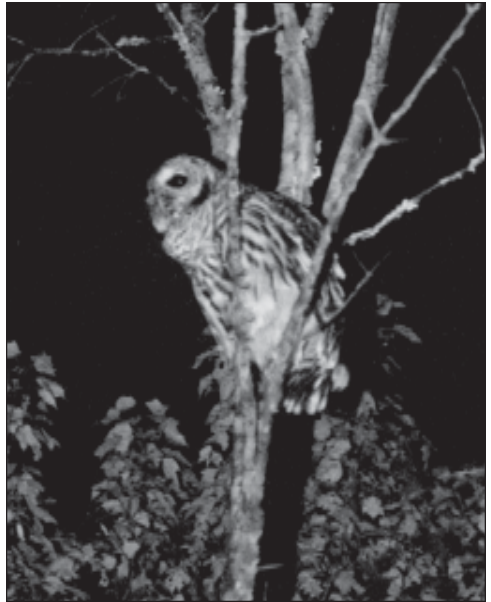
SABINE'S GULL — Many unsubstantiated reports 9/14–24 St. Louis (Superior Entry and/or Park Point, Duluth); documented 9/16 (2) †CRG (*The Loon* 74:119–120), 9/19 (2) †JJS. Juvenile also seen 9/21 **Stearns** (Paynesville lagoons) †HHD (*The Loon* 74:120).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE — Single juveniles reported 11/12 Cook (Five Mile Rock) †CRM *et al.* (*The Loon* 74:122), 11/30 St. Louis (Park Pt. in Duluth) DAG, †JWL.

Caspian Tern — Reported from six north and ten south counties. No reports from Northwest or Southeast. High counts 9/3 Benton (38 at Little Rock L.) HHD, 9/8 Dakota (55) ADS. Late north 10/8 St. Louis JRN. Late south 9/29 Hennepin SLC.

Common Tern — High count 9/8 Mille Lacs L. (304) KJB. Reported from five north counties. Late north **10/27** Beltrami (L. Bemidji) †DPJ (*The Loon* 74:118), **11/4** Mille Lacs (Mille Lacs L.) †PCC, †PHS. Only south report: 8/31 Jackson MJC.

ARCTIC TERN — An adult photographed **9/19–21** St. Louis (Superior Entry) †SP, †RJ, †JJS (*The Loon* 74:120–121) was with a juvenile, probably also an Arctic Tern.



Barred Owl, 8 September 2001, Aitkin County. Photo by Thomas Larkey.

Before September 2000, this species was unknown as a fall migrant in Minnesota.

Forster's Tern — Observed in only four north counties; two reports from Knife River 9/19 and (late north) 10/1 Lake JWL. Reported from 15 counties in the south, but none later than 9/19 Hennepin RBJ.

Black Tern — Reported from only three north counties; last seen 9/16 Wadena PJB. Seen in 17 south counties, including (late south) 9/26 Brown JSS.

Rock Dove — Reported statewide.

BAND-TAILED PIGEON — Eighth state record 10/18–20 **Hennepin** (at feeder in Golden Valley) m.obs.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE — A pair in Houston (Caledonia) fledged their third brood in September (*The Loon* 74:7–13). Breeding probably occurred at Russell, where an adult and juvenile were photographed 8/11 Lyon †PHS. Three

birds reportedly present in Jasper since May documented 9/8–9 Pipestone/Rock †PHS, †KRE *et al.*

Mourning Dove — Reported from 61 counties. Record high count 8/23 Norman (314 along state highway 113) BAB.

Black-billed Cuckoo — Reported from five north and nine south counties. Late north 8/26 St. Louis JWL. Late south 9/4 Dakota ADS.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo — Observed 8/13 Otter Tail DTT, SMT, only north report. Reported from eight south counties, all in August except 9/9 Yellow Medicine RJS.

Eastern Screech-Owl — One observed 8/30 Clay (Gooseberry Park, Moorhead) RHO, was the only north report. Gray-morph found 9/9 Hennepin (Cedar L.) SLC. All others: Brown, Carver, Dakota, Dodge, Freeborn, Jackson, Murray, and Rock.

Great Horned Owl — Reported from 11 north and 24 south counties statewide.

Snowy Owl — Recapitulating last year's influx, about one-fourth of the 64 Snowys reported in Minnesota this season were injured, starving, or found dead. Early north 10/17 Roseau SWd, 10/23 Lake of the Woods *vide* AXH. Early south 10/29 Olmsted CBe and Washington *vide* SKS.

Northern Hawk Owl — Reported from five locations in Northeast beginning 10/2 Cook (near Gunflint L.) *vide* KRE, 10/13 Cook (Lima Mountain Road) RHy.

Barred Owl — Observed in 9 north and 11 south counties. No reports from Southwest, and only Otter Tail in West-central, Becker in Northwest.

Great Gray Owl — All reports: 9/20 Lake of the Woods MHK, late September Roseau (Bednar F.R.) BJS, 11/28 Lake of the Woods (Roosevelt F.R.) GMM, 11/28 St. Louis (near Hoyt Lakes) *vide* NAJ.



Band-tailed Pigeon, 19 October 2001, Golden Valley, Hennepin County. Photo by David Cahlander.

Long-eared Owl — All north reports from St. Louis, including 16 banded at H.R.N.R. (DLE *et al.*). All south reports: 10/24 Washington RBJ, 11/4 Meeker (2) DMF, 11/23 Isanti AXH and Rice TFB.

Short-eared Owl — Late north 11/2 St. Louis CRM; also observed in five counties in Northwest region and 9/16 Morrison DRB. Only south reports: 10/26 Murray DRB, 11/2 Lac Qui Parle BEO. Statewide total about 14 individuals.

Boreal Owl — No reports.

Northern Saw-whet Owl — Seasonal total of 641 banded at H.R.N.R. in Duluth, down significantly from the previous two autumns, and fewer immatures than usual (DLE *et al.*). Also reported in October from Lake, Pine. No south reports.

Common Nighthawk — Peak migration in late August as usual, but counts down along North Shore of L. Superior. High

count 8/22 Lake/St. Louis (3000 between Two Harbors and Duluth) KRE. Reported from 13 north and 32 south counties. Late north 9/16 Pennington MJJ and Wadena PJB. Six October reports, including (late south) 10/11–12 Rice TFB.

Whip-poor-will — Only north report: one calling 9/4 St. Louis KJB. All south reports: 8/17 Brown JSS, 9/8 **Rock** (Blue Mounds S.P.) KRE *et al.*

Chimney Swift — Found in all regions. Only north report after mid-September: **10/23** St. Louis FJN. Late south 10/10 Hennepin (4) SLC.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird — Seen in 16 north and 31 south counties. Late north 9/28 Becker *fide* BAB. Late south 9/29 Meeker DMF.

Belted Kingfisher — Observed in 16 north and 36 south counties. Late north 11/3 St. Louis JRN. Also see winter report.

Red-headed Woodpecker — Reported from 7 north and 36 south counties. Only report from Northeast: 9/30 St. Louis (adult at H.R.N.R. in Duluth) FJN. Late north 10/17 Clay RHO, 10/19 Cass MJJ, SAS. Also see winter report.

Red-bellied Woodpecker — Observed in 45 counties as far north as Pennington MJJ and 11/11 **Red Lake** DRu in Northwest, and Cass, Itasca, Wadena in North-central.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker — Reported from 16 north and 21 south counties, but none in Southwest and only Otter Tail in West-central. Five October reports north; last seen 10/13 St. Louis JWL. Late south 11/11 Meeker DMF, only November observation.

Downy Woodpecker — Statewide.

Hairy Woodpecker — Statewide.

Three-toed Woodpecker — All reports: 9/15 Lake (Spruce Road) SJR, 9/21 Lake



Adult Pileated Woodpecker feeding young, 16 August 2001, West Twin Lake, Crow Wing County. Photo by Jean Segerstrom.

(N. Wilder L.) SES.

Black-backed Woodpecker — Numbers up in Northeast m.obs. Peak migration 10/27 Cook (6 locations PME, PHS, plus 4 more locations CRG). Seen 9/4 – 11/23 at H.R.N.R. in Duluth (max. 4 on 9/25) FJN, and at least 3 other locations in St. Louis. Also reported from Beltrami (2), Lake of the Woods (4), and Lake.

Northern Flicker — Seen in 64 counties statewide. High count 9/18 Polk (47 at East Grand Forks) EEF. Late north 11/3 Hubbard HJF, JLF, also see winter report.

Pileated Woodpecker — Reported from 45 counties and in all regions, but only Yellow Medicine in Southwest.

Olive-sided Flycatcher — Reported from all regions. Early south 8/10 Isanti REH and Watonwan JJS, one week later than the recent median. North reports

through 8/21, then only 9/3 Beltrami DPJ and St. Louis TPW. Late south 9/19–20 Hennepin PEB, TAT, 9/22 Dakota ADS.

Eastern Wood-Pewee — Late north 9/19 Clay RHO, 9/22 Carlton LAW. Late south 9/25 Renville CRM, 9/26 Dakota TAT and Fillmore NBO.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher — Only north reports after August: 9/3 Kanabec CAM, 9/16 Itasca BRN. Early south 8/12 Fillmore NBO, 8/15 Hennepin SLC; after 9/3, only 9/15 Hennepin SLC and 9/18 Freeborn AEB.

Acadian Flycatcher — One documented 8/20 Rice †TFB. Another from Houston in late August was from a breeding area, but how identified was not noted. **Note:** During migration undocumented reports of silent *Empidonax* flycatchers are not published in this report. Please be sure to indicate singing or calling birds on your seasonal report submission.

Alder Flycatcher — Late north 9/1 Cass MRN, 9/10 St. Louis (H.R.N.R.) MRN. Late south 8/29 Dakota ADS.

Willow Flycatcher — Last “singing” birds 8/4 Meeker DMF, 8/5 Dakota TAT, 8/8 Hennepin SLC.

Least Flycatcher — Late north 9/1 St. Louis TPW, 9/3 Beltrami DPJ. Late south 9/21 Brown JSS, 9/27 Hennepin TAT.

Eastern Phoebe — Late north 10/7 Wadena PJB, 10/13 Wilkin CMN, but also see winter report! Several south reports in late October, then only 11/22 Waseca JPS.

Great Crested Flycatcher — Reported north through 8/21, then only 9/16 Otter Tail DTT, SMT and Wadena PJB. Late south 9/18 Brown JSS, 9/19 Hennepin SLC. Late dates three or four days earlier than recent medians.

Western Kingbird — Reported in north-western Minnesota through 8/25 Clay

(25) and Wilkin TAT. Continuing a recent trend of late fall occurrences along the North Shore and representing the second and third latest north dates were singles **10/9–11** Lake (Larsmont) JWL, **10/14** St. Louis (Park Pt., Duluth) AXH. Only south reports: 8/3 Lincoln FZL, 8/17 Yellow Medicine RJS, 8/30 – 9/1 Dakota ADS.

Eastern Kingbird — Widely reported from all regions. Late north 9/12 St. Louis SLC, 9/16 Wadena PJB. Late south 9/17 Rice FVS, 9/18 Hennepin SLC.

Loggerhead Shrike — One north report: 8/25 Wilkin (2) CRG, TAT. Also observed 8/5 Rice (2) JGL, 8/8 Carver (Chaska) RMD, 8/14 Dakota (Vermillion Twp.) *vide* AXH, 8/31 Jackson MJC.

Northern Shrike — Reported from 11 north and 6 south counties, and in all regions except Southeast and Southwest. Early north 10/12 Cass RBJ, 10/13 Wilkin CMN. All south reports in October were at least seven days later than the recent median arrival: 10/21 Meeker DMF, 10/22 Washington RBJ, 10/25 Dakota PEB.

WHITE-EYED VIREO — Serendipitous was the discovery of a first-year bird at Lutsen Sea Villas **10/25–28** (latest date in state) **Cook** †JJS, CAK, †PHS, m.obs (*The Loon* 74:121–122).

Bell's Vireo — Observed 8/5 Dakota TAT.

Yellow-throated Vireo — Reported from all regions. Late north 9/16 Wadena PJB, 9/19 Clay RHO. Many reports south in mid-September; last seen 9/22 Carver SWe, 9/27 Houston FZL.

Blue-headed Vireo — Observed in all regions. Early south 8/10 Steele MJF, 8/15 Hennepin SLC (recent median 8/20). Late north 10/7 St. Louis DJF, 10/13 Clay RHO. Late south 10/14 Fillmore NBO, 10/20 Hennepin ChM.

Warbling Vireo — Several sightings near recent median north date (9/9), including

9/12 Todd JSK, SDu. One in Cook (**10/21** BRL, **10/26** CRG, same bird?) exceeded latest north date by almost a month! Late south 9/26 Ramsey REH, **10/2** Houston FZL (ties third latest south).

Philadelphia Vireo — Found in Aitkin, Cook, Itasca, St. Louis, plus (late north) 9/9 Carlton LAW, 9/18 Kanabec CAM. Also seen in 20 south counties, beginning 8/10 Isanti REH, 8/19 Dakota SWe. Late south 9/29 Hennepin SLC, 10/2 Houston FZL. Most south reports were from the last week of August through the third week of September. KJB found six on 9/1 in Anoka.

Red-eyed Vireo — Reported from every region. Late north 9/22 Carlton LAW, 9/23 Pennington MJJ. Two south reports near recent median (10/4), but surpassed by 10/12 Hennepin SLC, **11/6** (ties record late date) McLeod RWS.

Gray Jay — Found in Aitkin, Beltrami, Carlton, Clearwater, Cook, Itaca, Lake, Lake of the Woods, and St. Louis, with most reports of this resident species from mid-October through November.

Blue Jay — Reported statewide.

Black-billed Magpie — Reported within range from Becker, Koochiching, Polk, and Red Lake. Unusual location 9/24 **Pine** (Audubon Center, Sandstone) †CEP.

American Crow — Found statewide.

Common Raven — Reported from 12 north counties throughout the period. Several south reports from East-central region: 8/10 Isanti REH, 9/26 Washington RBJ, 11/3 Chisago (near Stacy) TAT, 11/14 Chisago REH.

Horned Lark — Reported throughout the state except in South-central region, but only one observation in Southeast. No high counts noted.

Purple Martin — Reported from six

north counties until 8/10, then only 9/2 Wadena PJB, 9/6 Polk EEF. Many south reports through first week of September, then only 9/11 Lyon RJS, 9/20 Meeker DMF. High count 8/25 Wright (60) DJF.

Tree Swallow — North reports through 9/29 Douglas REH, 10/12 Aitkin PEJ. Late south 10/15 Watonwan RBJ, 10/20 Winona PWP, 10/24 Hennepin SLC. All five of these were later than the latest Fall 2000 migrants.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow — Only north report: 8/19 Wadena PBJ, well before recent median north departure date (9/17). Even scarcer than in Fall 2000 (four north reports last year). Seen in 15 south counties; late south 9/25 Brown JSS and Renville CRM, 9/29 Dakota TAT.

Bank Swallow — Found in every region except Northeast and Southeast. Reported from three north counties in August, then only 9/7 Clearwater DPJ. Reported from five south counties through 9/9, but then only 9/15 Wright DFJ, 9/23 Lyon RJS.

Cliff Swallow — Two north reports in early August, then only 9/3 St. Louis TPW, 9/16 Wadena PJB. Widely reported south through 9/21, then 10/8 Meeker DMF, 11 days after recent median.

Barn Swallow — Late north 9/29 Becker and Otter Tail DFN, 10/6 Douglas REH. Reported from six south counties during October; latest 10/21 Wright DFJ.

Black-capped Chickadee — Statewide.

Boreal Chickadee — Observed in Cook, Lake of the Woods, and St. Louis, including three in Duluth in late August (KRE).

Tufted Titmouse — Though not quite as surprising as last fall's visitor in St. Louis, two at feeder 11/1–25 Chisago *fide* AXH were still unexpected. Only other reports from Houston.

Red-breasted Nuthatch — More reports

than in recent years. Seen throughout the state, with many south reports beginning mid-August.

White-breasted Nuthatch — Statewide.

Brown Creeper — Reported throughout the state. Numerous south reports during early September.

Carolina Wren — All reports: 9/2–4 Mower RNS, m.obs., 9/3–4 Houston (2, Jefferson Twp.) CAK, JJS, 10/27–28 **Cook** KMH, RBJ, 11/25+ Washington TTh.

House Wren — Late north 9/26 Polk EEF, 10/14 Lake DBz, 10/17 Clay RHO, almost two weeks after recent median (10/4). Late south 10/7 Ramsey REH, 10/8 Hennepin TAT (recent median 10/18).

Winter Wren — All north reports were October in Northeast. Late north 10/14 Cook PHS, 10/18 St. Louis HHD. Early south (away from known breeding areas) 9/13 Rice TFB, 9/14 Dakota TAT. Eight south reports during October; last seen 10/29 Freeborn RBJ, 10/30 Hennepin SLC, but also see winter report.

Sedge Wren — Departures within three days of recent medians. Late north 10/12 Aitkin PEJ, 10/13 Wilkin CMN. Late south 9/30 Wright DFJ, 10/12 Dakota ADS.

Marsh Wren — Reported from four north counties, including three in North-west. Late north 9/17 Kittson BRB, 10/13 Clay RHO. South reports widespread, through 10/23 Hennepin SLC and Jackson CRM, 11/2 Lyon RJS.

Golden-crowned Kinglet — Late north 10/20 in three counties, 10/21 Cass MRN. Early south 9/15 Hennepin SLC, 9/19 Ramsey REH, near median arrival (9/17). Four November reports south, including 11/15 Hennepin TAT. See winter report for additional dates north and south.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet — Early south 8/28 Hennepin SLC, 9/4 Rice TFB. Late

north 10/28 Cook JJS, 11/4 St. Louis TPW. Last south reports 11/15 Steele RBJ, 11/23 Hennepin SLC.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher — Numerous north reports from North-central region and Otter Tail through early September, followed by the almost expected North Shore report: **11/2** Lake (Knife River) JWJ, SL. Peak number 9/1 Dakota (16, Scharr's Bluff) TAT. No south reports after 9/22 Carver SWe and Olmsted PWP, 9/24 Dakota CRM.

Eastern Bluebird — High count 10/17 Polk (65) EEF. Late north 10/28 Wadena PJB. See winter report for south dates.

Mountain Bluebird — One observation: 10/16 Lake (male at Castle Danger) PHS.

Townsend's Solitaire — Record high number (20) during one season! All north reports from Northeast region, including five in Cook: 10/7–13 Lutsen DPB, AXH, 10/14 Grand Marais (near Gunflint Trail) PHS, 10/28 Croftville and Lutsen (at new location) m.obs., 11/22+ Grand Marais campground HAS *et al.* Two observations in Lake: 10/26–27 Two Harbors m.obs., 10/27 – 11/3 Knife River JWJ *et al.*. In St. Louis, eight migrated past H.R.N.R. in Duluth between 10/6 and 11/6 (FJN *et al.*) and one was north of Meadowlands 10/14 (EO). All south reports: **9/23** Lyon (Camden S.P.) †RJS, 10/13 **Kandiyohi** †RSF, 10/18 **Rock** (Blue Mounds S.P.) NED, †PHS (*The Loon* 74:121), 11/21 Anoka (Ramsey) MJu.

Veery — Total of nine reports statewide. Lingered north until 9/11 Carlton LAW, 10/1 St. Louis JRN. Late south 9/9 Dakota TAT, 9/16 Hennepin SLC.

Gray-checked Thrush — More reports (17) than last fall (5). Early north 9/12 St. Louis KJB, 9/13 Carlton LAW. Early south 8/22 Hennepin SLC, 8/27 Hennepin ChM, 9/11 Lyon RJS. Late north 10/7 St. Louis NAJ, 10/8 Lake CRM, KEO. Last observed south 9/19 Hennepin TAT, 9/21 Nicollet

MJF. On 9/18 during a nocturnal census in Anoka KJB heard at least 12.

Swainson's Thrush — Early south 8/14 Hennepin SLC, 8/24 Dakota ADS. Late north 10/14 Cook CRG and Lake DBz. Late south 10/4 Hennepin ChM, 10/6 Wright DFJ. No fewer than 100 estimated during nocturnal census 9/18 Anoka KJB.

Hermit Thrush — Many north reports through mid-October, then only 10/27–28 Cook PHS, JJS. Early south 9/12 Houston MHF, 9/23 Anoka JLH. Late south 10/31 Hennepin TAT, 11/1 Ramsey AXH.

Wood Thrush — No north reports. Only four south reports, the latest being 9/19 Hennepin TAT, 9/27 Rice TFB.

American Robin — Seen throughout the period, north and south. Peak migration “1000s” in Fillmore 10/24 (NBO).

Varied Thrush — All reports: 10/17 Anoka *fide* AXH, 11/1 Hennepin (Cedar L.) ChM, 11/27+ Cass (max. 2) *fide* JBL, late November+ Hennepin (Brooklyn Park) AKF.

Gray Catbird — North reports from St. Louis, Beltrami, and Lake during early October, then 10/13 Carlton LAW, 10/26 Cook CRG. Late south 10/18 Hennepin RBJ, then only 11/8 Dakota TAT, 11/20 Ramsey AXH.

Northern Mockingbird — All reports: 10/26 Murray (Chanarambie Twp.) NED, 11/2–19 St. Louis (Duluth) m.obs., 11/9 Douglas (Garfield) SWi, 11/10 Dakota SWe.

Brown Thrasher — North reports until 10/6 Clay RHO, 10/7 Wadena PJB, 10/20 Morrison DPJ. Late south 10/16 Hennepin SLC, 11/2 Jackson MJC.

European Starling — Found statewide.

American Pipit — Early north 8/31 Lake KRE, JWJ, 9/3 Polk DRu. Early south 9/8 Dakota ADS, then none until

late September. Late north 11/2 St. Louis JJS, 11/3 Lake CRM. Late south 11/2 Rice TFB, 11/4 Lyon RJS.

SPRAGUE'S PIPIT — One found 9/21 **Dakota** (Resurrection Cemetery) †TAT was relocated the next morning †ADS. One of the very few Minnesota records of this species away from western regions.

Bohemian Waxwing — Reported from seven north counties, beginning 10/13 Cook (5) PHS, 10/16 Beltrami DPJ. Only south report 10/28 Carver †RMD.

Cedar Waxwing — Reported statewide.

Blue-winged Warbler — Observed in 12 south counties. Last reported 9/5 Dakota ADS, 9/18 Fillmore NBO, 9/27 Brown JSS.

Golden-winged Warbler — Two north reports after 9/7 median departure date: 9/13 Crow Wing PSP, 9/16 Carlton LAW. Early south 8/4 Meeker DMF, 8/17 Rice TFB. Late south reports in four counties 9/10–11, 9/13 Goodhue ADS, 9/14 Hennepin ChM.

Tennessee Warbler — Early south 8/10 Hennepin ChM, 8/12 Fillmore NBO. High count 9/11 Anoka (45) KJB. Last reported north 9/23 Carlton LAW, 9/30 St. Louis ALE. No south observations after 10/12 Fillmore NBO, 10/23 Hennepin SLC.

Orange-crowned Warbler — Early north 9/8 Wadena PJB, 9/10 St. Louis CRM. Early south 9/2 Rice TFB, 9/5 Chisago REH. Late north 10/13 Clay CMN, RHO, 10/14 Cook AXH. Late south 10/31 Hennepin SLC. **Note:** This species is normally a late migrant through Minnesota. Please provide details for reports before early September.

Nashville Warbler — Notable high counts: 9/13 Anoka (38) KJB, 9/13 Hennepin (27) ChM. Late north 10/7 Carlton LAW, 10/8 Pine CRM. Many south reports through mid-October. Late south 10/20

Hennepin ChM, SLC, **11/5** (second latest date in state) Dakota TAT.

Northern Parula — Early south 8/18 Hennepin ChM and Meeker DMF. High count 9/6 Anoka (7) KJB. Late north 9/23 Carlton LAW, **10/27** (second latest north) Cook CRG. Late south 9/19 Hennepin SLC, 10/19 McLeod RWS, three weeks later than recent median.

Yellow Warbler — Late north 9/13–15 St. Louis m.obs., 10/8 St. Louis JRN. Late south 9/14 Dakota ADS, 9/21 Big Stone BEO.

Chestnut-sided Warbler — Early south 8/10 Steele MJF, 8/11 Hennepin SLC. High count 9/10 Hennepin (14) ChM. Late north 9/19 St. Louis ALE, 9/22 Carlton LAW and Lake JJS. Late south 9/22 in three counties, 9/25 Hennepin SLC.

Magnolia Warbler — Early south 8/10 Isanti REH, 8/13 Fillmore NBO. Late north 9/20 St. Louis ALE, 9/22 Carlton LAW. Late south 10/3 Hennepin SLC, 10/6 Wright DFJ.

Cape May Warbler — Reported from only four north counties, none after 9/18 St. Louis CRM (recent median departure date 10/27). Early south 8/25 Meeker DMF, 9/2 Anoka KJB and Dakota SWe. First county record 9/7 **Lincoln** (Hole-in-the-Mountain Park) RJS. Late south 9/25 Renville CRM, 9/26 Hennepin SLC.

Black-throated Blue Warbler — No north reports except 9/6, 9/13, **10/19** in the same Becker backyard *fide* BAB, but exceptional migration south. Early south 8/30 Meeker (Litchfield N.C.) DMF, 9/1 Anoka (Locke Park) KJB, 9/1 Hennepin (T.S. Roberts Sanctuary) m.obs. Reports of multiple birds: 9/3 Hennepin (3 at T.S. Roberts) SLC, 9/13 Anoka (5 at Martin-Island-Linwood Regional Park) KJB. Late south 10/4 Hennepin (T.S. Roberts) ChM. Also reported from Dakota, Rice, and first county occurrences 9/6 **Scott** DBA, 9/17 **Chisago** CRM.

Yellow-rumped Warbler — Early south (away from known breeding areas) 8/25 Chisago KIM, BAP. Peak south migration 10/4–11, high count 10/6 Wright (44) DFJ. Reported from all three North Shore counties 10/25, then 11/2 St. Louis JRN. Late south 10/29 Freeborn RBJ, 10/31 Fillmore NBO and Hennepin SLC. Also see winter report.

Black-throated Green Warbler — Early south 8/15 Hennepin SLC, 8/19 Fillmore NBO. High count 9/2 Cook (20) DFJ. Late north 9/18 Aitkin CLB and St. Louis CRM, TPW, 9/20 St. Louis ALE. Late south 9/29 Fillmore RBJ, 10/3 Hennepin SLC.

Blackburnian Warbler — First observed south 8/14 Hennepin SLC and Nobles CRM, 8/16 Rice TFB. Late north 9/18 St. Louis TPW, 9/23 Pennington JMJ. Late south 9/18 Hennepin TAT, 9/25 Lyon RJS.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER — One seen 8/24 Dakota (Ft. Snelling S.P.) †RBJ, another observed **9/8–9** Dakota (Acacia Cemetery) †TAT. Both possibly related to Summer 2002 nesting at Acacia Cemetery (*The Loon* 73:236–240).

Pine Warbler — No south reports after 9/20 Freeborn AEB, 9/22 Dakota TAT. Three north reports were even later: 9/24 Red Lake DRu, 10/1 St. Louis JRN, **11/23** Cook (Grand Portage) RPR.

Palm Warbler — Early south 8/30 Steele RBJ, 8/31 Hennepin ChM. Highest count 9/16 St. Louis (25) TPW. Late north 10/26 Cook CRG and Lake WCM, 11/6 Todd JSK, SDu. Late south 10/12 Hennepin SLC, 10/18 Hennepin KEO.

Bay-breasted Warbler — First observed south 8/16 Rice TFB, 8/18 Hennepin ChM. High count 9/11 Anoka (10) KJB. Late north 9/23 Pennington JMJ, 9/30 St. Louis JRN. Late south 10/5 Hennepin ChM, 10/6 Meeker DMF.

Blackpoll Warbler — Arrived north 8/30 Lake JWJ, 8/31 St. Louis KJB. Early south

8/22 Blue Earth MJF, 8/30 Hennepin ChM. Late north 9/22 Lake JJS, 10/7 Carlton LAW. No south reports after 9/27 Houston FZL, 9/29 Hennepin SLC.

Cerulean Warbler — No reports.

Black-and-white Warbler — High count 9/10 Hennepin (11) ChM. Late north 9/19 Clay RHO and St. Louis ALE, 9/20 Mille Lacs RBJ. Late south 9/24 Fillmore NBO, 9/25 Hennepin SLC. Departed ten days prior to recent medians north and south.

American Redstart — Late south 9/27 Freeborn RBJ, 9/29 Hennepin SLC, 10/1 Hennepin ChM. Two north reports were even later: 10/7 Carlton LAW, 10/8 Lake CRM, KEO.

Prothonotary Warbler — No reports.

Ovenbird — High count 9/2 Anoka (15) KJB. Frequent north reports through 9/8, then only 9/20 St. Louis TPW, 10/3 Todd JSK, SDu, 10/7 Carlton LAW. Late south 10/3 Hennepin SLC, 10/5 Hennepin ChM.

Northern Waterthrush — Early south (away from known breeding areas) 8/13 Murray CRM. High count 9/11 Anoka (8) KJB. All September reports north: 9/8 Cass MRN, 9/19 St. Louis NAJ. Late south 10/1 Hennepin ChM, TAT.

Louisiana Waterthrush — Only report: 8/20 Fillmore (Hvoslef W.M.A.) NBO.

Connecticut Warbler — Late north 9/12 St. Louis SLC, KJB, 9/16 Carlton LAW. All south reports: 8/28 Freeborn RBJ, 9/9 Hennepin SLC, 9/18 Hennepin TAT, 9/29 Hennepin OLJ.

Mourning Warbler — Late north 9/16 Carlton LAW, Itasca BRN and St. Louis ALE. Late south 9/18 Ramsey REH, 9/20 Brown JSS, 9/25 Renville CRM, one week prior to recent median.

Common Yellowthroat — High count 9/16 Anoka (58) KJB. Late north 9/22

Carlton LAW and Lake JJS, 10/13 St. Louis TAT. Late south 10/11 Isanti REH, 11/9 Hennepin TAT.

Hooded Warbler — Many observations in Scott (Murphy-Hanrehan Park) BAF. At least five individuals, including nest with three nestlings 8/7 (late for active nest) and final sighting **9/30**. Exceptionally late and out of range bird at St. Cloud State University **11/21 Stearns** †DFK *et al.*

Wilson's Warbler — Early north (away from potential breeding areas in North-east) 8/12 Polk EEF, 8/25 Clay RHO. First observed south 8/13 Ramsey TAT, 8/14 Hennepin SLC. Late north 9/19 St. Louis ALE, 10/6 Becker BRK, **11/3** (record late north) Lake KS, CRG. Late south 9/21 Brown JSS, 9/23 Hennepin SLC.

Canada Warbler — Early south 8/13 Hennepin ChM and Murray CRM. All north reports: 8/26 Aitkin CLB, 9/2 Wadena PJB, 9/3 St. Louis TPW, 9/15 St. Louis WCM. Late south 9/11 Brown JSS, 9/25 Hennepin TAT.

Summer Tanager — No reports.

Scarlet Tanager — Late north 9/23 Pennington JMJ, 9/25 Wilkin BAB. Late south 9/30 Washington BRL and Wright DFJ, 10/2 Houston MHF.

Spotted Towhee — Only report: one at feeder in Olmsted (Rochester) during late October (RLE).

Eastern Towhee — Only north report: 9/16 Wadena PJB. Late south 10/12 Houston MHF, 10/29 Dakota KEO.

American Tree Sparrow — Early north 9/25 Polk DRu, 10/8 St. Louis JRN. Early south 10/6 Meeker DMF, 10/16 Hennepin (4) SLC, TAT, Rice TFB. High counts 11/4 Wright (69) DFJ, 11/18 Wright (63) DFJ.

Chipping Sparrow — Late north 10/27 Cook CRG, 11/3 Lake (Two Harbors) CRG. Many reports south through 10/25,



Black-throated Sparrow, 7 October 2001, Knife River, Lake County. Photo by Peder Svingen.

then only 11/28 Nicollet MJF.

AEB, 10/10 Hennepin SLC.

Clay-colored Sparrow — Highest count 9/18 Polk (21 in East Grand Forks area) EEF. Late north 10/2 Red Lake DRu, 10/8 Lake CRM. Late south 10/7 Freeborn

Field Sparrow — All north reports after mid-August: 9/22 Otter Tail DTT, SMT, 10/6 **St. Louis** (Park Pt. in Duluth) *fide* KRE, 10/10 **Lake** (Knife River) JWJ, 10/20

Cook (Grand Marais) BRL, **11/3 Cook** (Lutsen) KS. Late south 10/20 Redwood RBJ, 11/4 Lyon RJS.

Vesper Sparrow — High count 9/15 Wright (8) DFJ. Late north 10/20 Lake (Beaver Bay) †PHS *et al.*, JMJ, 11/3 Cook (Lutsen) CRG. Late south 10/15 in three counties, 11/19 Waseca JEZ.

Lark Sparrow — All reports: 8/18 Meeker DMF, 8/23 Scott (2) RBJ, 8/25 Wilkin TAT.

BLACK-THROATED SPARROW — First-fall bird found by DPB while leading a WINGS tour 10/7 **Lake** (Knife River) was relocated the same afternoon †JWL, †PHS *et al.* but not thereafter. Fifth state record, all from fall/early winter.

Savannah Sparrow — High count 9/11 Polk (43) EEF. Late north 10/26 in three North Shore counties, 10/27 Cook PHS. Late south 10/31 Hennepin SLC, 11/4 Lyon RJS.

Grasshopper Sparrow — All sightings: 8/2 Todd REH, 8/4 Dakota ADS, 8/5 Wabasha (2) DFJ, 8/10 Big Stone RJS, 8/10 Isanti REH, 8/11 Murray JJS, 9/22 Le Sueur SWe. Latter date 34 days later than recent median south departure (8/19).

Henslow's Sparrow — Only report: 8/5 Winona (Great River Bluffs S.P.) DFJ.

Le Conte's Sparrow — Late north 10/11 Lake (Two Harbors) JWJ, 10/13 Wilkin CMN. All south reports: 9/12 Steele RBJ, 9/22 Renville (Boone Lake W.M.A.) RWS, DFJ, 9/23 Meeker DMF, 9/26 Hennepin (Crow-Hassan Regional Park) SLC, 10/6 Hennepin TAT, 10/11 Hennepin SLC, and 10/13 Scott RMD.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow — Only north reports: 9/16 St. Louis SWe, 9/19 Roseau (2) BRB. All south observations: 9/19 Anoka (Carlos Avery W.M.A.) KJB, 9/19–23 Olmsted (East Landfill Reservoir) CBe, 10/3–9 Rice (at least 2 at River Bend

N.C.) TFB, 10/5 Dakota (2 at Lakeville) ADS, TAT.

Fox Sparrow — Early north 9/23 Cook JJS, 10/1 St. Louis PHS. Early south 9/21 Lyon RJS, 9/25 Hennepin SLC. Late north 11/3 St. Louis ALE, 11/6 St. Louis JRN. See winter report for late south dates.

Song Sparrow — Late north 11/3 Lake CRM, 11/4 Wadena PJB. Reported south through end of period.

Lincoln's Sparrow — High count 9/16 Anoka (27) KJB. Many north reports through 10/14 Carlton LAW, then 10/27 Cook CRG, PHS, 11 days later than recent median. Many south reports throughout September and until 10/23, then 10/28 Hennepin SLC, 10/30 Hennepin TAT.

Swamp Sparrow — Record high count 9/16 Anoka (**149** at Carlos Avery W.M.A.) KJB. Late north 10/20 Lake JMJ, 10/26–27 Cook RBJ, PHS. Reported south through end of period.

White-throated Sparrow — Many south reports beginning 9/3 Hennepin SLC, 9/4 Houston JJS and Washington RBJ. High counts 9/18 St. Louis (40) TPW, 9/30 Wright (34) DFJ. Also see winter report.

Harris's Sparrow — Found in 16 north and 22 south counties. Early north 9/14 St. Louis NAJ, 9/22 St. Louis JJS. Late north 11/1 Becker BRK, 11/3 Cook CRM. First seen south 9/22 Meeker DMF, 9/27 Hennepin OLJ. Abundant in southwest 10/20 (RBJ, CRM). See winter report for late south dates.

White-crowned Sparrow — Early north 9/12 St. Louis KJB, 9/14 St. Louis (same as 9/12?) NAJ, 9/17 Lake PHS. Early south 9/10 Hennepin OLJ, 9/19 Hennepin TAT, 9/22 Rice TFB. Many north reports though 10/28, then only 11/3 Lake JJS. Late south 11/4 Wright (2) DFJ, 11/26 Brown JSS.

Dark-eyed Junco — Reported through-

out the period north, with peak numbers in mid-October. Early south 8/25 Dakota MAO, 9/13 Anoka JJS, 9/16 Meeker DMF. "Oregon" race 10/27 Meeker DMF, 11/6 Dakota TAT.

Lapland Longspur — Reported from 9 north and 10 south counties. High count 11/2 Yellow Medicine (1000+) DFN. Early north 9/4 (ties the earliest date) Kanabec CAM, 9/11 Cass PHS. Early south 9/23 Meeker DMF, 9/25 Renville CRM.

Smith's Longspur — All reports: 10/19 (6 near White Rock Dam) Traverse MO, 10/20–23 Cottonwood (vicinity of Jeffers Petroglyphs) BSe, JJS, †CRM, 10/21 St. Louis (40th Avenue West, Duluth) †PHS. Another report from Cottonwood (Red Rock Preserve) BRB was undated.

Snow Bunting — Reported from 10 north and 11 south counties. Early north 10/16 St. Louis JRN, 10/19 Itasca MJJ. Early south 10/17 Hennepin OLJ, 10/26 Dakota ADS, TAT. Highest counts 11/11 Dakota (250–300) ADS, 11/14 Polk (200) EEF.

Northern Cardinal — Reported from all regions except the Northwest and West-central.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak — High count 9/3 Carver (16) RMD. Late north 9/17 Todd JSK, SDu, 9/19 Clay RHO and Kanabec BLA. Late south 9/28 Olmsted PWP, 10/3 Hennepin SLC.

Blue Grosbeak — Observed in Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, and (late south) 8/26 Rock (2) PHS.

Indigo Bunting — Only north reports after mid-August: 8/24 Cass MRN, 9/2 Wadena PJB, 10/13 Clay RHO. Late south 9/29 Dakota TAT and Ramsey REH, 10/9 Hennepin SLC.

Dickcissel — All reports: Brown, Cottonwood, Dakota, Freeborn, Hennepin, Meeker, Murray, Pipestone, Rock, and

Steele. Last observed 8/22 Hennepin SLC, 9/12 Steele RBJ (compare with recent median south departure 8/19).

Bobolink — High count 9/11 Anoka (18) KJB. Late north 9/11 Polk EEF, 9/16 Wadena PJB. Late south 9/22 Dakota ADS, TAT, 9/22 Hennepin SLC.

Red-winged Blackbird — Reported throughout the season, though few north observations after early November.

Eastern Meadowlark — Post-September observations: 10/2 Dakota ADS, 10/11 Isanti REH and Todd JSK, SDu, 10/14 Anoka JLH, 10/26 Cook RBJ.

Western Meadowlark — Lingered north 10/19 Clay RHO, 11/2 Polk EEF. Late south 11/1 Brown JSS, 11/2 Big Stone BEO.

Yellow-headed Blackbird — Late north 8/12 Polk DRu, 9/2 Wadena PJB. Late south 9/22 Nicollet ChH, LWF, 10/4 Lyon RJS, 10/6 Meeker DMF.

Rusty Blackbird — Arrived north along North Shore of Lake Superior, beginning 9/15 St. Louis CAM. Observations away from Northeast began 9/30 Red Lake MJJ. High count 10/20 Douglas (200–250) REH. Early south 9/19 Lyon RJS, 9/25 Rice TFB. See winter report for lingering birds north and south.

Brewer's Blackbird — High counts 11/2 McLeod (150) RWS, 11/5 Scott (100) RBJ. Late north 10/25 Becker BRK, 11/17 Otter Tail DPS. Late south 11/22 Waseca (30) JPS, 11/24 Meeker DMF.

Common Grackle — Found north and south throughout the period. High count 10/4 Lyon (4500) RJS.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE — All reports from Jackson: 10/17 (20 males and 30 immature/females) †PHS; last seen 10/27 (32 at county roads 86 and 4) ADS, TAT.

Brown-headed Cowbird — Late north

9/2 Wadena PJB, 10/13 Wilkin CMN. Late south 11/9 Dakota ADS, 11/24 Meeker DMF, also see winter report.

Orchard Oriole — Only sighting north: 8/25 Wilkin (3) TAT. Late south 8/15 Nobles and Pipestone CRM, 8/21 Big Stone RJS, 8/27 Big Stone CRM.

Baltimore Oriole — High count 8/12 Polk (8) EEF. Lingered north through end of August, then 9/10 Wadena PJB, 9/28 Polk DRu. Late south 9/12 Washington DPS, 9/18 Houston FZL.

Pine Grosbeak — Reported from Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Cook, Itasca, Lake, Lake of the Woods, and St. Louis. High count 11/30 Aitkin (15) DFJ. Early north 10/22 Cass PHS, 10/26 in all three North Shore counties, 10/27 Itasca BRN. Only south report: 11/10 Anoka JLH.

Purple Finch — Reported from 15 north and 21 south counties. First south reports 8/19 Hennepin SLC, 8/26 Anoka KJB.

House Finch — Observed statewide.

Red Crossbill — Only five north reports, all in October: Cass, Cook, Itasca, Lake, and St. Louis. Reported south 10/24 Wright HHD, 11/3 Hennepin (4) SLC.

White-winged Crossbill — Reported

north from Aitkin, Becker, Cass, Cook, Lake, St. Louis, beginning mid-October. All south reports 10/30 Brown (4) JSS, 11/16 Dakota TAT, 11/21 Hennepin TAT.

Common Redpoll — Early north 10/20 St. Louis PEB, but abundant in Cook by 10/26 (RBJ). Only south reports: Anoka, Hennepin, Meeker, and Rice, beginning 10/29. High counts 11/8 Polk (140) EEF, 11/30 Aitkin (100) DFJ.

Hoary Redpoll — Reported 10/27–28 Cook (at least 3 locations) m.obs. Also discovered 11/8 Itasca BRN.

Pine Siskin — Found in all regions of the state. North reports throughout the period; south observations began 9/12 Washington DPS, 10/9 Lac Qui Parle FAE, 10/11 Rice TFB.

American Goldfinch — Seen statewide. High count 10/6 Wright (42) DFJ.

Evening Grosbeak — North reports from Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Cook, Hubbard, Itasca, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Mille Lacs, Pennington, and St. Louis. High count 11/15 St. Louis (70 in Duluth) NAJ. Two south reports: 8/12 Chisago KIM, BAP, 11/19 Anoka MJu.

House Sparrow — Ubiquitous, except in extreme North-central region.

Contributors

AAB	Al A. Bolduc	BJM	Barbara J. Martin	CBe	Chris Benson
ADS	Andrew D. Smith	BJS	Beth & Jeff Siverhus	CBR	Connie Brunnell
AEB	Al E. Batt	BKW	Brian K. Wheeler	CEP	Clarissa Ellis-Prudhomme
AKF	Al & Kit Ferber	BKY	Ben K. Yokel	ChH	Chad Heins
ALE	Audrey L. Evers	BLA	Betty L. Ammerman	ChM	Chet A. Meyers
AWJ	Andrew W. Jones	BRB	Brad R. Bolduan	CLB	Cindy L. Butler
AXH	Anthony X. Hertzog	BRK	Byron R. Kinkade	CLO	Connie L. Osbeck
BAB	Betsy A. Beneke	BRL	Bill R. Litkey	CMG	Clare & Maurita Geerts
BAF	Bruce A. Fall	BRN	Bill R. Nelson	CMJ	Charles M. Juhnke
BAP	Bruce A. Pannkuk	BRT	Bill R. Tefft	CMN	Connie M. Norheim
BBB	Bruce B. Baer	BSe	Blaine Seeliger	CR	Cynthia Reimer
BCM	Brandi C. Mansfield	CAK	Chuck A. Krulas	CRG	Colin R. Gjervold
BEO	Bridget E. Olson	CAM	Craig A. Menze		

CRM	Craig R. Mandel	JRN	Jeff R. Newman	PME	Paul M. Egeland
DAC	Dave A. Cahlander	JSK	John & Susan Kroll	PSP	Pamela S. Perry
DAG	David A. Grosshuesch	JSS	Jack Sprenger	PWP	Paul W. Pedersen
DB	Doug Buri	JWH	John W. Hockema	RAE	Ron A. Erpelding
DBa	Dave Baden	JWL	James W. Lind	RBJ	Robert B. Janssen
DBz	Dedrick Benz	KAK	Karla A. Kinstler	RCK	Rose C. Knees Kern
DCa	Dave Carman	KAR	Kathryn A. Rivers	RCS	Rolf C. Smeby
DCT	Dianne C. Tuff	KCH	Ken C. Hood	RDK	Ron D. Knees Kern
DCZ	Dave C. Zumeta	KEO	Ken E. Oulman	REH	Robert E. Holtz
DDM	Dennis D. Martin	KIM	Kim I. Metz	RHO	Robert H. O'Connor
DFJ	Doug F. Jenness	KJB	Karl J. Bardon	RHy	Rick Hoyme
DFK	Dale F. Kane	KKW	Kristine & Kyle Wicklund	RJe	Robert Jessen
DFN	David F. Neitzel	KMH	Ken & Molly Hoffman	RJS	Roger J. Schroeder
DKM	Diane K. Millard	KN	Kate Nicoletti	RLE	Robert L. Ekblad
DLB	Diane L. Brudellie	KRE	Kim R. Eckert	RLR	Ronald L. Refsnider
DLE	David L. Evans	KRS	Karen R. Sussman	RMD	Robert M. Dunlap
DMA	Diane M. Anderson	KS	Ken Schwartz	RNS	Richard N. Smaby
DMF	Dan M. Floren	KWR	Kim W. Risen	RPR	Robert P. Russell, Jr.
DMP	Daphne & Meyers Peterson	LAW	Larry A. Weber	RSF	Randy S. Frederickson
DPB	D. Parker Backstrom	LMC	Linda M. Cooper	RWS	Robert W. Schroeder
DPJ	Douglas P. Johnson	LWF	Lawrence W. Filter	RZ	Rick Zarwell
DPS	David P. Sovereign	MAJ	Murdoch A. Johnson	SAS	Shelley A. Steva
DRB	David R. Benson	MAO	Mark A. Ochs	SCH	Steven C. Hansen
DRu	Dorothy Russell	MBr	Mary Broten	SDu	Sue Durrant
DTT	Dan T. Thimgan	MH	Mike Hendrickson	SES	Steven E. Schon
EEF	Eve E. Freeberg	MHF	Marilynn H. Ford	SGW	Steve G. Wilson
EJE	Eddy & Judy Edwards	MHK	Martin H. Kehoe	SJR	Steve J. Roman
FAE	Fred A. Eckhardt	MJC	Mary Jo Christopherson	SKS	Sharon Koval Stiteler
FJN	Frank J. Nicoletti	MJF	Merrill J. Frydendall	SL	Sharon Lind
FVS	Forest V. Strnad	MJu	Mark Junghans	SLC	Steve L. Carlson
FZL	Fred Z. Leshner	MME	Molly M. Evans	SMT	Sandy M. Thimgan
GEN	Gary E. Nielsen	MO	Mark Otnes	SN	Sarah Nelson
GLS	Gary L. Simonson	MPH	Mary P. Hood	SP	Shaun Putz
GMM	Gretchen M. Mehmel	MRN	Michael R. North	SPM	Steven P. Millard
HAS	Hal A. Smith	MS	Mark Stock	SPS	Steve P. Stucker
HHD	Herb H. Dingmann	MSS	Mark Sparky Stensaas	STW	Sylvia T. Winkelman
HJF	Herbert J. Fisher	MWS	Mike W. Steffes	SWd	Stan Wood
JB	Jo Blanich	MWy	Mary Wyatt	SWe	Steve Weston
JEB	Jerry E. Bonkoski	NAJ	Nancy A. Jackson	SWi	Susan Wiste
JEP	Jim E. Pomplun	NAW	Ned A. Winters	SWS	Susan W. Seymour
JEZ	James E. Zimmerman	NBO	Nancy B. Overcott	TAN	Tom A. Nelson
JGL	Jon G. Little	NED	Nelvina E. De Kam	TAT	Tom A. Tustison
JJS	Jeff J. Stephenson	NFT	Nels F. Thompson	TEB	Tom & Elizabeth Bell
JLF	Jeanette L. Fisher	NG	Nancy Goetzinger	TFB	Tom F. Boevers
JLH	James L. Howitz	OLJ	Oscar L. Johnson	TPB	Terry P. Brashear
JLU	Janice & Larry Uden	PAH	Paul A. Hetland	TPW	Terry P. Wiens
JMa	Jim Mattsson	PBD	Pat & Bob Dewenter	TRa	Thomas Ramsay
JMF	June M. Foss	PCC	Philip C. Chu	TRo	Todd Ronning
JMJ	Jeanie M. Joppru	PEB	Paul E. Budde	TRS	Thomas R. Schultz
JPR	John P. Richardson	PEJ	Paul E. Jantscher	TTh	Tom Thomsen
JPS	Julian P. Sellers	PHS	Peder H. Svingen	WCM	William C. Marengo
		PJB	Paul J. Binek	WEN	Warren E. Nelson

WHL William H. Longley
WLB William L. Brown
WMS William M. Stauffer
WOB William O. Bruins
WOS William O. Stjern
m.obs. many observers

Abbreviations

H.R.N.R. Hawk Ridge Nature
Reserve
N.C. Nature Center
N.W.R. National Wildlife Refuge

S.N.A. Scientific & Natural Area
S.P. State Park
W.P.A. Waterfowl Production
Area
W.M.A. Wildlife Management
Area

BIRDING BY HINDSIGHT

A Second Look at Mississippi Kite

Kim R. Eckert



The Mississippi Kite holds a unique place on the checklist of Minnesota's 427 species of birds. It seems there is still no recognizable photograph (or specimen) of this bird taken in the state, and it's the only Casual Minnesota species holding this dubious distinction.

Yes, there are several Accidental birds on our checklist yet to be represented with a photo or specimen: e.g., White-winged Dove, Violet-green Swallow, Painted Redstart, and others. But by definition Casual species occur at least a few times each decade in the state — often enough, it would seem, for pictures to be taken of all of them at some point. But not the Mississippi Kite. While there were photos taken of individuals seen in flight on two occasions in recent years, the records committee (MOURC) considered the images too small to be recognizable

as Mississippi Kites.

Now, perhaps this point of ornithological trivia might strike you as just, well, trivial. After all, does it matter if a camera-shy vagrant like a Mississippi Kite is classified as a Casual or Accidental species? Maybe not. But note that some records committees exclude species from a state's official checklist unless accompanied by the tangible evidence of a photograph or specimen. And at the rate it's showing up in Minnesota, don't be surprised if this kite is promoted to Regular status within a few years. It would then be an annually occurring species considered by some ornithologists to be "non-existent" in Minnesota.

The Mississippi Kite has been steadily spreading its breeding range north during the past several years, and a few now apparently nest in Iowa on a regular ba-

sis. There are now several acceptable sight records in Minnesota between April and September, and it can show up almost anywhere in the state. Unfortunately, there have been just as many reports of this species with little or no documentation which MOURC has been unable to accept. Even more unfortunate is that most of these birds were probably correctly identified.

Indeed, a Mississippi Kite is a lot easier to identify than it is to document. Once you've seen them catching dragonflies in flight or rising as a migrant flock into a thermal, you'll find the combination of their flight style and overall shape to be unique and diagnostic. But how do you describe all this in words adequately enough to preclude other raptors from consideration? Frankly, I'm not entirely sure I can. Perhaps the best I can do here is to offer some other thoughts to keep in mind the next time this kite flies your way.

Other Insectivorous Raptors — Remember that Merlins and American Kestrels also catch and eat dragonflies and other large insects on the wing. (So does the falcon-shaped Common Nighthawk, for that matter.) Though the flight of these two falcons differs from a kite as they hunt, the Mississippi Kite is falcon-like in its profile, and the potential for confusion clearly exists.

Other Kiting Raptors — If you see a raptor kiting, it has to be a kite, right? Hardly. Remember that kiting basically just means the same thing as hovering, that almost any species of raptor can hover, and that some raptors like Red-tailed and Rough-legged hawks and American Kestrels do it all the time.

Size — A Mississippi Kite is not the same size as a Swainson's Hawk or Northern Harrier or Peregrine Falcon, as has been described in some documentations. It is smaller than many birders think, with its wing span and overall length roughly halfway between that of a

Peregrine and Merlin.

Wing Shape — While a Mississippi Kite's distinctive wing profile results partly from the relatively short length of its outermost primary, this oft-mentioned field mark is overrated. Yes, this primary is short, but look at photos of almost any flying accipiter, buteo, or harrier -- all of them show an outer primary that's clearly shorter than the one next to it.

Tail Shape — Some birders are under the mistaken impression that the tip of a Mississippi Kite's tail should look notched. A perched kite will probably show this, but a flying kite probably will not. (By the way, on a perched kite also note how the wing tips extend beyond the tail tip.) More likely, in flight the tail will look squared-off or slightly rounded. A better feature to look for is how wide the tip of the tail looks relative to its narrow base, even when the tail is folded in. Indeed, the sides of a Mississippi Kite's tail often look slightly concave, with the sides curving out a bit towards the tail tip.

White Head — The head of an adult or subadult (i.e., second-year) Mississippi Kite will typically appear whiter than the rest of its plumage, although this feature may not be as noticeable on females. Also note this is not something to look for at all on juveniles (i.e., first-year birds), which will probably look white only on the supercilium.

While looking at a Mississippi Kite's whitish head, be sure to also notice how large, dark, and contrasting the eye looks. This distinctive appearance results from the dark ruby red iris combined with a small blackish area next to the eye.

White Secondaries — White is also something to look for on the secondaries of an adult Mississippi Kite, but remember this feature is not present on subadults and juveniles. Keep in mind as well this diagnostic white patch is only

visible on the upper surface of the secondaries, but from below a good mark on an adult is the narrow and contrasting white trailing edge on the dark secondaries. (And while we're on the subject of an adult's wing color, there may be some dull rusty pigment on the middle primaries, but this is usually hard to see.)

Under Wing — As a Mississippi Kite passes overhead, you could see any number of things on the under side of the flight feathers. Some will have blackish primaries and outer secondaries fading to dark gray on the inner secondaries. Others will have a more complex pattern of blackish outer primaries, light gray inner primaries and inner secondaries, and darker gray outer secondaries. Many kites will show a small whitish area on the base of the outer primaries or on the inner primaries. And some (juveniles or subadults) can have a large whitish area along the base of the primaries, reminiscent of a Ferruginous Hawk.

The under wing coverts, though, should be more uniform and predictable. Depending on age, this part of the wing will appear uniformly brownish or grayish and look paler than the blackish or darker gray areas on the flight feathers.

Tail Pattern — Adults have an overall blackish tail above and below, generally solid black on males, with females showing some gray on the basal half. Juveniles have a tail with narrow white bands, very similar to the tail pattern of a Merlin. And subadults can have either an adult- or juvenile-like tail pattern.

Birding by Foresight — The power of suggestion is indeed a powerful thing. It is simply human nature to see what we expect to see, whether or not we really did. As a result, unfortunately, there are times when this involves sightings of real or imagined rarities. Witness last fall's reports of Brant and Yellow-billed Loon. The Brant was actually an immature blue-morph Snow Goose, and the correctly identified loon was apparently present

for a day only. Yet, expecting and hoping to see these rarities, some subsequent observers were fooled by that same Snow Goose, and others were misled by a paler-than-normal Common Loon after the Yellow-billed was gone.

To an extent, this same thing may be going on with some Mississippi Kites. As discussed above, this is a species with few diagnostic plumage features, with some misunderstood field marks, and with its ID depending largely on such intangible characters as flight and shape. So someone reports one, and we concur with its identification and practically have it on our list before we actually go out to see it.

In 1998, for example, the talk of the town was all about the half dozen Mississippi Kites being seen around the Twin Cities. Perhaps they were there, perhaps they weren't, and we'll probably never know. Of those six reports, one was identified without optics as the observer was driving at 70 m.p.h., three were insufficiently documented with brief and sketchy details, and two were never described at all.

And just last spring a similar surge in Mississippi Kite reports came in, mostly from the Twin Cities. Although MOURC has yet to evaluate these documentations, it is encouraging that the outcome will probably be better than four years ago. Of the seven descriptions, most of them appear at first glance to be at least reasonably convincing and credible.

Two of the descriptions, though, leave a lot to the imagination. One description consists entirely of the following: "small dark raptor. . .the bird was very dark, had pointed wings and a long tail. . .no streaking was visible." The other documentation only includes that the bird was seen in flight without binoculars, that it had pointed wings and did not fly like an accipiter, and when seen with binoculars after it perched "it had a lighter head with a small bill and a dark body."

8255 Congdon Blvd., Duluth, MN 55804.

Raptor Nest Survey in the Rice County Area

Jon Little¹ and Jacob Langeslag²

In the Spring of 1996, we began a yearly venture to find and monitor Red-tailed Hawk nests. In conjunction with this, we also found a number of breeding Great Horned Owls, which typically use old Red-tailed Hawk nests, as well as a few nests of Cooper's Hawks and Bald Eagles.

From our homes in Faribault, our search centered in and concentrated on Rice County, but also took in parts of the six adjacent counties of Scott, Dakota, Goodhue, Steele, Waseca, Le Sueur, and a small part of Blue Earth.

Initially, we did this as a part-time hobby, but eventually realized that we were collecting quite a bit of data. It was then that we decided to create a database and establish a method to analyze it. The following report is a review of those data. At no time did we compare our work with any other nest study, and therefore, we have not developed a bibliography. We merely intended to present this as a report of what we found in our particular area, during the specific years that we searched, namely 1996–2001.

During the study, many findings were typical and expected. Typical habits and patterns were observed and recorded, but we also made a number of discoveries that were somewhat surprising to us. The conclusions we drew from these will be presented in this report.

Methods

Our surveys were done almost exclusively by car. While driving along country roads, we could spot many nests from as far as one mile or more, while the less conspicuous ones might not be so easily seen. The most important factor is timing, i.e., searching before leaf-out in early

spring. While we also looked for nests during the previous winter, our key focus was on finding nests that were occupied by a roosting adult, so we concentrated on dates from late February through late April. In southern Minnesota, leaf-out generally occurs in mid-April.

Because most nests were not visible after leaf-out, we ended our searches at approximately the time of hatching and rearing, so we did not monitor success ratios of most nests. However, in a few cases, we were able to follow up and monitor particular nests, including some of the Cooper's Hawk and a few of the Red-tailed Hawk and Great Horned Owl. The natural disadvantage of our method, which also affected coverage and results, was that many areas of the county were not visible from roads. Because of this, many potential nest sites were probably overlooked. Our best estimation, considering the terrain, topography, and typical territory sizes, was that we found only about 50–75% of the possible nests.

Coverage

Initially, from 1996 to 1998, we conducted rather random searches, checking on known nests from previous years, and finding others along the way. But from 1999 to 2001, we developed a more systematic approach and began to cover all of the roads in Rice County. In the surrounding counties, we covered most roads within approximately five miles of Rice County. The results and accompanying data reflect this additional coverage. Many nests were visited more than once, especially when not occupied the first time. All known nests were subsequently checked each following year to monitor their status.

Format

The data were assembled in a spreadsheet file. Each nest was designated by a number, assigned roughly in chronological order as the nests were found. Location was noted according to township number with an additional field giving specific directions. Other columns were date, species and breeding criteria. Typical criteria used were: **ON** for occupied nest, and **NY** for nest with young. An additional column listed nests that were found but were not occupied when visited (most were likely built by Red-tailed Hawks — often in these cases, the adults were probably off hunting). Using this format, the categories can be sorted in any number of ways.

Results

The database contains a total of 413 nests. Note that the totals in Table 1 do not equal the overall total. This is mostly due to the fact that many nests were used first by Red-tailed Hawk and later by Great Horned Owl. Table 1 lists all nests, whether occupied or empty. The exception is Great Horned Owl, the nests of which were either occupied by adults or had young.

Totals by County

The map of Rice County (Figure 1) shows all nests found during the entire survey. For the purpose of this report, only those nests in Rice County were analyzed.

Interstate 35 roughly cuts the county in half — north to south. Topographically, the county is also split roughly in half. To the west of the interstate is the lake region, with its accompanying marshes, scattered woods, and rolling farmland; east of the interstate is the upland prairie, big woods remnant, and bluff-country region. The difference in the types of habitats existing in these regions becomes apparent when reading the map.

One obvious finding is that there was a far greater number of nests in the western portion of the county as opposed to

the eastern half. This discovery led to a basic hypothesis that Red-tailed Hawks were much more successful in the areas where there were lakes and marshes, as opposed to areas where there was farmland dominated by row crops. This was especially noticeable when looking at the townships in the extreme southeast portion of the county, which were historically prairie, but have been converted to crop use. Our supposition was that the birds were relying upon food sources that were more readily available in lake/marsh types of habitats. What kinds of prey they were actually eating is a matter for further study.

We assumed that row crop habitats would make hunting small game more difficult as the crops mature (especially corn). Our data seem to support this assumption. A related note regarding row crops is that in the adjacent counties that have more of this type of land use (especially Steele County), there was a correspondingly lower number of nests in areas where we would normally expect to find them.

Longevity and Reuse

Many nests were used year after year by either or both species. In the cases where Red-tailed Hawks reused a nest, we assumed it was probably the same pair that had built it earlier. However, that is probably not true in all cases. While many pairs will return early and “hang around” to reclaim territory, at other times a territory will be usurped by intruding pairs and the original pair moves on. We found many such pairs in January and early February — one nest was even found with a sitting female on 1 January 2000. We also suspect that in some cases siblings that had been raised in a given nest returned to it and claimed it for their own.

Nest use and reuse can work back and forth for a number of years. A good number of nests were used for three or four years, a few for all six years. Nest durability depended upon many factors, not the least of which was weather.

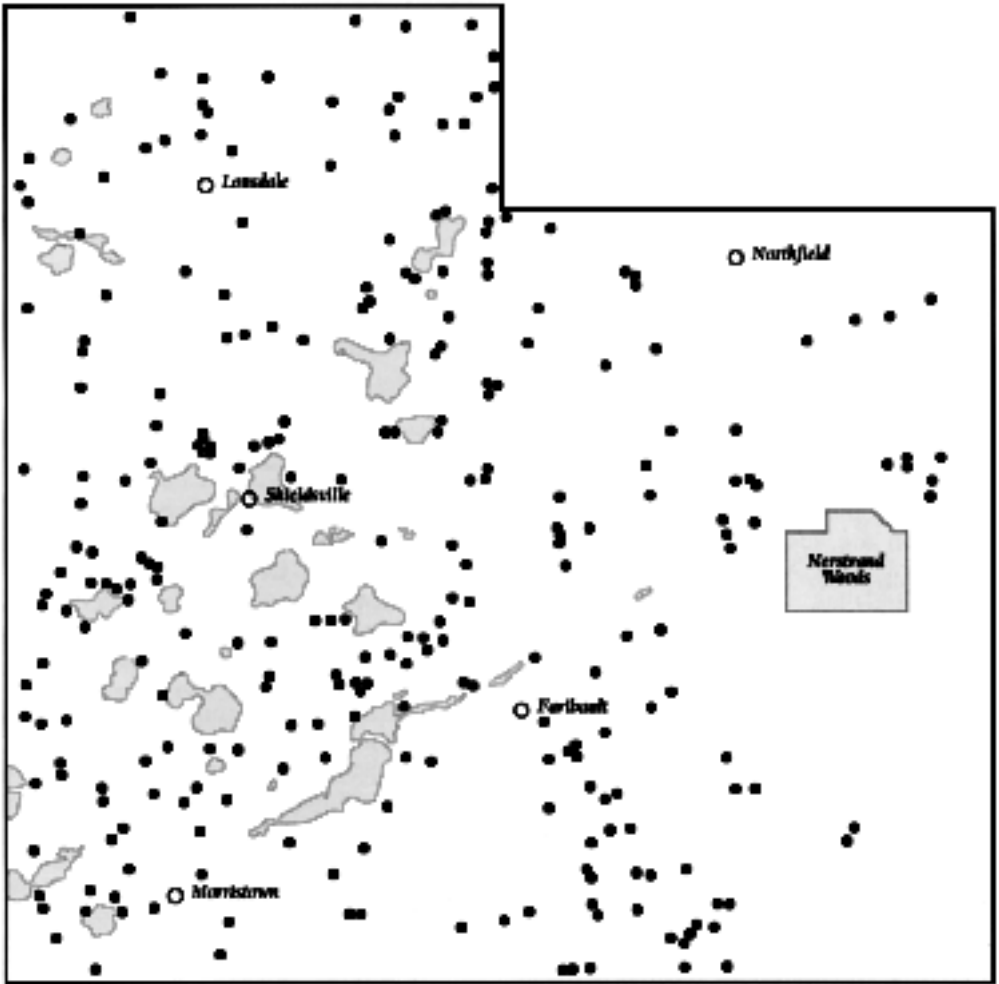


Figure 1. Rice County. Black circles indicate Red-tailed Hawk nest locations.

Territory Size & Proximity to Other Nests

We found that most territories were approximately 1–1.5 square miles. This was based on the fact that if we found a nest, we could expect to find another one in the adjacent section. This often proved to be the case and helped us develop an approach to nest-finding. The rule of thumb was that we could find one Red-tailed Hawk nest per section. However, many nests were actually located as

close as 1/2 mile from each other. In only three cases were Red-tailed Hawk nests built closer than this, and in two of those cases the nests were not within eyesight of each other (hills between were visual barriers). In only one case could birds in both nests actually see each other. The history of these two nests was as follows: on 14 March 2000, along Karlstad Ave, Rice County, nest #251 was found empty, with no other nest in sight. On 6 April 2000, new nest #319 was found directly

COUNTY	RTHA	GHOW	COHA	BAEA
Blue Earth	5	1		
Dakota	39	11		2
Goodhue	28	3	1	
Le Sueur	42	8	1	
Rice	224	59	15	4
Scott	11	3		
Steele	11	3		
Waseca	5			
TOTALS	368	89	17	6

Table 1.

across the road from #251; both nests were occupied by Red-tailed Hawks, and both birds were looking at each other across the span of 1/4–3/8 mile. On 8 April 2000, again both birds were occupying these nests. We were never able to check on the success of these nests. In 2001, only nest #319 was used — #251 was dilapidated.

One notable exception was found to our territory-size rule of thumb. In Shieldsville Township in the year 2000, we found a very high density of Red-tailed Hawk nests, especially in the northwest sections of the township, right around Rice Lake. This area is part of the Cannon River complex. Starting from Shields Lake and its various drainages, then leading into Rice Lake, and continuing downstream, the area contains a huge amount of marshland. During 2000, we found 14 Red-tailed Hawks occupied nests in this area. In this particular township more than any others, the lay of the land made it impossible to see many potential nest sites from roads. Therefore, we believe that an aerial search of this township could have revealed at least 15–20 additional active nests that year. Figure 2 shows only the active nests we found there in 2000.

Proximity to Humans

For the most part, nesting Red-tailed Hawks and Great Horned Owls avoid human contact. Most nest sites were a considerable distance from human activity or habitation. However, there were a number of exceptions to the rule. Especially

with Red-tailed Hawks, a small number (a dozen or so) of nests were found quite near or even within farmsteads or other human residential areas. Although some individual birds appeared to be quite tolerant of humans, the majority were not. And, although some Red-tailed Hawks seemed to be tolerant of humans, we found that Great Horned Owls rarely were. Almost invariably, Great Horned Owls selected a nest that was as far from human activity as possible. Only in a few rare cases, did we find a Great Horned Owl on a nest that was anywhere near to human activity. They always seemed much more wary of our presence than were Red-tailed Hawks.

Great Horned Owl vs. Red-tailed Hawk

As expected, we found a good number of nests that were built by Red-tailed Hawks, only to be taken over the succeeding year by a Great Horned Owl. Generally, the Great Horned Owls returned and started nesting about a month before the Red-tailed Hawks. In many cases, when we checked a previously known Red-tailed Hawk nest and found a Great Horned Owl on it, on a later visit we would find that the Red-tailed Hawks had built a new nest relatively close to the old one, roughly within 200–300 yards or so (particular cases can be gleaned from the database).

In those cases, the birds themselves appeared to be tolerant of each other. Even though they may compete for nests. A side note to Great Horned Owl nest was at least three cases where Great Horned Owls were nesting in old squirrel nests. Originally, that was one place we did not look, but after we found the first one, we were more aware of that possibility. Because of this we may well have overlooked a number of potential Great Horned Owl sites.

Regarding the Great Horned Owl and Red-tailed Hawk relationships, we discovered one phenomenon quite by accident. Although most Red-tailed Hawks are not nesting by the time Great Horned

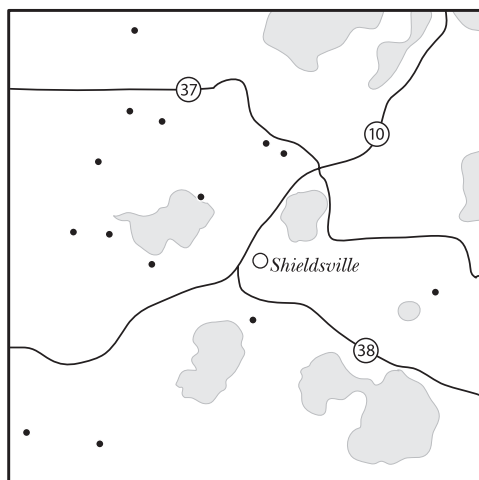


Figure 2. Active Red-tailed Hawk nests found in 2000 in Shieldsville Township.

Owls begin their nesting, in five or six cases we found that a Red-tailed Hawk which had already claimed a nest was later usurped by a Great Horned Owl. One possible reason was found when we noted the dates of occurrence. We found in these cases the Red-tailed Hawk had been nesting unusually early. It was only in these cases that this occurred. We concluded that if a Red-tailed Hawk nested considerably earlier than what might be typical, it was much more susceptible to such usurpation by a Great Horned Owl. Our supposition was that this probably occurred at night; the fate of the Red-tailed Hawk is unknown.

Although we were not able to check on the success of most nests, in the case of Great Horned Owls we tried to deduce whether a previous year's attempt had been successful by whether or not the nest was still intact the following year. Great Horned Owl fledglings, energetic and scrappy, can tear a nest apart by the time they are ready to leave it. Because the adults do not build or repair it, there is little material left by the next season. Many such cases were observed, although there were also a number of Great Horned Owl nests where this did not occur and which continued to be

used year after year.

Summary

The nature of the landscape in Rice County creates an ideal habitat mix for both Red-tailed Hawk and Great Horned Owl. Fragmented and disturbed by years of human occupation, the conditions that exist here apparently sustain a high population of these two raptors.

The data we collected, as well as the experience we gained during our survey, shows that Red-tailed Hawk nests were much more abundant in this area than we had expected.

We found that nest locations were predictable. Almost invariably, Red-tailed Hawk nests were placed on the edges of woods or in trees along fence lines. Rarely were they found very far into the woods, and when they were the entry/exit route was out and over the canopy, rather than out and down as is the case when they were on woodland edges.

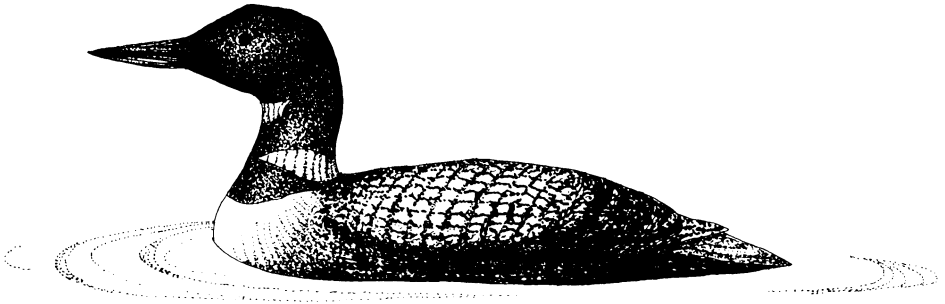
The major factor dictating nest site selection and nesting success is probably food supply. No hard data on specific food types were collected, but it seemed apparent that the birds were finding a better supply of food in the areas of the region that contained lake/marsh habitats, as opposed to row crop farmland. Even in areas where there was sufficient nesting habitat but few nests were found, land use appeared to influence food supply. Further analysis of these data may enhance this conclusion. We encourage anyone interested to follow up on these findings.

The contents of this database have been submitted to the MOU and are available either from them or the authors to any individual or organization who wishes to use this information.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Anthony Hertzell for producing the two maps used in this paper.

¹411 Chatham Sq., Winchester, VA 22601; ²815 SW 3rd Ave., Faribault, MN 55021.



NOTES OF INTEREST

LATE COMMON TERN IN BELTRAMI COUNTY — On 27 October 2001, I found a late Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) at the city park along Lake Bemidji in downtown Bemidji, Beltrami County. I only had my Kowa scope with 30X eyepiece (no binoculars) which made it difficult to follow the bird when it suddenly flew by about 11:30 A.M. With my naked eye, I could see that it had an extensive black cap, darkish primaries, and very whitish underparts. I wrote it off as a probable Forster's Tern, but then it circled back and landed amidst the Ring-billed Gulls huddled on the shoreline. I then had good looks through the scope from about 40 feet away for ten minutes.



Its bill was all dark except for a smudge of light gray at the base of the lower mandible. Its eyes were black and its legs were pinkish-red. The black cap extended above and slightly in front of the eye. Its back and wings were gray with a very distinct, dark carpal bar at the edge of the folded wing. The outermost feather or edge of the outermost tail feather was black. The underparts were white. The extensive black cap, dark carpal bar, and blackish outer tail feather indicated Common Tern rather than Forster's Tern. Whitish underparts and relatively long legs eliminated Arctic Tern. This sighting followed the first significant snowfall of the season on 25 October and seemed to be an unusually late date for a Common Tern in northern Minnesota. **Douglas P. Johnson, 7203 Tall Pines Rd. N.E., Bemidji, MN 56601.**

BARROW'S GOLDENEYE IN HOUSTON COUNTY — While scanning a large group of Canvasbacks and Common Goldeneyes with my tripod-mounted 20x80 Celestron binoculars on 17 November 2001, I spotted an adult male Barrow's Goldeneye as it flew in and landed on Pool 8 at the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge near Reno, Houston County. Even in flight, I was able to identify it as a Barrow's, based on its head shape and white facial crescent.

After it landed on the water approximately 200 yards away, I studied it off and on from about 7:30 A.M. until noon. Being that the bird was an adult male in full breeding plumage, its identification was straightforward. The most prominent features which separated it from the numerous Common Goldeneyes were as follows:

1) It had the classic Barrow's head shape — a large, domed head, beginning with an abrupt forehead and tapering towards the nape. Common Goldeneyes sport a

high-peaked, triangular-shaped head.

2) The white mark near its bill was an angled, crescent-shaped mark — not round as in Common Goldeneye.

3) It possessed an extensive black region on its back and shoulders, and correspondingly less white on its sides. The black extended down each side from the shoulders to form two small, black, downward-pointing “hooks” which are never present on Common Goldeneyes. It also featured smaller white spots in the black scapular region on its back — Common Goldeneyes have extensive white in their scapulars, appearing more as white stripes than spots.

4) On several occasions, it displayed a high forward and back rotating head motion. In my experience, this is consistent with Barrow’s — Common Goldeneyes give a similar display but keep their heads at a lower angle.

5) It was slightly larger than any of the drake Common Goldeneyes. Barrow’s Goldeneye averages larger than a Common, both dimensionally and by weight.

Paul E. Jantscher, 7533 15th Ave. S., Richfield, MN 55423.

SABINE’S GULLS AT THE SUPERIOR ENTRY — After missing a juvenile Sabine’s



Gull by minutes at Park Point on 15 September 2001 and then hearing about a sighting of nine off Wisconsin Point later the same day, it didn’t take much motivation for me to make the drive out to Wisconsin Point the next morning. On 16 September, the weather conditions were similar to the day before; it was overcast and the lake was calm. John Hockema, Sparky Stensaas, and I arrived around 9:00 A.M. and walked out to the end of the breakwater, where we began to sort through the many gulls out from the Superior Entry. The majority

were Ring-billed, but there were also a few Herring and Bonaparte’s gulls (both adult and first-winter birds). After about 45 minutes of uneventful watching, Sparky had to leave but Steve Roman soon arrived and started scanning the lake also.

At around 10:15 A.M., I noticed a darker-looking seabird with a buoyant, tern-like flight about 3/4 mile away on the Wisconsin side of the Superior Entry. It was much more active than nearby Ring-billed Gulls and appeared to be about half their size, or approximately the same size as a Bonaparte’s Gull. Its feeding style reminded me of a Bonaparte’s Gull, but this bird was much more dramatic in flight. It flew with deep and rather rapid wing beats until suddenly turning to dip down to the surface of the water. The bird slowly made its way west into Minnesota waters. Through my Bushnell Spacemaster spotting scope at 45x, I was able to catch a glimpse of white flashes on its wings. I quickly grabbed Steve’s spotting scope, which had better optics and a 60x eyepiece. I was then able to see white triangles on the bird’s wings and I called out, “I think I have a Sabine’s!”

Both Steve and John focused on the bird and we studied its field marks. The upperside of the gull was predominantly dark, except for the obvious white triangular pattern on its inner primaries and secondaries. The outer wing showed a black triangle, whereas the inner wing coverts showed brownish-gray that extended onto its back, hindnape, and back of the head. The bird was too far away to see eye, bill, or leg color. However, the field marks that we were able to see allowed us to confidently call it a juvenile Sabine’s Gull.

As we were watching this bird, John spotted a second juvenile Sabine’s that soon fed in close proximity to the first bird. Eventually, both of them moved about a mile off shore and well inside the Minnesota border. At about 10:30 A.M., they landed on the water to rest and were still there at 10:45 when we departed for Park Point. Possibly the same two juvenile Sabine’s were subsequently documented by Jeff Stephenson

off Wisconsin Point on 19 September 2001. **Colin R. Gjervold, 10600 Brunswick Rd. #302, Bloomington, MN 55438.**

SABINE'S GULL IN STEARNS COUNTY



— On 21 September 2001, I found a juvenile Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*) at the Paynesville lagoons. It was approximately the same size as the hundreds of Franklin's Gulls in the area, but was initially flying by itself. The upper side of the wings had a black wedge extending from the bend of the wing and along the leading edge, out to the wing tip. This contrasted sharply with a white triangular area running from the middle primaries to the leading bend of the wing and back to the point where the rear of the wing met the body. The back and lesser coverts were a brownish-gray in color, probably more brown than gray, and this color extended onto the back of the neck and top of the head. The tail was white. I did not notice if there was a black band across the tip of its tail, as I spent the brief time I had checking the wing and back pattern.

I first saw the bird at about 9:30 A.M. and watched it for a minute or two from a distance of 50–100 yards before it disappeared from view. This was a life bird for me and a first record of this species for Stearns County. **Herb H. Dingmann, 1412 White Dr., St. Cloud, MN 56303.**

ANOTHER ARCTIC TERN AT THE SUPERIOR ENTRY



— When Shaun Putz and I arrived at the end of Wisconsin Point on 19 September 2001, Shaun noticed two terns foraging along the breakwall near the lighthouse. One was an adult and the other was a juvenile. We

walked out on the rocks to within 50 feet or so and watched them for about an hour between 4:00 and 5:00 P.M. as they foraged out towards the lighthouse and circled back in front of us many times. The young bird stayed out farther and rested often, and the adult always landed next to it.

In flight, the adult looked “neckless”. Its bill was completely red/orange and did not show a dark tip. At rest through the scope, the legs looked red-orange and about 1/2 inch long. The bird had a full black cap. The breast was pale gray and the cheek was white. The upperwing was pale gray, matching its back except the primaries were lighter at the base and had a thin, dark trailing edge. Its wings lacked the dark wedge of a Common Tern. The underwings were white with a thin, black trailing edge on the primaries. The rump was white. The forked tail was white with pale gray outer edges. At very close range, pale gray (so faint it was diffi-



Arctic Tern, 19 September 2001, Park Point, Duluth, St. Louis County. Photo by Robbye Johnson.

cult to see) showed in some of the middle tail feathers.

Twice they flew across the entry to the Minnesota breakwall. When they flew back towards the bluff we thought they were gone, but they returned with some Common Terns. All of the Common Terns looked much darker-winged and their dark primary wedges were obvious. We also noticed that all of the Common Terns had already started molting their head feathers, so none of them had a full black cap. I spent little time studying the juvenile bird. It sat most of the time and didn't fly as close to us. I did note that in flight, its secondaries and inner primaries were lighter than the rest of the upper wing and that at rest, its legs appeared to be the same length as the adult's legs. **Robbye Johnson, 2602 N. 28th, Superior, WI 54880.**

FIRST TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE IN ROCK COUNTY — On 18 October 2001 at approximately 9:00 A.M., Nelvina De Kam and I discovered a Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) at Blue Mounds State Park, which provided the first record of this species for Rock County. Somewhat predictably (*The Loon* 65:110–115), we found the bird in a small stand of eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) on a south-facing slope near a small creek. This microhabitat provided shelter, food, and water, though the "juniper berries" in the area were scanty.



Approaching the cedars, we heard a querulous, high-pitched "eep" given as a single note. Nelvina somehow spotted the bird, even though it was sitting motionless on a cedar branch about two feet off the ground, and quietly announced that it had a white eyering. After our eyes adjusted to the shaded light conditions, we could make out additional plumage details. Even when viewed only in silhouette, its shape and posture immediately suggested solitaire. We watched it for about five minutes and except when opening its wings while shifting position on the branch, it remained motionless. It was still present when we left the area.

This thrush initially appeared dark gray overall, but when it opened its wings, an extensive buffy patch at the base of its primaries became visible. The solitaire also spread its tail while shifting position on the branch, which revealed white outermost rectrices. At other times during the observation, a white edge on its folded tail could be detected. Its bill was straight, relatively short, and black. Its irides appeared dark, and its legs and feet were black. But the most striking feature of all was its complete, thick, whitish eyering. **Peder H. Svingen, 2602 E. 4th St., Duluth, MN 55812.**

LATE WHITE-EYED VIREO IN COOK COUNTY — On 25 October 2001, I found a



White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*) at the Lutsen Sea Villas in Cook County. The bird was seen about 20 minutes later by Chuck Krulas and relocated the following day by Colin Gjervold, John Hockema, and others.

The bird had the following characteristics: vireo-sized bill (not a warbler bill), yellow spectacles extending around the eye, no white iris, gray nape extending up the back of head, two white wingbars with the front bar smaller than the other bar, and yellow on the side of its breast



White-eyed Vireo, 26 October 2001, Cook County. Photo by Peder Svingen.

but light gray in the center of its chest and on the throat.

I consulted *The Sibley Guide to Birds* after I had identified the bird and after I had written down field notes. Sibley mentions that the bird I observed was in first-winter plumage.

I have seen many White-eyed Vireos before outside of Minnesota, but don't remember if I have seen a first-winter bird before. The bird was observed through 28 October by many people attending the Grand Marais Birding Festival. **Jeff J. Stephenson, 1323 28th St. S.W., Rochester, MN 55902.**

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE NEAR FIVE MILE ROCK — On 12 November 2001,



Linda Felker, Rick Specht, and I spent the day birding in Cook County. Our highlight bird of the day was a first-winter Black-legged Kittiwake along the Lake Superior shoreline, just

east of Five Mile Rock. We found it after stopping to look at some Long-tailed Ducks. After observing the ducks for about ten minutes, I looked over a ridge at the shoreline and found the kittiwake sitting on a rock right below us about 20 feet away. We watched it from 10:40 to 11:20 A.M., but the bird was gone when we returned at 1:00 P.M.

I sketched and photographed the kittiwake, and we noted the following field marks: black bill, black legs, black eye, small dark crescent behind the eye, dark gray line on nape, wing coverts dark gray to black forming a "V" on the bird when observed from the tail end, outer edges of primaries black, and breast frosty white. **Craig R. Mandel, 10211 Cedar Lake Rd. #120, Minnetonka, MN 55305.**



Black-legged Kittiwake, 12 November 2001, Cook County. Photo by Craig Mandel.

CHRISTMAS BRAMBLING — As the cold winter winds slowly set in during December 2001, birdlife at our feeders became fairly predictable. All of the brightly colored neotropical migrants had gone south, spending their days in warm tropical sunshine. Even the last few hardy White-throated Sparrows had gone to continue their southerly migration. Now, only a few faithful birds like Black-capped Chickadees, White-breasted Nuthatches, and a variety of woodpeckers remained. A large flock (approximately 150) of American Goldfinches kept the feeders alive with action, while the Common Redpolls returned from a year's absence. Generally speaking, winter life at the feeders was familiar. That all changed, however, on 16 December 2001 when an unexpected visitor from half-way around the world came to our backyard.



Around 10:00 A.M., a check of the feeders through our dining room window revealed something different. An unusual looking bird was seen foraging on the ground with a flock of goldfinches. After a quick glance through the flock, we thought that the bird might be a Common Redpoll with a weird orange coloration. But taking a closer look with binoculars, we realized that it was not a redpoll, and more impor-



Brambling, 18 December 2001, Battle Lake, Otter Tail County. Photo by David Cahlander

tantly, was not even a bird familiar to us.

As the bird foraged on the ground for black oil sunflower seeds, we looked for field marks. We noticed that the bird appeared to be slightly larger than the goldfinches. The bird's bill was "finch-like" and yellow except for the tip, which had a dab of black. The throat, breast, sides and flanks were orange, while small black spots were present on the flanks. The orange color extended from the sides to the scapular and median secondary covert regions. White edging separated the orange in the median secondary coverts from the black greater secondary coverts. The greater primary coverts were orange and the primaries were black with faint white edging. The rump, belly, and area underneath the forked tail were white.

Additional field marks indicated that this bird was a male Brambling in basic plumage. The bird's head color was grayish overall except for two thin dark bands that ran across the crown to the nape of the neck. The orange throat suggested that the bird was a male. Individual feathers on the mantle of the bird were marked with both orange and black.

We waited to see if the bird would come to our feeders the next day. When it did, we put in a call to the MOU Rare Bird Alert. We wanted to reduce the chance of a "wild goose chase" for birders who might come long distances to see the bird. During the next two weeks approximately 150 birders from nine states came to see the Brambling. On the morning of 30 December 2001 the bird was seen in our yard for the last time. Interesting enough, about half of the American Goldfinches that the Brambling seemed to be traveling and foraging with also disappeared that day.

What a gift we received the Christmas of 2001 — a rambling Christmas Brambling.
J. Eddy & Judy Edwards, 23808 Big Buck Road, Battle Lake, MN.

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Purpose of the M.O.U.

The Minnesota Ornithologists' Union is an organization of both professionals and amateurs interested in birds. We foster the study of birds. We aim to create and increase public interest in birds, and to promote the preservation of birdlife and its natural habitat.

To carry out these aims, we publish a journal, *The Loon*, and a newsletter, *Minnesota Birding*; we conduct field trips;



we encourage and sponsor the preservation of natural areas; we hold seminars where research reports, unusual observations and conservation discussions are presented. We are supported by dues from members, affiliated clubs and special gifts. Any or all phases of the MOU program could be expanded significantly with gifts, memorials or bequests willed to the organization.

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The editors of *The Loon* welcome submissions of articles, Notes of Interest, color slides, and color or black & white photographs. Submissions should be typed, double-spaced and single-sided. Notes of Interest should be less than two pages. Photographs should be 5"x7". Whenever possible, please include a copy of your submission in any standard format on any 3 1/2 inch computer disk.

Club information and other announcements of general interest should be sent to the Newsletter editors. See inside front cover. Bird sighting reports for each season should be sent promptly at the end of February, May, July and November to Peder Svingen. See key to the "Seasonal Report."

The Loon

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EDITOR OF *The Loon*:

Anthony X. Hertzell, 8461 Pleasant View Drive,
Mounds View, MN 55112.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS OF *The Loon*:

Karl Bardon, Kim Eckert, Bruce Fall, Robert Janssen, Fred Leshner, Warren Nelson, Peder Svingen, Harrison Tordoff, Nancy Weber.

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EDITOR OF *Minnesota Birding*:

Jim Williams, 5239 Cranberry Lane, Webster, WI 54893.

MINNESOTA BIRD REPORTS:

Statewide 763-780-8890
Duluth 218-525-5952

MOU E-MAIL ADDRESS:

mou@cbs.umn.edu

MOU WORLD WIDE WEB SITE:

<http://cbs.umn.edu/~mou>

MOU E-MAIL LISTSERVICE:

For information e-mail Paul Budde at:
pbudde@aol.com

MOU OFFICERS

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VICE PRESIDENT: Jerry Bonkoski, 17255 Woodview Ct. SE, Prior Lake MN 55372

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RECORDING SECRETARY: Linda McMonagle, 15710 Wayzata Blvd., Wayzata MN 55391

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ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS: Paul Budde, 4612 Colfax Ave. S., Minneapolis MN 55409

MINNESOTA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION RECORDS COMMITTEE: Kim Eckert, 8255 Congdon Blvd., Duluth MN 55804

NOMINATIONS: Ann Kessen, 31145 Genesis Ave., Stacy MN 55079

PAPER SESSION: Carol Henderson, 640 - 119th Lane NE, Blaine MN 55434

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS: Robert Janssen, 162 Lakeview Road, Chanhassen MN 55317

SAVALOJA MEMORIAL FUND: Anthony Smith, 5345 Irving Ave. S., Minneapolis MN 55419

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Habitats and Landscapes Used by Breeding Golden-winged Warblers in Western Great Lakes Forests

JoAnn Hanowski

The Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) is a priority bird for conservation in the Boreal Hardwood Transition physiographic area (Partners in Flight, in press). The species received this designation in this region for several reasons. First, the species population has declined significantly throughout its North American breeding range from 1966 to 2000 (-3.49 birds/route/year (Sauer *et al.* 2001)), and more significantly in the last decade (-5.03 birds/route/year). In addition, although the species' breeding distribution in North America includes the Great Lakes states and Adirondacks, about 80% of the species population occurs in the upper Midwest. Also, the highest breeding densities occur in Minnesota (2.64/birds/route from 1990–2000) and Wisconsin (1.69 birds/route from 1990–2000) (Sauer *et al.* 2001).

Partners in Flight attributes declines in Golden-winged Warblers to loss of breeding habitat (including reforestation, intensive agriculture, and urban/suburban development), possibly loss of wintering habitat (by deforestation), and possibly competition and hybridization with the Blue-winged Warbler (*V. pinus*). Nest parasitism by the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) may additionally contribute to the decline (Confer 1992). To date, most habitat conservation efforts for the species in western Great Lakes forest have focused on the importance of providing early successional aspen habitat (Roth 2001). However, proponents of this management have often overlooked available and relevant habitat and population data that provides a



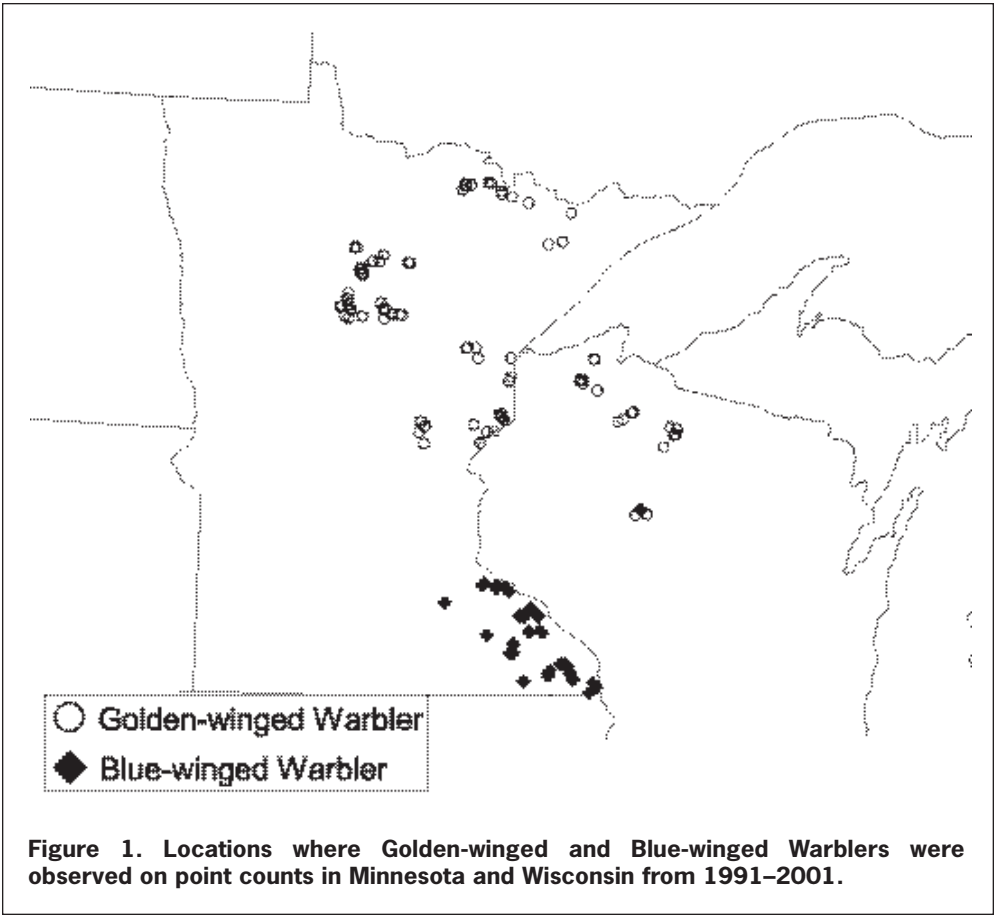
Golden-winged Warbler, 8 June 2002, Sandstone, Pine County. Photo by Stan Tekiela.

more comprehensive picture of habitats and landscapes utilized by the species in this region.

The purpose of this paper is to examine some of the conservation issues for this species in Minnesota and Wisconsin and describe; 1) habitats used by Golden-winged Warblers in four regional forest areas in Minnesota and Wisconsin; 2) important landscape features in areas where the species occurs; 3) population trends from breeding bird surveys in regional forest areas; and 4) data from other studies to provide a comprehensive picture of the habitat and landscapes utilized by the species in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Study Area and Methods

Forest breeding songbirds have been



surveyed annually with an off-road habitat specific monitoring program (Hanol-ski and Niemi 1995) in northern Minnesota and Wisconsin, beginning in 1991 in Minnesota and in 1992 in Wisconsin (Figure 1). This is one of the most long-standing, extensive, off-road, and habitat specific, breeding bird monitoring program in the United States. Annual surveys have been conducted using National standards on over 1600 points/year by the Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI). A similar breeding bird monitoring program exists for the Nicolet National Forest in northeast Wisconsin that is coordinated by the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay (UWGB) (UWGB 2001a). Together, these monitoring programs survey the types of habitats and

landscapes that occur across western Great Lakes forests.

Data from the surveys have been used to calculate population trends for about 80 species and to document habitat for over 100 species (NRRI 2001). In addition to the monitoring, landscape models for the Golden-winged Warbler and several other breeding bird species have been constructed (UWGB 2001b). For the landscape models, a number of landscape characteristics were computed at 100, 500, 2000 and 5000m radii circles from the center of each location where Golden-winged Warblers were observed. Metrics included proportions of the major cover types (e.g., percent lowland conifer), as well as patch size, and edge density. The landscape model provides

information on the amounts (sizes of patches) and configuration of habitats that the Golden-winged Warbler selects during the breeding season.

Results

Almost 500 Golden-winged Warblers (492 singing males) were observed on 15,204 point counts in the Chequamegon, Chippewa, and Superior National Forests, and St. Croix study regions from 1991–2001 (Figure 1). About half of the observations were made in the Chippewa National Forest (Table 1). Fewest numbers of Golden-winged Warblers were observed in the Superior National Forest compared to the other three study areas, and most of these observations were from an area on the west side of the Forest (near Orr, Minnesota) (Figure 1).

Population trends from surveys for the Golden-winged Warbler indicated that the species has not changed in population in any region from 1991–2002 (Lind *et al.* 2002). Slight, but non-significant increases were noted for both the Chippewa and Chequamegon National Forests. In the St. Croix study area, numbers decreased from 1992–2001, but increased in 2002 and the trend was not significant. The regional trend for this species (includes data from the three National Forests), did not show any significant change in numbers over the past 11 years (Lind *et al.* 2002).

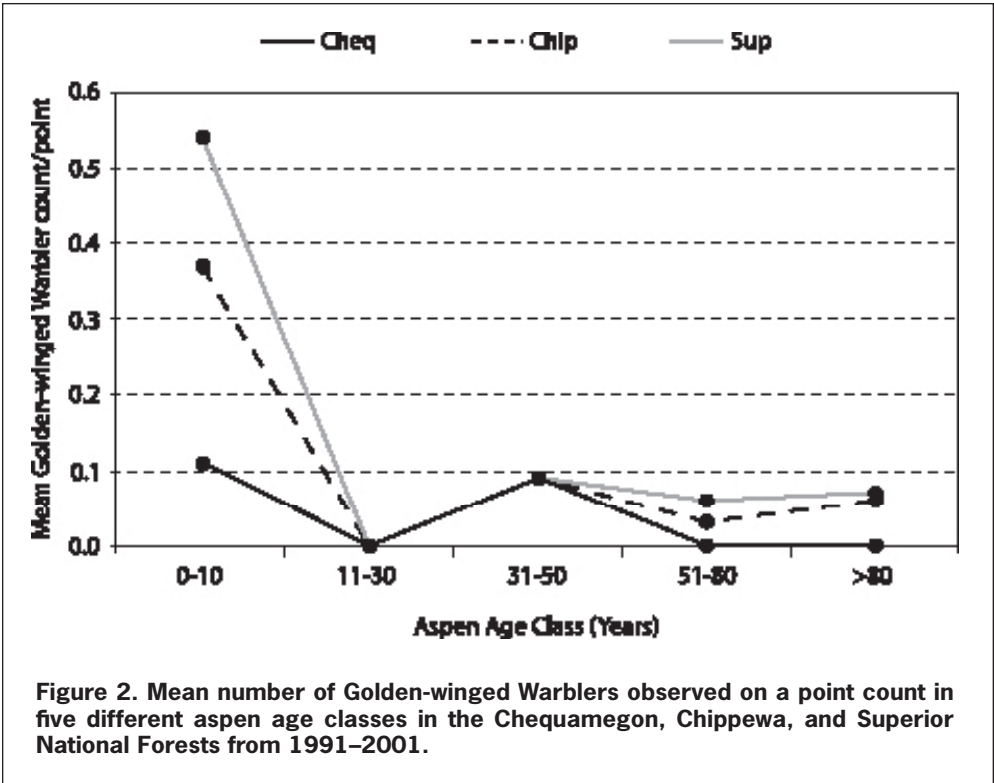
Habitat types where Golden-winged Warblers were observed varied by region, but most of the variation can be attributed to the distribution of samples across habitat types. For example, alder habitat was the most commonly used habitat in the Chequamegon National Forest and in the St. Croix area (33% of all observations), but this type was not sampled in either the Chippewa or Superior National Forests (Table 1). Recently created openings (first year after harvest) and tamarack were other habitats in the Chequamegon National Forest where more than 10% of all observations occurred (Table 1). Lowland sedge habitat was sampled only in the Chequamegon

National Forest, but 11% of the surveys documented Golden-winged Warblers.

In the Chippewa National Forest, the highest proportion of all observations occurred in the white spruce/balsam fir type, however only 30 points in this type were sampled over the 11 year period. This type was not sampled in any other region. Aspen and aspen mixed forests were also commonly used habitats in the Chippewa National Forest (all >10%) and in the St. Croix region (all >12%). No alder or upland brush habitats were surveyed in the Chippewa National Forest. However, in the St. Croix region where alder was surveyed, the majority of all observations were in this type (33%) (Table 1). The Golden-winged Warbler was least abundant in the Superior National Forest and was found almost exclusively in open (newly harvested) aspen habitat (Table 1). No alder or upland brush habitats were surveyed in this region.

Although aspen and aspen-mixed forest types were commonly used by Golden-winged Warblers, most observations were in stands less than 11 years of age (Figure 2). A few individuals continued to be observed on stands greater than ten years, but overall abundance decreased dramatically after stands reached this age. Individuals observed on stands greater than ten years were often associated with wet portions of the stand, old landings, or road edges that had not regenerated as fast as the surrounding trees.

The landscape model for the Golden-winged Warbler indicated that the species occurrence was best predicted by the amount of lowland shrub cover in a 100m buffer surrounding the point where the species was observed. The bird was absent when this value was lower than 10.4%. Additional landscape variables that were important in predicting this species presence/absence was the amount of white spruce and other conifer within 5000m of the point. The species was absent when white spruce patch size and other conifer patch densities were low. Other, but less important



landscape variables in the model, were aspen edge density at the 2000m buffer (species was absent when this value was <67%).

Blue-winged Warblers were not observed (with one exception) in the four northern regions of the surveys (Figure 1). The species is commonly observed in surveys conducted in southeast Minnesota and occurs in both upland and lowland hardwoods. A significant decline in Blue-winged Warblers was detected from 1995–2001 in the southeast Minnesota study area (Lind *et al.* 2002).

Discussion

The population trend for Golden-winged Warbler from the breeding bird monitoring program does not reflect trends occurring on the national or state (Minnesota or Wisconsin) levels. Although national and state trends from the BBS data indicate significant down-

ward trends, no declines were detected in the forest bird surveys. In addition, survey data from the Nicolet National Forest in northern Wisconsin from 1987–2001 does not indicate that populations have decreased (UWGB 2001a). The lack of agreement in trends from regional forest bird monitoring programs and Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) trends could be due to the location of surveys, mainly in the northern portions of Minnesota and Wisconsin versus locations of BBS routes across both states. For example, based on BBS data, it appears that the range of the species has contracted to the north over the past 30 years. In Wisconsin, the 30-year trend is based on the species occurrence on 44 routes and the mean count was 0.95/ birds/route. The ten-year trend (from 1990–2000) is based on 36 routes, but the mean number of birds increased to 1.69 birds/route. A similar, but not as

Habitat Type	Chequamegon			Chippewa			St. Croix			Superior		
	Points	GWWA	Prop	Points	GWWA	Prop	Points	GWWA	Prop	Points	GWWA	Prop
Alder	73	24	0.33	NS	—	—	12	4	0.33	NS	—	—
Ash/Elm/Red maple	212	4	0.02	331	4	0.01	176	4	0.02	NS	—	—
Aspen/Paper birch	NS	—	—	39	4	0.10	168	1	0.01	37	0	0.00
Aspen/White spruce	NS	—	—	NS	—	—	NS	—	—	129	1	0.01
Balsam poplar	NS	—	—	NS	—	—	24	3	0.13	NS	—	—
Bigtooth aspen	NS	—	—	NS	—	—	6	0	0.00	26	0	0.00
Black spruce	70	5	0.07	438	27	0.06	52	1	0.02	183	0	0.00
Cedar	204	2	0.01	104	1	0.01	NS	—	—	155	0	0.00
Fir/Aspen/Paper birch	168	1	0.01	82	10	0.12	64	1	0.02	777	1	0.00
Hemlock	257	0	0.00	NS	—	—	NS	—	—	NS	—	—
Jack pine	135	8	0.06	346	15	0.04	30	2	0.07	659	0	0.00
Maple/Beech	39	0	0.00	NS	—	—	NS	—	—	59	0	0.00
Mixed swamp conifer	140	0	0.00	421	21	0.05	107	7	0.07	236	0	0.00
Northern red oak	218	0	0.00	271	5	0.02	111	0	0.00	NS	—	—
Open (1st year harvest)	74	11	0.15	73	7	0.10	35	2	0.06	70	11	0.16
Paper birch	90	1	0.01	208	1	0.00	63	2	0.03	316	0	0.00
Quaking aspen	156	4	0.03	759	89	0.12	323	38	0.12	1979	70	0.04
Red pine	524	4	0.01	682	25	0.04	50	0	0.00	370	2	0.01
Sedge	61	7	0.11	NS	—	—	NS	—	—	NS	—	—
Sugar maple	337	0	0.00	10	0	0.00	NS	—	—	125	0	0.00
Sugar maple/Basswood	713	6	0.01	170	0	0.00	378	9	0.02	NS	—	—
Tamarack	55	7	0.13	188	11	0.06	99	8	0.08	NS	—	—
Upland black spruce	NS	—	—	NS	—	—	NS	—	—	85	0	0.00
Upland brush	221	3	0.01	NS	—	—	NS	—	—	NS	—	—
White pine	111	3	0.03	119	2	0.02	30	0	0.00	132	0	0.00
White spruce/Fir	NS	—	—	30	13	0.43	NS	—	—	9	0	0.00
Total	3858	90		4271	235		1728	82		5347	85	

Table 1. Number of point counts by habitat type (Points), number of points where Golden-winged Warblers were observed (GWWA), and the proportion of points within each of the habitats sampled where Golden-winged Warblers were observed within each of four study areas from 1991 (or 1992 in the Chequamegon and St. Croix areas) through 2001 (Prop). NS indicates that the habitat was not sampled in that area. Mean number of observations/point count in the various habitats can be viewed at the NRRI web site, www.nrri.umn.edu/mnbirds.

dramatic a range contraction, has occurred in Minnesota. The 30-year trend is based on 27 routes and the mean number of birds/route was 2.37. Over the past ten years, the species was recorded on 24 routes but numbers/route increased to 2.64. These results indicate that the species occurs in higher abundance today than it did 30 years ago, but that the area that the species occupies has decreased in size. Because the forest breeding bird surveys conducted by NRRI and UWGB are located in areas still occupied by Golden-winged Warblers, it is not unusual that population declines were not detected.

At the turn of the century, Golden-winged Warblers commonly occurred in the “big woods” of Hennepin, Wright, and Stearns counties, as far north as

Itasca State Park and, as far south as Lanesboro (Roberts 1932). In contrast, the Blue-winged Warbler only occurred in the southeastern portion of the state and rarely so (Roberts 1932). The same historical pattern of occurrence for Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers was documented for Michigan (Brewer *et al.* 1991). Blue-winged Warblers were not known in the Michigan during the middle 1800s, but now they occur across the southern third of the lower peninsula. Today, Blue-winged Warblers have moved north in Minnesota, Wisconsin (Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas) and Michigan, and have displaced the Golden-winged Warbler in many areas.

Golden-winged Warbler habitat preference in the early part of the 19th century was documented by Roberts (1932)

for Minnesota. He found that the species selected groves of heavy deciduous trees in the southern part of the state, and, in Aitkin County, the species was regularly distributed in brushy woods and wet scrubby places near tamarack swamps. In Michigan, the species occupies a variety of habitats including swampy woodlands, alder/willow thickets, and upland sites of aspen and fire cherry saplings (Brewer *et al.* 1991). A recent study in the southeastern portion (North Carolina and Tennessee) of the species range reported that Golden-winged Warblers occupied young forest stands with low basal area and annually mowed roads. Nests were located in areas with high herbaceous density, fewer saplings, and less canopy cover than areas surrounding the territory (Klaus and Buehler 2001). Young stands with high sapling density that lacked herbaceous openings were not occupied by the species (Klaus and Buehler 2001). In addition, another study from this area in a wetland habitat (North Carolina) reported the importance of canopy trees for song perches and also that open water was an important attribute of Golden-winged Warbler territories (Rossell 2001).

Data from the NRRI surveys indicate that Golden-winged Warblers will occur wherever shrubs are present. The species is a habitat generalist and often occurs along roadside edges where shrubs have an opportunity to grow. For example, in the Nicolet National Forest, 30% of all observations for this species occurred in roadside counts. Openings, aspen, lowland conifer, and shrub swamp were other habitats commonly used by the species in the Nicolet National Forest. These results are similar to NRRI findings throughout four study regions. Lowland brush and upland early successional were most commonly used by Golden-winged Warblers.

Because Golden-winged Warblers occupy several habitat types, it is unlikely that habitat availability in the northern portions of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan is currently limiting their populations. There may be more suitable

habitat for Golden-winged Warblers in this area today, than there was historically, due to increased amounts of early successional (primarily aspen), roads, and other rights-of-ways. The key habitat for maintaining a viable population for this species is likely lowland shrub and poorly stocked lowland conifer habitats. Although early successional aspen habitat is used by the species, NRRI data indicate that this habitat is suitable for only ten years. Lowland brush and other wetland habitat types occupied by the species does not succeed rapidly (Hanuski *et al.* 1999). Golden-winged Warbler presence in northern Minnesota and Wisconsin is best predicted by amounts of lowland brush habitat. This habitat is preferred and will likely perpetuate Golden-winged Warbler populations into the future.

Maintaining suitable wetland habitat throughout the species range may be key to preventing additional range contraction and replacement by the Blue-winged Warbler. For example, Will (1986) reported that Blue-winged Warblers in southern Michigan predominated in drier, upland and woodland sites, while Golden-winged Warblers were found almost exclusively in tamarack swamps and other hydric habitats. In the northern portion of the lower peninsula where Golden-winged Warblers outnumbered Blue-winged Warblers, the Blue-winged Warbler was found exclusively in drier field borders and woodland clearings. Historic loss of wetland habitat throughout southern Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan have likely contributed to the contraction of the Golden-winged Warblers range to the north (most sources estimate that less than 50% of original wetlands exist in these areas of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan).

In summary, in northern Minnesota and Wisconsin, Golden-winged Warbler populations are higher (on a BBS route basis) than they were 30 years ago and NRRI's more extensive monitoring program has found no decline over the past 11 years. In this region, the species is a

habitat generalist, with a preference for lowland brush and poorly stocked lowland conifer habitats. It occupies newly harvested sites for about the first ten years after harvest. In this region, conservation measures should focus on preventing additional range contraction to the north by managing for shrubby wetland habitat in the southern portions of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Wetland habitat in these areas has declined significantly over the past 100 years and the Blue-winged Warbler appears to have an advantage over the Golden-winged Warbler in occupation of shrubby dry habitats in this region.

Acknowledgments

Funding for NRRRI's bird monitoring program was provided by the Chequamegon, Chippewa, and Superior National Forests and the Legislative Commission for Minnesota Resources. Thanks to Jan Green, Linda Parker, and Andy Paulious for providing helpful comments on an earlier draft. This is contribution number 317 of the Center for Water and the Environment of the Natural Resources Research Institute.

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A Brief History of the Seasonal Report And the Winter Distribution of Ten Avian Species

Robert E. Holtz

In this brief article I will describe how the format of the “Seasonal Report” has changed over the last 60 years. In addition, I will discuss the changes in the winter distribution of ten bird species during the last 31 years.

History

As most readers probably know, originally our publication was called *The Flicker*. Volume 1, Number 1 appeared in 1929. It consisted of only four very general articles, the first of which described the author’s sadness upon witnessing a shrike (undoubtedly a Northern Shrike, as it was a January observation) kill a Tufted Titmouse. Volume 36, Number 1 (March 1964) was the first issue referred to as ***The Loon***.

The March 1937 issue of *The Flicker* contains an article entitled “Ten Years of Winter Birds.” It is a summary, incomplete as admitted in the article, of birds seen in Minnesota during the months of December, January, and February, beginning in January of 1927. The author, E. D. Swenborg, indicated he used *The Auk*, *Wilson Bulletin*, *Bird Lore*, *The Flicker*, and his own records to compile the report. Currently, the MOU has very incomplete records prior to 1941; therefore, it is difficult to pinpoint the early development of seasonal reports.

The forerunner of seasonal reports first appeared, as far as I could find, in Volume 13, Number 2 (May 1941) as “Winter Bird Census.” It mentioned reports of a few species from only eight localities. Only winter season reports appeared in *The Flicker* until Volume 19, Number 3 (September, 1947). That first report was very general, covering the 1947 months of May through August. No contributors

were listed. This report was written by Mary Lupient, who continued to write similar reports for over 13 years, her last one covering the winter of 1960–61. It appeared in Volume 33, Number 2 (June 1961).

In the same issue containing Mary Lupient’s last report, Ronald L. Huber wrote the spring “Seasonal Report” for 1961. That was the first official reference to a specific season’s report. Mr. Huber mentioned the spring weather first and then listed species from loons to sparrows. In many cases he mentioned earliest dates seen. In most cases, reporters were listed by name along with the species and dates. No list of contributors appeared at the end of the report. The report mentioned that 264 species had been reported that spring.

Volume 36, Number 3 (September 1964) marked further changes in the “Seasonal Report”. The reports began to look more like they appear today. It was the first issue to record contributors’ initials by species seen and provide a list of reporters at the end of the article. However, there was still a discernible difference in how the contributors were listed. They were alphabetized by first initial and where necessary by second initial. For example, Carl E. Pospichal was listed before Carl M. Johnson because, alphabetically, CEP came before CMJ.

The last significant change in the “Seasonal Report” occurred in Volume 41, Number 2 (June 1969) with the winter 1968–69 report. It was modified to look much as we see the “Seasonal Report” in today’s issues, including a change in how the contributors were listed. Then with the Winter Seasonal Report for 1999–2000 in Volume 72, Number 3, ***The Loon***

Species	1969/70–1978/79	1979/80–1988/89	1989/90–1999/2000
Bald Eagle	14.67	26.8 (83%)	46 (72%)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	7.88	12.44 (58%)	24 (93%)
Cooper's Hawk	3.2	4.6 (44%)	12.27 (167%)
Red-shouldered Hawk	3.44	4.3 (25%)	6.45 (50%)
American Kestrel	20.63	38.33 (86%)	40.45 (5.5%)
Peregrine Falcon	1.30	1.1 (-15%)	4.27 (228%)
Northern Shrike	23.71	42.7 (80%)	50.27 (17.8%)
Northern Cardinal	19.25	28.6 (49%)	41.09 (43.7%)
Song Sparrow	8.75	7.3 (-17%)	12.91 (77%)
Swamp Sparrow	1.0	1.44 (44%)	2.0 (39%)

Table 1. Mean number of counties in which species were seen.

editor Anthony Hertzell reverted to alphabetizing contributors by first and second initials.

Winter Distribution of Ten Species

For a review of the winter distribution of ten species, I began with the 1969–70 report, which, was the first of many “Seasonal Reports” written by Kim Eckert. For distribution I tallied the number of counties from which each species was reported. Other species could have been included, but I chose Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper’s Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, American Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Northern Shrike, Northern Cardinal, Song Sparrow, and Swamp Sparrow.

Table 1 lists the above ten species and the mean number of counties in which each species was observed during each of the three decades surveyed. The last decade includes 2000, for an 11-year decade.

The percentage figures following each of the mean numbers for the second and third decades indicates the change in the mean number of counties in which that species was seen (reported from) as a percent of the previous mean. Note that all were positive changes with the exception of the Peregrine Falcon in the 1980s and the Song Sparrow, also in the 1980s.

The decline for the Peregrine Falcon is understandable, considering its endangered status, and the great increase in the following decade could also be ex-

pected, due to the reintroduction efforts.

After calculating the Table 1 means and percentages and finding nearly all showing large percentage increases, it seemed to me that another factor other than an increase in the distribution of all species was probably playing a role in these changes. Therefore, I returned to all 31 winter reports and recorded the number of report contributors for each of the years. Those figures are summarized in Table 2 by decade, mean number of contributors, and percentage increase in the number of contributors over the previous decade. A quick glance at the table indicates that the increase in the number of contributors very likely could have played a key role in the increase in the distribution of at least most species.

However, if one next looks back at the percentage increase in the counties in which a species was seen, as recorded in Table 1, seven of the ten species show a percentage change in the number of counties in which the species was observed that is substantially greater than the 17.2% increase in contributors in the 1980s. For the 1990s, eight of the percentage increases in counties are greater than the 34.46% increase in contributors, and for five of those eight, the increase was significantly greater.

One variable which cannot be measured by looking at the “Seasonal Report” is the skill level of the contributors from decade to decade. I know my skills are better today than they were during

Decade	Average Number of Contributors	Percent increase from Previous Decade
1969/70 – 1978/79	58	—
1979/80 – 1988/89	68	17
1989/90 – 1999/2000	91	34

Table 2. Mean number of “Seasonal Report” contributors by decade.

the early years I had contributed to the “Seasonal Report.”

Discussion

1. Bald Eagles certainly have increased in distribution. The increase could be termed dramatic. In the 70s there were three years where they were found only in nine counties. In 1999–2000, they were reported from 64 counties.

2. Sharp-shinned Hawks increased at a rate that seems to indicate wider distribution. There were reports from two counties in 1970–71, and from 38 counties in 1999–2000.

3. Cooper’s Hawks may be more difficult to identify, but going from no counties in 1977–78 to 20 in 1998–99 indicates a wider winter time dispersal.

4. Red-shouldered Hawks show a slight increase in distribution.

5. American Kestrels may be a species of to watch in the coming years. Their meager 5.5% increase in county dispersal from the 1980s to the 1990s, while reports increased by 34.46% indicates this species bears watching. It was reported from 52 counties in the winter of 1986–87. That number dropped to 28 counties in 1993–94 and 1996–97, with a bit of an increase after 1996–97.

6. Peregrine Falcon re-introduction has greatly increased their number, and their winter dispersal increased to six counties for 1999–2000. Those counties are largely in the metro area.

7. Northern Shrike distribution increases in the 1990s do not match the increase in contributors to the “Seasonal Report.” Nevertheless, they were reported from 64

counties in 1995–96.

8. Northern Cardinals are doing well. Since the winter of 1982–83 when they were reported from 32 counties, the range of counties from which they have been reported has been from 31 to 48 (1989–90). Whereas, in the 14 years prior to that, the number of report counties ranged from 6 (1971–72) to 27 (1975–76 and 1976–77).

9. Song Sparrow distribution dropped in the 1980s, but seems to have rebounded well in the 1990s. In the 1980s, nine county reports on two occasions (1983–84 and 1988–89) were the highest recorded. In 1999–2000 they were reported from 24 counties.

10. Swamp Sparrow reports may never be very high. For several years there were no reports of Swamp Sparrows and the high county count only reached six (1997–98). However, they are very secretive. I have found them in the winter only by pishing. They may have a wider distribution than we are observing.

I would like to thank the “Seasonal Report” contributors for the data they collect and submit. Many have been contributors for several decades. Their numbers, for winter reports, have increased from a low of just 45 in 1974–75 to 120 in 1999–2000. However, special thanks must go to the “Seasonal Report” editors/compiler for their yeoman service to all of us.

As a final note, I would like to add that Anthony Hertz provided me with a copy of the Occasional Paper, *The Winter Bird-life of Minnesota*, by Thomas S. Roberts (1916). While the paper did not provide the same type of information I found in *The Loon*, of interest was the use of four categories of Minnesota winter birds: permanent resident, winter visitant, half-hardy, and accidental. Of the ten species whose records I reviewed here, none appear in Roberts’ first three categories and only the Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and Song Sparrow are on his accidental list.

668 Overlook Dr., Roseville, MN 55113.

The Winter Season

(1 December 2001 – 28 February 2002)

Karl J. Bardon

*Record warm temperatures left many lingering birds from the fall season and induced a number of interesting overwintering species. For the most part, boreal invaders were not well represented. The only rarities were the state's third **Anna's Hummingbird** in Minneapolis and its fifth **Brambling** at Battle Lake. **Palm Warbler** and **Dunlin** were recorded for the first time in winter.*

The period December–February was the second warmest on record statewide, surpassed only by Winter 1997–98, while November – February was the warmest ever. Mean temperatures (°F) were 23.9° for December, 19.9° for January, and 25° for February, which were 9.8, 11.7, and 10.9 degrees above normal respectively. Statewide, the high temperatures each month were in the lower 60s, with the maximum reported as 65° at Worthington on 24 February. Statewide low temperatures were only in the –20s, with the minimum reported as –28° at Tower on 4 February. The Twin Cities set a record by not reaching a below zero temperature until 18 January (previous record 16 January 1955), and this proved to be the only subzero reading all winter! Precipitation was 0.5 inches below normal statewide during December and January, but closer to normal in February (0.14 below average) when 4–9 inches of snow fell in central and southern regions, 6–12 inches fell on the North Shore, and 15–19 inches fell locally in Pine County.

Similar to previous warm winters (e.g., 1997–1998 and 1999–2000), observers focused on lingering waterbirds in December, since many lakes in the south did not freeze until late December (up to a month later than normal). Record late dates were set for a number of waterbirds, including **Greater White-fronted Goose**, **Greater Scaup**, **Killdeer** and **Dunlin** at Duluth, and **Great Egret**, **Surf Scoter** and **Black Scoter** at Winona. On

a trip to the Southeast on 22 December, I encountered balmy, snow-less, ice-free conditions reminiscent of early November, and was surprised to estimate concentrations of 12,100 **Tundra Swans** at Reno and 75,000 **Common Mergansers** on Lake Pepin.

Lingering passerines were widely distributed. A **Marsh Wren** was found in the Minnesota River Valley at Mound Springs Park, Hennepin County — all but two of the previous nine winter records have been from the Minnesota River Valley in the Twin Cities. A pair of **Eastern Phoebes** feeding on berries along a small creek in Little Sauk, Todd County, lingered into the New Year. Among the record high 18 individual **Yellow-rumped Warblers** was an “Audubon’s” **Warbler** documented in Washington County; this represents only the 16th record of this subspecies in Minnesota, four of which have occurred in winter. Despite **Palm Warbler**’s late migration period in fall, eleven other species of warblers had been recorded in previous winters before this species’ debut on 14 December at Two Harbors. An **Orange-crowned Warbler** on 14 December was the third species of warbler found this season. The **Summer Tanager** at Duluth was only the third winter record and the latest date for northern Minnesota, while a late **Baltimore Oriole**, also at Duluth, was carefully scrutinized to eliminate Bull-ock’s Oriole. Minnesota’s only record of Bull-ock’s is from Duluth in the winter. A

Lincoln's Sparrow in downtown Minneapolis was only the eighth ever found in winter, but was the observer's second for this location during winter! Lastly, a **Savannah Sparrow** was discovered in a Wilkin County field in mid-January. In spite of this multitude of interesting late passerines, no **towhees** were reported for the first winter since 1985, in great contrast to last year's seventeen reports. Also, for the first time in over 40 years, no **meadowlarks** were found.

Most of the interesting waterfowl and passerines did not remain throughout the winter. Overwintering records of interest included three **White-winged Scoters** at Duluth, several **Red-breasted Mergansers** in the southern Twin Cities metro area, an injured **Sandhill Crane** at Moorhead, four different **Carolina Wrens**, and increased numbers of **Northern Flickers** and **Eastern Bluebirds**.

Although one or two **Ring-billed Gulls** have overwintered at Black Dog Lake in the past (1970–1971, 1992–1993, and 1999–2000), for the first time ever a large flock of gulls overwintered at Black Dog and the adjacent Minnesota River in Hennepin County, resulting in the first confirmation of both **Herring Gull** and **Glaucous Gull** overwintering away from Lake Superior. Greater than normal numbers of gulls were present at the western end of Lake Superior this season as well. As a result, at least four **Great Black-backed Gulls** and four **Iceland Gulls** were documented, two species which were considered Casual just a few years ago. Additional reports at Black Dog Lake of an adult Iceland Gull with completely white wingtips were inconclusive since recent experience in northern Alaska has shown that adult Glaucous Gulls can appear very small-billed and long-winged, and can even appear slightly smaller than Herring Gulls. Well described and more noteworthy was the **Black-legged Kittiwake** found feeding on a road-killed deer along I-35 in Pine County.

With few exceptions, boreal species did not move southward in significant numbers. A record high 41 **Black-backed**

Woodpeckers included 2 reports from Sherburne County, the first south reports since the invasion of 1987, but the reports of **Three-toed Woodpeckers** was average. Except for **Snowy Owls**, which were widespread in good numbers, numbers of northern owls were modest at best. Though **White-winged Crossbills** were widespread, most of the reports outside the coniferous region were of individuals or small groups at feeders, and the large numbers typifying an "invasion" were not present. Other Fringillids were found in average numbers.

Warm temperatures during the period 18–23 February brought a surge of early migrants into the state, with several new early dates set for waterfowl, but subsequent snowfall and below normal temperatures curbed this migration. March almost became the coldest month of the "winter." As with the winter 1999–2000 season, large numbers of **Greater White-fronted Geese** moved into the state during the latter half of February, heralded by a flock of six in Otter Tail County on the remarkable date of 14 February. Well over half of the 675 reported individuals had already been seen by 23 February, even though the previous early migration date was 24 February! Despite these large numbers of white-fronted geese, there were only two reports of migrant **Snow Geese** and one of **Ross's Goose** during the same period. Observers also reported flocks of ten **Tundra Swans** and seven **Red-breasted Mergansers** along the Mississippi River in the Southeast region on 18 February. Although both species occasionally overwinter, the flock sizes indicated that these were record early migrants (and underscores the importance of reporting flock sizes when claiming early dates for waterfowl).

The early migration inspired Frank Nicoletti and Dave Carman to begin counting raptors at the West Skyline Hawkwatch in Duluth earlier than usual, and as a result they found a record early **Cooper's Hawk** on 18 February. Also on this remarkable date was an immature **Red-shouldered Hawk** in Grant Coun-

ty, a first county record. Although this could have been an early migrant, experience at the Hastings-Prescott Bird Count (where large numbers of Red-shouldered Hawks are seen) has indicated that adults move north weeks ahead of immatures.

This report summarizes 159 species found by over 118 observers. The many additional observers who participated in the 59 CBCs and/or those who reported only to MOU-net were not listed. Though CBC data were fully incorporated into this report as usual, a separate summary of the CBC season has been prepared by

CBC editor Roger Schroeder. My thanks to Roger for coordinating and compiling these data. I also thank Betsy Beneke, Dave Benson, Kim Eckert, and Anthony Hertzell, who compiled the state's three rare bird alerts, and Paul Budde, who provided a summary of data submitted by observers electronically. Peder Svingen reviewed the manuscript and compiled sightings of northern owls and Trumpeter Swans. Anthony Hertzell produced the map used in Figure 1.

13073 Hastings St. NE, Blaine, MN 55449.

KEY TO SEASONAL REPORTS

1. Upper case (**LEAST TERN**) indicates a Casual or Accidental species in the state.
2. Dates listed in bold (**10/9**) indicate an occurrence either earlier, later or within the three earliest or latest dates on file.
3. Counties listed in bold (**Aitkin**) indicate an unusual occurrence for that county.
4. Counties with an underline (Becker) indicate a first county record.
5. Counties listed in italics (*Crow Wing*) indicate a first county breeding record.
6. Brackets [] indicate a species for which there is reasonable doubt as to its origin or wildness.
7. Counts listed in bold (**150**) indicate total within or exceeding the top three high counts for that species.
8. Dagger "†" preceding observer's initials denotes documentation was submitted.
9. Species documented with a photograph are denoted with "ph".

The Season publishes reports of bird sightings from throughout Minnesota. We particularly invite reports from parts of the state that have been neglected or covered lightly in past reports. To become a contributor, request a report form from the Editor of *The Season*, Peder Svingen, 2602 E. 4th St., Duluth, MN 55812-1533.

Common Loon — Record 16 individuals reported from 12 counties, equally split between the north and south. Late north 12/15 Duluth CBC, 12/16 Crosby and Two Harbors CBCs. Late south 12/15 Willmar CBC and Ramsey (4) BRL, 12/16 Hennepin SLC, RBJ, PEB.

Pied-billed Grebe — Nine individuals reported from eight counties. Two overwintered in Otter Tail (Fergus Falls) SPM. Only other north reports: 12/15 Bemidji CBC and 1/5 †Battle Lake CBC. Latest south report 1/6 Winona JDa.

Horned Grebe — Only reports: 12/17 Cook (Horseshoe Bay, L. Superior) PCC, PHS, 1/20 & 2/24 Lake (11-12 near Stewart R. mouth, L. Superior) JWL.

Red-necked Grebe — Only reports from L. Superior: 12/15 Duluth CBC, 12/17 Cook PCC, PHS, 12/10-26 Lake JWL.

American White Pelican — An injured bird overwintered in Dakota (Black Dog L.) m.ob. Late south (all reports) 12/6 Minneapolis *fide* AXH, 12/15 Goodhue BRL and †Northwest McLeod CBC, 12/22

Winona CBC, 12/26 Lac Qui Parle CBC.

Double-crested Cormorant — Reported from nine counties. Overwintered in Dakota (25 at Black Dog L.) PEJ, m.ob. Only additional report after early January was 2/14 Otter Tail (4) JLH. Only additional north location was from early December in St. Louis *fide* KRE.

Great Blue Heron — Fewer reports than usual. Nineteen individuals reported from six south counties. The only reports not associated with a CBC were from Ramsey (Pigs Eye L. outlet, Mississippi River, South St. Paul), with a maximum of 12 on 1/6 (KJB).

Great Egret — One seen 12/21 Winona KG. Third winter report and latest date on record.

Black-crowned Night-Heron — One seen 1/5–13 Dakota (Black Dog L. outlet to Minnesota River) †DWK.

Greater White-fronted Goose — Record late north through 12/9 St. Louis (Duluth) DAG, JWJ, PHS *et al.* (injured, also see fall report). Two reports of late lingering birds south: 12/15–1/11 Martin †BRB and 1/27 Wright DFJ. Total of 675 spring migrants reported in 15 counties. Early north (only date and earliest on record) 2/14–25 Otter Tail (7) JLH. Early south 2/18 Big Stone (5) and Swift (4) SPM, 2/20 Lac Qui Parle (1) RBJ, 2/21 Olmsted (6) CBe (previous early date was 2/24). Peak 2/23 Olmsted (150+) RLE, CBe, CRM, Nobles (90) PEJ, and Jackson (190) PEJ.

Snow Goose — Overwintered in Otter Tail (1) SPM. Total of 119 lingering birds through 1/4 Martin (1) BRB, most of which were on CBCs. Only early spring migrants were 2/23 Jackson (1) PEJ and Goodhue BRL.

Ross's Goose — Up to five individuals lingered 12/11–15 Olmsted (E. Landfill Reservoir) RLE *et al.* Early south (only

report) 2/28 Rice (Wells L.) TFB (second earliest date on record).

Canada Goose — Reported from record 58 counties throughout the state. Peak count on Rochester CBC (26,000). Spring migrants observed as early as 2/16–18, including lesser forms.

Mute Swan — One overwintered in Wright (Monticello) †CRM, †DFJ, m.ob. Also seen 12/9–15 Olmsted (Rochester) WOB *et al.*, 12/28–30 Freeborn (Albert Lea L.) †AEB *et al.*

Trumpeter Swan — Overwintered in Otter Tail (300+ along the Otter Tail River) SPM and Wright/Sherburne (along the Mississippi River near Monticello; maximum 658 on 1/4 KJB). Only other mid-winter report: 1/30 Morrison (12 at Camp Ripley) WLB. Late migrants (away from wintering areas) included 12/2–14 Freeborn (Alden) AEB, 12/14 Rice (2 at Mazaska L.) TFB, 12/15 Dakota (2 at Gun Club L.) TAT, 12/7–21 Houston (2) MHF, 12/31 Ramsey (2 along Hardman Avenue dike) JPS. Early migrants noted in 11 counties beginning 2/11 Becker (23 at Height of Land L.) *fide* BAB, 2/16 Crow Wing (8) PSP, 2/18 Norman (4) DPJ.

Tundra Swan — Two or three overwintered in Wright (Monticello) RBJ, DFJ, KJB *et al.* Late north (only reports) 12/1 Becker (84) *fide* BAB, 12/1 Cass (100) MRN, early December St. Louis (Duluth) *fide* KRE, 12/22 Aitkin WEN. Late south migrants in 14 counties through 12/26 Winona (200) KJB. Early south migrants (only reports) 2/18 Wabasha (10) PEJ, DFN (earliest date on record), 2/23 Olmsted (17) RLE, 2/24 Waseca (8) JEZ. Peak 12/22 Houston (12,100 at Reno) KJB. An additional 4896 were counted the same day on the Winona CBC, for a grand total of nearly 17,000!

Wood Duck — Observed in 14 counties. Overwintered in Dakota (Black Dog L.); additional mid-winter reports from Yellow Medicine (Granite Falls), Wright

(Monticello), and Winona. Late north (only reports) 12/15 Bemidji CBC, 12/16 Fergus Falls CBC, 12/27 St. Louis (Duluth) †PHS. Potential early migrants noted 2/23–27 in three south counties. Peak count 12/2 Scott (175) PEJ.

Gadwall — Seen in 20 south counties. Mid-winter/overwintering reports from Hennepin, Scott, Dakota, Ramsey, and Goodhue. No reports from Winona between 1/6–2/18. Peak 12/22 Houston (600 at LaCrescent) KJB. Potential early migrants 2/23 Kandiyohi (12) DMF, 2/23 Nobles and Jackson PEJ.

American Wigeon — Observed in nine counties. Late north 11/30–12/3 St. Louis (Duluth) DAG, JWL, PHS, 12/16 Fergus Falls CBC. Late south 12/23 Hennepin SLC, KJB, 12/24 Winona JDa, 12/29 †Northern Wright County CBC. Only mid-winter report 1/17 Dakota (male) PEJ. Early migrants (only report) 2/23 Jackson (8) PEJ.

American Black Duck — Observed in 20 counties in eastern and central regions, plus 12/29–2/28 Yellow Medicine and Chippewa (Granite Falls) RJS in the west.

Mallard — Reported from 46 counties throughout the state. Peak count on the Fairmont CBC (8,940).

Northern Shoveler — Reported from ten south counties. Late south 12/22 in four counties, 12/28 Hennepin (70+) SLC.

Northern Pintail — Reported from a record 16 south counties. Overwintered in Dakota (3) PEJ. Late south 12/22 Houston KJB and Winona CBC (4), 12/30 Freeborn AEB. Early south 2/18 Wabasha (9) PEJ, DFN, 2/19 Olmsted (2) NAJ, 2/23 in five counties including Nobles and Jackson (400) PEJ, Martin (200) BRB.

Green-winged Teal — Reported from nine counties. Overwintered in Dakota (41 at Black Dog L.) PEJ, with occasional reports from nearby areas. Late north

(only reports) 12/23 St. Louis (Duluth) †PHS, 1/5 Battle Lake CBC. Late south 12/26 Winona JDa, 1/1 Afton CBC. Potential early south migrant 2/18 Wabasha (1) PEJ, DFN.

Canvasback — Observed in 13 counties. Late north (only reports) 12/8 St. Louis TAT, plus the Fergus Falls CBC (count week). Late south 12/24 Winona, 12/28 Dakota. Early south (only report) 2/23 Jackson (34) PEJ.

Redhead — Reported from 15 counties. Only two mid-winter reports: 1/21 Washington (female near Afton) KJB, 2/6–28 Dakota (female on L. Rebecca, Hastings) TAT (possibly the same individual). Late north (only reports) 12/8 St. Louis (3) TAT, 12/11 Beltrami DPJ, 12/16 Fergus Falls CBC (4). Late south 12/29 Wright (6) DFJ, 1/9 Freeborn RBJ. Early south 2/17 Lac Qui Parle (#?) WCM, 2/18 Wabasha (2) PEJ, DFN, 2/23 Jackson (28) PEJ and Kandiyohi (15) DMF.

Ring-necked Duck — Reported from a record high 21 counties. Overwintered in Beltrami (2) DPJ, Otter Tail (2) SPM, and Scott (8) PEJ, m.ob. Late north (only report) 12/27 St. Louis (Duluth) †PHS. Late south 12/26 Goodhue/Wabasha (1) KJB, 12/29 Northern Wright County CBC. Early south 2/15 Dakota (#?) PEJ, 2/18 Wabasha and Winona (2) PEJ, DEN, 2/23 Rice TFB, 2/26 Olmsted CRM. Peak 12/2 Scott (1200) PEJ.

Greater Scaup — All reports: Late north 12/15 †Fergus Falls CBC (1), 12/4–12/30 St. Louis (Duluth) †PHS, KJB *et al* (record late north). Also seen on the Bemidji CBC (count week). Late south 12/5 Winona JEB, 12/9 Meeker DMF, 12/22 Houston (100) KJB, and 12/26 Goodhue/Wabasha (6) KJB.

Lesser Scaup — Reported from 26 counties. Overwintered in Beltrami DPJ. Only additional mid-winter report 1/27 Wright DFJ. Late north (all reports) 12/15 Fargo-Moorhead CBC (6), 12/16 Fergus Falls

CBC (3), 12/25 St. Louis (one at Duluth) PHS. Late south 1/6 Winona JDa and Hennepin SLC. Early south 2/18 Big Stone SPM, 2/18 Wabasha (46), Hennepin (3), and Dakota (8) PEJ.

Harlequin Duck — Seen 11/30–12/28 St. Louis (female/immature at Duluth) m.ob., 12/17–21 Cook (female/immature at Grand Marais) PHS, PCC *et al.*, 12/17 & 1/28 Cook (adult male at Paradise Beach) PHS, PCC, 1/29 Lake (3 females at Two Harbors) JWJ.

Surf Scoter — Minnesota's ninth winter record: **12/1–5** Winona (Winona, also see fall report) DBz, RBJ, JEB (record late south date).

White-winged Scoter — Overwintered St. Louis (3 female/immatures at Duluth) †PHS, m.ob. Also reported 12/13 Olmsted (Rochester) †RLE, 12/1–15 Winona (2 at Winona, also see fall report) DBz, RBJ, JEB, 12/17 Cook †PHS, PCC, and the Bemidji CBC (count week). Peak 12/1 St. Louis (13 at Duluth) PHS.

Black Scoter — Reported **12/3–4** St. Louis (max. 2 at Duluth) CRM, PHS *et al.*, **12/1–15** Winona (Winona, also see fall report) DBz, RBJ, JEB *et al.* (record late south). Only six previous winter records.

Long-tailed Duck — Seen on L. Superior including peak 12/17 Cook (272) PHS, PCC. Many south reports: 12/8 Meeker DMF, 12/15 †Bloomington CBC, 12/15–17 Olmsted (2 at Rochester) RLE, DFJ (including †Rochester CBC), 12/26 Goodhue and Wabasha (3 on L. Pepin) KJB.

Bufflehead — Observed in 22 counties in all regions except the Northwest and Southwest. Overwintered in Lake (4–6) JWJ, Douglas SPM, and in southern Twin Cities area, where one or more females wandered around (Scott, Dakota, Hennepin and Ramsey counties). Late north 1/3 Beltrami DPJ, 1/4 Cook PEB, 1/5 St. Louis PHS. Late south 12/20 Excelsior CBC (36), 12/22 Winona CBC (4). No reports

of early migrants.

Common Goldeneye — Reported from 39 counties in all regions except the Northwest. Peak 12/26 Goodhue (1200 on L. Pepin) KJB.

Common Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser — Presumed hybrid 2/6 Dakota (female at Black Dog L.) †PEJ. Fourth report of this hybrid (*The Loon* 71:51–52).

Hooded Merganser — Reported from 4 north and 18 south counties. Large numbers still present in December including peaks 12/3 Dakota (311 at Black Dog L.) TAT in the south and 12/8 Beltrami (50) DPJ in the north. Overwintered in St. Louis (8th year at Virginia), Otter Tail (Fergus Falls), and the Twin Cities area (10+ in Ramsey, Scott, Dakota, Washington counties). Reports of early migrants included 2/18 Dakota (#?) PEJ, Wabasha (1) DFN and Winona (6) DFN; 2/23 Goodhue (#?) RBJ, and 2/27 (#?) Rice TFB, but without more data on flock sizes, these are difficult to distinguish from wintering birds (e.g., a flock of 4–5 overwintered at Black Dog L.).

Common Merganser — Reported from 40 counties throughout the state. Exceptional peak of **75,000** lingered at L. Pepin through 12/22 JPM, KJB, with “only” 25,000 present on 12/26 when lake mostly frozen (KJB). Large numbers still lingering 1/6 Dakota (3300 at Black Dog L.) PEJ and 1/15 Winona (1000 from Minneapolis to Whitman Dam).

Red-breasted Merganser — Reported from a record five north and nine south counties (western-most observation in Meeker). Overwintered in St. Louis, and 2–4 in the southern Twin Cities (Dakota, Hennepin, and Ramsey counties). Additional (and unusual) late migrants 12/4 Freeborn AEB, 12/9 Meeker DMF, 12/15 Crosby CBC, 12/16 Aitkin WEN, 12/22 Goodhue (L. Pepin) KJB, 1/7 Wabasha (L. Pepin) OLJ. Record early migrants 2/18 Winona (7) PEJ, DFN.

Ruddy Duck — Reported from eight south counties through 1/13 Dakota (Black Dog L.) ADS *et al.*

Bald Eagle — Reported from a record 66 counties throughout the state. Late movement over Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve in Duluth, including 85 on 12/8 and 61 on 12/10 (FJN). Early migrants counted in Duluth (18 on 2/17 and 43 on 2/18) FJN, DCa, and along the Minnesota River in Renville (19 on 2/18) WCM.

Northern Harrier — Approximately 36 individuals observed in 20 south counties plus Marshall, Polk, Clay, and Wilkin in the Northwest and West-central regions. Only January reports: 1/12 Murray BRB, 1/17 Lyon RJS. Slight increase in reports beginning 2/17–19, including 2/17 Wilkin (3 males) SPM.

Sharp-shinned Hawk — Reported from 12 north and 26 south counties, and in all regions. Reported throughout the season in the south, but the only February report in the north was 2/2 RHO.

Cooper's Hawk — Reported from 18 south counties throughout the season. Only reliable north report was an apparent record early migrant 2/18 St. Louis (Duluth) FJN, DCa. An additional north report in mid-December from Polk lacked details.

Northern Goshawk — Except for the 21 counted at Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve in Duluth on 12/8, about 42 individuals were reported from 16 north and 8 south counties. Most southerly were 12/27 Nobles RBJ, 1/20 Winona (adult) †JBr.

Red-shouldered Hawk — At least 17 individuals reported from 9 south counties, plus 12/15 Crosby CBC and 2/18 **Grant** (immature) SPM in the north. There were no February reports south. Peak 12/29 St. Paul (Northeast Suburban) CBC (7).

Red-tailed Hawk — Reported from 56 counties in all regions. Adult dark morph

(*B. j. calurus*) observed 1/6 Washington (Newport) †KJB, within several miles of dark morph seen last two winters.

Rough-legged Hawk — As many as 127 individuals reported from 55 counties throughout the state and season. Unusual numbers in west (where normally scarce in winter), even in mid-winter (e.g., 8 at Rothsay W.M.A., Wilkin County, 1/25 SPM). Peak numbers (presumably north-bound birds) 2/16 St. Louis (16 at Sax-Zim bog) FJN, 2/24 Kittson (13) PHS.

Golden Eagle — A record 28 individuals reported from 15 counties throughout the season. Centers of abundance included Duluth (6), Polk County (5), West-central region plus adjacent Todd County (8), Wabasha and Winona counties (4), and the Minnesota River Valley from Granite Falls to Mankato (2). Also reported 12/1 Meeker (Dassel Twp.) DMF, 12/11 Cottonwood/Redwood (Hwy 71). Five still southbound 12/8 St. Louis (Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve in Duluth) FJN.

American Kestrel — Reported from 9 north and 37 south counties. Northernmost reports were Polk, Becker, Cass and St. Louis.

Merlin — Approximately 21 individuals from 13 counties scattered throughout the state and season. "Richardson's" Merlins reported 1/11 & 2/7 Wilkin SPM, 2/4 Meeker DMF, 12/6 & 2/19 Winona CBe.

Gyrfalcon — Immature gray morphs (same bird?) reported 12/3 (London Rd. and 16th Ave. East in Duluth) FJN, 1/5 (Superior Entry) †PHS, and 2/4 (Peavey elevator) MH, all in St. Louis County.

Peregrine Falcon — Seen in St. Louis, Stearns, Hennepin, Ramsey and Dakota.

Prairie Falcon — Reported without details 12/1 Polk (near Wetland, Pines, and Prairie Audubon Sanctuary) *vide* BAB.

Gray Partridge — Reported only from

Cottonwood, Meeker, Mower, plus the Warren (14), Marshall (12), and Albert Lea (6) CBCs.

Ring-necked Pheasant — Observed in 37 counties as far north as Otter Tail and Wadena, plus Polk and the Bemidji CBC.

Ruffed Grouse — Reported from 29 counties in range.

Spruce Grouse — Seen only in Lake.

Sharp-tailed Grouse — Reported from Aitkin, St. Louis, Kittson, Roseau, Polk, plus the Warren (10), Baudette (12), and International Falls (30) CBCs. Also found 12/8 Carlton TAT.

Greater Prairie-Chicken — Reported from Polk, Clay, Wilkin, and Otter Tail. Also reported 2/18 Lac Qui Parle (5 at Plover Prairie) WCM.

Wild Turkey — Observed in 29 counties as far north as Otter Tail, Todd, and Pine. Peak count on the St. Paul (Northeast Suburban) CBC (354). Also reported 2/24 Kittson PHS, JMJ, SAS.

Northern Bobwhite — No reports.

American Coot — Reported from 15 south and 2 north counties. Overwintered in Otter Tail, Wright, Scott, and Waseca. Potential early migrant 2/23 Wabasha JLU.

Sandhill Crane — One injured bird overwintered 11/28 through 2/18 Clay (Moorhead) †CMN, RHO. Only previous overwintering record was in 1968–1969 (*The Loon* 41:45). Also seen 12/13–14 †St. Paul CBC (count week); second latest south date.

Killdeer — Reported from nine south counties and one north county. Latest north date on record 12/4 St. Louis †PHS. Late south 12/28 Dakota ADS. No January reports, but two birds 2/1 Houston FZL were reported as overwintering. Ad-

ditional February reports: 2/8 Washington TAT, 2/18 Wabasha PEJ, 2/24 Mower RCK, RDK.

Dunlin — First winter record 12/15–16 St. Louis (Park Pt., Duluth) ph. †MS.

Common Snipe — Two overwintered in St. Louis (Duluth) JRN. Also found 12/29 St. Paul (Northeast Suburban) CBC, 1/1 Austin CBC, 1/2–23 Hennepin SLC, 2/18 & 2/27 Dakota TAT, ADS.

Bonaparte's Gull — Late north (only report) 12/9 Mille Lacs L. PHS (third latest north date). Late south (all reports) 12/1 Meeker DMF, 12/5 Winona JEB, 12/5 Goodhue and Wabasha (L. Pepin) RBJ, 12/7 Wright (2) DFJ, 12/15 Washington (2 at Afton) BRL (ties second latest south date).

Ring-billed Gull — Reported from 4 north and 28 south counties. Up to nine individuals overwintered at Black Dog L., Dakota Co. and adjacent Minnesota R., Hennepin Co. m.ob. Late north 12/8 Beltrami DPJ, 1/5 St. Louis PHS, 1/20 Lake (injured foot) JWJ. Late south 12/26 Goodhue and Wabasha (200) KJB, 12/27 Hennepin (L. Harriet) SLC. Absent from Mississippi R. along Hardman Ave. dike in South St. Paul, Ramsey and Dakota counties, between 1/6 and 2/7 (KJB). Many migrants moved into south beginning 2/18, including 281 in Goodhue and Wabasha counties RBJ.

Herring Gull — Reported from 4 north and 17 south counties. Numbers at western end of L. Superior at Duluth-Superior variable, but overall number greater than normal (PHS). For the first time, a significant flock (170–200) overwintered away from L. Superior at Black Dog L., Dakota Co. (and adjacent Minnesota R. in Hennepin, and Mississippi R. along Hardman Ave. dike in Ramsey and Washington counties) m.ob. One pushed ahead of the season on 2/6 Anoka (Mississippi R. at Anoka) KJB. Only report of potential early migrants: 2/23 Goodhue RBJ.



Juvenile Great Black-backed Gull, 4 December 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County. Photo by Peder Svingen.

Thayer's Gull — All reports. Two adults and one immature overwintered in St. Louis (Duluth) PHS *et al.* (with additional birds at adjacent Superior, Wisconsin landfill). Also reported 12/1 Cook (2 first-winters at Grand Marais) and 12/9 Lake (first-winter at Two Harbors). Late south 12/26 Goodhue and Wabasha (2 at L. Pepin) KJB. At least two first-winters and one adult were present at Black Dog L., Dakota Co. and adjacent Minnesota R., Hennepin Co. through 1/2 (m.ob.), but only one first-winter attempted overwintering through **2/3** Dakota KJB.

Iceland Gull — Four individuals were documented: 12/9 Lake (first-winter at Two Harbors) †JWL, 12/15 †Duluth CBC (first-winter), 1/1 Dakota (adult “Kumlien’s” at Black Dog L.) †TAT, BAF, and 1/11 St. Louis (adult at Duluth) †MH (probably same individual that wintered

at the Superior, Wisconsin landfill).

Lesser Black-backed Gull — Adult from fall season last seen 12/23 Hennepin (L. Calhoun) KJB, SLC.

Glaucous Gull — All reports. Overwintered at western end of L. Superior in Lake and St. Louis including a maximum count 1/27 St. Louis (10 at Duluth) PHS (but additional birds at adjacent Superior, Wisconsin landfill). Maximum numbers at Black Dog L., Dakota Co. (and adjacent Minnesota R., Hennepin Co.) were two adults and three immatures (one of which died); at least one overwintered through **2/27** Dakota TAT. First county occurrences 12/8–14 **Beltrami** (adult at L. Bemidji) †DPJ, 12/15 **Kandiyohi** (first-winter at county landfill) †RSF.

Great Black-backed Gull — All reports:

juvenile 12/4 (Duluth) MH, ph. †PHS, one adult 12/20 †Excelsior CBC, an immature (first or second-winter) 1/1–23 Dakota (Black Dog L. & Burnsville landfill) †ADS, †CRM, JPM, m.ob., and one adult 1/26–27 St. Louis (Duluth) ph. †PHS, †MH *et al.*

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE — First-winter individual found feeding on road-killed deer along I-35 on 12/2 **Pine** (near Sandstone) †TPW (*The Loon* 74:58–59).

Rock Dove — Reported from 63 counties throughout the state.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE — Two birds were reported 12/15 Lyon (Russell) RJS, presumably the same individuals that were documented there in August.

Mourning Dove — Reported from 41 counties throughout the state, including 48 overwintering in St. Louis (Duluth) JRN. Peak 12/22 Winona CBC (275).

Eastern Screech-Owl — Reported from Houston, Freeborn, Wabasha, Hennepin, Clay, plus the Minneapolis (North), St. Paul (Northeast Suburban), Bloomington (count week), Hastings, Rochester (2) and Austin CBCs.

Great Horned Owl — Reported from 48 counties throughout the state.

Snowy Owl — Widespread (please see Figure 1). PHS compiled 134 individuals in 40 counties 10/17–5/18, 61 of which occurred during the winter season.

Northern Hawk Owl — PHS compiled 30 individuals in 8 counties 10/2–2/28, 24 of which occurred during winter season. Unusual location 12/30 Polk (Wetland, Pines, and Prairie Audubon Sanctuary) *vide* BAB. Only other reports away from the Northeast: Beltrami (2), Roseau (3–5), Lake of the Woods (2), Koochiching.

Barred Owl — Observed in 27 counties in all regions except the Southwest.

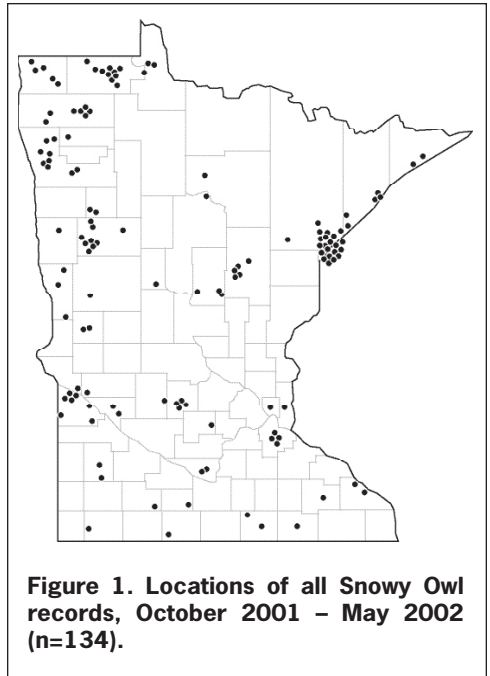


Figure 1. Locations of all Snowy Owl records, October 2001 – May 2002 (n=134).

Great Gray Owl — PHS compiled a total of 31 individuals in Beltrami, Roseau, Lake of the Woods, Aitkin, Lake, and St. Louis counties between 9/20 and 4/15, 23 of which occurred during winter season.

Long-eared Owl — Observed 12/8–1/13 Meeker (Litchfield Nature Center) DMF *et al.*, 12/10–2/27 Rice (max. 2) TFB, 12/15 †Duluth CBC, mid-December Polk (2) *vide* BAB, 12/26 Lac Qui Parle CBC, 12/29 Albert Lea CBC, and 1/9 Waseca (3 at Otisca W.M.A.) RBJ.

Short-eared Owl — Sixteen individuals reported from Marshall, Polk, Norman, Becker, Wilkin, Lincoln. Maximum 12/9 Wilkin (9) SPM. No reports after 1/21 Norman SPM.

Boreal Owl — No reports.

Northern Saw-whet Owl — At least five individuals reported from three sites in Hennepin m.ob. Also seen 1/30–2/19 Rice TFB and 12/30 Wabasha CBC.

ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD — Third state record 12/1–26 **Hennepin** (Minneapolis) JJJ, m.ob. (found dead 12/27).

Belted Kingfisher — Reported from 17 south and 6 north counties throughout the season. Most northerly were 1/3 St. Louis (Ely) BRT, and 12/15 International Falls CBC.

Red-headed Woodpecker — Reported from 13 counties as far north as Cass and Becker.

Red-bellied Woodpecker — Reported from 12 north and 37 south counties, but absent north of a line through the counties of Pennington, Cass, Aitkin and Carlton.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker — In spite of the mild winter, no reports.

Downy Woodpecker — Reported from 63 counties throughout the state.

Hairy Woodpecker — Reported from 64 counties throughout the state.

Three-toed Woodpecker — Only about six individuals reported from Roseau, St. Louis, Lake, and Cook.

Black-backed Woodpecker — A record 41 individuals in Roseau, Lake of the Woods, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Itasca, St. Louis, Lake, plus first south reports since 1987: 1/2–9 Sherburne (Becker) ph. †DO *et al.*, and 2/23 Sherburne (Sand Dunes S.F.) JEH.

Northern Flicker — Excellent numbers from a record 32 south counties. Only north reports: 12/22 Little Falls CBC and overwintered in Otter Tail.

Pileated Woodpecker — Reported from a record 57 counties throughout the state.

Eastern Phoebe — Latest date on record 12/30–1/7 Todd (Little Sauk) RW, †JSK m.ob. Fourth winter record.

Northern Shrike — Reported from 19 north and 18 south counties, and in all regions except the Southwest.

Gray Jay — Reported from ten counties in range.

Blue Jay — Reported from 65 counties throughout the state.

Black-billed Magpie — Reported from ten counties in range.

American Crow — Reported from 64 counties throughout the state.

Common Raven — Reported from 19 counties in range as far south as Anoka, plus 12/29 †St. Paul (Northeast Suburban) CBC (4).

Horned Lark — Reported from 38 counties. Absent north and east of a line through Washington, Mille Lacs, Cass, Polk, Kittson. Potential early migrants noted as early as 1/9–1/21+ but note maxima 12/29 Albert Lea CBC (370) and 1/1 Mountain Lake-Windom CBC (409).

Black-capped Chickadee — Reported from 67 counties throughout the state.

Boreal Chickadee — Found in Aitkin, Lake, Lake of the Woods, and St. Louis.

Tufted Titmouse — Reported from Fillmore, Houston, Olmsted, Wabasha, and Winona, plus 12/29 St. Paul (Northeast Suburban) CBC.

Red-breasted Nuthatch — Reported from 52 counties throughout the state.

White-breasted Nuthatch — Reported from 67 counties throughout the state.

Brown Creeper — Reported from 44 counties in all regions.

Carolina Wren — Four reports. Overwintered in Mower (Austin) ph. †JEM, m.ob., and Olmsted (two locations in

Rochester) †Rochester CBC, †PHS, m.ob. Also reported 11/25–12/29+ Washington (Stillwater) ph. TTh *et al.*

Winter Wren — Only reports: 12/11 Houston FZL, 1/8 Rice TFB.

Marsh Wren — Reported 12/8–16 Hennepin (Mound Springs Park) †SLC. Eight previous winter records.

Golden-crowned Kinglet — Reported from ten counties in all regions except the East-central. Only reports after early January: 1/23–24 Todd RBJ, JSK, 1/30 Lake JWL, 2/24 Kittson PHS, JMJ, SKS.

Eastern Bluebird — Reported from 13 south counties. Overwintered in Brown JSS. Only other reports between 1/9 and 2/15 were 1/16 Houston FZL, 1/28 Washington (2) TEB. Nine reports of lingering birds through 1/9 LeSueur (8) RBJ. Ten reports of possible early migrants starting 2/15 Wright WCM, 2/16 Redwood JEB and Scott (16 at Louisville Swamp) DWK.

Townsend's Solitaire — Eight reports: 12/17 Cook (Grand Marais campground, probably same bird as 11/22+) PHS, PCC, 1/5 LeSueur (Kasota Prairie) ChH, 1/27 Dakota (Lebanon Hills Regional Park) JPM, 1/27 Winona (county road 39) CBE, 1/31 Meeker (Litchfield Nature Center) †DMF, 2/5 Renville (Town & Country C.P.) KJB, SLC, 2/18 Renville (Skalbakken C.P.) †WCM, and 2/24+ Hennepin (Minneapolis) ChM, SLC.

Hermit Thrush — Only report: 2/18 Renville †WCM.

American Robin — Reported from 53 counties throughout the state. Hundreds present locally south; high count 12/15 Minneapolis CBC (1067).

Varied Thrush — Eleven reports of 13 individuals. Reported from late November through 2/3+ Hennepin (Brooklyn Park) ph. AKF, 11/27–12/3 Cass (max. 2 near Motley on 12/3) *fide* JBL, 12/7 Otter

Tail (Long L.) EJE, 12/11–23 Becker (Cotton L.) †KHa, 12/17–26 Beltrami (Bemidji) *fide* DPJ, 12/30 Sherburne (Zimmerman) *fide* AXH, 12/31–1/16 Dakota (Eagan) ADS, TAT, m.ob., late December through mid-January+ Anoka (East Bethel) *fide* AXH, 1/3–6 Otter Tail (Round L.) EJE, DST, 1/6 (and other dates) Crow Wing (2 at Brainerd) PSP *et al.*, 1/22–2/26+ Otter Tail (Fergus Falls) GO, m.ob.

Northern Mockingbird — Observed 12/13–1/17 St. Louis (Duluth) including the †Duluth CBC.

Brown Thrasher — Only reports: 1/2 Polk (2 at Crookston) EEF, 1/5 Dakota TAT, ADS.

European Starling — Reported from 61 counties throughout the state.

Bohemian Waxwing — Reported from 17 north counties, plus 3 south reports: 12/15 Wild River CBC, 12/29 St. Paul (Northeast Suburban) CBC (9), and 1/1 Afton CBC (1). Reduced numbers in north except 12/16 Crosby CBC (1045).

Cedar Waxwing — Reported from 12 north and 32 south counties. Hundreds locally south including high count 12/20 Excelsior CBC (1299).

Orange-crowned Warbler — Fourth winter record **12/14** Washington TEB (record late south).

Yellow-rumped Warbler — Record high 18 individuals reported from seven counties: 12/15–1/13 St. Louis (Duluth) JBa, 12/15 St. Paul (North) CBC, 12/20 Dakota ADS, 12/29 †St. Paul (N.E. Suburban) CBC, 12/22 Winona CBC, 1/1–2/2 Washington (max. 6 at Afton) m.ob., 2/2–3/3 Hennepin (2 at Eden Prairie) SLC, 2/5 Scott (2 at Jordan) SLC, KJB, 2/8–16 Washington (2 at Grey Cloud Is.) †TAT, †ADS, TEB (one was “Audubon’s” race), 2/16 Winona (Whitewater W.M.A.) CBE.

Palm Warbler — First Minnesota winter



Northern Mockingbird, 17 January 2002, Duluth, St. Louis County. Photo by Peder Svingen.

record **12/14** Lake (Two Harbors) †JWL.

Summer Tanager — Record late date north **12/2** St. Louis (Duluth) fide KRE.

Spotted Towhee — No reports.

Eastern Towhee — No reports.

American Tree Sparrow — Reported from 12 north and 35 south counties, but absent north of a line through Clay, Becker, Wadena, Cass, Aitkin, and southern St. Louis (Duluth).

Chipping Sparrow — Only documented report: 12/15 Mankato †CBC (1). Three additional reports undocumented. **Note:** Details requested for all winter reports of

this species.

Savannah Sparrow — Fifth winter record **1/29** Wilkin (Lawndale) †SPM.

Fox Sparrow — Only reports: 12/10 Washington TAT, 12/29 Rice TFB, 1/19–20 Washington TTh. Also reported on the Fargo-Moorhead CBC (count week).

Song Sparrow — Increased numbers in south (17 counties), decreased numbers in north (2 counties). Only north reports: 12/15 Duluth CBC (2), 1/5 Battle Lake CBC (1). Exceptional numbers overwintered in Hennepin and Dakota counties (Minnesota River Valley), including 13+ found by SLC, and 11 on the Bloomington CBC (may be some overlap). Only

additional reports beyond early January: 1/26 Scott (3) TAT, 2/2 Rice TFB, 2/22 Houston KAK.

Lincoln's Sparrow — The state's eighth winter record 12/6 Hennepin (Minneapolis) TAT.

Swamp Sparrow — At least seven individuals reported from the now traditional wintering area in Hennepin (Minnesota River Valley) from 12/4 (6 individuals) to 2/24 (1 individual) SLC. Also seen 12/15 Mankato †CBC, 12/15 Bloomington CBC, and 2/9 Dakota TAT.

White-throated Sparrow — Reported from nine north and ten south counties, but absent from the Southwest and Central regions. Overwintered in St. Louis JEN and Otter Tail SPM. Only other reports after early January: 1/17 Wilkin MO, 1/27 Hennepin (3 in Minneapolis) TAT, 1/27 through 2/28 Lake JWL, 2/24 Kittson PHS, JMJ, SKS.

Harris's Sparrow — Overwintered in Carver ph. RMD. Also reported 12/2 & 12/29 Freeborn (2) AEB, 12/16 Fergus Falls CBC (2), 12/26 Lac Qui Parle CBC (2), 1/1 Austin CBC, 1/29 Clay RHO, and the Willmar CBC (count week).

White-crowned Sparrow — All reports: 12/22 Faribault CBC (2), 12/29 Roseau CBC (1).

Dark-eyed Junco — Reported from 15 north and 39 south counties; absent from the northern two tiers of counties in the North-central and Northwest regions.

Lapland Longspur — Reported from 21 counties south and west of a line through Dakota, Wright, Otter Tail, Red Lake, and Kittson. Reports spanned the season. Maximum counts 1/1 Austin CBC (100), 2/19–23 Nobles (100s).

Snow Bunting — Reduced numbers. Seen in only 38 counties throughout the state. Maximum 12/29 Roseau CBC (300).

Northern Cardinal — Reported from 52 counties as far north as a line from Clay to southern St. Louis (Duluth), plus the Warren CBC.

Red-winged Blackbird — Reported from 4 north and 22 south counties in all regions except the North-central. Only reported overwintering was in Otter Tail and Dakota, though still 30–40 on 1/17 Pipestone. All other north reports: 12/7 St. Louis JRN, 12/16 Polk DRU, 2/3 Wilkin SPM, 2/18 Otter Tail SPM. Maximum count 12/15 Mankato CBC (1508).

Meadowlark, sp. — No reports.

Yellow-headed Blackbird — Reported 12/29 †Hastings CBC (immature male) and 1/7 Grant (adult male, Herman) DM.

Rusty Blackbird — Reported from 12 south counties plus the following north reports: 12/23 Otter Tail SPM, 2/18 Grant SPM, 2/20 Polk (12) EEF. Latter two dates may represent early migrants. Only south report between 12/29 and 2/18 was 1/20 Hennepin DWK.

Brewer's Blackbird: Reported 12/14 †Lamberton CBC (2).

Common Grackle — Reported from 6 north and 24 south counties. None were specifically mentioned as overwintering, but reports spanned the winter season. Maximum counts 12/15 Mankato CBC (166), 1/9 LeSueur (80+) RBJ.

Brown-headed Cowbird — Flock of 14–25+ seen 12/4–1/5 Dakota TAT, ADS. Also reported 12/15 †Mankato CBC (10), 12/15 Owatonna CBC (1), 2/24 Waseca (3) †JPS, and Austin CBC (count week).

Baltimore Oriole — Reported 12/10–21 St. Louis (Duluth) ph. †PHS *et al.* (second latest north).

BRAMBLING — Fifth Minnesota record 12/16–30 **Otter Tail** (Battle Lake) †EJE, ph. DDM, m.ob. (*The Loon* 74:122–123).



Brambling, Battle Lake, Otter Tail County, 18 December 2001. Photo by Denny Martin.

Pine Grosbeak — Average numbers reported from 20 north counties. Maximum 12/15 Duluth CBC (149).

Purple Finch — Scarce in the north (9 counties) with only modest numbers in south (28 counties). Maximum 12/29 St. Paul (Northeast Suburban) CBC (58).

House Finch — Reported from 12 north and 35 south counties. Maximum 12/15 Rochester CBC (430).

Red Crossbill — Relatively scarce. Only reported from nine north counties, plus two south reports: 12/17 Steele (2) NFT, 12/29 Albert Lea CBC (4).

White-winged Crossbill — Widespread but only in small numbers. Reported from 14 north and 15 south counties.

Maximum number 1/11 Lake (50 along county road 2). Many of the reports outside the coniferous belt were of singles or small flocks at feeders.

Common Redpoll — Scarce. Seen in only 24 north and 13 south counties. Based on CBC data, numbers greatest in southern half of northern regions. Maximum reported 12/15 Duluth CBC (520).

Hoary Redpoll — Approximate total of 12 individuals reported from Todd, Crow Wing, St. Louis, Lake, Cook. Documented reports: 1/20 Lake †PHS, 1/28 Cook (Croftville) †PHS, 2/23 Lake ph. JWJ, and 2/25 St. Louis †DOK.

Pine Siskin — Reported from 17 north and 21 south counties. Low to modest numbers throughout state; very scarce in



Baltimore Oriole, 10 December 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County. Photo by Peder Svingen.

Northeast region compared to last year. Maximum 12/29 St. Paul (Northeast Suburban) CBC (120).

American Goldfinch — Reported from 15 north and 41 south counties. Maxima in the East-central and Southeast regions; absent from northern tier of counties.

Evening Grosbeak — Reported from 16 counties within normal range across the coniferous belt. Maximum count 12/22 Itasca S.P. CBC (118). Unusual was the report 2/14 & 2/23 Freeborn AEB.

House Sparrow — Reported from 57 counties throughout the state.

Contributors

AAB Al A. Bolduc
 ABi Andrew Bicek
 ADS Andrew D. Smith
 AEB Al E. Batt
 AKF Al & Kit Ferber
 ALE Audrey L. Evers
 AXH Anthony X. Hertzell
 BAB Betsy A. Beneke
 BAP Bruce A. Pannkuk
 BLA Betty L. Ammerman
 BRB Brad R. Bolduan
 BRK Byron R. Kinkade

BRL Bill R. Litkey
 BRT Bill R. Tefft
 BSe Blaine Seeliger
 CBe Chris Benson
 CDC Carol & Don Crust
 ChH Chad Heins
 ChM Chet A. Meyers
 CLB Cindy L. Butler
 CMN Connie M. Norheim
 CRG Colin R. Gjervold
 CRM Craig R. Mandel
 DAC David A. Cahlander

DBz	Dedrick Benz	KRE	Kim R. Eckert
DCa	Dave Carman	LWF	Lawrence W. Filter
DCT	Dianne C. Tuff	MAJ	Murdoch A. Johnson
DFJ	Doug F. Jenness	MH	Mike Hendrickson
DFN	David F. Neitzel	MHF	Marilynn H. Ford
DLB	Diane L. Brudelic	MHK	Martin H. Kehoe
DLE	David L. Evans	MJC	Mary Jo Christopherson
DM	Dave McRoberts	MME	Molly M. Evans
DMA	Diane M. Anderson	MO	Mark Otnes
DMF	Dan M. Floren	MRN	Michael R. North
DMP	Daphne & Meyers Peterson	MS	Mark Stock
DO	Dan Orr	NAJ	Nancy A. Jackson
DOK	Don O. Kienholz	NED	Nelvina E. De Kam
DPJ	Douglas P. Johnson	NFT	Nels F. Thompson
DPS	David P. Sovereign	OLJ	Oscar L. Johnson
DRB	David R. Benson	PAH	Paul A. Hetland
DRu	Dorothy Russell	PCC	Philip C. Chu
DTT	Dan T. Thingan	PEJ	Paul E. Jantscher
DWK	Douglas W. Kieser	PHS	Peder H. Svingen
EEF	Eve E. Freeberg	PJB	Paul J. Binek
EJE	Eddy & Judy Edwards	PMJ	Paul M. Johnson
EPD	Edward P. Duerksen	PSP	Pam S. Perry
FAE	Fred A. Eckhardt	RA	Renner Anderson
FJN	Frank J. Nicoletti	RBJ	Robert B. Janssen
FZL	Fred Z. Leshner	RCK	Rose C. Kneeskern
GMM	Gretchen M. Mehmehl	RCS	Rolf C. Smeby
GO	Gary Otnes	RDK	Ron D. Kneeskern
HHD	Herb H. Dingmann	REH	Robert E. Holtz
HJF	Herbert J. Fisher	RHO	Robert H. O'Connor
JBa	Jim Barrett	RJS	Roger J. Schroeder
JBl	Jo Blanych	RLE	Robert L. Ekblad
JDa	Jeff Dains	RMD	Robert M. Dunlap
JEB	Jerry E. Bonkoski	RSF	Randy S. Frederickson
JEH	Jay E. Hamernick	RW	Ron Weinhold
JEM	John E. Morrison	SAS	Shelley A. Steva
JEZ	James E. Zimmerman	SDu	Sue Durrant
JJL	Jeff & Janet Lauber	SES	Steven E. Schon
JLH	James L. Howitz	SLC	Steve L. Carlson
JLU	Janice & Larry Uden	SMT	Sandy M. Thimgan
JMJ	Jeanie M. Joppru	SPM	Steve P. Millard
JPM	James P. Mattsson	STW	Sylvia T. Winkelman
JPS	Julian P. Sellers	TAT	Tom A. Tustison
JRN	Jeff R. Newman	TEB	Tom & Elizabeth Bell
JSK	John & Susan Kroll	TFB	Tom F. Boevers
JSS	Jack Sprenger	TPW	Terry P. Wiens
JWL	James W. Lind	TTh	Tom Thomsen
KAK	Karla A. Kinstler	WCM	William C. Marengo
KG	Kraig Geise	WEN	Warren E. Nelson
KHa	Kay Hartness	WLB	William L. Brown
KIM	Kim I. Metz	WOB	William O. Bruins
KJB	Karl J. Bardon	m.ob.	many observers

The 2001–2002 Christmas Bird Count in Minnesota

Roger Schroeder

The Lambertton Christmas Bird Count (CBC) set the stage for one of the most memorable CBC seasons in Minnesota history with its “lead-off homerun” of 44 Count Day species on 14 December 2001, breaking its previous record by 7 species. Not to be out done, Duluth broke its CBC record by ten species while at the same time tying the state’s all-time record of 73.

Weather was the major contributing factor to this remarkable season. Opening weekend low temperatures ranged from 18°–37° F, with open water reported throughout the state. For the most part, this weather continued throughout the season. A cold front moved through between the 22nd and 26th of December, accounting for below freezing temperatures for the final ten days of the CBC season, and the freezing of open water.

Fifty-nine count circles submitted census data resulting in a record 136 full species on the Minnesota composite list, topping the previous record of 132 species set during the 1997–98 season. Two additional species were observed during Count Week; a first Minnesota CBC Great Egret in the Winona count circle, and two regularly observed Eurasian Collared-Doves in the Marshall count circle. These additions bumped the CBC Season composite list total to 138 full species (133 species was the previous Count Week/Count Day high). Finally, a dark-headed gull (probably a Bonaparte’s Gull according to observer Brad Bolduan) on the Fairmont count is the only genus level (unidentified species) observation of a bird that was not represented by a similar full species on the composite list.

Final census figures show 362,118 individuals on Count Day, beating the pre-

vious record of 343,189 individuals set during the 1999–2000 season; only the fourth time our combined census totals have been over the 300,000 mark.

Waterfowl were a major factor in the numbers. The vast amount of open water and mild temperatures contributed to the greatest diversity of waterfowl in Minnesota CBC history with 28 different species of ducks, geese, and swans observed. (The previous record was 27 species of waterfowl for the 1994–95 CBC season). The ten-year average for the number of waterfowl species seen in Minnesota during a CBC season is 24 species, while the 20-year average is 21 species.

The total number of 187,569 waterfowl counted this CBC season represents the third highest Minnesota CBC waterfowl census. This total includes 1,191 Ring-necked Ducks, which is nine times greater than the previous single season high of 124 Ring-necked Ducks that was established 40 years ago! Also in the mix of waterfowl were all three swan species, and a carefully observed Ross’s Goose. Although Canada Goose was not one of the species seen in highest numbers, it may be interesting to note that somewhere in the mix of 99,305 Canada Geese counted on December 15th, Minnesota’s two-millionth reported CBC Canada Goose was counted!

One of the season highlights, of course, was Minnesota’s first CBC *Anna’s Hummingbird* on the Bloomington Count, which had been present since early December, and Minnesota’s first CBC *Dunlin* at Park Point, Duluth. And don’t forget the Count Week Great Egret from the Winona circle.

Other unusual sightings include four different Varied Thrush reports (two dur-

ing Count Week), three different Carolina Wrens, two out of range Glaucous Gull sightings, and Minnesota's second ever CBC Marsh Wren! Both the Eastern Phoebe seen on the Long Prairie count, and the two different Sandhill Cranes (one during Count Week) accounted for only the 4th occurrence in Minnesota CBC history for either species. The Common Loon was observed from an unprecedented four different count areas, including the first time on a Central Minnesota geographic region count (Willmar). Since the 1949–50 CBC season only 23 Common Loons have been counted on Minnesota CBCs during 15 different CBC seasons. The only other season that Common Loon was observed on more than one individual count was the 1993–94 CBC season in which this species was observed on two different counts.

Looking closer at Minnesota's geographic regions provides additional sightings of interest. Two new species to the Bemidji count, Herring Gull and Glaucous Gull, represent species that have never been reported on a North-central geographic region CBC. Bemidji also had an unusual record of White-winged Scoter during Count Week. Other first time regional birds included a lingering Red-shouldered Hawk on the Crosby CBC in the North-central region, while other species new to CBCs included Wild Turkey on the Pine County CBC, while Duluth added both Ring-necked Duck, and that first Minnesota CBC Dunlin! Hooded Merganser and Varied Thrush showed up on different West-central Minnesota CBCs, while several different species were observed for the first time on counts in the Central Minnesota region including American White Pelican, American Wigeon, Ruddy Duck, and Glaucous Gull. Tundra Swan was the new species to Southwest Minnesota counts, while Chipping Sparrow joined Killdeer and Northern Shoveler as new species to South-central counts. Finally, in the Southeast, the Long-tailed Duck on the Rochester Count was the only species new to a CBC in that geographic region.

Distribution, or presence of species throughout Minnesota CBCs, was also noteworthy this season. For example, Bald Eagle was observed on 54 of the 59 individual Minnesota CBCs during the 2001–02 season! This is a dramatic increase from the previous high mark of Bald Eagles observed on 41 different Minnesota CBCs in a single season, which was set during last year. Of the 136 species on the 2001–02 Minnesota CBC composite list, 77 were observed on the most number of individual Minnesota count circles tying a 28-year old record for the most number of species observed on the most number of Minnesota CBCs in a single season. Several species were observed on nearly twice as many counts this CBC season as in any other previous season including Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, and Hooded Merganser. In addition, American Black Duck was observed on 17 counts this CBC season, breaking the 21-year old record of 16, while American Coot was seen on 15 individual counts, breaking the 26-year old record.

The much anticipated winter finch invasion did not get very far south during the 2001–02 CBC season. Only Pine Grosbeak and Common Redpoll were seen in numbers higher than average, and far less than their highest concentrations.

In the ubiquitous category, four species were seen on every individual census: Black-capped Chickadee, Blue Jay, Downy Woodpecker, and White-breasted Nuthatch. This is the first time in five CBC seasons that any species has been observed on every count. Regarding species abundance, 28 species were tallied in their highest single season numbers ever, such as 5,978 Cedar Waxwings (double the previous high), and 4,268 American Robin (441 higher).

Although the data and statistics presented in this article refer only to species seen inside the Minnesota boundary, it is important to remember that six counts have some territory outside Minnesota. Interesting observation of species out-

side Minnesota territory on these counts include a Prairie Falcon on the Grand Forks-East Grand Forks CBC, and a Fox Sparrow on the Fargo-Moorhead count. Both of these observations were made during the Count Week, but were not seen on count day.

An estimated 755 participants logged roughly 2,735 party hours that covered an estimated 21,031 miles by foot, car, and cross-country ski. In addition, 292 feeder watchers scanned for a total of 672 hours! Herb Dingmann equaled the record for *known* CBC participation by traveling the state to work on six different counts, while ten other individuals worked on four different counts. Compilers did an excellent job of compiling and submitting timely results, and encouraging the submission of 79 individual docu-

mentation forms on no fewer than 75 unusual observations. And even though some species were not included in this season's tallies due to inconclusive documentation, all those who did submit documentation are very much appreciated.

I would like to extend additional thanks to the compilers of counts covering territory outside Minnesota: Dave Lambeth, Bridget Olson, Bob O'Conner, Roger Field, Rick Kinzie, Kraig Geise, and Joe Merchack for making the extra effort of separating census data. Thanks also to Anthony Hertzell for his assistance with the presentation of these data, and once again, many thanks to Karl Bardon for providing insights on the documentation received.

215 Rainbow Drive, Marshall, MN 56258.

Table 1. CBC totals. Albert Lea (ABLEA), Afton (AFTON), Aurora (AUROR), Austin (AUSTN), Battle Lake (BATLK), Baudette (BAUDT), Bemidji (BEMID), Bloomington (BLOOM), Beltrami Island (BLTRM), Big Stone NWR (BSNWR), Cedar Creek Bog (CEDRC), Cottonwood (COTTN), Carlton/Cloquet (CRLCL), Crookston (CROOK), Crosby (CROSB), Detroit Lakes (DLAKE), Duluth (DULUT), Excelsior (EXCEL), Faribalut (FARIB). OB = Outside MN Boundary, CW = County Week, * = MN-only data. ** Includes 2-state date.

Species	Sum	ABLEA	*AFTON	AUROR	AUSTN	BATLK	BAUDT	BEMID	BLOOM	BLTRM*BSNWR	CEDRC	COTTN	CRLCL	CROOK	CROSB	DLAKE	DULUT	EXCEL	FARIB
Com. Loon	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pied-billed Grebe	6	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-necked Grebe	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Am. Wh. Pelican	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Double-cr. Cormorant	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gr. Egret	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gr. Blue Heron	10	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gr. Wh.-fr. Goose	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Snow Goose	117	-	OB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ross's Goose	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Canada Goose	127,989	2,209	1,601	-	2,513	867	-	5	6,891	-	2,357	458	531	CW	35	4	749	4,534	1,931
Mute Swan	3	1	OB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trumpeter Swan	941	-	5	-	-	254	-	-	2	-	-	5	-	-	-	6	-	-	2
Tundra Swan	5,896	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	896
Wood Duck	54	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	38	1
Gadwall	1,121	CW	OB	-	-	-	-	40	-	OB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	CW
Am. Wigeon	84	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
Am. Black Duck	147	5	OB	-	-	-	-	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42	5	1
Mallard	44,619	1,486	143	-	911	8	2	10	5,754	-	210	58	-	CW	-	-	1,862	2,542	1,214
N. Shoveler	212	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	138	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
N. Pintail	56	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Green-winged Teal	36	-	2	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	7	-
Canvasback	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Redhead	46	1	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ring-necked Duck	1,191	-	-	-	-	-	2	7	-	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	3	45	-
Gr. Scaup	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Lesser Scaup	278	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	2	-
Harlequin Duck	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Wh.-winged Scoter	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Long-tailed Duck	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-
Bufflehead	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	8	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	15	36	-
Com. Goldeneye	2,340	-	155	6	-	29	-	282	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	415	91	-
Hooded Merganser	252	1	-	-	-	2	-	47	84	OB	5	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	-
Com. Merganser	1,776	1	304	-	-	1	423	144	-	2	-	-	-	-	9	-	46	352	-
Red-br. Merganser	18	-	OB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	8	2	-
Ruddy Duck	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bald Eagle	608	2	12	7	2	3	CW	18	11	-	7	8	1	4	1	11	6	14	45
N. Harrier	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Sharp-sh. Hawk	37	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	5	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	3	2
Cooper's Hawk	16	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
N. Goshawk	22	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	7	-
Red-sh. Hawk	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Red-tailed Hawk	511	26	7	-	14	2	-	27	-	1	7	7	1	CW	1	-	2	49	11
Rough-legged Hawk	115	1	OB	4	3	1	-	1	-	1	-	5	4	14	1	-	4	1	-
Golden Eagle	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Am. Kestrel	67	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	4	1
Merlin	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-
Peregrine Falcon	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-
OB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gray Partridge	32	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ring-nk. Pheasant	608	4	1	-	4	1	-	1	4	-	12	6	5	-	-	-	-	19	6
Ruffed Grouse	102	-	OB	4	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	3	-	29	-

Proceedings of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union Records Committee

Kim R. Eckert, MOURC Chairman

The following records were voted on January – July 2002 and found to be Acceptable.

- White-faced Ibis (eight individuals reported), 17 April 2002, near Rochester, Olmsted County (record #2002-32, vote 6-1: three individuals accepted as White-faced, and the other five accepted as *Plegadis*, sp.).

Although these ibis were seen by many observers, only one of them provided documentation. While it is likely all eight birds were White-faced, the lone description received refers to “white around the eyes” on only three of the individuals. Accordingly, only these could be accepted as White-faced Ibis, with the other five accepted as unidentified *Plegadis* ibis.

- White-faced Ibis, 23 April 2002, Mott Lake, Waseca County (record #2002-33, vote 7-0).

- White-faced Ibis, 5 May 2002, Thielke Lake, Big Stone County (record #2002-34, vote 7-0).

The descriptions provided with this and the previous record (2002-33) include mention of red eyes and facial skin along with white visible around the back of the eyes.

- White-faced Ibis (five individuals), 10 May – 2 June 2002, Southwick/Slayton Wildlife Management Areas, Murray County (record #2002-16, vote 7-0).

All five individuals are described as having “distinct white feathering completely surrounding reddish facial skin.”

- *Plegadis* ibis, 28 September 2001, near Hawley, Clay County (record #2002-06, vote 6-1).

Because of the difficulty in separating White-faced from Glossy Ibis in late summer and fall, most ibis records then

will eventually be accepted and filed as unidentified *Plegadis* ibis.

- Brant, 10 April 2002, near Coon Creek Wildlife Management Area, Lyon County (record #2002-17, vote 7-0, *The Loon* 74:179-180).

This individual was an adult of the Atlantic race *brotta*; most previous Brant records in Minnesota have also been of this same race. The documentation includes field notes and sketches made at the time of the observation along with some marginally identifiable photos.

- King Eider, 7-20 May 2002, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2002-18, vote 7-0, *The Loon* 74:180-181).

The documentation of this female, which was eventually seen by many observers, includes field notes and sketches made at the time of the observation. This is only the second documented spring record of this species in Minnesota.

- Mississippi Kite, 26 April 2002, Golden Valley / Minnetonka, Hennepin County (record #2002-19, vote 5-2).

- Mississippi Kite, 27 May 2002, Western Township, Otter Tail County (record #2002-35, vote 5-2).

Those in the minority not accepting this and the previous record (2002-19) were concerned that several details were unclear or missing in the documentations — i.e., whether or not optics were used, light conditions, distance from the birds, and duration of the observations.

- Mississippi Kite, 9 June 2002, Golden Valley, Hennepin County (record #2002-38, vote 7-0).

This was an adult with the diagnostic white patch visible on the upper surface of the secondaries. It is possible that this and the other four Twin Cities records included in this article (2002-19, 36, 37, and

39) could all refer to the same individual.

- Gyrfalcon, 31 March 2002, Grand Plain Township, Marshall County (record #2002-28, vote 6–1).

This was apparently an immature gray-morph individual.

- Sharp-tailed Grouse, 18 March 2002, Big Stone County (record #2002-29, vote 7–0).

This individual probably wandered in from nearby northeastern South Dakota. In Minnesota, the nearest Sharp-tailed Grouse are found in Polk County, about 150 miles north of Big Stone County.

- Western Sandpiper (two individuals), 2 May 2002, Mud Lake, Traverse County (record #2002-20, vote 7–0 one individual / vote 6–1 both individuals, **The Loon** 74:182).

The observer, who is very experienced with this species in other states, included field notes, sketches, and a marginally identifiable photo with the documentation. This represents only the fifth documented record ever in Minnesota, although this species was formerly (and probably erroneously) considered Regular here.

- White-rumped Sandpiper, 10 August 2001, New Germany, Carver County (record #2002-02, vote 5–2).

This record was accepted on a second-round vote after the first vote was an inconclusive 4–3. Those in the minority still unable to accept the record in their second vote were concerned that the observer had no previous experience with this species, a bird whose relatively rare status in fall and its identification difficulties then are relatively unfamiliar to many birders.

- Ruff, 23 May 2002, Lake Byllesby, Dakota County (record #2002-21, vote 7–0).

This female was seen by many birders and thoroughly documented by two of the observers.

- unidentified jaeger, sp., 1 August 2001, Cass Lake, Cass County (record #2002-01, vote 7–0).

The observer reported this as a probable adult Parasitic Jaeger, but he also

stated that he (and the description provided) could not entirely rule out the possibility of it being a Long-tailed. The record was accordingly accepted only as an unidentified jaeger.

- California Gull (two individuals), 25 April 2002, Clay County landfill, Clay County (record #2002-22, vote 7–0 one individual / vote 6–1 both individuals).

- California Gull, 3 May 2002, Athens Township, Isanti County (record #2002-23, vote 7–0).

Two of the three individuals involved in this and the previous record (2002-22) were full adults, with the other a bird in nearly adult plumage. All diagnostic field marks were described by the observer who is very familiar with the difficulties of gull identification.

- Sabine's Gull, 21 September 2001, Paynesville, Stearns County (record #2002-05, vote 6–1, **The Loon** 74:120).

This was a juvenile bird with its diagnostic wing pattern clearly described.

- Black-legged Kittiwake, 12 November 2001, near Grand Marais, Cook County (record #2002-10, vote 7–0, **The Loon** 74:122).

Clearly identifiable photos of this juvenile/first-winter bird were included in the documentation.

- Black-legged Kittiwake, 30 November 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2002-12, vote 7–0, **The Loon** 74:176–177).

There is the possibility that this and the other two kittiwake records (2002-10 and 13) all refer to the same individual.

- Black-legged Kittiwake, 2 December 2001, near Sandstone, Pine County (record #2002-13, vote 7–0, **The Loon** 74:58–59).

This gull was found under unusual circumstances: it was feeding on a deer carcass on the shoulder of Interstate 35.

- Common Tern, 27 October 2001, Bemidji, Beltrami County (record #2002-09, vote 6–1, **The Loon** 74:118).

With late fall reports of Common Terns, it is necessary to preclude the possibility of both Forster's and Arctic terns, as this observer does in his documenta-



Anna's Hummingbird, 3 December 2001, Minneapolis, Hennepin County. Photos by Dave Cahlander.

tion.

- Arctic Tern, 19 September 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2002-04, vote 6-1, *The Loon* 74:120-121).

This adult was seen on both the Minnesota and Wisconsin sides of the Superior Entry, the shipping channel separating Park Point from Wisconsin Point. The

identification is primarily documented by excellent photos showing the diagnostic pattern on both the upper and under sides of the primaries.

- Arctic Tern, 27 May 2002, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2002-24, vote 6-1).

This tern was seen well in flight in

direct comparison with Common Terns by an experienced observer who took field notes at the time of the observation. These notes include the combination of its different shape, flight style, wing pattern of the upper and lower surfaces, grayer underparts, and contrasting whiter cheeks.

- Eurasian Collared-Dove (two individuals reported), May – August 2002, Caledonia, Houston County (record #2002-42, vote 6–1 one individual only).

Although seen by many observers with three individuals eventually reported, including a juvenile, only one observer submitted any documentation. This description is of two birds: one an apparent female on the nest (which at the time could not be seen well enough to rule out the possibility of Ringed Turtle-Dove), and the other a male calling nearby. Accordingly, the documentation for only one individual was accepted. This location was the same as the nesting area of 2001, and it seems obvious a pair again nested in 2002; however, without further documentation this cannot be confirmed.

- Burrowing Owl, 6 May – 2 June 2002, Lowville Township, Murray County (record #2002-43, vote 7–0).

This individual was seen by many observers and photographed. Although observed in and near an apparent badger hole, the owl apparently disappeared after a few weeks and no nesting evidence was ever reported.

- Anna's Hummingbird, 1–26 December 2001, Minneapolis, Hennepin County (record #2002-14, vote 7–0).

This bird was seen and photographed by many observers during its month-long presence at a feeder.

- Say's Phoebe, 29 April 2002, near Gonvick, Clearwater County (record #2002-44, vote 6–1).

Field notes were written at the time of observation before any field guides were consulted. (See comment below on the Rock Wren record 2002-47.)

- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, 25 May 2002, near Split Rock Lighthouse State

Park, Lake County (record #2002-45, vote 7–0).

The pale head and pinkish color visible on the belly and under wings as mentioned in the description preclude Fork-tailed Flycatcher.

- White-eyed Vireo, 15 May 2002, Bloomington, Hennepin County (record #2002-46, vote 7–0).

Although not heard singing, this vireo's diagnostic pale eyes and other features were adequately described.

- Rock Wren, 21 April 2002, Moorhead, Clay County (record #2002-47, vote 7–0).

Field notes were written at the time of observation before any field guides were consulted. As with the above Say's Phoebe record (2002-44), a record's documentation is always strengthened if field notes on the bird's appearance are written before the observer looks at any references. A field sketch, no matter how crude, is also recommended. When consulting a field guide first, it becomes too easy to end up describing what the bird looked like in the book (i.e., what it should have looked like), rather than describing the actual appearance of the bird in the field.

- Hooded Warbler, 21 November 2001, St. Cloud, Stearns County (record #2002-11, vote 7–0, *The Loon* 74:179).

Although an extremely late record for this Minnesota rarity, this adult male was well described and is difficult to confuse with any other species.

- Great-tailed Grackle (seven individuals), 6 May 2002, Grover's Lake, Jackson County (record #2002-25, vote 7–0).

The three males and four females were all described, with the males heard vocalizing and precluding the very unlikely possibility of these being Boat-tailed Grackles.

- Brambling, 16–31 December 2001, near Battle Lake, Otter Tail County (record #2002-15, vote 7–0, *The Loon* 74:122–123).

This individual was seen by many observers and photographed during its appearance at a bird feeder.



Burrowing Owl, 7 May 2002, Lowville Township, Murray County. Photo by Dave Cahlander.

The following records were voted on January – July 2002 and were found to be Not Acceptable. Also see the three Acceptable records above which in part involved a Not Acceptable vote: White faced/unidentified Ibis (2002-32), unidentified/Parasitic jaeger (2002-01), and Eurasian Collared-Dove (2002-42).

(It is important to note that a record which is not accepted only means the provided documentation was not complete or convincing enough to include the sighting in *The Loon*, the journal of the MOU. Such a vote does not necessarily mean the observer misidentified the bird. In this sense, therefore, MOURC is only acting as an editor of the records submitted to the MOU.

Also, a summary of the reasons why a record was not accepted is included in these “Proceedings” articles. They are, of course, in no way intended to be critical of the observer. The only purpose is instructional: that is, to show the difficulties an observer had in identifying or documenting a bird so that these might be avoided by other observers when documenting future reports of this and similar species.)

- Pacific Loon, 27 October 2001, near Grand Marais, Cook County (record #2002-08, vote 1–6).

The brief documentation mentions this small loon’s “chin strap,” but no other field marks are given to identify this as a Pacific Loon and preclude other species.

Several other observers had seen and documented a Red-throated Loon about the same time at this location, and it is likely this is what the present observer saw.

- Black Vulture, 31 August 2001, near Hastings, Dakota County (record #2002-03, vote 1–6).

The field notes written at the time of the observation only describe a black bird smaller than nearby Turkey Vultures with “white on tips of wings.” For a report of such an unusual species (a potential second state record), a much more complete description is necessary. Some additional documentation was written later, but it is still incomplete and apparently written only from memory two months after the observation.

- Black Vulture, 23 October 2001, Duluth, St. Louis County (record #2002-07, vote 0–7).

The description only includes that the bird was smaller than a Turkey Vulture, with light-colored wing tips, a short tail, and it flew with more flapping and less gliding. As with the previous record (2002-03), much more complete documentation is needed for such an unusual species.

- Mississippi Kite, 9 May 2002, Eden Prairie, Hennepin County (record #2002-36, vote 3–4).

This was a difficult record to evaluate, as indicated by the 3–4 vote. A sketch of the bird, made ten minutes after the sighting and before any field guides were consulted, shows a kite-like bird with a whitish head, blackish flight feathers, and a blackish tail. However, the majority was unable to accept the documentation because no optics were used, and it is unclear how far away the bird was when any field marks were visible. Additionally, the light conditions were described as “intensely bright” and “sharp,” with the head appearing unnaturally white, and the bird’s underparts in heavy shadow and looking darker than normal. The combination of unfavorable light conditions and lack of optics suggests this bird was probably not seen very well.

- Mississippi Kite, 25 May 2002, Murphy-Hanrehan Regional Park, Scott County (record #2002-37, vote 0–7).

The identification may well have been correct, since field notes were written 15 minutes later before consulting any field guides. However, the only feature mentioned in the description to indicate this species over other possibilities is the “tail square at end and flared at tip.” Additionally, nothing was seen or described of the bird’s actual plumage, since it “appeared uniformly dark against the bright overcast noonday sky.”

- Mississippi Kite, 12 June 2002, Minnetonka, Hennepin County (record #2002-39, vote 0–7).

The bird was first seen in flight without any optics used, and it was only then seen as a small dark raptor with pointed wing tips that did not fly like an accipiter. With binoculars, the observer saw the bird perched and only described it then as having a “lighter head with a small bill on a dark body.” Such documentation is not complete enough to determine the identification of this bird.

- Ferruginous Hawk, 30 March 2002, Big Stone State Park, Big Stone County (record #2002-26, vote 0–7).

The identification was based on the bird’s apparent lack of a dark patagium and its limited amount of red in the tail. Since the observer mentions in the documentation that he had no experience with this species or Krider’s-type Red-tailed Hawks, the description provided could just as easily fit a Red-tailed.

- Prairie Falcon, 30 March 2002, Lake Traverse, Traverse County (record #2002-27, vote 3–4).

This bird may well have been correctly identified, since it was described as having a falcon shape, brown overall plumage, lighter underparts, and a “band of dark feathers in the center of the wing from the shoulder to the wrist.” While this last feature seems to indicate a Prairie Falcon’s blackish wing linings, it is somewhat unclear from the description where exactly the dark feathering was on the wing, and Gyrfalcons also have

somewhat similar dark wing linings. Additionally, the size of this bird is unclear from the description, and nothing was seen of the head pattern.

- Wilson's Plover, 2 April 2002, near Faribault, Rice County (record #2002-40, vote 0-7).

This would be only the third state record of a species far from its normal range. As such, the documentation would need to be completely consistent with this species. However, the bill was described as "thin" (a Wilson's bill is thick); the legs were seen as both "yellow" and "dark" (a Wilson's are pinkish); "the end of the tail was white, and then a black band, and then white up to the body" (a Wilson's tail pattern is different than this); and its back was darker than the head (they are the same shade on a Wilson's).

- Thayer's Gull, 11 April 2002, Chaska, Carver County (record #2002-30, vote 1-6).

Many gulls in spring and summer appear unnaturally pale due to feather wear, fading, or molt, and accordingly they are difficult to identify. Without attention paid to a gull's plumage condition at this time of year, even experienced observers frequently mistake these abnormally pale Herrings and other gulls for a Thayer's, Iceland, or Glaucous gull. This observer indicated he had no experience with Thayer's Gull, and he was uncertain of the age of this gull. In addition, the bird's size is described as the same or "slightly larger" than a Herring Gull, which would be possible but atypical for a Thayer's.

- American Tree Sparrow, 6 June 2002, Flandrau State Park, Brown County (record #2002-31, vote 3-4).

This was yet another difficult 3-4 vote, with this sparrow quite possibly correctly identified. The observer knew this was an unusually late date for this species, but the spring had been unusually late and cold. The identification of this rusty-crowned sparrow was only based on the "dark central spot on its breast." However, sparrows which normally have an

unmarked underparts can sometimes show a real or apparent breast spot due to a variety of factors. Since no other markings were described to preclude a Field or other sparrows (the bill color and presence or absence of an eye ring were not seen), the majority was unable to accept this record.

The efforts of all those observers who document reports of unusual species are appreciated, whether or not those records are accepted. Accordingly, the Committee acknowledges with thanks those who provided documentation for the records listed in this article: Mark Alt, Karl Bardon (five records), Betsy Beneke, Terry Brashear, Paul Budde, Dave Cahlander, Reggie Carlson, Philip Chu (three records), Tim Dawson, Herb Dingmann, Bob Dunlap (two records), Eddy & Judy Edwards, John Ellis (three records), Chris Fagyal, Steve Hansen, Anthony Hertz, Bob Janssen, Doug Johnson, Oscar Johnson, Robbye Johnson, Jeanie Joppru, Dale Kane, Jim Lind, Craig Mandel, Smiley Meehan, Steve Millard (two records), Mark Otnes, Paul Pedersen, James Pomplun, Roger Schroeder, Brian Smith, Drew Smith, Dave Sovereign, Jeff Stephenson, Shelley Steva, Sharon Stiteler (two records), Forest Strnad, Peder Svingen (seven records), Dan & Sandy Thimgan, Tom Tustison, Carol Tveekrem, Terry Wiens, and Dennis Wiesenborn.

There were also other observers who documented records which were not submitted for a vote to the Committee; although these records are not cited here, their documentations are also appreciated.

The Committee Chairman welcomes questions or comments from MOU members regarding any record in particular or our procedures in general. He can be contacted at the address below or by e-mail at <kreckert@cpinternet.com>.

Summary: 46 records voted on — 35 Acceptable (76%), 11 Not Acceptable (24%).

8255 Congdon Blvd., Duluth, MN 55804.

BIRDING BY HINDSIGHT

A Second Look at Thayer's Gull

Kim R. Eckert



Are you one of those birders whose eyes glaze over when someone starts talking about gull identification? Do you approach the subject of distinguishing immature gulls with awe and fear? If so, this article is not for you.

Are you looking for all the answers to your Thayer's Gull questions? You'd best look elsewhere, since you'll find this article will likely raise more questions than it can answer. There will probably be more here about how to misidentify a Thayer's Gull than how to identify one.

Or, are you one of those experts well versed in the complexities of Thayer's and Iceland gulls, reading this in search of how to separate the two? Sorry, but I'm neither smart enough nor stupid enough to attempt the impossible.

So, now that no one's left to read this, it may be safe to proceed. There are certainly lots of birds out there which are difficult to identify, but at least you know why they can be so hard, at least you know there is a field guide or other reference explaining which field marks to look for. The Thayer's Gull, however, may be unique in that there are more misleading references about it than helpful ones. Indeed, among this gull's published and alleged field marks, there are probably more misleading marks than there are useful ones.

History

In the first place, consider that ornithologists have long disagreed on just what a Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*) really is. Is it a full species, just a subspecies, merely a color morph, should it be lumped or split and, if so, with what? Consider the convoluted chronology of *L. thayeri*:

1) Initially, it is a full species.
2) Later, it is a subspecies, lumped with Herring Gull (*L. argentatus*).
3) Still later, based on research on Thayer's and Iceland (*L. glaucooides*) gulls, it is split from Herring Gull and recognized as a full species, and considered still split from the darker Kumlien's race of Iceland Gull (*L. g. kumlieni*).
4) Subsequently, the validity of this Thayer's Gull research is widely discredited.
5) Consequently, though the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) continues at present to recognize Herring, Thayer's, and Iceland gulls as three distinct species, many ornithologists now consider the Thayer's lumped with Iceland Gull as one of three subspecies. That is, the darkest gulls breeding in north central Canada would be the Thayer's subspecies (*Larus glaucooides thayeri*), the whitest gulls breeding in Greenland would remain as the nominate Iceland subspecies (*L. g. glaucooides*), and the in-between gulls breeding in northeast Canada would be the Kumlien's subspecies (*L. g. kumlieni*).
6) Yet another current theory holds

that Thayer's should be lumped with Iceland, but that there are no subspecies involved. That is, the transition from darker to in-between to whiter Iceland Gulls is gradual or possibly random, that it does not necessarily involve geographic ranges or subspecies. That is, these darker and whiter gulls may only be color morphs, just like there are among Snow Geese and Gyrfalcons.

7) Doesn't anyone out there want to advance the Thayer's = Herring X Iceland hybrid theory?

References

If ornithologists cannot agree on what a Thayer's Gull is in the first place, how can you be expected to know what it looks like? But the Thayer's Gull can't entirely be ignored since it is indeed out there and can be correctly identified. It is even classified as a Regular Minnesota species, with several reliable records per year, mostly in fall and winter around Lake Superior and in the Twin Cities.

So, you're going to have to consult your library. First, as far as the field guides go, they don't go far enough. If you have a Peterson, Golden, Stokes, Griggs, or Kaufman field guide, just leave it on the shelf. Their treatments of this complex ID are incomplete and consequently more misleading than helpful. The *Geographic* field guide is better, but even this excellent guide falls somewhat short. The *Sibley* guide's many illustrations, though, are a better place to start. And be sure to study more than just its 13 Thayer's Gull pictures: the full page on Iceland Gull and the two full pages on Herring Gull are of equal importance.

Next, you'll need to do some reading in some additional sources. Still in print is Kenn Kaufman's *Field Guide to Advanced Birding*, which has a very helpful Thayer's Gull chapter written by Kevin Zimmer. There is probably no better single reference on this subject. I also recommend the article "Shades of Gray: The Catch 22 of Thayer's Gull?" by Steve Howell, which appeared in the December 1998 of *Birders Journal* (7:305-309).

This short and readable article may not explain Thayer's Gull ID, but it does clearly discuss what the problem is and how to approach it.

As some experienced birders are aware, there are several other well-known, widely read, and "standard" references on Thayer's Gulls identification. What about these? Well, here they are, but exercise caution: some of them are not the solution but part of the problem! In chronological order:

1966 — The now widely discredited research which considered Thayer's Gull as distinct from both Herring and Iceland gulls is published as an AOU monograph. Many ornithologists are of the opinion that much of the field research was simply fabricated.

1973 — The AOU publishes its checklist supplement in *The Auk* (90:411-119), which concurs with the 1966 research on Thayer's Gull as a distinct species. Few present-day ornithologists agree with this treatment, however.

1975 — What is probably the first widely read article on Thayer's Gull ID is published (*American Birds* 29:1059-1066). This early article admirably urges caution when making an identification, but it also discusses and reaches some premature ID conclusions within the context of Thayer's as a separate species. Additionally, the article includes some misleading photos, especially those of the folded primaries on some specimens and the photo on the magazine cover (December 1975). This latter (under-exposed?) photo shows an adult Thayer's with a dark gray mantle and deep pink legs and feet, and to this day many are under the misconception that adult Thayer's are supposed to have darker gray mantles and deeper pink legs/feet than Herrings and Icelands.

1980 — The December issue of *Birding* prints that journal's first Thayer's Gull ID article (12:198-210). The text is accurate and well-written, but it is handicapped by its illustrations. The five color photos are good (especially the first-winter bird on the magazine cover), but

the color plate showing three immature plumages is not entirely accurate, and the black-and-white photos are either too small or too dark to be as useful as they should be.

1982 — The first edition of Grant's *Gulls: A Guide to Identification* is published... but with no mention of Thayer's Gull! This classic and definitive guide was written from the European point of view, and the Thayer's Gull had apparently not yet been recorded in Europe.

1986 — The second edition of Grant does include Thayer's Gull, but it (and other North America-only species) receives only limited treatment. There are only seven photos, and five of these fail to show any useful field marks. European birders, no matter how expert, probably have limited Thayer's Gull experience at best. Equally as important, Iceland and Herring gulls in Europe are of different subspecies than those here, so any Thayer's Gull comparison with these two similar species from such a European perspective may not be entirely useful to us.

1991 — The October issue of *Birding* publishes a long article on Kumlien's-type Iceland Gulls (23:254–269). Since Thayer's and Iceland gulls are really the same thing, after all, this article with its numerous color photos is certainly worthwhile. The caveat is that at least seven of these photos, all labeled as Iceland, show birds which could easily pass for Thayer's Gulls. Some of the captions admit these birds could be some sort of Thayer's Gull integrades, but there is no explanation as to what they really are and why.

1998 — Another highly regarded and oft-quoted article on Thayer's Gull ID is published in the British journal *Birding World* (11:94–101). However, as mentioned above with the Grant guide, the value of this European article to North American birders may be limited.

2003(?) — Another comprehensive guide to gulls is said to be scheduled for publication in January. *Gulls of Europe, Asia, and North America* by Olsen and Larsson sounds like it will far sur-

pass Grant as the definitive guide with its 544 pages, 93 color plates, and 800 color photos. Note, however, it is written from a European perspective.

How to Identify a Thayer's Gull

Well, if you've made it this far, I assume you already know — or at least know where to find — the basics of Thayer's Gull ID. To begin with, before listing some field marks, here are some ground rules to consider:

- Thayer's Gulls at any age are quite variable in overall plumage. Some are as dark as a Herring Gull; others are as pale as an Iceland.

- For the time being, don't worry about separating those paler Thayer's Gulls from an Iceland. No one knows how to do it consistently because, as anyone with common sense knows, a Thayer's already is an Iceland! The more important issue is telling a Thayer's from a Herring Gull.

- For now, don't worry about things like Glaucous-winged Gulls, Glaucous-winged X Herring gulls, and other hybrids. Though any of these can bear a strong resemblance to a Thayer's Gull and present a serious ID problem, their infrequent or unlikely occurrence in Minnesota puts them beyond the scope of this introductory article.

- Before identifying a Thayer's Gull (or any other difficult gull), decide on its age. A mostly brownish gull, perhaps with some gray on the back, is less than two years old: i.e., a juvenile, 1st-winter, or 2nd-winter bird. The field marks to consider on these gulls are mostly different than those to examine on a gull which looks like an adult or close to it — i.e., it's more than two years old and in 3rd-winter, 4th-winter, or full adult plumage.

- The identification points below will only briefly cover the "field guide" basics, and there is no need to elaborate here on what your *Sibley* or *Geographic* pictures already show. And, for a more comprehensive analysis, that's what that whole bunch of references above is for.

- Don't assume every gull you see can be identified: Thayer's Gull ID is tough. Be prepared to leave some gulls as unidentified; or, if you insist on trying to identify them all, be prepared to make lots of mistakes.

- Finally, after you're satisfied that the field marks you're seeing look good for a Thayer's Gull, read the "How to Misidentify" section. Unless you do so, unless you are aware of the various caveats involved in this ID problem, a misidentification may well result.

So, here are some field marks on a 1st-winter type gull which should prompt you to take a second look, especially when compared to nearby Herring Gulls of the same age. Be sure to note, however, none of these marks alone is diagnostic, and all are qualified in the "Misidentify" section:

- The paler brown and whitish-edged upper surface of the outer primaries, visible on both standing and flying gulls.

- The paler upper surface of the tail, often with a solid brownish or grayish sub-terminal band.

- In flight, the paler or whitish under surface of the flight feathers.

- The usually smaller bill, head, neck, and overall size; similarly, the usually rounder and less-flat crown profile.

And, here are the field marks on an adult or sub-adult which should prompt you to take another look at the gull to see if it's a Thayer's. Again, you'll find all but one of these marks subject to qualification in the "Misidentify" section:

- As with 1st-winter types, the usually smaller bill, head, neck, overall size, and rounder head.

- In flight, the mostly white under side of the outer primaries with only a narrow black trailing edge. This feature is also often visible on a standing gull when the under side of the opposite folded wing tip is showing.

- The upper surface of the outer primaries with less black and more white than on an adult Herring Gull. Note this is mostly visible when the primaries are spread in flight; the folded primaries on

a standing adult Thayer's may look like a Herring's.

- The usually brown eye (i.e., iris) color.

- At very close range, a purple or reddish orbital ring; a Herring Gull's ring is yellow. (An orbital ring is a narrow, unfeathered ring around the eye and is hard to see.)

How to Misidentify a Thayer's Gull

Now comes the easy part. After all, lots of birders already misidentify Thayer's Gulls. Or, more accurately, they mistake other gulls as Thayer's. As mentioned earlier, trying to identify a gull as a Thayer's without being aware of the points covered in this section will often result in an error.

A. Among the field marks of Thayer's and similar gulls at any age which are not really field marks, or only work some of the time, and/or are frequently misunderstood:

- On the average, a Thayer's Gull has a smaller bill, a smaller head and rounder crown, a thinner neck, and smaller overall body size than a Herring Gull. (Similarly, an Iceland averages smaller than a Thayer's.) However, a male gull can look larger than a female of the same species, and it is not unusual to see a Thayer's looking just as big as a Herring (or an Iceland just as big as a Thayer's). Use size and shape with caution, or not at all, and be aware there is overlap between species.

- When trying to judge how dark or light the primaries are on a suspected Thayer's Gull, be prepared for the folded primaries of a standing gull to look darker than when these primaries are spread in flight.

- When trying to judge how dark or light any part of a gull is the field, you need to take into account what the light conditions are, and at what angle you are viewing the gull. (Gulls at an angle can look darker than those fully perpendicular to your position.) And when looking at a gull photo, be aware that varia-

tions in film type, camera exposure, film processing, or how well a magazine or website reproduces a photo can all easily lead to misconceptions of what the gull really looked like.

B. Similarly, these field marks of 1st-winter type gulls need to be qualified and should be only used with caution or not at all:

- Lesson number one involves what is probably the most common mistake made with trying to identify an immature gull as a Thayer's. In spring and summer, the plumages of many Herring Gulls (and other species) are typically worn and faded. Consequently, their primaries, tail feathers, and overall plumage appear quite pale — even whitish. Some are even paler than the worn 1st-summer bird illustrated in *Sibley*. The result: even experienced birders often mistakenly report these as Thayer's Gulls.

- The bill color, eye color and leg/foot color of a suspected Thayer's Gull are no different from a Herring Gull of the same age. It is worth noting them in your field notes and sketches, but none are diagnostic field marks for these immatures.

- Some birders are under the impression that an area of darker feathers around the eye is a diagnostic mark of a 1st-winter Thayer's. Not so: Herrings and Icelanders can look the same way.

- Beware of the folded primaries of some 1st-winter Herring Gulls which are narrowly edged with white and can suggest those of a Thayer's.

- On the average, a Thayer's overall plumage looks "smoother" or more cleanly and neatly marked than on a Herring Gull. However, juvenile Herrings not yet attaining 1st-winter plumage can look just as smooth and neat as a Thayer's overall.

- The under side of a flying Herring Gull's flight feathers often can look as unmarked and as pale as a Thayer's. When looking at a suspected 1st-winter Thayer's in flight, it is better to examine the upper wing surface. (On adults, the

under side of the primaries is more helpful.)

- Speaking of the upper wing surface, the Thayer's has a "dark-light-dark" pattern on the flight feathers: i.e., outer primaries and secondaries darker than the paler inner primaries. While this is often a good mark to separate a 1st-winter Thayer's from an Iceland, it does not work to distinguish a Thayer's from a Herring Gull: Herrings have this same pattern.

- Finally, for those still trying to distinguish a Thayer's from an Iceland Gull, beware of two marks of dubious merit you may have read about. One is the tertials pattern: solid-colored = Thayer's; speckled = Iceland. The problem is I have seen gulls which in every respect looked like a normal 1st-winter Thayer's — except for their speckled tertials. And some references have indicated that dark spots near the tips of the primaries are diagnostic of 1st-winter Icelanders. Hardly: many Icelanders lack them, and many Thayer's have them.

C. Finally, these field marks of adult and near-adult gulls could certainly use some further explanation:

- Lesson number one involves what is probably the most common mistake made with trying to ID an adult gull as a Thayer's. In late summer and fall, adult Herring and Ring-billed gulls are in molt, which results in a reduced amount of black being visible in their wing tips. At some angles, some flying birds can almost look mostly or entirely "white-winged" — just like a Thayer's Gull, or even a Glaucous or Iceland.

- Use special caution before calling any brown-eyed gull a Thayer's. For one thing, you need to make sure the gull is really a full adult in the first place. Third-winter Herring Gulls, for example, generally resemble full adults, and many of these have dark eyes. (I also suspect some 4th-winter Herring Gulls, which are essentially adults, can even have dark eyes.) For another thing, at a distance or in poor light a yellow-eyed gull of

any species can appear to be dark-eyed — and consequently be mistaken for a Thayer's. (Or a California or Mew gull, for that matter.)

- And even if that gull is really a full adult and the iris is really dark, remember that some Thayer's (reportedly 10% of them) have yellow eyes. And I have had close looks at a few full adult Thayer's Gulls over the years which had one yellow iris and one brown iris! Or were these Herring Gulls?

- It has been said in some references that adult Thayer's Gulls have a darker gray mantle and deeper pink legs than Herrings. I doubt this is true at all regarding mantle color, any leg color difference may hold only some of the time, and I wouldn't rely on either feature as a useful field mark.

- Finally and unfortunately, as illustrated in *Sibley* and as I have seen on a few occasions, an adult Herring Gull rarely can have only a limited amount of black on the under side of its outer primaries. Such birds could therefore be easily mistaken for Thayer's.

Conclusions

Well, perhaps there aren't any. Thayer's Gull taxonomy is still a work in progress, the perfect Thayer's Gull identification reference has yet to be written, and almost all Thayer's Gull field marks involve a caveat or two. But, again, there are Thayer's Gulls migrating through and wintering in Minnesota, and some of them can even be identified.

8255 Congdon Blvd., Duluth, MN 55804.



NOTES OF INTEREST

TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE IN LYON COUNTY — On 23 September 2001, I found a Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) in the underbrush of a riparian deciduous woodland at Camden State Park, Lyon County. I was first alerted by a simple series of monotonous, repeated, whistled "toot" or "took" notes. As I approached the area where the call was coming from, a slender, gray, robin-sized bird flew from the outer branches of a black walnut tree into a buckthorn bush. It seemed to be foraging in the buckthorn, probably for either berries or insects.

The bird was mostly colored in shades of gray. The head, back, sides, breast, and belly were almost uniformly medium gray, though the middle of the breast and the throat were lighter. The primaries and upper tail were noticeably darker than the rest of its wings, while the back was again medium to medium-light



gray. One faint (light buff-colored) partial wingbar was discernible on the lower edge of its greater coverts. Whitish feather edging was also visible on the outer edge of its tail feathers.

Its bill was dark charcoal-gray, short, and of uniform thickness, appearing similar to that of an Eastern Bluebird but perhaps thicker. A white eye ring fully encircled the black eye. It had an upright posture and a slender look to it, even while feeding. Unfortunately, the bird was in view for only a couple minutes until an approaching train scared it off. This represents the second earliest date for this species in southern Minnesota. **Roger J. Schroeder, 215 Rainbow Drive, Marshall, MN 56258.**

FIRST KANDIYOHI COUNTY TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE — While pheasant hunting on private property in Kandiyohi County on 13 October 2001, I flushed a Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) from a thicket. It flew about 15 feet away and landed in a tree about 12 feet up. The bird was backlit and I assumed at first that it was a robin, then noticed that the shape wasn't quite right. The bird was more slender and had a longer tail than a robin. Then I noticed that it had a white eyering. Suspecting solitaire, I changed my vantage point with respect to lighting and as I did so, the bird flew again but only a few feet farther. This allowed viewing of the extended wing and helped rule out mockingbird, which shows white wing patches in flight. In the better lighting, I could see the solitaire's overall gray appearance, white eyering, brownish markings on the wing, and dark tail with white edging. Knowing that this represented a first county record for this species, I called it to the attention of my companions. The bird seemed quite tame and did not vocalize. **Randy S. Frederickson, 416 19th St. N.W., Willmar, MN 56201.**



ANOTHER YELLOW-BILLED LOON ON MILLE LACS — At 9:35 A.M. on 4 November 2001, while conducting a survey for loons and gulls, we discovered a juvenile Yellow-billed Loon (*Gavia adamsii*) on Mille Lacs Lake, near the Liberty Beach Resort in Mille Lacs County. We had already counted over 500 Common Loons (*G. immer*) along the east shore between Malmo and Liberty Beach when Peder spotted this individual 300–400 yards offshore. He immediately recognized it as a juvenile Yellow-billed Loon and invited Phil to “take a look at this” through a Leica Televid 77 mm spotting scope. Phil independently arrived at the same conclusion and, after a brief display of irrational exuberance, we began taking field notes and making sketches as the bird slowly drifted towards the northwest. We observed the loon until 10:00 A.M., by which time it had moved to approximately 800 yards away. Viewing conditions could not have been better. The lake surface was calm with scarcely a ripple, the morning sun was shining behind us, and we were able to dial our zoom eyepieces up to 60 power with complete preservation of resolution and clarity.

Initially, the loon was floating on the surface of the lake, where it preened and briefly assumed a sleeping posture; later, it started diving with occasional periods of respite on the surface. It seemed to stay underwater longer than the few Common Loons that were nearby, though its dives were not timed by us. It did not associate with the other loons, and indeed no interactions with other birds were observed.

This individual appeared larger than a Common Loon. It showed the classic “bumped” forehead and flattened crown of a Yellow-billed, its eye looked small and dark, and its bill often appeared larger and heavier than that of a Common. The bill was always held tilted up, well above horizontal. The culmen looked essentially

straight while the lower mandible appeared angular and swept up at the gonys. Bill color was yellowish-white throughout, except for a dusky area on the proximal one-to two-thirds of the culmen.

For the loon in question, plumage was as follows. Its forehead and crown were dark, as was a narrow strip down the center of the hindneck; the entire face (including loreal and supraloreal regions, ocular and supraocular regions, and cheeks) and the neck-sides were considerably paler, a dirty buffish or whitish color. Its chin, throat, and upper foreneck were white. The eye, being completely surrounded by the pale color of the sides of the head, stood out from the rest of the face. Also standing out was a diagnostic dark smudge at the rear of the ear-coverts, present on both sides of the head but more prominent on the right. Overall, the face and neck-sides looked paler than their counterparts on any Common Loon observed that day; when viewed from behind, the juxtaposition of pale face, pale neck-sides, and a narrow dark strip down the center of the hindneck produced an effect vaguely reminiscent of an *Aechmophorus* grebe. As for the loon's back and scapulars, they were brownish with pale scalloping arranged in transverse rows; the pale scalloping indicated the loon to be a juvenile. The breast and belly (seen while the loon preened) were white. On one occasion, the bird rose up slightly and flapped its wings, revealing that the upperwings and rump were similar in color to the back and scapulars. Finally, the tail was not seen.

Identification of the Yellow-billed Loon (a.k.a. White-billed Diver in Europe) has been thoroughly reviewed by Binford and Remsen (1974), Burn and Mather (1974), Cramp and Simmons (1977), Appleby *et al.* (1986), Phillips (1990), Kaufman (1991), Beaman and Madge (1998), and others. Bill size and shape, color of the bill (especially the culmen), bill carriage, head shape, and the auricular smudge are considered useful characters. These were all noted on the bird at Mille Lacs, and all were consistent with a Yellow-billed Loon. The Common Loon can show a pale bill but its culmen is dusky to the tip and the culmen itself is gently downcurved; in addition, its forecrown is often less obviously bumped, it lacks a discrete auricular smudge, and though it may hold its bill above horizontal for short periods of time, it would probably not do so consistently. Presumed hybrids between *immer* and *adamsii* have been reported (Palmer 1962) but there were no atypical or intermediate characters observed on the individual at Mille Lacs.

This represents the fifth occurrence of the Yellow-billed Loon in Minnesota. Others were 16 November 1980 on Lake Winnibigoshish, Itasca County (Savaloja 1981), with possibly the same individual 26–28 November 1980 on Lake Superior at Duluth, St. Louis County and Two Harbors, Lake County (Green 1981); 17 October 1987 on Lake Superior at Stoney Point and Duluth, St. Louis County (Eckert 1988); and 11–13 November 1995 on Mille Lacs Lake, Crow Wing and Mille Lacs counties (Eckert 1996).

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Peder H. Svingen, 2602 East 4th Street, Duluth, MN 55812; Philip C. Chu, Department of Biology, St. John's University, Collegeville, MN 56321.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE IN DULUTH — On 30 November 2001, while looking at waterfowl in the Duluth harbor at the Park Point Recreational Area, Dave Grosshuesch and I observed a first-winter Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*). At about 2:20 P.M., we spotted an unusual looking gull approaching from the direction of Superior, Wisconsin. After it got closer and I got my scope on it, we both recognized it as a Black-legged Kittiwake. A bold black "M" on the upper surface of the wings, a bold black bar on the back of its neck, and a black terminal band (about one inch wide) on the tail were obvious in flight.

The back was light gray, the forehead, crown, chest, and belly were pure white, the back portion of the upper wing was white with no trailing black edge, and the tail was white out to the black terminal band. The under surface of the wing was all white except for the black tips of the outer three or four primaries. Its flight was more direct and less buoyant than a Bonaparte's Gull. The bird landed in front of us, just out from the boat landing, and a black smudge behind and below the eye was visible, as was a diagonal black bar across the folded wing. The bill was solid black, pointed, and slight decurved. After sitting on the water briefly, the bird took off towards Canal Park. We then made several phone calls and took field notes, and about 20 minutes later we spotted it coming back from the direction of Canal Park. It landed again and consumed a minnow. After about two minutes, it flew back towards Superior and was never relocated. Interestingly, Terry Wiens found a first-winter Black-legged Kittiwake two days later along Interstate 35 in Pine County, Minnesota. **Jim Lind, 320 2nd Ave., Two Harbors, MN 55616.**

RECORDS OF THE BLACK-HEADED GULL ALONG THE MINNESOTA-IOWA BORDER —

At approximately 4:50 P.M. on 17 October 2001, after about four hours of waiting near the fishing pier along Jackson County Road 2 on the north side of Spirit Lake, I relocated an adult Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) that had been seen on both sides of the Minnesota/Iowa state line since 6 October. It was apparently spending most of its time in Iowa, but flew across the road into Minnesota before circling back into Iowa, where it foraged back-and-forth along the side of the road. One adult Bonaparte's Gull (*L. philadelphia*) and numerous Ring-billed Gulls (*L. delawarensis*) were also foraging over the "surf" churned up by southeast winds. The accompanying photograph by Dennis Martin nicely depicts salient features, so plumage details will not be presented here. Identification of adults in flight is straightforward (Kaufman 1993). Written descriptions by myself and others have been placed in the M.O.U. files at the Bell Museum of Natural History.

This represents the fourth consecutive October that one or more adults have been found at this location, and at the time of this writing (October 2002), one has appar-



Black-headed Gull, 20 October 2001, Jackson County. Photo by Denny Martin.

ently returned for the fifth consecutive fall! Black-headed Gull was first reported on the Minnesota side of the state line near the Spirit Lake fishing pier 4 August 1994 (Hertzel 1995), when one of two adults discovered 2 August 1994 on the Iowa side of the border (Dinsmore 1996) strayed into Minnesota. Steve Dinsmore found the second adult feeding a recently fledged juvenile at Kettleson W.P.A., just a few miles southwest of the fishing pier (Dinsmore 1996). There were no 1994 reports from this area after 12 August, but a basic-plumaged adult was found in south-central Iowa at Big Creek L., Polk County 17, 21, and 23 November 1994 (Kent and Dinsmore 1996).

Neither Iowa nor Minnesota recorded this species in 1995, and Minnesota had no sightings in 1996, but Iowa had an adult at Jemmerson Slough, Dickinson County, between 23 June and 20 July 1996 (*Iowa Bird Life* 66:133). The same or another adult

returned to Jemerson Slough the following year, where it was seen 20 June – 16 July 1997 (*Iowa Bird Life* 67:124, Proescholdt 1998). One found in spring was relocated at Kettleston Hogsback, Dickinson County 23 June 1998 (*Iowa Bird Life* 68:127). Yet another summer occurrence from this area was 10 July 1999 at the Dickinson County landfill (*Iowa Bird Life* 69:127). The probable breeding record from Iowa in 1994 and these subsequent summer sightings intrigued observers on both sides of the state line, especially since this species' nesting range in North America has been geographically limited (Nikula 1993).

Most or possibly all recent sightings may refer to the same individual(s) returning year after year. The consecutive series of fall sightings at the fishing pier began in 1998, but spring sightings have been almost as consistent since that time. Two adults were on the Minnesota side of Grovers Lake (which straddles the state line) in April and May 1998 (Eckert 1998); one of these was seen in Iowa at Kettleston Hogsback, Dickinson County 17 May 1998 (*Iowa Bird Life* 68:93). An adult was photographed in Minnesota near the fishing pier 26 March 1999 (***The Loon*** 71:199) and one was well-described there 7 April 2001 (***The Loon*** 73:214).

In Fall 1998, an adult was documented in Iowa at Spirit L., Dickinson County 11, 15 October and two adults were seen 8 November (*Iowa Bird Life* 69:35); one was photographed at the fishing pier and flew across the state line into Minnesota 29 October (***The Loon*** 71:87, wrong date in photo caption 70:241). One adult at the fishing pier beginning 1 October 1999 (*Iowa Bird Life* 70:37, 70:38) led to the discovery of two adults on the Jackson County side 9 October; both birds then appeared on both sides of the state line through 13 November 1999 (Hertzel 2000). An adult at the fishing pier 7 October 2000 (*Iowa Bird Life* 71:35) was subsequently photographed on both sides of the state line on the 8th (***The Loon*** 73:91). Finally, an adult was seen and photographed on both sides of the border 6–24 October 2001 (Hertzel 2002, *North American Birds* 56:55, ***The Loon*** 74:95).

The first acceptable Minnesota record of the Black-headed Gull was an adult at North Heron L., Jackson County, 28 May – July 1986 (Janssen 1986). An accepted record from the same location 24 April 1987 was recently re-evaluated and was found to be unacceptable (Eckert 2000). Thus, all acceptable Minnesota records of this species have occurred in Jackson County and except for the first, all have occurred within a few mile radius of the fishing pier at remarkably consistent times of year.

Acknowledgments: I thank Paul Hertzel for providing data on records from Iowa and for reviewing this note. Additional information was obtained from the Iowa Ornithologists' Union Records Committee home page at <http://www.iowabirds.org/records/annualReport_public.asp>.

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LATE HOODED WARBLER IN STEARNS COUNTY — On 21 November 2001, Chrisy



Skindlein, an undergraduate ecology student at St. Cloud University, informed me of a small, yellow and black bird moving about in some shrubs and on the lawn near the northeast side of Headley Hall. I did not have binoculars or camera, and did not really expect to find anything unusual (thinking that it might be an American Goldfinch). We went outside and briefly observed it in the same location from about seven meters, but the bird flushed into a nearby deciduous tree when someone walked past on the sidewalk. We walked over to

the tree and were able to observe it from different angles within three to five meters for approximately ten minutes while it moved about, foraging in the open (leafless) canopy.

Its identification as a Hooded Warbler (*Wilsonia citrina*) was not difficult because it was a male in breeding plumage. This medium-sized warbler had a black crown and bib, which were connected on the shoulders, forming a hood that enclosed its bright yellow face. Its breast, belly, and undertail coverts were the same shade of yellow, and non-streaked. The tail was white underneath and long in comparison to the undertail coverts. The tip of the tail had a slight indentation. Its back, wings, rump, and tail were yellow-green.

We went back indoors and I encouraged the student to verify the sighting by checking field guides. We then informed two more ecology students (Melissa Olson and Melissa Rafferty) and Dr. William Faber, Assistant Professor of Wildlife Ecology, about the sighting. When we all went back outside, the bird was on the lawn at its original location. One of the students had binoculars and two had field guides, so we checked the tail for white in the outer upper rectrices and looked for pink legs, and the bird had both of these field marks. A passerby flushed the bird but it remained in the vicinity of Headley and Brown halls, foraging in the lower canopy of several trees and landing several times on the lawn beneath the trees. Again, passing students flushed the bird and it moved out of sight into a dense tree. During the observations, the bird was silent. The first sighting was at 11:30 A.M. and the second sighting was about 12:15 P.M. The bird was seen for about 10 minutes each sighting. **Dale F. Kane, Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Biological Sciences, 720 4th Ave. S., St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN 56301.**

BRANT IN LYON COUNTY — Four trips throughout southwestern Minnesota during spring 2002 to count geese and look for Brant culminated in success on 10 April when an adult of the Atlantic race (*Branta bernicla brota*) was discovered near Coon Creek W.M.A. on Lyon County Road 2, about 1.5 miles from the Lincoln County line. A large flock of mixed geese was counted on this pond, including 3300 Snow Geese, 163 Ross's Geese, 37 White-fronted Geese, and 20 Canada Geese.



Unlike many flocks of Snow Geese, this flock was near enough to the road so that all the individuals could be scanned efficiently, and when many of the birds (including the Brant) climbed out onto the remaining ice, excellent views and even photographs were obtained. The Brant was similar in size to the Ross's Geese, and therefore distinctly smaller than all the Snow Geese. It was

often seen side by side with immature blue-morph Snow Geese, showing the Brant's much blacker head and breast, the much smaller and all dark bill, the dark legs, the lack of any white on the face (most of the immature Blue Geese were showing variable signs of whitish on the face), and a blackish tail only thinly exposed beyond the conspicuous white rump and undertail coverts. The presence of a white mark on the sides of the neck that did not meet on the front of the neck, and sharp demarcation between the blackish breast and the pale whitish-buff belly and flanks indicated this bird to be of the Atlantic race (or "pale-bellied" race, Sibley 2000), while the lack of any conspicuous white fringing on the upperwing coverts and scapulars indicate the bird was an adult (the white fringing present on juveniles is apparently retained "until at least first summer," Madge and Burn 1988).

This is the first sighting of a Brant in Minnesota since 1991. There are eleven previous records of Brant in Minnesota which have detailed descriptions, photographs, or specimens on file. Two additional records reported by the DNR include 2 November 1963 at Buffalo Bay, Lake of the Woods (flock of 17–18!), and 13 November 1985 in Olmsted County (one shot), but there are no descriptions or physical evidence of these birds on file. The only previous spring records are 17–31 May 1966 at Rice Lake N.W.R., Aitkin Co. (*The Loon* 38:105), 27 March 1987 in Manfred Township, Lac Qui Parle Co. (*The Loon* 59:149), and 28 March 1991 at Mountain Lake, Cottonwood County (*The Loon* 63:209). Although most records of Brant in Minnesota appear to be of the Atlantic race, the bird mentioned above at Rice Lake N.W.R. was of the Pacific race (*B. b. nigricans*). Details on file also indicate the immature seen at Agassiz N.W.R. on 31 October 1972 (*The Loon* 45:24) and the individual seen in Lac Qui Parle County (above) may have also been of the Pacific race.

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Karl Bardon, 13073 Hastings St. NE, Blaine, MN 55449

KING EIDER AT DULUTH — While scanning scaup on the bay-side of Duluth's Park Point on 7 May 2002, I noticed a female King Eider diving among them. Its overall size was nearly twice as large as the adjacent scaup, and the overall shape was classic eider with a heavy body and thick neck. It dove in typical sea-duck fashion with the wings held out.

Although the bird was quite distant (about one-half mile), I could clearly make out the bill shape and size, especially with the early morning sun coming out directly behind me. The shape of the bill was obviously that of a King Eider, with a slight concavity to the upper mandible, and a very rounded (almost vertical) shape to the loreal feathering where it meets the bill. In Common Eider, the bill is more sloping and elongate, with a straighter edge to the upper mandible, and a more pointed and longer extension of the loreal feathering out onto the sides of the bill. Furthermore, the head of King Eider is squarish in shape, with an overall smaller appearance to the bill projection, while the head of Common Eider is more rounded, with a slight bump where the upper portion of the bill meets the forehead. I have seen many eiders in both Alaska and on the East Coast, and feel the differences in head and bill shape are easily recognizable at any reasonable distance. The King Eider was watched in flight, when it showed no obvious white in the upper wing, and it was also seen to flap its wings during exercising several times, when it showed pale whitish on the underwing coverts, typical

of female eiders. Although 9 of the 15 acceptable King Eider records have occurred on Lake Superior, 7 of these 9 records have been from Cook County, and all 9 of them have been from fall and winter (14 October – 15 January). Surprisingly, this represents the first King Eider record for Duluth, although there is a previous St. Louis County record from Lost Lake on 29 October 1964 (*The Loon* 36:136). The only previous spring record is from Lower Red Lake, Beltrami County on 9 May 1971 (*The Loon* 43:90–91). **Karl Bardon, 13073 Hastings St. NE, Blaine, MN 55449.**

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE IN LYON COUNTY — On my birthday, 4 April 2001, while birding the Black Rush Lake area in Lyon County I was observing a *Quiscalus* sp. that caught my attention with its abrasive vocalizations. The bird's song started with a longer, single, raspy introductory note that I would describe as "an intake of breath." Then there was a short but noticeable pause between the introductory note and the end of the song, which consisted of a loud, raucous series of three to five "kek" notes. The "kek" notes were moderate in pitch (not sounding too low or too high) and had the same sound; individual notes did not seem to vary in structure or quality.



Visually, the size of this bird appeared at least twice as large as a Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), which was available for direct comparison as the two species were perched on the same small branch of a small tree in a small wetland pond. The bird in question appeared about 1.5 times the size of a Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*). Although they were in the same general area, no individual Common Grackles were in the same view as the bird in question to make a direct comparison.

Regarding plumage, this bird's entire body (generally) was dark black with the exception of the dark purple head. The tail, underside, throat, and breast of the bird were a dark black color. And although the wings and back also were dark (black) they had a dark green cast to them. This contrasted with a dark purple neck, face, and head. The eye of the bird was bright yellow.

Legs and bill were also black. The bill was thick at the base, slightly decurved throughout the length, and came to a dull point at the tip.

Proportionately, the shape of this bird was similar to Common Grackle with the exception of the tail, which seemed to be about twice as long as the tail of Common Grackle, and much broader when fanned out. The size and shape of the bill was similar to Common Grackle. It did not appear noticeably larger, but did seem thicker at the base, and not as sharply pointed at the tip. The vocalization this individual sang was very different from Common Grackle; the repeated "kek" notes being quite unlike the two-syllable song of Common Grackle.

Although the typical range of Boat-tailed Grackle (*Q. major*) would seem to preclude this species as a possibility, many features of Boat-tailed and Great-tailed are similar. I discounted *major*, however, because of the quality of the notes in its song.

The tail of the bird I was viewing seemed too long and broad for what one would expect in *major*. Furthermore, the song of *major*, although similar in structure with repeated notes, has a quality to the sound that is not as harsh and choppy as *mexicanus*. The quality of the tone of the song of *mexicanus* seems adequately described in the *Sibley Guide to Birds* as "mechanical." Boat-tailed Grackle does not have that same mechanical quality to the song.

As I was preparing to photograph the bird it took flight, circling the area of this pond and a nearby farmyard, then flying south away from the area. Repeated attempts to relocate this species over the following days were not successful. **Roger Schroeder, 215 Rainbow Drive, Marshall, MN 56258.**

WESTERN SANDPIPERS IN TRAVERSE COUNTY



Two Western Sandpipers were found with a mixed flock of shorebirds on the Minnesota shore of Mud Lake, Traverse County on 2 May 2002. One bird was in nearly full alternate plumage, while the other was showing only subtle signs of pre-alternate molt. Although all five species of “peep” were present on the lake, only Baird’s Sandpiper was close enough for direct comparison; the two Western Sandpipers appeared substantially smaller than the Baird’s by about 30%, and had a noticeably different structure with the wingtips only reaching the tail tip. Their legs and

bills were blackish.

The bills of these two birds were typical for Western Sandpiper: nearly as long as the head, slightly decurved, noticeably thicker at the base, and finely tapered at the tip. The brightest individual showed isolated, prominent patches of reddish color on the crown, ear coverts, and upper scapulars, contributing to an overall colorful appearance that was noticeable with only binoculars from several hundred feet away. The underparts of this bright individual were heavily patterned with dark streaks, forming well-defined, narrow rows on the upper breast, then becoming broader and wider on the lower breast and flanks. The marks on the flanks were clearly V-shaped. The duller of the two birds had only faint chestnut in the upper scapulars (with no visible chestnut in the crown or ear coverts), and did not show the extensive streaks and V-shaped marks on the underparts. Nonetheless, the structure of this bird was nearly identical to the brighter individual.

Although Semipalmated Sandpipers from the eastern part of the species’ range can have long bills which overlap with Western Sandpiper in length (and many of these long-billed birds were seen at Mud Lake later in the month), their bills appear thicker at the base and finely tapered at the tip, with more obvious decurvature. Although alternate plumaged Semipalmated Sandpipers can show minor chestnut color in the upper scapulars, they always lack the conspicuous patches of red on the crown and ear coverts, and although some Semis can show minor streaking along the flanks, they always lack the obvious and extensive rows of V-shaped marks on the breast and flanks.

Western Sandpiper has perhaps the most embarrassing history of any bird in Minnesota. From 1952–1988, over 223 observations were reported from 48 counties, with a maximum high count of 75 in Lyon County in spring 1975 (*The Loon* 47:166)! In 1988, the status of this species was reviewed, resulting in only four acceptable sightings from 1988–2002: one seen 28 July 1988 in Bloomington, Hennepin County (*The Loon* 61:24), two adults seen 21 May 1991 at Agassiz N.W.R., Marshall County (*The Loon* 63:196–197), one seen at Lake Byllesby, Dakota County 26–27 October 2001 (*North American Birds* 56:55), and the present Mud Lake record. The only acceptable observation prior to 1988 and the only record with verifiable physical evidence is one collected on 4 September 1960 at Salt Lake, Lac Qui Parle County (*The Flicker* 32:125). Although photographs were taken of the Mud Lake birds, only the duller of the two birds can be clearly seen. **Karl Bardon, 13073 Hastings St. NE, Blaine, MN 55449.**

WARBLER FALL-OUT AT MILLE LACS LAKE



A wonderful fall-out of warblers occurred at Mille Lacs Lake on 15 May 2002. Conditions were perfect for such an event: late in the day on 14 May 2002, the winds shifted to the south after weeks of north winds and cold weather throughout the state, during which migration was relatively slow and only minor influxes of new birds occurred. No doubt a massive movement of birds took advantage of this favorable weather, and went airborne that evening. Sometime before dawn on 15 May, an isolated

band of showers moved directly over the area of Mille Lacs Lake, causing the fall-out observed. A total of 3104 warblers of 24 species were counted (Table 1).

Although I birded around much of the lake, over 95% of the birds counted were in a seven mile stretch along the northeast shore of the lake from Malmo, Aitkin County down to Mille Lacs County Road 28 (this area is similar in length to Minnesota Point, Duluth). In this area, many of my stops had 100–200 warblers in view at once, and at the best location over 200 individuals of 19 species were in view simultaneously in just a few trees. Most memorable, at this same location 21 Cape May Warblers were seen in two small adjacent spruce trees (along with many other warblers). The old adage “dripping from the trees” was certainly apt in this case. Coincident with the arrival of these warblers was a hatch of millions of tiny aerial insects around the budding deciduous trees, and as a result the warblers were feeding frantically in dense flocks.

The total numbers of Tennessee, Nashville, Northern Parula, Yellow, and Cape May Warblers represent state high counts, and the totals for many others were near-record. Other migrants of interest counted in exceptional numbers included 487 Chipping Sparrows and 71 Baltimore Orioles. Except for nine Philadelphia, vireos were not common. Thrushes and flycatchers were similarly scarce.

Interestingly, while watching at Malmo during the mid-morning, hundreds of warblers were seen in the air, many of which were heading back south into the wind. Although I had expected the warblers to concentrate on the south side of the lake with south winds during a spring flight, it appears that the densest concentration of birds was on the northeast side of the lake. This fall-out at Mille Lacs Lake on 15 May certainly represents the best warbler watching I have ever witnessed.

Golden-winged Warbler	9
Tennessee Warbler	263
Orange-crowned Warbler	71
Nashville Warbler	488
Northern Parula	56
Yellow Warbler	492
Chestnut-sided Warbler	43
Magnolia Warbler	49
Cape May Warbler	98
Yellow-rumped Warbler	930
Black-throated Green Warbler	23
Blackburnian Warbler	16
Pine Warbler	7
Palm Warbler	315
Bay-breasted Warbler	5
Blackpoll Warbler	28
Black-and-white Warbler	25
American Redstart	132
Ovenbird	8
Northern Waterthrush	4
Mourning Warbler	1
Common Yellowthroat	6
Wilson's Warbler	34
Canada Warbler	1

Table 1. Warblers counted at Mille Lacs Lake on 15 May 2002.

Karl Bardon, 13073 Hastings St. NE, Blaine, MN 55449.

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Purpose of the M.O.U.

The Minnesota Ornithologists' Union is an organization of both professionals and amateurs interested in birds. We foster the study of birds. We aim to create and increase public interest in birds, and to promote the preservation of birdlife and its natural habitat.

To carry out these aims, we publish a journal, *The Loon*, and a newsletter, *Minnesota Birding*; we conduct field trips;



we encourage and sponsor the preservation of natural areas; we hold seminars where research reports, unusual observations and conservation discussions are presented. We are supported by dues from members, affiliated clubs and special gifts. Any or all phases of the MOU program could be expanded significantly with gifts, memorials or bequests willed to the organization.

Suggestions to Authors

The editors of *The Loon* welcome submissions of articles, Notes of Interest, color slides, and color or black & white photographs. Submissions should be typed, double-spaced and single-sided. Notes of Interest should be less than two pages. Photographs should be 5"x7". Whenever possible, please include a copy of your submission in any standard format on any 3 1/2 inch computer disk.

Club information and other announcements of general interest should be sent to the Newsletter editors. See inside front cover. Bird sighting reports for each season should be sent promptly at the end of February, May, July and November to Peder Svingen. See key to the "Seasonal Report."

The **Loon**

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THE MINNESOTA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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EDITOR OF *The Loon*:

Anthony X. Hertzell, 8461 Pleasant View Drive,
Mounds View, MN 55112.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS OF *The Loon*:

Karl Bardon, Kim Eckert, Bruce Fall, Robert Janssen, Fred Leshner, Warren Nelson, Peder Svungen, Harrison Tordoff, Nancy Weber.

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EDITOR OF *Minnesota Birding*:

Jim Williams, 345 Ferndale Road N. Wayzata MN 55391

MINNESOTA BIRD REPORTS:

Statewide 763-780-8890
Duluth 218-728-5030

MOU E-MAIL ADDRESS:

mou@cbs.umn.edu

MOU WEB SITE:

<http://cbs.umn.edu/~mou>

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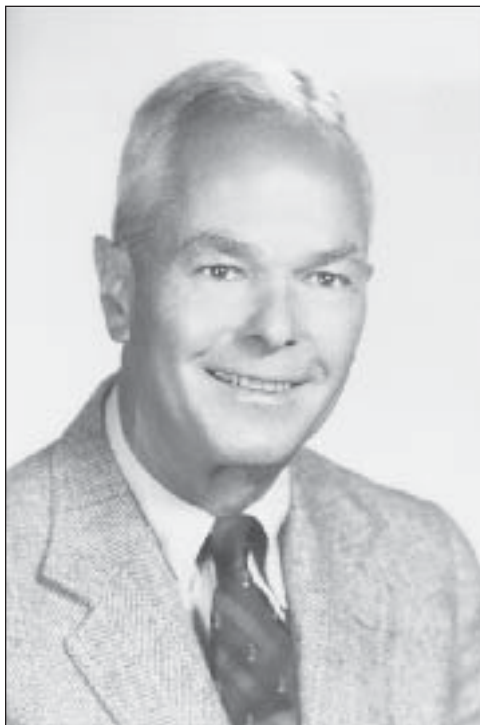
Obituary:
Wallace C. Dayton, Conservationist
1921–2002

Harrison B. Tordoff

Wallace C. Dayton, age 81, died on October 27, 2002. He left a career in business in 1967 to devote the rest of his life to conservation. Imagine the strength of character needed to give up a powerful leading position in the family's department store at age 46 to devote the rest of his life to the preservation of the natural world. He must have been sure he could make a difference, and he certainly did. Wally was ready to listen and quick to laugh, easy to talk with but not loquacious. He was serene and gentle, but tough and passionate about his conservation work. He had great enthusiasm for new field experiences and for new ideas about keeping things natural. Every moment spent with him was a delight.

Over three and a half decades, he invested his time and money in support of a wide range of conservation issues. On a national scale, he served at the highest levels of such organizations as the National Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, Wilderness Society, World Wildlife Fund, and Sierra Club. In Minnesota, he held leading roles with Hennepin Parks, Landscape Arboretum, Center for Environmental Advocacy, and Quetico Superior Foundation, to name only a few.

I first met Wally Dayton in 1970 when I came to Minnesota as director of the James Ford Bell Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota. He loved the Bell Museum of Natural History, giving wise advice and support, and I was privileged to see the results of his work first-hand. Here is my personal view of



Wallace C. Dayton.

this remarkable man's generosity.

In 1974, Wally recognized a special need for the training of students for work in field biology. While graduate students in laboratory sciences are subsidized by investments in laboratories and equipment, students in field biology usually lack such direct societal support. Accordingly, Wally established endowed fellowships for field biology at the University

of Minnesota, to be earned competitively by students seeking masters and doctoral degrees. The fellowships made it possible for students to buy equipment and travel to research sites around the world. Dayton Fellowships, usually ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars, have helped support more than 200 graduate students, who have produced excellent research and gone on to careers in natural science. Dayton Fellowship alumni now include at least one college president, leaders in state and federal natural resource agencies, scientists in private conservation groups, and teachers at every level. The success of the Dayton Fellowships and the clear need for more funds also led to endowment of the comparable Wilkie Fellowships by the Wilkie Brothers Foundation, increasing the money available for student research and training.

Dayton's research support was not limited to students. Most Minnesotans have heard of David Mech's research on wolves, of Lynn Roger's studies of black bears, of Peregrine Falcon restoration; these and an array of other field projects on moose, deer, turkeys, eagles, Ospreys, and other kinds of birds, mammals, herps, fish, and plants have had generous support from Wallace Dayton.

Whenever possible, Wally visited the sites of the field work he sponsored and loved being part of it. He and his wife, Mary Lee Dayton, who has always been his partner in conservation, worked hard and successfully with The Nature Conservancy and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to preserve remnant native prairies of Minnesota. Together, Wally and Mary Lee published a book on wildflowers, illustrated with Wally's photographs.

The most important publishing event in the history of American ornithology, the monumental *Birds of North America* monograph series (BNA), could not have happened without Daytons' support. The

BNA is a series of monographs on the biology of nearly every species of North American bird. Each monograph — about 700 in all — is written by the expert or experts on that species. The Daytons' support ranged from crucial start-up funding in 1990 to providing sets of BNA to every state Department of Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy office in every state, and to dozens of small libraries and schools unable to purchase the set with their own limited funds. The first monograph appeared in 1992 and the final ones, completing the series, were scheduled to be published by the end of 2002. In recognition of their generosity to BNA, the names Wallace C. Dayton and Mary L. Dayton are inscribed in perpetuity as Guarantors on the rolls of the American Ornithologists' Union.

Scott Lanyon, Director of the Bell Museum, pointed out to me that Wally had a gift for providing support at critical moments, often bringing success to an organization or program facing an uncertain future. For example, Wally strongly supported the Peregrine Fund in its early days at Cornell, when skeptics about the potential of captive propagation as a means of restoring extirpated Peregrine populations were numerous and vocal. Similarly, BNA faced such daunting financial needs at the outset in 1990 that some people doubted it could succeed. Wally's support was crucial in itself, but it also, as a vote of confidence, helped to inspire the contributions of other donors.

Wallace Dayton's commitment to preserve the natural world that we share with other organisms and his thoughtful generosity set a standard for personal contribution to conservation that is unmatched in my experience.

Harrison B. Tordoff, Professor Emeritus, Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior and Bell Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota.

Scott's Oriole in Olmsted County

George Eckman

On Wednesday, 17 April 2002, I was eating breakfast around 6:30 A.M. In my groggy state, I noticed a yellow and black bird out on our peanut feeder pecking around in the dish for food. My first thought was "Wow, that's the biggest goldfinch I've ever seen!" I quickly realized that the bird I was looking at was not a goldfinch but an oriole of some kind. The Baltimore and Orchard Orioles usually show up at our feeders in the first week of May. We have orange halves and sugar water waiting for them at that time but this bird was almost two and a half weeks early and wasn't a Baltimore or Orchard Oriole, at least as far as I could recall. Since the bird was obviously hungry I cut up a couple of oranges and put them on a feeder, hoping it would eat. I then got out one of our bird identification books to try and determine what I was seeing out on the deck. I vaguely recalled seeing pictures of Orchard Orioles that were yellow and was expecting to find that the bird I was seeing was an Orchard Oriole that had showed up early. I was very surprised to find out that the bird I was seeing was not an Orchard Oriole at all but was in fact a Scott's Oriole from the southwestern U.S.!

The Scott's Oriole was feeding on the oranges by this time, and I mixed up some sugar water and put that out with the oranges. I also got some pictures of the bird with our 35mm camera. By this time I had to go to work. While at work I did a quick search for Scott's Orioles in Minnesota on Google's web site. Some of the hits I got were from the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union (MOU) web site. I sent them a description of the bird and asked some questions about feeding it and if the bird would be okay. I was concerned that the bird was so far out of bounds that it

might not survive here in Minnesota as cold weather was supposed to be coming that weekend. I also sent an e-mail to my wife who was out of town on business. We are both backyard birders and I knew she would love to see this bird.

Later in the morning I got a call from Tony Hertzell from MOU. He thanked me for the e-mail and the description of the bird and wanted to know if I could e-mail him some of the pictures that I had taken. I said sure, as soon as I got them developed I would e-mail the pictures to him. We talked a little while about the bird and Tony said that if this really did turn out to be a Scott's Oriole that it would only be the second time this species had occurred in Minnesota and that there likely would be a lot of birders interested in coming out and seeing it. At that point I thought the most that was going to happen was I would send Tony the pictures the next day, he would say yes or no if it really was a Scott's Oriole, and if so we'd get a few birders showing up on the weekend to take a look. Boy was I wrong.

Tony called me later that afternoon and we decided he should come down and take a look at the bird. Earlier, over my lunch break, I had gone to the local bird store and bought some meal worms for the bird. I had put them out and the Scott's Oriole seemed really happy to have some substantial food to eat. Tony showed up at my place about 5:30 P.M. I explained that the best viewing area was probably through the windows of the sliding glass door that leads out to the deck. I had put out fresh meal worms and oranges by that time and I couldn't see the bird at all but Tony spotted him immediately in the top of a large silver maple tree a few hundred feet behind our house. I was really impressed how fast Tony located

the bird and was equally surprised that he was able to instantly identify it as a Scott's Oriole from that distance. I was initially disappointed that the bird was not in close and feeding while Tony was there to observe it, but just as I was thinking that, the bird swooped down from his perch in the silver maple tree and landed on the meal worm feeder. At this point the bird was only about sixteen feet away from us and Tony was getting some great pictures of it with his camera.

The Scott's Oriole stayed for about thirty minutes. It was obviously very hungry as it must have eaten 20 or more meal worms while we watched. Because the bird turned out to be a male Scott's Oriole, Tony wanted to know if we would be willing to allow birders to come and see it. Tony was far more experienced in this aspect than I and we discussed some ground rules for people coming to view the bird. We quickly settled on some general procedures such as setting up observing times for birders to show up and when they had to leave, where they should park, and so forth. Tony warned me that we could get large groups of people in our yard looking for the bird, but I assumed this was a worst case scenario so I didn't take it too seriously.

By now it was starting to sink in that having a Scott's Oriole in Minnesota was a bigger deal than I had originally expected. I still wasn't expecting to see any birders stopping by to see the bird until the weekend as that's when I expected everyone to have some free time. The next morning was wet and damp due to rain during the previous evening. I looked down from our back window around 6:15 A.M. to see the Scott's Oriole perched by the meal worm dish that was now flooded with soggy dead meal worms. While I know birds don't have facial expressions and it's not correct to project human emotions onto animals, I could only describe the bird's attitude at the time as "grumpy". I went down and replaced the meal worms and oranges and the bird started eating again after a short

while. I then went to work and sent Tony a short note saying the bird was still around and everything seemed okay.

During my lunch hour that day I decided to stop by the house to replenish the meal worms and see if birders had actually stopped by. There was one birder from Rochester there who had stopped by over his lunch hour and he told me several other birders had been there. I was pretty happy other people were getting a chance to see the bird, and decided I'd better let the neighbors know what was going on so they would not wonder why there were strange cars pulling up to our house and people going into our back yard.

When I got home that evening there were a couple of guys at the end of my driveway talking. I asked them if they had stopped by to see the Scott's Oriole and if anyone else had showed up to see the bird. They both said yes and then told me about 50 people had already been there in the morning. I was floored, I had not expected any kind of turnout like that. I guess all through the day there was a steady stream of cars and birders at the house. Typically there were 10 to 12 cars at the house at one time, and I heard that one birder had even driven all the way down from Duluth!

Birders continued to come to visit the bird through the weekend. Luckily my wife returned home Friday evening and was able to view the Scott's Oriole on Saturday morning. The president of MOU, Al Batt, stopped by Saturday afternoon to say "thank you" to us for allowing the birders to visit and see the Scott's Oriole. It was really amazing, he was willing to just stop by and not bother us with seeing the bird. There were a couple of birders there at the moment and we went to check with them to see if they had seen the bird. Luckily we spotted the bird right away. He was in one of the spruce trees in our side yard. It looked like he was trying to stay warm and hide somewhat as he was right in the middle of the tree.

Al thanked us again and gave us his

business card. He stressed to call him if we had problems with anyone not obeying the viewing procedures. Needless to say, we were very impressed!

A small snow storm occurred Saturday evening, leaving about two inches of snow on the ground Sunday morning. Much to our dismay, the Scott's Oriole decided to leave. I never saw him after Sunday morning. I hope he made it back to his native territory in the southwest.

All in all this was a great experience and I feel very fortunate that the Scott's Oriole chose our house to stop and rest.

I also found the experience of allowing fellow birders to view the Scott's Oriole to be very positive. I was amazed at how respectful people were of the viewing hours. People diligently arrived and left exactly on time, being very careful to stay within the viewing guidelines.

One final note. We'd like to thank MOU for the gift subscription to their journal and for the plaque they gave us for hosting the birders at our place. We really do appreciate them a lot.

307 – 12th Lane SW, Oronoco, MN, 55906.

A Mythical Undiscovered Peregrine Falcon Population

Harrison B. Tordoff

The restored population of midwestern Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) has been closely watched since the first releases in 1982. The first successful nesting was in 1987, at the Multifoods Tower in downtown Minneapolis. In 2002, 144 known pairs nested across the Midwest (ND, MN, WI, MI, SD, NE, IA, IL, IN, OH, KS, MO, KY, southeastern MB, northwestern ON). A strong effort is made each year to band the young falcons produced by pairs nesting in the wild. We have assumed from the early days of the project that some pairs were nesting undiscovered. Proof of this seemed to be the regular appearance of unbanded adults in the nesting population. In fact, it now

appears that most of the unbanded adults have actually come from known nests in which the young were not banded for a variety of reasons, and that there is no substantial undiscovered population. This is an important insight for any analysis of the population dynamics of midwestern Peregrines and for their future management. Here is the evidence for this conclusion.

From 1987 through 2002, 2029 young have fledged from known nests; 1720 of these have been banded. The 309 young known to have fledged unbanded are 15.2% of the total fledged (Table 1).

In 2002, 144 pairs were known to be on territories, 288 adults. Of the 199

Table 1. Banding status of Peregrine Falcon young fledged wild in the Midwest.

Year	No. of Pairs Fledging Young	Total Young Fledged	Young Fledged Banded	Young Fledged Unbanded	% Young Fledged Unbanded
1987–1993	102	265	203	62	23.4%
1994–1996	132	361	319	42	11.6%
1997–1999	208	586	512	74	12.6%
2000–2001	185	533	445	88	16.5%
Subtotal through 2001	627	1745	1479	266	15.2%
2002	106	284	241	43	15.1%
Grand Total	733	2029	1720	309	15.2%

adults whose banding status was determined (banded vs. unbanded), 32 (16.1%) were unbanded (Table 2). This translates to an estimated 46 unbanded adults in the total of 288. The source population for the 2002 territorial population is made up of birds fledged in year 2001 or earlier (Table 1, subtotal). A comparison of the frequencies of unbanded birds in the source population (15.2%) and in the 2002 territorial population (16.1%) shows that enough unbanded young have fledged from known nests to account for many, if not most, of the unbanded territorial adults, without having to postulate a substantial “undiscovered population.”

The banding status of the 2002 population can be summarized as follows:

- 288 territorial adults (144 pairs)
 - 199 banding status known
 - 167 banded (83.9%)
 - 144 individually identified
 - 7 immigrants (4.9%)
 - 137 local (midwestern in origin)
 - 32 unbanded (16.1%)
 - 89 banding status not known
 - 75 banded (projected)
 - 14 unbanded (projected)
 - 242 adults known + estimated banded
 - 46 known + estimated unbanded (16.1%)

Another source of territorial adult Peregrines is immigration to the Midwest

from eastern U.S. and Canada. There is no evidence to date of any movement of Peregrines in either direction across the Great Plains south of Canada. Of 144 territorial adults individually identified in 2002, seven (4.9%, one in Nebraska and six in Ohio) were immigrants, originating from eastern Ontario (1), New York (2), Pennsylvania (2), Maryland (1), and Virginia (1). This translates to an estimate of 14 immigrants in the 2002 known territorial population of 288 adults.

Why are some young fledged unbanded from known nests? Some nests are in inaccessible locations on buildings or bridges. Others nests require specialized equipment, such as “snoopers” for reaching under bridges, that is not always available at the appropriate window for banding, roughly two to four weeks of chick age. Not all nests are found at the outset; some are discovered when the young are too old to band without risk of premature fledging. Finally, the entire project depends heavily on volunteers scattered over 13 states and two provinces. Things can go wrong, signals may get mixed, people can procrastinate. The wonder is that we have tracked the population as well as we have, not that we fall short of perfection.

What evidence is there of undiscovered nesting pairs? In recent years, at least four nests have been discovered after the

Table 2. Banding status of territorial adult Peregrines in the Midwest, 2002.

Year	Territorial Pairs/Adults	Banding Status Known	Banded Adults	Unbanded Adults	Unbanded Adults, %
2002	144/288	199	167	32	16.1%

young had fledged, Hoan Bridge in Milwaukee in 1999, Minneapolis City Hall in 2000, Hastings Cliff in Minnesota in 2001, and the U.S. Highway 421 Ohio River Bridge, Milton, Kentucky, in 2002. Also in 2002, a newly fledged male Peregrine was picked up on the street by Chicago Animal Control, proof of a nest still not located. If, on average one or two nests are discovered late each year, it seems probable that a few may be missed altogether.

Coverage of Peregrine nest sites in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, and Missouri, all on man-made structures, seems thorough. Rows of huge grain elevators in Kansas City, Topeka, Minneapolis, and other midwestern cities attract Peregrines that might go unnoticed unless reported by some worker at the site. Northern parts of Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota are wild and difficult to search. Ontario has far more wild country and big cliffs than the rest of the Midwest. However, Brian Ratcliff and Ted Armstrong, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, regularly and efficiently search that area by helicopter. The ore pits on the Iron Range of Minnesota are difficult to survey. One site in the Hull Rust mine at Hibbing has been used for years and it seems probable that another pair or two might nest in other ore pits, but none has been reported in the eight years since the first nest at Hull Rust.

The evidence suggests that a few pairs may nest undiscovered each year, but it is clear that the number of unbanded adults on territories is consistent with the number of unbanded young fledging from known nests. There is no evidence of an undiscovered population on the order of 10% to 20% of the known population.

Why did it take so long to realize this? From the beginning, any assertion that our coverage of nesting pairs was essentially complete would have been deemed boastful and unjustified. Once the idea of undiscovered pairs was established, it was easy to assume that new unbanded adults came from that source, ignoring the unbanded young fledging each year from well-known sites.

It has seemed likely that close monitoring and banding of the Peregrine population in the Midwest would ultimately cease as more and more pairs found places to nest undetected and the population became increasingly unbanded. However, if there is no substantial undetected population, the proportion of unbanded adults should not increase unless monitoring and banding taper off. So far that has not happened; unbanded young in 2002 were 14.8% of the total fledged, consistent with the long-term record. Why should we continue to keep track of the Peregrines? There are at least two good reasons: first, Peregrines are magnetically attractive; watching them and banding the chicks is intensely satisfying. Also, the database on midwestern Peregrines becomes more valuable scientifically each year with the addition of new information. Monitoring and banding at the current level of intensity in the Midwest can continue indefinitely, if the will persists.

I am grateful to Don Alstad, Bruce Fall, and David Hussell for suggestions that improved early drafts of this paper.

Bell Museum of Natural History and Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior, University of Minnesota, 1987 Upper Buford Circle, St. Paul MN 55108.

The Spring Season (1 March to 31 May 2002)

Peder H. Svingen

Exceptional numbers of waterfowl, shorebirds, and warblers were found in Minnesota during Spring 2002. Birders and DNR area wildlife managers with decades of experience termed the waterfowl migration in western Minnesota the best since the 1960s. The DNR and USFWS publicized drawdowns of wetlands and shorebird enthusiasts responded with alacrity. Shorebird surveys at Mud Lake in Traverse County recorded 1900+ birds on four dates and record high counts for several species.

Following record high counts there in May 2000 and May 2001, a total of only 12 **Red-throated Loons** was at Duluth. Single Red-throateds in Hennepin and Olmsted counties were documented by multiple observers. Serendipitous was the discovery of a **Pacific Loon** at Lake Shetek, Murray County, during the North American Migration Count. Nearly routine was a **Clark's Grebe** at Thielke Lake, Big Stone County; another was at Agassiz N.W.R. Fourteen **Snowy Egrets** were the most since Spring 1999, but other species among the *Ardeidae* were scarce — only one **Little Blue Heron** and one **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**. Though still a Casual species, no fewer than ten **White-faced Ibis** were reported.

For the second consecutive year, Karl Bardon conducted the Hastings-Prescott Bird Count (*The Loon* 73:231–235). Total hours (106) of coverage was about 59% that of last spring, yet the total number of waterbirds (70,057) was still about 92% of last year's total. Temperatures reached 91° F. in Minneapolis on 15 April and strong winds persisted 14–17 April, so the count ended about a week earlier than in 2001. Declines from last spring included **Double-crested Cormorants** (down 62%), **Canada Geese** (down 62%), and diurnal **raptors** (down 43%). However, **Tundra Swans** more than quintupled!

Birders, local residents, and Minnesota D.N.R. area wildlife managers with many years of experience described waterfowl migration in western Minnesota as the best since the 1960s. Conditions in the

Great Plains apparently induced an eastward shift in migration routes. Tripling the previous record high count was **10,585 Greater White-fronted Geese** in Big Stone County. Dave Trauba estimated that over 100,000 **Snow Geese** moved through Lac Qui Parle W.M.A. 5–7 April and Dave Soehren described a flock of “Snows and Blues” near Appleton that stretched nearly five miles long and more than a mile wide at its widest point! Less than 20 years ago, **Ross's Goose** was still Casual in Minnesota, but approximately 1000 were reported this spring. Recapitulating their strong showing in western Minnesota, numbers of Greater White-fronted, Ross's, and Snow geese were up at Hastings-Prescott. Careful scrutiny of the geese in western Minnesota revealed a **Brant** in Lyon County.

Highlights in the duck family included four **Cinnamon Teal** and four probable **Blue-winged x Cinnamon Teal** hybrids. Observers are encouraged to not only consider the possibility of hybrid waterfowl, but also document them. Numbers of **Greater Scaup** staging off Park Point in Duluth have apparently increased in recent springs; the **5400** on 17 April was a record high count. Providing a second record for St. Louis County was a female **King Eider** in Duluth. It was also the state's second spring record; the first was four birds at Lower Red Lake, 9 May 1971 (*The Loon* 43:90–91). All three **scoters** were found on Lake Superior this spring.

An early **Mississippi Kite** visited the Twin Cities area, but more unusual was

one in Otter Tail County. Frank Nicoletti and Dave Carman conducted the West Skyline Hawk Count (W.S.H.C.) in Duluth for the 6th consecutive spring and tallied 25,474 raptors during 483.25 hours over a period of 88 days. Excellent numbers of **Bald Eagles**, **Red-tailed Hawks**, and **Golden Eagles** were recorded, but the unequivocal highlight was an adult light-morph **Ferruginous Hawk**.

Minnesota D.N.R. and other agencies publicized drawdowns of area wetlands, including Mud Lake in Traverse County which attracted exceptional numbers of **shorebirds**. A total of six May surveys there produced 1900+ shorebirds on four dates and record high counts for several species. Mud Lake had 18 species 2 May, 21 species 8 May, 20 species 13 May, 16 species 22 May, and 18 species 29 May. The best example of shorebird diversity was the 27 species found in northwestern Minnesota 26 May (AXH, PHS).

Despite the shorebird bonanza at Mud Lake, **American Golden-Plovers** were scarce for the third consecutive spring. Enthusiasm about the number of migrant **Piping Plovers** was dampened by their possible extirpation as a breeding species after devastation of Pine-Curry Island by powerful storms and high water levels at Lake of the Woods. The statewide total of 167+ **American Avocets** was the most ever recorded in one season (*The Loon* 70:11–20) and 179 **Willetts** in 36 counties was just as impressive. Far exceeding the Spring 2000 total of 274+ **Hudsonian Godwits** was this season's 740 birds in 30 counties! Maxima of 12 **Red Knots** in each of two counties were not record high counts, but this species also had its best migration in years. Two **Western Sandpipers** were carefully identified at Mud Lake and a **Ruff** transited Dakota County for the second consecutive spring. The statewide total of 1785+ **Wilson's Phalaropes** (950+ last spring) included 340 at Warroad and 164 at the Roseau lagoons on the same day. Thanks to all who submitted counts and specific locations for shorebirds.

The highlight of a Carlton County Big

Day conducted for the benefit of Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve was an adult **Little Gull** at the Moose Lake sewage ponds, but after being found at Duluth for three consecutive spring migrations, Little Gulls were absent from that location. Bardon cornered the market on **California Gulls** this spring with two adults in western Minnesota and a fourth-year bird in Isanti County. Recorded in western Minnesota for only the second time was the **Lesser Black-backed Gull** in Traverse County. Another **Arctic Tern** graced Duluth; this species has been seen there in 10 of the last 30 years.

Eurasian Collared-Doves returned to last year's nesting location in Houston County by early March and an adult was documented at Herman in Grant County, but proof of this species' expansion in Minnesota continues to be plagued by undocumented reports. A **Snowy Owl** lingering through 18 May at Duluth was the first one ever included on the species list of birds seen during the annual Hawk Ridge Birdathon. Increasingly threatened throughout its range and documented in Minnesota for the first time since 31 May 1997, an apparently unmated **Burrowing Owl** attracted attention from the Murray County Highway Department, Minnesota D.N.R., and local residents. **Short-eared Owls** declined in numbers following an irruption that lasted about two years.

A late April **Say's Phoebe** in western Minnesota was congruent with its recent pattern of vagrancy and a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** on the North Shore of Lake Superior was almost predictable (*The Loon* 73:39–43). **Loggerhead Shrike** numbers were comparable to last spring. Briefly advertising from a huge mound of fill at a construction site was a **Rock Wren** in Clay County. Five additional **Townsend's Solitaires** in spring resulted in a total of 33 birds since September, the most since the invasion of 1992–93 (*The Loon* 65:110–115).

Warblers arriving in late April and early May encountered predominantly north winds, below normal temperatures, and delayed leaf-out — most deciduous

trees were relatively bare until the end of May in northern regions. These phenomena kept birds on or near the ground as observers witnessed Minnesota's best warbler migration in many years. Hordes of warblers were seen on the ground, along roadways and streams, and around lakes and ponds, searching for insects and other food sources. Relatively few communicated the exuberance of spring migration through birdsong. As a result, wood lots and parks were eerily silent even though the understory and leaf litter were peppered with passerines.

Warbler migration was lackluster along the North Shore of Lake Superior and in southwestern Minnesota, but numbers and variety were fantastic elsewhere. Karl Bardon circumvented Mille Lacs Lake 15 May and tallied record high counts for several species (*The Loon* 74:182–183). Peak variety included 26 warbler species in Goodhue County 11 May (KJB), 24 species in Washington County 15 May (AXH, PHS), 26 species in the Mankato area 18 May (CRM), 26 species in Meeker County 18 May (DMF), and 26 species in Anoka County 23 May (KJB). Twenty or more warbler species were found during each of six consecutive days in Rice County, including 25 species 17–18 May (TFB). Also remarkable was 21 warbler species in Ben Yokel's yard at Melrude, St. Louis County 19 May! Two observers (AXH, PHS) found 25 warbler species in northwestern Minnesota enroute to a new statewide Big Day record of 204 species on 26 May.

Though far fewer than the record high influx of 18+ during May 1999, a total of 7 **Summer Tanagers** was still more than twice the 30-year average (*The Loon* 71:216–220). Unusually high numbers of Summer Tanagers were also discovered in Wisconsin and Michigan during Spring 2002 (*North American Birds* 56:309). Reminiscent of the May 1995 invasion of **Western Tanagers** into Minnesota (*The Loon* 67:180–181), when only about a third of 20 reports were ever documented with written details or photos, half of the 12+ individuals reported this season had no details.

Contrary to conventional wisdom that **Spotted Towhee** is best looked for in southwestern Minnesota during late April and early May, the only report this spring was from Steele County. Furnishing a 6th state record was an adult **Black-throated Sparrow** at Moorhead, Clay County. The previous records were 20–23 September 1974 at Stoney Point, St. Louis County, 7 October 1980 at Duluth, St. Louis County, 25 November through 27 December 1992 at Doran, Wilkin County, 8 November 1997 at Austin, Mower County, and 7 October 2001 at Knife River, Lake County. Discovered at Grand Marais in late December 2001 and persisting through 1 May was Minnesota's third **Golden-crowned Sparrow**. The same Clay County backyard that hosted the Black-throated Sparrow attracted a **Black-headed Grosbeak**. A record high number of **Lazuli Buntings** was reported but two were undocumented. Consistent with its pattern of vagrancy to the Midwest was yet another **Painted Bunting**, the 6th occurrence in the state since 1994.

Great-tailed Grackles were found in Jackson County for the 5th consecutive year, while pioneering birds visited Lyon, Murray, and Nicollet counties. The highlight of the spring for many observers was a male **Scott's Oriole** in Olmsted County. A second male Scott's Oriole was photographed as it contemplated a junco sitting in the snow below a feeder in Wright County! The dates overlapped, so different birds were involved. Minnesota's first Scott's was an immature male banded at Duluth 23 May 1974, that subsequently stayed three weeks (*The Loon* 47:22–24, 48:34). All of these were probably spring overshoots, but vagrant Scott's have also been found in late fall/winter, e.g., the adult male photographed at Silver Islet, Sibley Provincial Park, Thunder Bay District, Ontario, 9 November 1975 (*Canadian Field-Naturalist* 90:500–501); a male (possibly a second-year bird) photographed in Adams County, Wisconsin, late November 1995 – 3 February 1996 (*Passenger Pigeon* 58:293–296); and an immature male photographed in Stark

County, Illinois, 15 January – 3 February 2000 (*North American Birds* 54:228).

Undocumented Reports: **White-faced Ibis** 5/? Kandiyohi; **Eurasian Collared-Dove** 5/13+ Renville (Renville); **Say's Phoebe** 4/26 Lac Qui Parle (Louisburg); **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** 5/14 Meeker (Pigeon Lake), 5/30 Wilkin (near Rothsay); **Lark Bunting** 5/23 Lac Qui Parle; **Lazuli Bunting** 5/26 Kandiyohi (Willmar), 5/27 Wright (Lake Maria State Park); **Great-tailed Grackle** 4/12 Murray (Lake Wilson). Undocumented rarities cannot be included in "The Season."

Weather Summary: In sharp contrast to unusually warm weather during Winter 2001–2002, March was significantly colder than normal. Temperatures ranged from 4.3° (Southeast region) to 9.4° (Southwest region) below historical averages. In a unique juxtaposition, the March mean temperature was colder than any of the preceding winter months in numerous communities. A powerful winter storm system 14–15 March left a swath of heavy snow from Canby to St. Cloud and Willmar, then east into northwest Wisconsin. Some of the snowfall totals included 20" at Askov in Pine County, 17.5" at St. Cloud and Willmar, and 10.8" at Chanhassen, the official snow measuring spot for the Twin Cities.

The first week of April continued the trend from March with below normal temperatures over most of the state. By the second week of April, temperatures had warmed up to above normal and ice was melting rapidly off lakes in central Minnesota. An historic mid-April heat wave set numerous records, including the highest temperature ever measured in Minnesota for the 15th (93° F at Faribault), the earliest ever 90° temperatures for the state, and record high temperatures in more than three dozen communities, e.g., 80° at Hibbing, 81° at Grand Rapids, 82° at Aitkin and Little Falls, 84° at St. Cloud, 90° at Cambridge, Owatonna, Winona and Worthington, 91° at Mankato, Redwood Falls and the Twin Cities, and 92° at Waseca. Warmth continued through the following day, as new record highs were

set at Grand Forks (87° F), Rochester (84° F), and the "Nation's Icebox" in International Falls where it reached 79° F at 4:31 P.M. on the 16th.

Flip-flopping less than a week later, a winter storm brought up to a half-foot of snow to parts of Minnesota 21–22 April. Many communities from Duluth to the Iowa border saw at least a coating of crystals. The very next weekend, another system dumped up to a half-foot of snow over portions of central Minnesota 27–28 April. Observers reported waves of thunder snow on the evening of the 27th with vivid lightning displays and crackling thunder. The 6" of snow recorded at Chanhassen pushed the monthly snowfall for the Twin Cities (20.2") into second place on the list of all-time snowiest Aprils since 1891, right behind the 21.8" in April 1983. Temperatures by the end of the third week of April turned colder, but it was also windy, so the ice-out line continued to move north. Though the first week of May remained cool, ice had left nearly all the lakes in Minnesota by the 9th.

May was downright cold. All regions reported below normal temperatures, ranging from 3.9° below average in the Southeast to 7.2° below average in the Northwest.

Acknowledgments: Thanks to Frank Nicoletti and Dave Carman for providing data from the West Skyline Hawk Count in Duluth, and Karl Bardon for data from the Hastings-Prescott Bird Count. I thank Kim Eckert for information about records recently evaluated by the M.O.U. Records Committee. Betsy Beneke, Dave Benson, and Anthony Hertzell summarized sightings called in to the M.O.U. "hotlines" in Detroit Lakes, Duluth, and the Twin Cities, respectively. Robert Janssen and Paul Budde compiled record early and late, and median dates. Paul also compiled the species accounts for flycatchers through finches. I thank Karl Bardon, Paul Budde, Anthony Hertzell, and Terry Wiens for comments that improved the accuracy and content of this report.

2602 East 4th St., Duluth, MN 55812-1533.

KEY TO *THE SEASON*

1. Upper case (**LEAST TERN**) indicates a Casual or Accidental species in the state.
2. Dates listed in bold (**10/9**) indicate an occurrence either earlier, later or within the three earliest or latest dates on file.
3. Counties listed in bold (**Aitkin**) indicate an unusual occurrence for that county.
4. Counties with an underline (Becker) indicate a first county record.
5. Counties listed in italics (*Crow Wing*) indicate a first county breeding record.
6. Brackets [] indicate a species for which there is reasonable doubt as to its origin or wildness.
7. Counts listed in bold (**150**) indicate total within or exceeding the top three high counts for that species.
8. Dagger “†” preceding observer’s initials denotes documentation was submitted.
9. Species documented with a photograph are denoted with “ph”.

The Season is a compilation of bird sightings from throughout Minnesota. We particularly invite reports from parts of the state that have been neglected or covered lightly in past reports. To become a contributor, request a report form from the Editor of *The Season*, Peder Svingen, 2602 E. 4th St., Duluth, MN 55812–1533.

Loons through Vultures

Red-throated Loon — Seasonal total (12) down in St. Louis; first observed 5/7 Duluth (2) KJB, high count 5/29 Duluth (5) JB. See summer report for late north migrants. Exceptionally well-documented reports south: 5/3 **Olmsted** (East Landfill Reservoir) †JPr, †CBe, ph. †RLE, †JWH, †CAK, †PWP, **5/20–26 Hennepin** (Diamond L.) †WCM, †OLJ, †TAT, m.ob.

Pacific Loon — One in basic plumage **5/11–17 Murray** (L. Shetek) ph. AXH, †PHS, †JEB, †RBJ, CRM was unusual for spring and unexpected in the Southwest.

Common Loon — Seen in 25 south and 23 north counties in all regions. Early south (median 3/27) 3/19 Freeborn AEB and Martin CRM, then 4/3 Hennepin TAT. Early north (median 4/1) 3/27 Otter Tail SMT, 4/12–14 in six counties.

Pied-billed Grebe — Reported from 43 south and 21 north counties. Arrived late and reported as scarce (RBJ). Early south (median 3/8) 3/18 Hennepin OLJ and Washington KJB, then 3/28–30 in nine counties. Early north (median 3/28) 4/4

Beltrami DPJ, 4/5 St. Louis NAJ.

Horned Grebe — Observed in 21 south and 21 north counties. Early south 4/10 Rice TFB, 4/12–14 in six counties. Early north (away from L. Superior in Lake County, where 10+ loitered near mouth of Stewart R. through 3/11) 4/12 St. Louis JWL, 4/14 Cass SWS. Late south 5/14 Hennepin SLC, **5/19 Big Stone** (6) NSp, **5/31 Lac Qui Parle** (4) FAE. High count 4/21 Hennepin (1400 at Lakes Calhoun & Harriet KJB, plus 461 at L. Nokomis TAT).

Red-necked Grebe — Reported from 26 south and 19 north counties. Early south (median 4/3) 4/12 McLeod RWS, 4/13–14 in five counties. Only report from Southeast region: 5/11 **Mower** JJS. Early north (median 4/8) 4/6 St. Louis PHS, 4/13–19 in six counties. High count 4/26 St. Louis (110 at Duluth) PHS.

Eared Grebe — Reported from 19 south and 14 north counties in all regions. Early south 4/7 Mower RRR, 4/13 Lac Qui Parle m.ob. Early north **4/7** (second earliest north) Clay RHO, 4/13 Cass SWS. More reports than usual in Northeast, including three locations in St. Louis: 4/17 Melrude

BKY, 4/26 Duluth BCM, 5/14 Biwabik (2) ALE. Exceptional location 5/10–15 **Lake** (Two Harbors) JWL. High count 5/10 Polk (63 at East Grand Forks) EEF.

Western Grebe — Observed in 17 south and 10 north counties. No reports from the Northeast. Early south 4/10 Big Stone KJB, 4/17 Freeborn AEB and Mower RDK, RCK. Early north 4/25 Douglas REH, 5/5 Roseau JMJ. First county record 5/23 **Norman** JJS.

Clark's Grebe — Documented reports: 5/5+ Big Stone (Thielke L.) †PCC, †PHS, 5/29 Marshall (Agassiz N.W.R.) †KJB.

American White Pelican — Observed in 33 south and 19 north counties. Early south 4/2 Lac Qui Parle KJB, 4/3 Jackson MJC, peak migration 4/10–16 (13 south counties). Numbers down at H.P.B.C. (peak 383 on 4/12) KJB. Early north 4/12 Cass SWS, 4/14 Grant DTT, SMT and St. Louis FJN. Seasonal total 322 at W.S.H.C. in Duluth (peak 63 on 4/26) FJN, DSC.

Double-crested Cormorant — Seen in 40 south and 24 north counties. Overwintered Dakota (Black Dog L., see winter report). Early south migrants 3/20 Dakota (H.P.B.C.) KJB, 3/28 Ramsey (36) TAT. Numbers down at H.P.B.C. (peak 2194 on 4/14) KJB. Early north 3/17 Becker BRK, 4/6 Otter Tail SPM, DKM and St. Louis PHS, peak migration 4/12–20 (15 north counties) including 4/16 St. Louis (600+ at W.S.H.C. in Duluth) FJN, DSC.

American Bittern — Reported from 17 south and 17 north counties. Early south 4/21 Goodhue (only report from Southeast region) PHS, 4/22 Lyon RWS. Early north 4/20 Aitkin PSP, 4/29 Carlton LAW.

Least Bittern — Early south 5/11 Murray SWe, 5/18 Meeker DMF; also reported in Cottonwood, Kandiyohi, and Steele. Only north report: 5/26 Roseau AXH, PHS.

Great Blue Heron — Seen in 44 south and 25 north counties. Overwintered in

Ramsey; first migrants seen 3/12 Dakota (56) KJB, 3/13 Rice TFB. Early north 3/30 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 3/31 Pine WCM.

Great Egret — Reported from 36 south and 9 north counties, none in Northeast. Early south (median 3/22) 3/31 Dakota SWe and Rice FVS, peak migration 4/3–10 (12 south counties). Early north 4/6 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 4/7 Wadena PJB.

Snowy Egret — Eight records involving at least 13 birds. Most reports since the Spring 1999 influx (*The Loon* 73:3–7). All south reports: 4/13 Le Sueur (near St. Peter) DPS, 5/4 Lac Qui Parle (3 in Cerro Gordo Twp.) BRL, 5/7 Yellow Medicine (Spielmann L.) PME, 5/9 Kandiyohi (Swan L.) RPR, 5/15 Murray (Slayton) DFJ, 5/15 **Rice** (Dennison) TFB. All north reports: 4/23+ Otter Tail (max. 4 at L. Alice) SPM, DKM, m.ob., 5/15 **Douglas** (L. Christina) DDM.

Little Blue Heron — Only report: 5/29 Hennepin (Bass Ponds) RDE.

Cattle Egret — Statewide total 24 birds, down from 90 last spring and resuming this species' relative scarcity since Spring 1993. Early south 4/13 Meeker DMF, 4/15 Freeborn AEB, followed by single birds in Dakota (2 locations), Lac Qui Parle, Nicollet, Ramsey, Scott, Stearns, Wright. All north reports: 4/16 Wilkin RBJ, 4/17 **Morrison** (near Motley) WLB, PSP, 4/22+ Otter Tail (max. 11) SPM, DKM, 5/23 **Norman** (Twin Valley lagoons) JJS.

Green Heron — Reported from 28 south and 15 north counties in all regions. Early south 4/17 Freeborn AEB, 4/20 Ramsey CKu, peak migration 5/7–12 (12 south counties). Early north 4/28 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 5/4 Clay RHO, peak 5/12–18 (8 north counties).

Black-crowned Night-Heron — Seen in 18 south but only 3 north counties. Early south 3/29 Steele CKu, 4/5 Cottonwood EPD. High count 5/11 Wright (10) DFJ *et al.* Early north 4/14 Marshall JMJ, 4/16 Ot-

ter Tail DTT, SMT, 5/8 Traverse KJB.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron — Only report: 4/19 Washington (adult at Colby L.) *fide* AXH.

WHITE-FACED IBIS — All reports: 4/17 **Olmsted** (3 at East Landfill Reservoir, Rochester) JWH, †RLE, †PWP, 4/23–29 **Waseca** (Mott L.) †RBJ, JEB, DDM, MJF, 5/5 Big Stone (Thielke Lake) m.ob., †JPE, 5/7+ **Murray** (5 at Hiram Southwick W.M.A.) JJS, †PCC, †PHS, m.ob.

IBIS, sp. — Five additional *Plegadis* 4/17 at East Landfill Reservoir, Rochester (see above) were not conclusively identified as either White-faced or Glossy Ibis.

Turkey Vulture — Reported from 37 south and 22 north counties. Early south 3/22 Freeborn AEB, 3/24 Blue Earth MJF, peak migration 4/1–9 (13 south counties). Early north 3/30 Grant SPM, DKM, 4/4 Pine CAM and St. Louis JRN.

Waterfowl

Greater White-fronted Goose — Seen in 34 south and 6 north counties, and in all regions except the North-central. See winter report for first migrants south and north. Late south 5/26 Stearns (St. Martin Twp.) HHD, **5/30** Scott (Spring L.) *fide* AXH. Late north 5/12 Clay CMN, 5/18 St. Louis m.ob. Many reports of “thousands” in western Minnesota, including 3/29 (**8000+** in three Southwest counties) RBJ. Record high count 4/3 Big Stone (**10,585**) KJB; additional specific counts 4/8 Lincoln (1200 at L. Shaokatan) JEB, RBJ, DDM, 4/9 Otter Tail (1500, Western Twp.) EJE. An article will appear in a future issue about the Spring 2002 goose migration.

Snow Goose — Seen in 30 south and 10 north counties statewide. Many reports of flocks >10,000 in western Minnesota. Early south 3/6–7 Rice FVS, TFB, also see winter report. Early north 3/30 Grant SPM, DKM and Polk JMJ. Late south 5/28 Olmsted (2) DFJ, 5/29+ Murray (2) NED,



Horned Grebe, 26 April 2002, Minneapolis, Hennepin County. Photo by Vija Kelly.

5/31 Kandiyohi (2) RSF. Late north 5/30 Pennington and Roseau KJB, but also see summer report. Migration waves included an estimated 100,000+ moving through Lac Qui Parle W.M.A. 4/5–7 (DTr *fide* JSc). Noteworthy totals 3/22 Jackson & Nobles (**54,000**) KJB, 4/8 Lincoln & Lyon (**50,000**) JEB, RBJ, DDM.

Ross's Goose — Record high statewide total 993+, easily exceeding 575 during Spring 2000. Observed in 29 south and 7 north counties. First county occurrences 5/15 **Clearwater** and **Mahnomen** JEB, RBJ. Early south 3/6 Rice m.ob., 3/12 Freeborn AEB. Early north 4/12 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 4/16 Wilkin RBJ. Late south 5/11–12 Rock JEB, RBJ *et al.*, 5/18–19 Benton HHD, RBJ. Late north 5/7–24 St. Louis (Duluth) KJB, m.ob., 5/24 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 5/26 Roseau MSS. Peaks 3/29 Nobles (101 at L. Ocheda) PCC, KJB, 4/10 Lyon (**163**, Coon Creek Twp.) KJB.

Canada Goose — Reported statewide. High count 4/3 Big Stone (34,800) KJB.

BRANT — One adult reported 4/10 **Lyon** (Coon Creek Twp.) ph. †KJB (*The Loon* 74:179–180). Like most of the previous Minnesota occurrences, identified as the Atlantic race (*Branta bernicla brota*).

Mute Swan — Overwintered in Wright (see winter report). Presumably “wild” based on location were 3/20+ **Le Sueur** (L. Tetonka) MJF, RBJ *et al.*, 4/6 – 5/7+ Wabasha (near Weaver) m.ob., 5/4 Carver (2 at Goose L.) WCM. Birds of uncertain origin in Rice, Steele. Probable escapees Anoka (2 at Coon Rapids) KJB, Hennepin (Old Cedar Ave., Bloomington) m.ob., and Washington (2) DCZ.

Trumpeter Swan — Excluding overwintering flock at Monticello, statewide total of 180+ birds reported from 22 south and 15 north counties (about a dozen reports omitted the number of birds). See winter report for early north migrants. First county record (since becoming Regular in January 1999) 5/26 **Douglas** (Lake Osakis) REH.

Tundra Swan — See winter report for early south. Early north 3/17 Grant and Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 3/25 Becker BRK. Late south 5/3 Pope JEB, 5/13 Meeker (injured) DMF. Late north 5/18 Clay RBJ and St. Louis m.ob., 5/26 Marshall AXH, PHS. Numbers up at H.P.B.C. (10,168 for season) including high count 4/9 (4577) KJB. Noteworthy concentration 4/6 Houston (3000–4000) DFN.

Wood Duck — Reported from 47 south and 26 north counties. See winter report for overwintering birds and early south migrants. Early north 3/17 Grant and Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 3/31 Beltrami DPJ and Clay GEN. Peak 4/12 Dakota (140 at H.P.B.C.) KJB.

Gadwall — Reported from 44 south and 20 north counties. See winter report for overwintering birds and early south. Early north 3/18 Traverse and 3/26 Grant SPM, DKM. High counts 3/29 Jackson (720 at Indian L.) KJB, 3/30 Meeker (700) DMF.

American Wigeon — Reported from 37 counties in the south and 22 in the north. Early south (but see winter report) 3/13 Dakota KJB, 3/18–20 in five counties. Early north 3/30 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, then 4/12–14 in five counties. Peak 3/30 Meeker (450) DMF.

American Black Duck — Observed in nine south and four north counties. No reports from West-central, Southwest, or Southeast regions. Reported from Marshall in the Northwest (5/4 JMJ, 5/25 MSS) and Cook, Lake, St. Louis in the Northeast. Late south (median 5/23) 5/11 Hennepin (2) SLC, but also see summer report.

Mallard — Seen throughout the state.

Blue-winged Teal — Reported from 48 south and 25 north counties. Early south (median 3/11) 3/17 Dakota SWe, 3/26–30 in 16 counties. Early north 3/29 Otter Tail DTT, SMT, 3/30 Otter Tail SPM, DKM. High count 5/2 Lac Qui Parle (3666 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO.

Cinnamon Teal — More reports than usual for this barely Regular species. Adult males 3/29 Cottonwood (Mountain L.) EPD, 4/28 – 5/7 Hennepin (Old Cedar Avenue, Bloomington) JEP, †PCC, m.ob., 5/13 **Renville** (Fairfax) PME, WCM, DDM, 5/26–27 Polk (Crookston) AXH, PHS, JMJ, SAS.

Blue-winged X Cinnamon Teal — Male apparent hybrids documented 4/19–20+ Goodhue (Frontenac) JSF, †AXH, ph. PHS, 4/22 Crow Wing (near Brainerd) ph. BiM, 5/2 Traverse (Mud L.) †KJB, 5/17+ Becker (Bisson L.) ph. FJN, m.ob.

Northern Shoveler — Seen in 44 south and 24 north counties. Early south 3/12 Faribault CRM and Freeborn AEB, 3/17 Dakota SWe and Washington KJB. Peak migration 3/27–30 (18 south counties). Early north 3/30 Otter Tail SPM, DKM and Polk JMJ, 4/6–9 in nine counties. High count 4/25 Pennington (1000 at Thief River Falls) KJB.

Northern Pintail — Reported from 34 south and 14 north counties. Overwintered in Freeborn AEB, also see winter report. Peak migration 3/29 in Southwest KJB. Early north (median 3/20) 3/30 Otter Tail SPM, DKM and Polk JMJ.

Green-winged Teal — Seen in 38 south and 22 north counties. See winter report for overwintering birds and possible early south migrants; first reported this season 3/18 Hennepin SLC and Lac Qui Parle SPM, DKM, 3/22 Freeborn AEB; migration peak 3/27–30 in 13 south counties. Early north 4/7 Polk EEF, 4/9 Kanabec CAM. High count 4/12 Lac Qui Parle (1742 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO.

Canvasback — Seen in 39 south and 19 north counties in all regions. See winter report for early south dates; additional arrivals 3/8 Washington TAT. Early north 3/30 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 4/6 Polk EEF. High count 3/26 Winona (4000 at Winona) KJB.

Redhead — Reported from 41 south and 18 north counties. See winter report for early south dates. Early north **3/2** (record early) Douglas SPM, DKM, 3/17 Grant SPM, DKM. High count 4/12 Lac Qui Parle (1439 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO.

Ring-necked Duck — Seen in 45 south and 21 north counties. See winter report for overwintering south and north, plus early south migrants. Early north (median 3/20) 3/16 Grant SPM, DKM, 4/6–11 in eight counties. High count 4/12 Lac Qui Parle (2554 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO.

Greater Scaup — Observed in 16 south and 14 north counties in all regions. Early south 3/16 Washington KJB, 3/17 Freeborn AEB and Washington TAT. Early north (median 4/1) 4/13 Pennington JMJ and Polk EEF. Late south 5/10 Meeker DMF, 5/11 Murray AXH, PHS. Late north 5/23 St. Louis DFN, 5/26 Roseau (2) AXH, PHS. Record high count 4/17 St. Louis (**5400** at Park Point, Duluth) PHS.

Lesser Scaup — Seen in 45 south and 25

north counties. See winter report for early south migrants. Early north (median 3/18) 3/16 Grant SPM, DKM, only March report north except Beltrami (where overwintered). High counts 4/12 Ramsey (4000 at Pigs Eye L.) KJB, 4/12 Lac Qui Parle (3252 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO.

KING EIDER — Sixteenth Minnesota record **5/7–20** St. Louis (female at Park Point, Duluth) †KJB, †PHS, m.ob. (*The Loon* 74:180–181). Second St. Louis record (first was at Lost L., 29 October 1964).

Harlequin Duck — Only reports: singles 3/29 – 4/14 Cook (Grand Marais) m.ob., 4/15 – 5/1 St. Louis (Duluth) MH *et al.*

Surf Scoter — All reports: single birds observed 5/7–11 St. Louis (Duluth) m.ob., 5/22 Lake (Two Harbors) JWJ.

White-winged Scoter — Reported only from L. Superior. Three **overwintered** through 3/23 St. Louis (Duluth) †PHS, m.ob. All other reports: 5/7–19 St. Louis (max. 5, Duluth) KJB *et al.*

Black Scoter — All reports: one or two birds 5/7–18 St. Louis (Duluth) KJB *et al.*

Long-tailed Duck — All reports were from L. Superior in Cook, Lake, St. Louis. One overwintered through 3/11 St. Louis (Duluth) PHS *et al.* Late north 5/24–26 Cook (36–40 in two locations) DFN.

Bufflehead — Seen in 45 south and 25 north counties in all regions. Early south (median 3/2) 3/16 Houston FZL and Olmsted CRG, 3/17–20 in ten counties. Early north (away from L. Superior) 3/30 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 4/2 Pine KIM, BAP. Late south 5/24 Dakota (2) ADS, 5/25 Anoka (2) JLH. High count 3/26 Lake of the Woods (253) KJB.

Common Goldeneye — Reported from 31 south and 24 north counties. Late south 5/17 Stearns JJS, but see summer report. High count 3/25 Wright (1200 at Monticello) KJB.

Hooded Merganser — Observed in 42 south and 23 north counties. See winter report for overwintering and early south migrants. Early north (away from known overwintering locations) 3/17 Crow Wing (7) PSP, St. Louis (2) PHS and Wadena PJB. High counts 4/6 Anoka (261 at Coon Rapids Dam) KJB, 4/11 St. Louis (75 at Duluth) JRN.

Common Merganser — Seen in 38 south and 21 north counties. Early north (away from L. Superior) 3/2 Pennington (6 at Thief River Falls) JMJ, 3/17 Cass PSP, Clay GEN and Grant SPM, DKM. Late south 5/29 Ramsey REH, also see summer report. High count 3/26 L. Pepin (1128) KJB.

Red-breasted Merganser — Reported from 32 south and 17 north counties. See winter report for overwintering and early south migrants; additional arrival 3/3 Ramsey TAT. Early north (away from L. Superior) 4/11 Kanabec CAM, 4/13 Cass SWS. Late south 5/14 Hennepin SLC, 5/20 Stevens JJS. High count 4/24 Lake of the Woods (585) KJB.

Ruddy Duck — Reported from 44 south and 15 north counties, and in all regions except the North-central. Early south 3/19 Faribault CRM and Freeborn AEB, 3/22 Cottonwood EPD. Early north 4/20 Kanabec CAM and Polk EEF. High counts 4/22 Jackson (1800 at North Heron Lake) KJB, 5/10 Meeker (2200 at Long L.) DMF.

Raptors

Osprey — Observed in 24 south and 23 north counties. Early south (median 3/28) 3/18 Cottonwood (Mountain Lake) EPD, 3/22 Blue Earth (along Blue Earth R.) LWF, 4/4 Freeborn AEB. Early north 4/8 Aitkin (on nest) DCZ, 4/11–18 in seven counties. Also see Table 1.

MISSISSIPPI KITE — Single adults seen 4/26 Hennepin (state highways 7 & 101) †AXH, †SKS, 5/27 **Otter Tail** (Western Twp.) †SPM.

Bald Eagle — Observed in 41 south and 25 north counties. Peak migration 3/17 Dakota (533 at H.P.B.C., mostly in Minnesota) KJB, 4/12 St. Louis (372 at W.S.H.C., Duluth) FJN, DSC. Also see Table 1.

Northern Harrier — Seen in 37 south and 25 north counties. Possible early south migrants 3/12 Rice TFB, 3/16–30 in 12 counties. Early north (but see winter report) 3/8 Wilkin SPM, DKM, 3/17 Cass WLB, SWS. Also see Table 1.

Sharp-shinned Hawk — Reported from 25 south and 19 counties in all regions. Early north 3/26 Otter Tail DTT, SMT, but also see Table 1. Six south reports 5/10–17, then (late south) 5/18 Blue Earth CRM. High count 4/13 St. Louis (450 at W.S.H.C., Duluth) FJN, DSC.

Cooper's Hawk — Observed in 27 south and 14 north counties in all regions. Early north (but see winter report) 3/21 Otter Tail DTT, SMT, 3/28 Todd JSK, SDu. Also see Table 1.

Northern Goshawk — Seen in six south and four north counties. Late south 4/14 Big Stone RPR, 5/10 Hennepin BRL. Also see Table 1.

Red-shouldered Hawk — Observed in 21 south and 7 north counties, and in all regions except the Southwest. Early south coincided with peak migration at H.P.B.C. (34 on 3/12, mostly in Wisconsin) KJB. Early north 3/12 Grant SPM, DKM, 3/14 Becker MWy *vide* BAB. First county record 4/5 **Steele** NFT. Total of four seen at W.S.H.C., Duluth (Table 1).

Broad-winged Hawk — Observed in 25 south and 21 north counties. Early south 4/4 Steele NFT, 4/13 Rice DAB, 4/15–20 in ten south counties. Numbers down at H.P.B.C. (KJB). Early north 4/15 Todd JSK, SDu, 4/16 Kanabec CAM and St. Louis FJN, DSC. High count 5/1 St. Louis (3616 at W.S.H.C., Duluth) FJN, DSC. No fewer than seven adult dark morphs at W.S.H.C. 5/1 (3), 5/3, 5/12 (2), & 5/14.

Species	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Total	Range	Peak	No.
Turkey Vulture	0	1	1548	138	1687	3/31-5/22	4/13	335
Osprey	0	0	137	118	225	4/12-5/18	5/01	62
Bald Eagle	93	1468	1293	118	2972	2/17-5/24	4/12	372
Northern Harrier	0	6	46	9	61	3/27-5/24	4/12	16
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	3	1447	979	2430	2/23-5/24	4/13	450
Cooper's Hawk	1	4	40	18	63	2/18-5/13	4/7,5/1	8
Northern Goshawk	0	6	16	2	24	3/10-5/01	4/1,4/6	3
Red-shouldered Hawk	0	0	4	0	4	4/02-4/12	singles	
Broad-winged Hawk	0	0	1187	8991	10178	4/16-5/24	5/01	3616
Swainson's Hawk	0	0	1	4	5	4/13-5/24	singles	
Red-tailed Hawk	0	107	7016	186	7309	3/11-5/24	4/12	2222
Ferruginous Hawk	0	0	1	0	1	4/19	single	
Rough-legged Hawk	12	16	210	9	247	2/17-5/16	4/14	77
Golden Eagle	2	53	19	3	77	2/18-5/12	3/21	9
American Kestrel	0	1	92	22	115	3/18-5/17	4/13	25
Merlin	0	1	9	7	17	3/18-5/15		
Peregrine Falcon	0	2	2	3	7	3/18-5/15	singles	
unidentified	0	3	14	5	22			
Totals	109	1671	13082	13082	25474			

Table 1. Spring 2002 West Skyline Hawk Count in Duluth.

Swainson's Hawk — Seen in 17 south counties, 7 of these in the Southwest and 4 in the South-central. Early south 4/8 Mower RDK, RCK, 4/9 Dakota ADS. All north reports: 4/23 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 4/28 Wilkin WCM, plus five at W.S.H.C., Duluth.

Red-tailed Hawk — Seen in 75 counties statewide. Among the total of 7309 at W.S.H.C. (Table 1) were 87 adult and 3 immature dark morphs, 3 adult "Krider's" Hawks, an adult light and 5 adult dark-morph "Harlan's" Hawks, plus intergrades (FJN, DSC). Dark "Harlan's" also reported 3/30 Dakota TAT, 4/6 Carver RMD, plus 8 for the season at H.P.B.C. (7 on 4/6) KJB. Unusual location for "Krider's" Hawk 5/5 Hennepin †PEB.

Ferruginous Hawk — All reports: 4/24 **St. Louis** (adult light morph at W.S.H.C., Duluth) ph. †FJN, DSC, 4/25 Clay (adult light morph, Hawley Twp.) †KJB.

Rough-legged Hawk — Observed in 12 south and 15 north counties. Late south 4/7 Freeborn AEB, 5/22 Cottonwood EPD.

Late north 5/16 St. Louis FJN, DSC, also see summer report. Peak count 4/14 St. Louis (77 at W.S.H.C.) FJN, DSC.

Golden Eagle — Numbers up at W.S.H.C., Duluth (77 for the season) FJN, DSC. Late south 3/30 Meeker (Dasel Twp.) DMF. Late north **5/12** St. Louis (Duluth) FJN, DSC. Also seen in Dakota, Washington, Wilkin, Winona.

American Kestrel — Reported from 73 counties statewide. Early north (but see winter report) 3/17 Cass, Morrison and Otter Tail; compare with recent median (3/6). Also see Table 1.

Merlin — Observed in 11 south and 18 north counties. Eight reports from Dakota County, but none in South-central region and only Yellow Medicine in Southwest, Goodhue in Southeast. "Richardson's" Merlins began courtship 3/10 Pennington (Thief River Falls) SAS and observed for the 5th consecutive year 5/5+ Kittson JMJ. Late south (away from nesting locations in Twin Cities) 5/13 Renville WCM, 5/27 Dakota (Randolph) BRL.



Peregrine Falcon on nest during a snow storm, 21 April 2002, Minneapolis, Hennepin County. Photo by John R. Tradewell.

Gyr Falcon — Only report: 3/31 Marshall (Grand Plain Twp.) †JMJ, †SAS.

Peregrine Falcon — Seen in 17 south and 14 north counties in all regions. Early south (away from Twin Cities) 4/3 Freeborn AEB, 4/9 Sherburne PLJ. Early north 3/18 St. Louis FJN, DSC, 3/29 Lake of the Woods GMM, JMF. Probable migrants still present 5/25 Kandiyohi RSF, 5/28 Meeker DMF. Twelve reports in May from Northwest and West-central regions; late north (away from North Shore of L. Superior) 5/19 Pennington MJM, 5/26 Marshall m.ob. and Roseau MSS.

Prairie Falcon — Reported 3/30 Murray (Belfast Twp.) †PEJ, †DFN.

Partridges through Cranes

Gray Partridge — Small numbers reported in 12 south counties: Cottonwood, Fillmore, Freeborn, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui

Parle, Lyon, Meeker, Murray, Pipestone, Renville, Rock, and Yellow Medicine. Only north reports: Polk (6), Todd, and Wilkin (2).

Ring-necked Pheasant — Observed in 55 counties as far north as Clay, Otter Tail, Wadena, Aitkin.

Ruffed Grouse — Seen in 24 counties including 5/18 Dakota (Miesville Ravine) ADS, TAT.

Spruce Grouse — All reports: one or two birds in each of five Lake of the Woods locations during May (BRB, GMM, JMF, MHK).

Sharp-tailed Grouse — First county record in modern times 3/18 **Big Stone** †SPM, DKM. All north reports: Aitkin (6), Carlton (no data), Lake of the Woods (2), Polk (1), Roseau (1), St. Louis (6–9 by Meadowlands).

Greater Prairie-Chicken — Reported within usual range from Clay, Norman, Otter Tail, Polk, Wilkin. High counts 4/20 Wilkin (150 west of Rothsay) DPS, 4/21 Polk (75 near Fertile) RP.

Wild Turkey — Observed in 38 counties as far north as Clay (3 locations), Otter Tail, **Wadena** (4/7+, PJB), **Cass** (3/15, SWS), Pine.

Northern Bobwhite — None except a probable escapee 3/19 Lac Qui Parle (9 miles northwest of Boyd) *fide* FAE.

Yellow Rail — All reports: 5/3 Anoka (Carlos Avery W.M.A.) KJB, 5/26 Roseau (4 at Roseau River W.M.A.) AXH, PHS.

Virginia Rail — Reported from 21 south and 9 north counties. No reports from Southeast or North-central, and only St. Louis in Northeast. Early south (median 4/15) 4/14 Rice, Scott and Sherburne. Early north (median 5/6) 4/20 Otter Tail DTT, SMT, 5/11 Clay RHO and Todd JSK, SDu.

Sora — Reported from 30 south and 22 north counties in all regions. Early south 4/14 Sherburne RMN, LMC, 4/17 Anoka WHL and Hennepin TAT. Early north 5/3 Otter Tail DTT, SMT, 5/5 Wadena PJB. High counts 5/11 Washington (14) DPS and Murray (12 at Slayton) SWE.

Common Moorhen — No reports.

American Coot — Seen in 72 counties. Early south (but see winter report) 3/16 Houston FZL, 3/17 Freeborn AEB and Waseca JEZ. Early north 3/17 Grant SPM, DKM, 3/29 Otter Tail DTT, SMT. High count 4/11 Pope (5000+ at L. Minnewaska) KJB.

Sandhill Crane — Observed in 25 south and 22 north counties and in all regions, but only Jackson in the Southwest. Early south 3/12 Rice DAB, 3/13 Freeborn AEB. Early north **3/16** Marshall *fide* BAB, 3/19 Lake of the Woods *fide* GMM. High count 4/17 Polk (4000 at Tilden Jct.) EEF.

Shorebirds

Black-bellied Plover — Observed in 13 south and 6 north counties. Early south 4/21 Meeker (2) DMF, 5/9 Faribault JJS. Early north 5/15 Clearwater (25, high count) JEB, RBJ and St. Louis (5) FJN. Noteworthy total 5/23 Dakota (17 at L. Byllesby) ADS.

American Golden-Plover — Relatively scarce for the third consecutive spring. Bardon's eight May shorebird surveys in western Minnesota turned up only 94 individuals. Reported from only seven south and three north counties. Early south 4/8 Redwood RBJ, 4/10 Lincoln and Lyon KJB. Early north **4/16** Wilkin RBJ, 5/2 Traverse KJB. High count 4/21 Meeker (135 in Cedar Mills Twp.) DMF.

Semipalmated Plover — Reported from 24 south and 11 north counties, and in all regions except the North-central. Early south 4/22 Jackson KJB, 4/25 Dakota ADS. Early north 5/2 Traverse KJB, 5/4 Grant JEB, RBJ. Late south 5/31 Rice TFB and Dakota ADS, but see summer report. High counts 5/8 & 5/13 Traverse (120+ at Mud L.) KJB.

Piping Plover — Best spring migration since 1984. All reports: 4/27–29, 5/9 **Swift** (Marsh L. dam) Bse *et al.*, KJB, 5/2 St. Louis (2 at Duluth) DRB, RPR, 5/4 **Grant** (near Herman) JEB, RBJ, 5/6–10 Dakota (max. 3 at L. Byllesby) CRG, FTM *et al.*, 5/7 **Murray** (Slayton) †CRM *et al.*, 5/7–8 Clay (Sabin) RHO, 5/16 **Washington** (location?) DPS.

Killdeer — Reported from 80 counties. Early south (but see winter report) 3/12 Dakota KJB, 3/16–18 in ten counties. Early north 3/13 Todd JSK, SDu, 3/26 Crow Wing PSP. Peak 4/3 Dakota (117 at H.P.B.C.) KJB.

American Avocet — Statewide total 167+ birds in 30 counties, the most ever in a single season (**The Loon** 70:11–20). Early south 4/15 Dakota (6 at H.P.B.C.) KJB,

4/18 Freeborn (30 at Geneva) WJP. Early north 4/29+ Becker (2 at Hamden Slough N.W.R.) m.ob., 5/2 Traverse (17 at Mud L.) KJB. Only report from Northeast: 5/11–15 St. Louis (3 at Duluth) DRB, DSC, FJN. First county occurrences 5/13 **Pope** (9 at Long Beach) KJB, 5/25–26 **Scott** (Louisville Swamp) CRM, SWe.

Greater Yellowlegs — Seen in 37 south and 19 north counties. Early south 3/22 Freeborn AEB, 3/29 Dakota ADS. Early north 4/7 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 4/13 Pennington JMJ and Polk EEF. Record high count 4/30 Traverse (**390** at Mud L.) BEO, plus 82 on the South Dakota side.

Lesser Yellowlegs — Observed in 28 south and 25 north counties. Early south 3/30 Jackson and Nobles PEJ, DFN, 4/4 Dakota ADS. Early north 4/9 Morrison WLB, 4/11 Todd JSK, SDu. High counts 4/30 Traverse (1560, plus 328 on South Dakota side of Mud L.) BEO, 5/2 (1353 at Mud L., all in Minnesota) KJB.

Solitary Sandpiper — Seen in 34 south and 15 north counties. Early south 4/16 Steele NFT, 4/22 Lincoln KJB. Early north 5/4 Clay RHO and Traverse PHS, 5/5 Wadena PJB. Late south 5/29 Big Stone KJB, also see summer report. High counts 5/8 Big Stone (13 at Graceville) KJB, 5/12 Wadena (11) PJB.

Willet — Grand total 179+ birds in 24 south and 12 north counties, numbers up for the third consecutive spring (Table 2). Observed in all regions except the North-central. Early south 4/27 Dakota ADS, TAT and Lac Qui Parle m.ob., 4/28–30 in nine counties. Early north **4/15** (earliest north date) Otter Tail (Newman W.P.A.) EJE, 4/24 Roseau KJB, 4/29 Becker BAB. Late south 5/26 McLeod (2) DMF, 5/27 Lac Qui Parle FAE. Late north 5/27 St. Louis PHS, 5/29 Marshall KJB, also see summer report. High counts 5/7 Dakota (29 at L. Byllesby) TAT, 5/11 St. Louis (25 at Duluth) FJN.

Spotted Sandpiper — Reported from 36

<u>Year</u>	<u>Birds</u>	<u>Counties</u>
1995	80	15
1996	35	19
1997	38	13
1998	38	16
1999	40	9
2000	120	21
2001	126	17
2002	179	36

Table 2. Willet reports during spring migration in Minnesota, 1995–2002.

south and 27 north counties. Early south 4/20 Goodhue PEB, 4/27 Dakota ADS, TAT. Early north 5/4 in five counties, 5/5 in three more. High count 5/20 Lac Qui Parle (22 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO.

Upland Sandpiper — Observed in ten south and six north counties. No reports from North-central or Southeast regions. Early south (median 4/26) 4/17 Waseca JEZ, 4/30 Hennepin TAT. Early north (median 5/2) 4/23 Traverse KJB, 5/4 Traverse RBJ. Also seen 5/12 Hennepin (Old Cedar Ave., Bloomington) LBF.

Whimbrel — Arrived north 5/18–19 St. Louis (max. 13) m.ob. High counts 5/24 Cook (25 at Paradise Beach) DFN, 5/24 St. Louis (17–19 at Duluth) KJB, FJN. First county occurrences 5/26 **Polk** (Crookston lagoons) AXH, PHS, 5/31 **Kandiyohi** (3 at Green Lake lagoons) RSF.

Hudsonian Godwit — Statewide total no fewer than 740 birds in 19 south and 11 north counties, far exceeding the 274+ birds (19 counties) during Spring 2000 migration. Earliest date on record **4/7–8** Dakota (4 at L. Byllesby) ADS, TAT, SWe, 4/18 Olmsted (1) TAT. Early north 5/4 Traverse (1) PHS, 5/7–12 Clay (max. 24 at Sabin) RHO *et al.* Late south 5/29 Big Stone (1) KJB. Late north 5/29 Traverse KJB, also see summer report. Second county occurrence 5/16 Benton (Foley lagoons) HHD, JJS. High counts 5/13 Traverse (168 at Mud L.) KJB, 5/14 Lincoln (96 at L. Benton) RJS, 5/20 Big Stone/Stearns (123)

KJB, 5/26 Marshall (140 at Agassiz N.W.R.) AXH, PHS.

Marbled Godwit — Seen in 11 south and 13 north counties, mostly in western regions. No reports from Southeast. Early south 4/17 Freeborn AEB, 4/20 Meeker DMF. Early north 4/17 Polk EEF, 4/19 Wilkin (31) KJB. Additional counts 5/2 Dakota (15 at L. Byllesby) ADS, TAT, 5/8 Traverse (17 at Mud L.) KJB.

Ruddy Turnstone — Seen in 15 south and 12 north counties in all regions. Scarce along North Shore of L. Superior. Earliest date on record 4/28 Big Stone (Thielke L.) NAJ, then no south reports until 5/11 Goodhue KJB. Early north 5/4 Traverse PCC, AXH, PHS, 5/7–13 Clay RHO *et al.* Late south 5/27 Brown CRG, 5/28 Dakota (14) ADS. Late north 5/30 Roseau KJB, also see summer report. First county occurrence 5/18 **Meeker** DMF. High counts 5/22 Big Stone/Lac Qui Parle (33) KJB, 5/26–27 Polk (19 at Crookston) AXH, PHS *et al.*

Red Knot — Exceptional migration at Lake Byllesby, **Dakota**, as ADS determined that no fewer than 32 knots transited that wetland between 5/14 and the end of the period, including peak count 5/18 (12) CFa. Only other south report: 5/16 **Waseca** (2 at Mott L.) JPS. All north reports: 5/20 St. Louis (40th Ave. West, Duluth) FJN, 5/21 Marshall (4 at Agassiz N.W.R.) THK, 5/23 **Norman** (Ada lagoons) JJS, 5/24–27 St. Louis (4–6 at Park Pt., Duluth) KJB, FJN, 5/30 Roseau (12 at Springsteel Is., flew into Lake of the Woods County) KJB.

Sanderling — Reported from ten south and eight north counties. No reports from Southwest or Southeast. Early south 5/4 Hennepin (9) RMD, 5/6 Dakota CRG, ADS. Early north 5/4 Traverse (Mud L.) PCC, AXH, PHS, 5/10 Clay (3) RHO. Late south (median 5/31) 5/31 Rice (9) TFB. Late north 5/29 Traverse (7 at Mud L.) KJB, also see summer report. High count 5/26 St. Louis (75+ at Duluth) FJN.

Semipalmated Sandpiper — Seen in 21 south and 13 north counties. Arrived within one day of recent medians south and north. Early south 4/18 Dakota TAT, 4/19 Meeker DMF. Early north 5/5 Todd JSK, SDu, 5/7 Clay RHO. High count 5/29 Traverse (1066 at Mud L., plus 248 on South Dakota side) KJB.

WESTERN SANDPIPER — Only the 4th acceptable record since 1988 when this species' status in the state was reviewed. Two birds observed 5/2 **Traverse** (Mud L.) ph. †KJB (*The Loon* 74:182).

Least Sandpiper — Reported from 30 south and 20 north counties. Early south 4/18 Dakota TAT, 4/19 Meeker DMF. Early north 5/2 Traverse KJB, 5/4 Grant RBJ. High count 5/13 Traverse (748 at Mud L., all in Minnesota) KJB.

White-rumped Sandpiper — Observed in 19 south and 14 north counties, mostly in the western and central regions. Early south 5/2 Big Stone (5) KJB, 5/4 Lac Qui Parle BRL. Early north 5/2 Traverse (1) KJB, 5/4 Traverse (2) PCC, AXH, PHS. Late south 5/31 Dakota ADS, also see summer report. Record high count 5/29 Traverse (**787** at Mud L., plus 320 on South Dakota side) KJB. Stay tuned for even higher counts in June!

Baird's Sandpiper — Reported from 20 south and 12 north counties. Early south 4/7 Freeborn AEB, 4/7–9 Dakota m.ob. Early north 4/23 Wilkin KJB, then record high count 5/2 Traverse (**256** at Mud L., all in Minnesota) KJB. Late south (median 6/1) 5/26 Dakota SWe. Late north 5/26 Beltrami DPJ and Roseau MSS.

Pectoral Sandpiper — Observed in 32 south and 14 north counties. Early south 4/7 Freeborn AEB, 4/7–9 Dakota m.ob. Early north 4/17 Kanabec CAM, 4/19 Otter Tail DTT, SMT. Late south 5/29 Big Stone KJB, also see summer report. High count 5/2 Traverse (850 at Mud L.) KJB.

Dunlin — Seen in 27 south and 16 north

counties. Early south 4/7 Dakota ADS, SWe, 4/20 Meeker DMF, 4/22 Lincoln KJB. Early north 5/2–4 Traverse (1 at Mud L.) KJB *et al.*, 5/8 Traverse (147 at Mud L.) KJB. Late south 5/31 Dakota ADS and Rice TFB, also see summer report. Record high count 5/22 Traverse (**523** at Mud L.) KJB.

Stilt Sandpiper — More reports than usual from 11 south and 6 north counties. Early south (median 5/5) 4/26 Dakota ADS, 5/2 Big Stone KJB. Early north 5/4 Traverse (2) PCC *et al.*, 5/8 Traverse (4) KJB. Late south 5/27 Cottonwood CRG, 5/29 Stevens (2) KJB. Late north 5/29 Traverse (6) KJB, also see summer report.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper — No reports.

RUFF — Female 5/23 Dakota (L. Byllesby) †TAT *et al.* (*The Loon* 74:240). Second consecutive spring for this species in Dakota.

Short-billed Dowitcher — Reported from 20 south and 15 north counties in all regions, but only Mower in Southeast. Early south 4/26 (ties earliest date) Lyon RBJ, 4/28 Lac Qui Parle NAJ. Early north 5/8 Traverse KJB, 5/11 Clay RHO and Polk JMJ. Late south (median 5/23) 5/20 Stevens JJS. Late north 5/26 Beltrami DPJ, 5/27 Pennington JMJ. High counts 5/2 Lac Qui Parle (47 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO, 5/16 Polk (46 at Crookston) EEF, plus three additional reports of 25+ birds elsewhere in the state during mid-May.

Long-billed Dowitcher — Observed in 12 south and 4 north counties. Early south 4/22 Jackson KJB, 4/29 Dakota ADS. Early north 5/2 Traverse (43 at Mud L.) KJB. Late south 5/10 in three counties, 5/11 Murray (calling) AXH, PHS. Late north 5/18 Carlton (20) and St. Louis (calling) AXH, PHS, 5/19 Polk JMJ. Record high count 5/8 Traverse (**203** at Mud L., all in Minnesota) KJB.

dowitcher, sp. — Unidentified birds in six counties including 4/20 Cass (1) SWS, 5/11 Cottonwood (20) EPD *et al.*, 5/13 Traverse (51) KJB.

Common Snipe — Observed in 25 south and 15 north counties, and in all regions except Southeast. Early south (away from Dakota County, see winter report) 4/2 Freeborn AEB, 4/4 Waseca JEZ. Early north (away from Duluth where 2 overwintered) 4/7 Cass WLB, 4/9 Todd JSK, SDu. High counts 4/12 Lac Qui Parle (58 at Big Stone N.W.R.) BEO, 4/14 Dakota (69 in Castle Rock Twp.) SWe.

American Woodcock — Reported from 18 south and 11 north counties. Arrived about a week later than recent medians south (3/13) and north (3/24). Early south 3/21 Washington DPS, 3/27–31 in five counties. Early north 3/30 Carlton LAW, 4/13–16 in four counties.

Wilson's Phalarope — Statewide total 1785+ individuals reported from 28 south and 20 north counties; numbers up from last spring (950+ in 29 counties). Early south 4/22 Lincoln KJB, 4/28–29 Winona CRG, PHS. Early north 5/2–4 Traverse KJB *et al.*, 5/5 Wilkin PCC, PHS. High counts 5/10 Pipestone (200+ at Pipestone lagoons) RBJ, JEB, 5/26 Roseau (340 at Warroad lagoons, 164 at Roseau lagoons) AXH, PHS, MSS. **Note:** Please continue giving exact locations and numbers for all phalarope reports.

Red-necked Phalarope — Seen in ten south and eight north counties, and in all regions except East-central and Northeast. This species is normally very scarce during spring migration in the state. Early south 5/9 Lincoln KJB, 5/10 Pipestone RBJ, 5/11 Mower JJS. Early north 5/15 Mahnomen RBJ, 5/19 Pennington JMJ. Late south 5/25 Winona CRG, also see summer report. First county occurrence 5/26 **Crow Wing** (2) PSP. Peak number 5/24 Kandiyohi (12 at L. Lillian) RSF.

Jaegers through Terns

Parasitic Jaeger — No reports.

Franklin's Gull — Seen in 21 south and 12 north counties, and all regions except

Northeast. Early south 3/19 Freeborn AEB and Martin CRM, 3/28 Ramsey TAT. Early north 4/13 Polk EEF, 4/18 Otter Tail DTT, SMT. High count 5/29 Marshall (3800 at Agassiz N.W.R.) KJB.

Little Gull — One adult at Moose Lake lagoons 5/18 **Carlton** MSS, GL.

Bonaparte's Gull — Seen in 21 south and 15 north counties in all regions. Early south 4/7 Dakota m.ob. and Hennepin OLJ, 4/8–13 in eight counties. Early north 4/13 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 4/14–19 in five counties. Late south 5/25 Hennepin SLC, 5/27 Lac Qui Parle FAE, also see summer report. High counts 5/4 (1200, FJN) and 5/8 (1600+, MH) at Duluth.

Ring-billed Gull — Observed in 71 counties statewide. See winter report for early south migrants and overwintering birds. Early north 3/15 St. Louis (350+ at Duluth) FJN, 3/18 Lake JWJ. High count 4/5 Dakota (11,000) KJB.

CALIFORNIA GULL — Documented 4/25 Clay (2 adults, Hawley Twp.) †KJB (*The Loon* 74:239–240), 5/3 **Isanti** (fourth-year bird, Athens Twp.) †KJB (*The Loon* 74:239–240).

Herring Gull — Seen in 26 south and 13 north counties. Overwintered north and south. First influx 3/12 Washington (150) KJB. Early north (away from L. Superior) 4/6 Polk EEF, 4/7 Wadena PJB.

Thayer's Gull — Early south 3/12–27 Washington (4+ individuals at Pt. Douglas) KJB, 3/19, 3/27–30 Dakota (first-winter, Pine Bend) TAT. Only north reports: 3/12–14 Lake (adult at Knife Is.) JWJ, overwintering through 3/16 St. Louis (3 at Duluth) PHS. Late south 5/1 Dakota (Pine Bend) KJB, 5/7 Isanti (Athens Twp.) KJB.

Iceland Gull — No reports following good numbers during the fall (4) and winter (4) seasons.

Lesser Black-backed Gull — Providing

the second record for western Minnesota (following one at the Crookston lagoons, Polk County, 2 June 2000) was a second-year bird 5/2–4 **Traverse** (Mud L.) †KJB, †PCC. Also observed 4/13 – 5/1 Dakota (probable first-year bird at Pine Bend) †KJB, 4/13–19 Dakota (adult at Pine Bend) †KJB, †PEB, m.ob., 4/27 Isanti (adult in Athens Twp.) †KJB.

Glaucous Gull — Many reports of one or two “immatures” at Pine Bend landfill, Dakota County. Only south report away from Dakota County: 3/23 Washington (2 at Pt. Douglas) KJB. Record late south date 5/1 Dakota (Pine Bend) KJB. Late north 3/14 Lake (2 adults) JWJ, 3/23 St. Louis (3 adults) PHS.

Great Black-backed Gull — Late south 5/1 Dakota (first-year at Burnsville) †KJB.

Caspian Tern — Observed in 16 south and 12 north counties in all regions. Early south 4/27 Meeker DMF, 5/1 Hennepin KJB. Early north 5/4 St. Louis FJN, 5/5 Traverse PHS. High counts 5/11 St. Louis (227 at Duluth) JRN, 5/24 Hennepin (75 at Purgatory Creek) SWe.

Common Tern — Observed in 12 south and 11 north counties in all regions, but only Goodhue in Southeast, St. Louis in Northeast. Early south 4/27 **Nobles** RBJ, 5/4 Jackson MJC; also seen 5/12 Benton (Little Rock L.) HHD. Early north 5/11 St. Louis JWJ, 5/12 Grant SPM, DKM. Late south 5/25 Hennepin (one at French L.) SLC, but see summer report for record late south dates.

ARCTIC TERN — One adult 5/27 St. Louis (40th Ave. West, Duluth) †PHS.

Forster's Tern — Observed in 31 south and 18 north counties. Arrived within two days of recent medians south (4/10) and north (4/19). Early south 4/12 Big Stone BEO, Freeborn AEB and Ramsey DFJ *et al.*, 4/14–20 in nine counties. Early north 4/17 Becker (12) BRK, 4/19 Douglas KJB. High count 5/13 Pope (158 at Long

Beach) KJB.

Black Tern — Reported from 32 south and 18 north counties. Arrived later than medians south (4/28) and north (5/7). Early south 5/4 Lac Qui Parle CRG, 5/5 Hennepin WCM. Early north 5/12 Wadena PJB, 5/13 Crow Wing JJS. High count 5/26 Marshall (800+ at Agassiz N.W.R.) AXH, PHS.

Doves through Kingfishers

Rock Dove — Statewide.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE — First reported at last year's breeding location early March+ Houston (Caledonia) JGa, FZL, †PHS. First county occurrence 4/13+ **Grant** (Herman) †SPM, DKM. Also see undocumented reports.

Mourning Dove — Seen in 73 counties throughout the state. Overwintered north; probable migrants 3/13 Kanabec BLA, 3/14 Todd JSK, SDu.

Black-billed Cuckoo — Observed in 12 south counties beginning 5/17 Freeborn AEB, 5/18 in four counties. Arrived north 5/27 St. Louis m.ob., 5/28 Carlton MSS and Otter Tail DTT, SMT. Only additional north report: 5/31 Pennington JMJ.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo — Arrived south 5/24 Carver RMD and Dakota TAT; also reported from Meeker, Scott. Only north report: 5/22 Morrison WLB.

Eastern Screech-Owl — All reports: Cottonwood, Dakota, Freeborn, Meeker, Murray, Washington, and Wright (2).

Great Horned Owl — Observed in 23 south and 10 north counties.

Snowy Owl — The last of 134+ Snowy Owls in the state from Fall 2001 through Spring 2002 (see map in winter report) lingered through 4/30 Marshall (Warren) MBr, 5/17–18 St. Louis (Duluth) †AXH, †PHS. Third largest documented invasion



Great Gray Owl, 18 May 2002, Sax-Zim Bog, St. Louis County. Photo by Anthony X. Hertzell.

in state history, following 351 in 1993–94 and 153 in 1996–97.

Northern Hawk Owl — Many reports from Cook (upper Gunflint Trail). One lingered through 3/25 St. Louis (Rice Lake Twp.) m.ob., also see winter report. Late north 5/26 Roseau (2 at Lost River S.F.) AXH, PHS, but see summer report.

BURROWING OWL — An unmated adult faithfully attended a burrow 5/6+ Murray (Lowville Twp.) m.ob., ph. DAC (*The Loon* 74:165). First documented record since May 1997.

Barred Owl — Reported from 18 south and 13 north counties within usual range.

Great Gray Owl — Seen in Aitkin, Cook,

Lake, Lake of the Woods, Roseau, St. Louis.

Long-eared Owl — Four March reports from Rice (max. 3 birds, 3/13) TFB *et al.* All other south reports: 3/17 Dakota SWe, 3/18 Hennepin PEJ, 4/10 Freeborn AEB and Mower RJe, 5/15 Washington AXH, PHS. Early north 4/10 St. Louis JRN; also reported from Cook, Lake, Roseau.

Short-eared Owl — No fewer than 23 individuals reported from five south and seven north counties (five reports lacked number of birds). No reports from Southwest or North-central. Early south 3/29 Waseca JEZ, only March report. Early north 4/7 St. Louis BCM, 4/8 Pine KIM, BAP. High count 4/12 Hennepin (6 at Crow-Hassan Park) WCM.

Boreal Owl — Seven males calling on territories in Cook BLA, representing the second lowest total since 1987. Also reported from Lake.

Northern Saw-whet Owl — All south reports: Blue Earth, Isanti, Rice (5 reports between 3/14 & 4/8, TFB). Many reports from the Northeast region beginning 3/1 Lake *fide* DRB, 3/13 St. Louis ALE. All additional north reports: Cook, Hubbard, Polk, Roseau, Todd.

Common Nighthawk — Observed in 30 south and 14 north counties, and in all regions. Early south (median 4/27) 5/9 Martin DLB, 5/10–15 in 15 counties. Early north (median 5/9) 5/13 Todd JSK, SDu, 5/18 St. Louis AXH, PHS.

Whip-poor-will — Reported from 12 south and 6 north counties. No reports from Southwest or West-central regions, and only St. Louis in Northeast. Early south 4/18 Houston KAK, 4/25 Rice TFB, only April reports. Early north 5/4 Clay RHO, 5/5 Todd SDu. First county occurrence 5/18 **Meeker** (Litchfield N.C.) DMF.

Chimney Swift — Seen in 37 south and 19 north counties. Early south 4/19 Rice

TFB, 4/27 Cottonwood EPD, only April reports. Early north 5/4 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 5/6 Kanabec CAM. Peak migration 5/4–12 south, 5/11–19 north.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird — Seen in 33 south and 22 north counties. In spite of the cool, wet conditions, many reports within three days of recent medians south (5/5) and north (5/8). Early south 5/3 Nicollet MJF, 5/4 in four counties. Early north 5/5 Cass, Kanabec, Otter Tail and Todd, then 5/10–15 in 11 counties.

Belted Kingfisher — Reported from 37 south and 24 north counties. Only March report north 3/17 Grant SPM, DKM, but see winter report. Peak migration 4/6–15 in ten north counties.

Woodpeckers through Flycatchers

Red-headed Woodpecker — Reported from 32 south and 15 north counties in all regions, but only St. Louis in Northeast. About 20 overwintered at Cedar Creek Natural History Area, Anoka County (JLH). Observed in five Houston locations, but numbers low in Southwest. High counts north 5/19 Marshall (8 at Old Mill S.P.) ZL, 5/26 Beltrami (7 near Upper Red L.) DPJ.

Red-bellied Woodpecker — Seen in 55 counties as far north as Marshall and Pennington in Northwest, Cass, Crow Wing and Aitkin in North-central, and southern St. Louis (3 locations) in Northeast.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker — Reported from 32 south and 25 north counties. Early south 3/29 Anoka SLC, 3/30 Meeker DMF, peak migration 4/8–15. Early north 4/12 St. Louis JRN, 4/13 in five counties.

Downy Woodpecker — Statewide.

Hairy Woodpecker — Statewide.

Three-toed Woodpecker — All reports: St. Louis (county road 16) m.ob., 5/18 Lake of the Woods (Faunce F.R., 2.2 miles south of Stoney Corners) MHK.

Black-backed Woodpecker — Seen in Cook, Hubbard (Fern Twp.), Lake (max. 4 pair on 5/19, JWL *et al.*), Lake of the Woods, Roseau (Lost River S.F.), St. Louis.

Northern Flicker — Observed in 72 counties statewide. Overwintered in Otter Tail (male “Yellow-shafted”) DTT, SMT. Early north 3/12 Hubbard HJF, 3/23 Clay RHO, only March reports. Peak migration 4/13–19 (19 north counties). High counts 4/15 St. Louis (50+ at Duluth) JRN, 4/17 Polk (62 at Crookston) EEF.

Pileated Woodpecker — Reported within usual range from 31 south and 24 north counties.

Olive-sided Flycatcher — Observed in 18 south and 6 north counties. Arrived later than recent medians south (5/6) and north (5/13). Early south 5/11 Hennepin CRM, 5/12–13 in six counties. Early north 5/16 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 5/18 Otter Tail DTT, SMT. Late south 5/29 Steele RBJ, NFT, also see summer report. Record high count reported 5/26 Goodhue (25 at Frontenac) SWe.

Eastern Wood-Pewee — Reported from 23 south and 12 north counties. Arrived on time. Early south 5/4 Meeker DMF, 5/5 Houston DPS. Early north 5/12 Marshall JMJ and Todd JSK. Peak migration 5/20–28 south (25 reports), 5/25–31 north (14 reports).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher — Early south (median 5/10) 5/16 Meeker †DMF, 5/20 Hennepin †TAT, 5/21–25 in five counties. No north reports of vocalizing birds. Sight reports from seven north counties beginning 5/18 Becker RBJ.

Acadian Flycatcher — Vocalizing birds first reported 5/14+ Houston PHS, 5/17 Washington DPS. Second county occurrence 5/26 Carver (east edge of Carver) †RMD. Also reported from McLeod, Rice, Scott.

Alder Flycatcher — Arrived later than medians south (5/12) and north (5/15).

Vocalizing birds reported from six south counties starting 5/18 Meeker DMF, 5/23 Anoka KJB and Dakota TAT. Early north 5/25 Douglas JPE, 5/26 Wadena PJB. Record high count 5/25 Dakota (15 at Scharr’s Bluff) TAT. Additional count 5/25 Anoka (12 at Rice Creek) KJB.

Willow Flycatcher — Vocalizing birds reported from six south counties starting 5/6 Hennepin OLJ, 5/17 Stearns DCT, MAJ. Only north report of calling birds: 5/31 Polk (2) EEF. **Note:** During spring and fall migration, please provide details for silent *Empidonax* flycatchers and denote birds identified by voice.

Least Flycatcher — Vocalizing birds first reported 5/4 Dakota ADS, TAT and Sibley CRG, 5/5 Rice TFB. Early north 5/11 St. Louis (calling) JWL, 5/13 Clay †DPJ. Record high count 5/10 Anoka (25) KJB.

Eastern Phoebe — Reported from 35 south and 27 north counties. Early south 3/28 Freeborn AEB, 3/29 Houston MHF and Rice TFB; peak migration 4/4–14 (33 reports). Early north 3/24 Todd JSK, 4/7 Otter Tail *fide* BAB and Wadena PJB; peak migration 4/12–16 (25 reports).

SAY’S PHOEBE — One individual observed 4/29 Clearwater (near Gonvick) †TD *et al.*

Great Crested Flycatcher — Seen in 30 south and 18 north counties. Early south 5/1 Rice TFB, 5/4 in six counties. Early north 5/12 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 5/14 Itasca JEB, RBJ. High count 5/31 Polk (12) EEF.

Western Kingbird — Reported from 4 south and 11 north counties. Early south 5/4 Lac Qui Parle CRG, 5/6 Pipestone PHS; only other south reports from Meeker, Sherburne. Early north 5/13 Clay RHO, 5/14–18 in five counties.

Eastern Kingbird — Reported from 29 south and 18 north counties. Arrived late in southern regions, but simultaneously

north. Early south (median 4/25) 5/4 Big Stone and Lac Qui Parle NSp, 5/5–8 in seven counties. Early north 5/4 Todd JSK, 5/5 Cass MRN. High count 5/24 Otter Tail (47 in one field) SPM, DKM.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER — Only documented report: 5/25 Lake (Split Rock R.) †CJT.

Srikes through Swallows

Loggerhead Shrike — Approximately 26 individuals reported from 12 south and 4 north counties, similar to last spring (23 birds in 17 counties), but below the 1992–96 spring average of 20 counties for 6th consecutive year. Early south (median 3/17) 4/8 Dakota TAT and Freeborn AEB. First county occurrence 5/4 **Stevens** (Morris) JEB, RBJ *et al.* All other south reports: Brown, Carver, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Meeker, Murray, Pope, Rice, Winona. All north reports: 4/14 Wilkin (Rothsay W.M.A.) *fide* BAB, 4/17+ Clay m.ob., 5/3 Grant SPM, DKM, 5/26 Pennington (Polk Centre Twp.) AXH, PHS. **Note:** Please provide exact locations and numbers of shrikes for all seasons.

Northern Shrike — Observed in nine south and ten north counties. Late south 4/2 Big Stone KJB, 4/5 Anoka REH. Last reported 4/13 St. Louis JWL and Otter Tail DTT, SMT.

WHITE-EYED VIREO — All reports: 5/14 Olmsted (Chester Woods C.P.) †JPr *et al.*, 5/15 Hennepin (Old Cedar Ave., Bloomington) †JEP.

Bell's Vireo — Reported 5/7 Blue Earth (seen and heard at Minneopa S.P.) MJF, 5/26+ Goodhue SWe *et al.*, 5/27+ Dakota (Black Dog L.) TAT, 5/28 Wabasha (McCarthy Lakes W.M.A.) CRM, 5/30 Winona (Great River Bluffs S.P.) *fide* AXH.

Yellow-throated Vireo — Seen in 25 south and 17 north counties. Early south 4/25 Mower RDK, RCK, 5/3 Houston FZL, 5/4–6 in six counties. Early north 5/5

Wadena PJB, 5/6 Kanabec CAM, peak migration 5/13–18.

Blue-headed Vireo — Observed in 31 south and 22 north counties. Early south 4/25 Hennepin CKu, 4/26 Anoka KJB, peak migration 5/4 (7 south counties). Early north 5/4 Cass, Clay, St. Louis and Wadena, peak migration 5/11–15 (11 counties). Late south 5/27 Hennepin DCZ and Washington PEB. High count 5/10 Anoka (8) KJB.

Warbling Vireo — Seen in 30 south and 18 north counties. Arrived after medians south (4/30) and north (5/8). Early south 5/4 in seven counties, 5/5 Houston, Rice and Scott. Early north 5/12 Marshall JMJ, 5/14 Mille Lacs JJS.

Philadelphia Vireo — Reported from 17 south and 12 north counties, and in all regions except the Southwest. Early south 5/6 Hennepin DWK, 5/11 Goodhue DFN, peak migration 5/13–15 in eight counties. Early north 5/12 Marshall JMJ, 5/14 Itasca JEB, RBJ. Late south 5/28 Anoka KJB. Record high counts 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (9) KJB, 5/17 Goodhue (13) KJB.

Red-eyed Vireo — Observed in 22 south and 22 north counties in all regions. Early south 5/8 Nicollet MJF and Winona GLS, 5/10 Meeker DMF. Early north 5/10 Todd JSK, 5/11 Carlton LAW. Migration peaked 5/15–18 south, 5/22–27 north. High count 5/23 Anoka (40) KJB.

Gray Jay — Reported within usual range from Cass, Clearwater, Cook, Itasca, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Roseau, St. Louis.

Blue Jay — Occurs throughout the state.

Black-billed Magpie — Reported from six counties in Northwest region, plus Aitkin, Beltrami, Koochiching, St. Louis. Peak count 4/11 Polk (12) EEF.

American Crow — Seen statewide.

Common Raven — Reported from ten

north counties, but only Roseau in the Northwest. High count 3/23 St. Louis (23 at Duluth) FJN. Only south report: Anoka KJB.

Horned Lark — Observed in 36 south and 17 north counties. High counts 3/16 Wright (132) DFJ, 3/21 Polk (150) EEF.

Purple Martin — Reported from 29 south and 16 north counties. Early south 4/7 Dakota KJB, 4/8 Freeborn AEB. Early north 4/12 Todd JSK, 4/13 Douglas REH.

Tree Swallow — Seen in 41 south and 25 north counties. Early south 3/22 Freeborn AEB, 3/31 Hennepin SLC. Early north 4/2 Pine KIM, BAP, 4/7 Otter Tail SPM, DKM.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow — Seen in 32 south and 15 north counties. Early south 4/7 Freeborn AEB, then daily arrivals 4/11–17. Early north 4/20 Lake JWL, 4/21 Otter Tail PHS.

Bank Swallow — Observed in 25 south and 15 north counties. Early south 4/8 Carver RMD, then no reports until 4/20 Olmsted RBJ. Early north 5/5 Beltrami DPJ, 5/7 Clay RHO.

Cliff Swallow — Seen in 28 south and 20 north counties. Early south 4/12 Stearns DRu, 4/20 Goodhue PEB. Arrived north 4/21 Otter Tail PHS, only April report. High count 5/23 Polk (500) EEF.

Barn Swallow — Seen in 36 south and 22 north counties. Early south 4/6 Carver RMD, 4/10 Meeker, and Waseca. Early north 4/17 Morrison WLB, 4/21 Otter Tail PHS.

Chickadees through Gnatcatchers

Black-capped Chickadee — Observed throughout the state.

Boreal Chickadee — All reports: Cook, Itasca, Lake, St. Louis.

Tufted Titmouse — Reported as usual from Fillmore, Houston, and Olmsted,

plus 3/28–29 Anoka (Coon Rapids) GPI, †SLC, 4/1–4 Washington (Grey Cloud Is.) TEB, 5/17 Goodhue (Frontenac) KJB.

Red-breasted Nuthatch — Observed in 23 south and 17 north counties. Late south 5/20 Olmsted OWB and Sherburne PLJ, 5/24 Fillmore NBO.

White-breasted Nuthatch — Reported throughout the state. High count 3/16 Wright (14) DFJ.

Brown Creeper — Observed in 23 south and 14 north counties. Late south 5/20 Hennepin SLC and Lac Qui Parle FAE, 5/27 Scott TAT.

ROCK WREN — One seen 4/21 **Clay** (Moorhead) †DDW.

Carolina Wren — Continuing from the winter season were singles through 4/17+ Olmsted (Rochester) CRG, JWH and 4/17 Mower (Austin) AEB. Only other report: 4/28 Winona JJS.

House Wren — Seen in 37 south and 21 north counties. Early south 4/15 Rice TFB, 4/17 Fillmore NBO and Houston KAK. Early north 5/4 Clay RHO and Pennington JMJ, 5/5 Wadena PJB. High count 5/9 Swift (17 at Marsh L. Dam) KJB.

Winter Wren — Seen in 11 south and 9 north counties. Early south 3/28 Rice TFB, 3/29 Anoka SLC and Rice DAB. Early north 4/6 Cass SWS, 4/13 Cook DWK and St. Louis ALE. Late south 5/4 Hennepin OLJ, only May report south.

Sedge Wren — Reported from 19 south and 15 north counties. Early south 4/29 Anoka KJB, 4/30 Hennepin SLC. Early north 5/10 Clay RHO, 5/11 Todd JSK.

Marsh Wren — Observed in 21 south and 11 north counties. Early south 4/19 Carver RMD, 4/28 Hennepin PEB. Early north 5/4 Marshall and 5/5 Roseau JMJ.

Golden-crowned Kinglet — Reported

from 21 south and 9 north counties. Early south 3/28 Washington TAT, 3/30–31 in five counties, peak migration 4/6–13. Early north (but see winter report) 4/7 Otter Tail *fide* BAB, 4/12 Pennington JMJ and St. Louis (14) JRN. Late south 5/9 Cottonwood EPD, only May report south.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet — Seen in 40 counties in the south and 23 in the north. Early south 3/29 Ramsey DFJ, 4/5 Rice DAB, TFB. Early north 4/7 Otter Tail *fide* BAB, 4/13 in five counties. Late south 5/18–20 in eight counties, 5/23 Hennepin SLC. High count 5/6 Anoka (75 at Rice Creek) KJB.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher — Reported from 31 south counties beginning 4/14 (earliest date on record) Rice DAB, 4/17 Hennepin TAT and Ramsey CKu, 4/18 Washington TEB, 4/19 Freeborn AEB. Arrived north 4/21 (record early) Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 4/29 Todd JSK, SDu, 5/14 Mille Lacs JJS. All other north reports: Cass, Clay, Douglas, Wadena.

Bluebirds through Waxwings

Eastern Bluebird — Seen in 38 south and 24 north counties. See winter report for early south migrants; peak migration 3/18–27 (12 south counties). Early north 3/29 Crow Wing PSP, 3/30 Kanabec CAM.

Mountain Bluebird — No reports.

Townsend's Solitaire — One lingered 2/24 – 3/5 Hennepin (Minneapolis) CMM, m.ob. Five additional reports, including 5/13 St. Louis (Duluth) ph. FJN, DSC — apart from a June record in Cook (*The Loon* 67:62), Minnesota's latest date. All other reports: 3/6 Yellow Medicine (2 at Miller-Richter W.M.A.) †RJS, 3/11 Ramsey (Roseville) *fide* AXH, 3/23 Dakota (Lebanon Hills) NAJ, 4/9 Dakota (Castle Rock) CRG. These data brought the total since September 2001 to 31 records (33 birds), exceeding the state's previous high of 22 records (29 solitaires) during the 1992–93 invasion (*The Loon* 65:110–115).

Veery — Reported from 22 south and 21 north counties in all regions except Southwest. Early south 5/4 Hennepin OIJ and Meeker DMF, 5/6 Anoka KJB and Rice TFB. Daily arrivals north beginning 5/11 Crow Wing CMC, DEC and Polk JMJ. High count 5/10 Anoka (28) KJB.

Gray-cheeked Thrush — Reported from 29 south and 12 north counties. Early south 5/4 Hennepin OIJ, 5/6 Hennepin SLC and Pipestone PHS, peak migration 5/10–16 (30 reports). Early north 5/11 Clay RHO and Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 5/14 St. Louis DCZ and Todd JSK. Late south 5/26 Nicollet LWF, 5/27 Hennepin DCZ and Meeker DMF. Late north 5/26 in three counties, 5/27 Beltrami DPJ.

Swainson's Thrush — Reported from 37 south and 22 north counties. Undocumented reports in April were excluded due to potential confusion with Hermit Thrush (*The Loon* 67:44–45). Early south 5/1 Dakota ADS and Ramsey NSp, 5/3 Murray NED, peak migration 5/18–19 Kandiyohi (“hundreds”) RSF. Early north 5/2 Clay GEN, 5/4 in three counties. Late south 5/31 Hennepin TAT and Scott DWK, also see summer report.

Hermit Thrush — Reported from 23 south and 16 north counties. Early south 3/29 Anoka SLC, 4/5 Rice TFB. Early north 4/8 Beltrami DPJ, 4/12 St. Louis JRN, FJN. Late south 5/17 Stearns JJS, but territorial bird 5/26–27+ Washington (Falls Creek S.N.A.) KJB, PEB. High count 4/21 Anoka (28 at Pioneer Park) KJB.

Wood Thrush — Observed in 27 south and 10 north counties. Early south 4/23 Waseca JEB, then no reports until 5/4 Anoka KJB and Meeker DMF. Early north 5/11 Crow Wing, Kanabec, Morrison and Todd.

American Robin — Seen throughout the state. High count 4/12 St. Louis (1000+ at W.S.H.C, Duluth) FJN, DSC.

Varied Thrush — Individuals lingering

from winter season seen sporadically through early March in Becker (Cotton L.) KHa and until at least 3/24 Otter Tail (Fergus Falls) m.ob. Only “new” report: 3/9 Hennepin (Plymouth) DNO.

Gray Catbird — Seen in 36 south and 24 north counties. Early south 4/28 Dakota TAT, 4/29 Houston MHF. Early north 5/8 Wadena PJB, 5/11 in four counties. High count 5/11 Goodhue (30) KJB.

Northern Mockingbird — All reports: 4/11 Olmsted (by county road 22) JWH, 4/16 Olmsted (county road 3) DMA, 4/24+ (Rosemont) TAT, m.ob., 5/1 Winona CAS *fide* JJS, 5/11 Hennepin (Old Cedar Ave.) RMD, 5/18 Lac Qui Parle BRL. Two north reports: overwintered through mid-April St. Louis (Duluth) m.ob., 5/27 Cook (Hollow Rock) †MeM, TV.

Brown Thrasher — Reported from 36 south and 19 north counties statewide. Overwintered through 3/11 Freeborn AEB. Early south 4/6 Dakota TAT, 4/12 Fillmore NBO. Early north 4/26 Douglas REH, 4/29–30 in three counties. High count 5/6 Pipestone (15) PHS.

European Starling — Seen statewide.

American Pipit — Reported from ten south and seven north counties. Arrived south 4/22 Meeker DMF, 5/2 Big Stone KJB. Early north 4/28 St. Louis NAJ, 5/2 Traverse KJB. Late south 5/12 Murray CRG and Rock PHS. Late north 5/20 Lake m.ob., 5/22 St. Louis NAJ. High count 5/8 Traverse (135 at Mud L.) KJB.

Bohemian Waxwing — Late north 4/14 in three counties, 4/15 St. Louis PHS. High counts 3/15 (600) and 4/6 (465) St. Louis (Duluth) FJN. No south reports.

Cedar Waxwing — Observed in 33 south and 17 north counties.

Warblers

Blue-winged Warbler — Observed in

23 south counties beginning 5/3 Olmsted OWB, 5/4 Dakota ADS, TAT and Goodhue OWB. Unusual location 5/5 Lac Qui Parle (Big Stone N.W.R.) †PHS, †PCC. First county record 5/15 **Pope** (Barness Park, Glenwood) †SPM, DKM. Record high count 5/14 Houston (**16** at Beaver Creek Valley S.P.) PHS.

Golden-winged Warbler — Seen in 28 counties in the south and 10 in the north. Early south 5/4 Dakota, Goodhue, Hennepin, Ramsey and Rice. Unusual report 5/11–12 Lac Qui Parle †Nsp. Early north 5/11 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 5/14 Cass JWJ and Mille Lacs JJS. “Brewster’s” Warbler 5/24 Carver RMD.

Tennessee Warbler — Seen in 36 south and 23 north counties. Early south **4/24** (ties earliest date) Freeborn AEB, then no reports until 5/4 in eight counties! Early north 5/11 Carlton LAW and Otter Tail DTT, SMT, 5/12 Becker BRK. Record high count 5/15 Douglas (**600+** at L. Carlos) SPM, DKM, with 263 counted around Mille Lacs L. the same day (KJB).

Orange-crowned Warbler — Reported from 38 south and 23 north counties. Early south **4/15** Cottonwood EPD, 4/17 Lac Qui Parle FAE, 4/19 in four counties. Early north **4/20** Clay RHO and Kanabec CAM, 4/24 Crow WIng PSP and Marshall KJB. Late south 5/23–25 in four counties, 5/27 Hennepin DCZ. Late north 5/24 Kanabec BLA, 5/26 Lake JWJ and Roseau AXH, PHS. High count 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (71) KJB.

Nashville Warbler — Observed in 36 south and 24 north counties. Early south 4/23 Hennepin SLC, TAT and Ramsey REH, 4/24 Freeborn AEB and Rice TFB. Early north 5/3 St. Louis ALE, 5/4 Otter Tail DTT, SMT and Wadena PJB. Record high count 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (**488**) KJB.

Northern Parula — Reported from 23 south and 10 north counties. Early south 4/24 Rice TFB, 4/27 Rice DAB. Early north 5/4 St. Louis ALE, 5/5 St. Louis NAJ. Late

south 5/27 Hennepin PEJ. All reports from the western regions: Cottonwood, Grant, Murray, Roseau, Stevens. Record high counts 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (56) KJB, 5/17 Goodhue (17) KJB.

Yellow Warbler — Seen in 36 south and 25 north counties. Early south 4/14 Freeborn AEB, 4/21 Goodhue PHS, only April reports. Early north 5/4 Kanabec CAM and Wadena PJB, 5/5 Cass SWS and Polk EEF. Record high count 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (492) KJB.

Chestnut-sided Warbler — Reported from 32 south and 20 north counties. Early south 5/4 Freeborn AEB, Hennepin OJL, SLC and Rice TFB, 5/5–6 in six counties. Early north 5/11 Carlton LAW, 5/15 in six counties. High counts 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (43) KJB, 5/25 Anoka (34 at Rice Creek) KJB.

Magnolia Warbler — Observed in 36 south and 21 north counties. Early south 5/4 Rice TFB, 5/5 in five counties. Early north 5/11 in six counties, 5/12 Lake JWL. Late south 5/31 Anoka (2) KJB and Hennepin TAT, also see summer report. High count 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (49) KJB.

Cape May Warbler — Seen in 33 south and 21 north counties. Early south 5/4 Winona KJB, 5/5 Waseca JEZ. Early north 5/3 St. Louis JRN, 5/11 Kanabec CAM and Otter Tail SPM, DKM. Late south 5/26 Dakota TAT, 5/28 Kandiyohi RSF. First county occurrence 5/19 **Rock** (2 at Hills) BRL. Record high count 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (98) KJB.

Black-throated Blue Warbler — All south reports: 5/8 Hennepin (Bass Ponds) DFJ, 5/11–12 **Lac Qui Parle** (Big Stone N.W.R.) †NSp, 5/12 Sherburne (Snuffy's Landing) ADB, 5/15 Washington (Colby L.) AXH, PHS, 5/25 Houston (Beaver Creek Valley S.P.) CRG. Only north reports were from breeding areas in Northeast region, beginning 5/18 Cook MWS. High count 5/29 Lake (14 singing males at Tettegouche S.P.) JWL.



Cape May Warbler, 20 May 2002, Rice Creek Regional Trail, Anoka County. Photo by Vija Kelly.

Yellow-rumped Warbler — Seen in 43 south and 28 north counties. See winter report for overwintering south; presumed migrants 4/6 Ramsey NSp and Rice TFB, 4/7 Freeborn AEB. Early north 3/31 Cook WCM, 4/12–13 in six counties. Late south (away from known breeding range) 5/27 Blue Earth CRG. “Audubon’s” race 4/28 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 5/18 Otter Tail (Glendalough S.P.) †DTT, SMT. Estimated high counts 5/10 Brown (5000+ in one field) RBJ, 5/20 Lake of the Woods (“thousands”) BRB, plus 1000 more in each of three south counties.

Black-throated Green Warbler — Seen in 27 south and 15 north counties. Early south 5/1 Hennepin TAT, 5/4 in four counties. Arrived north 4/30 Aitkin RWS, 5/9 Cass MRN, 5/11 in four counties. First county record 5/15 **Pope** †SPM, DKM. High count 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (23) KJB.

Blackburnian Warbler — Seen in 26 south and 18 north counties. Early south 5/4 Hennepin CRM, 5/5 Freeborn AEB and Rice TFB, peak migration 5/11–18 (27 reports). Early north 5/1 Kanabec BLA, 5/11 Kanabec CAM, peak migration 5/18–26

(20 reports). Late south 5/28 Hennepin SLC, also see summer report. High count 5/25 Anoka (22 at Rice Creek) KJB.

Pine Warbler — Seen in 13 south and 15 north counties. No reports from Southwest or West-Central, and only Goodhue in Southeast. Early south 4/12 (ties earliest south) Stearns DRu, 4/18 Anoka KJB and Ramsey REH. Early north 4/17 (ties earliest north) St. Louis FJN, 4/21 Crow Wing PSP, Itasca BRN and Wadena PJB.

PRAIRIE WARBLER — Episodic reports 4/20–25 Hennepin (Coon Rapids Dam) JKS, †RLR, †OLJ. This bird was apparently difficult to relocate as many observers searched in vain multiple times.

Palm Warbler — Observed in 39 south and 20 north counties. Early south 4/14 Freeborn AEB, 4/19 Hennepin CKu and Ramsey TAT. Early north 4/25 Beltrami DPJ, 4/26 Todd JSK. Late south 5/25 Hennepin SLC, 5/27 Dakota SWe. High counts 5/11 St. Louis (57) JRN, 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (315) KJB.

Bay-breasted Warbler — Reported from 18 south and 15 north counties in all regions, but only Murray (5/21, NED) in the Southwest. Early south 5/8 Blue Earth MJF, 5/9 Ramsey TAT. Early north 5/11 Otter Tail SPM, DKM and Pennington MJM, 5/14 Itasca BRN. Late south 5/26 Anoka JLH and Goodhue SWe, 5/27 in three counties. High count 5/25 Anoka (11 at Rice Creek) KJB.

Blackpoll Warbler — Reported from 29 south and 22 north counties. Arrived south 5/4 Hennepin CRM and Ramsey SWe, 5/5–7 in seven counties. Early north 5/11 Otter Tail DTT, SMT and Pennington JMJ, 5/13–15 in ten counties. Late south 5/29 Ramsey REH, 5/31 Anoka KJB. Late north 5/29 St. Louis ALE, 5/30 Roseau PAN, also see summer report. High count 5/25 Anoka (44 at Rice Creek) KJB.

Cerulean Warbler — Seen in 11 south counties. Early south 5/5+ Scott (max. 5 at Murphy-Hanrehan) DWK, m.ob, 5/8+



Yellow-rumped Warbler, 3 May 2002, Carlos Avery WMA, Anoka County. Photo by Vija Kelly.

Houston (max. 3 at Beaver Creek Valley S.P.) GLS *et al.* All other reports: 5/12 Sherburne (L. Ann) ADB, 5/13 Freeborn AEB, 5/13–14 Mower (Austin) m.ob, 5/22 Rice (Cannon R. Wilderness) TFB, 5/23 Anoka (Linwood L.) KJB, 5/23 Dakota (female at Schaar's Bluff) TAT, 5/23 Hennepin (female at Cedar L.) SLC, 5/25 Rice (L. Sakatah S.P.) DAB, 5/26 Nicollet (Seven Mile Creek C.P.) PH, 5/27 Wright (8 at Lake Maria S.P.) HHD.

Black-and-white Warbler — Seen in 36 south and 24 north counties. Early south 4/26 Rice TFB, 4/27 Meeker DMF and Rice DAB. Early north 5/3 St. Louis JRN, 5/4 in four counties. Late south (away from known nesting range) 5/27 Meeker DMF. Record high count 5/6 Anoka (43 at Rice Creek) KJB.

American Redstart — Reported from 39 south and 24 north counties. Early south 5/4 in five counties, 5/5 in five more. Early north 5/4 Kanabec BLA and Wadena PJB, 5/11 in five counties. Peak migration 5/11–15 south, 5/14–18 north. High count 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (132) KJB.

Prothonotary Warbler — Early south 4/20 Hennepin †RLR, 5/4 Goodhue OWB

and Meeker DMF. First county occurrence 5/11 **Steele** NFT; also reported from Blue Earth, Dakota, Freeborn, Houston, Le Sueur, Nicollet, Rice. No north reports.

Worm-eating Warbler — No reports.

Ovenbird — Seen in 35 south and 23 north counties. Early south 4/21 (second earliest) Ramsey TAT, 4/28 Rice TFB, 5/1 in three counties. Early north 5/5 Carlton LAW and Cass SWS, MRN, 5/7 Clay RHO and St. Louis ALE. Peak migration 5/5–12 south, 5/11–18 north. Record high count 5/10 Anoka (51) KJB.

Northern Waterthrush — Observed in 31 south and 16 north counties. Early south 4/28 Anoka KJB and Hennepin SLC, TAT, 4/30 Dodge JJS. Early north 5/4 Clay RHO, 5/11 in three counties. Late south (away from known breeding areas) 5/27 Dakota TAT. Record high count 5/10 Anoka (64) KJB.

Louisiana Waterthrush — Early south 4/14 Wabasha (Whitewater W.M.A.) IJU, 4/17+ Houston (3 at Beaver Creek Valley S.P.) OWB, m.ob. First county occurrence 5/4 **Meeker** (Litchfield N.C.) †DMF. Also observed in Blue Earth (Minneopa S.P.), Chisago (Interstate S.P.), Rice (multiple locations), Washington (3 locations).

Kentucky Warbler — All observations: 5/11 Nicollet (Seven Mile Creek C.P.) SWE, 5/15 Washington (William O'Brien S.P.) PHS, 5/18+ Blue Earth (Williams N.C.) CRM *et al.*, 5/22 **McLeod** (William May C.P.) DDM, 5/22 Ramsey (Sucker L.) MKE, and 5/25+ Scott (Murphy-Hanrehan Park) BAF, TAT.

Connecticut Warbler — Reported from ten south and four north counties. Early south 5/11 Goodhue KJB, 5/13 Meeker DMF. Early north 5/20 Lake m.ob., 5/23 Clay RHO. Late south 5/27 in five counties. High count 5/27 Anoka (8) KJB.

Mourning Warbler — Seen in 25 south and 10 north counties. Early south 5/6

Hennepin SLC, 5/7 Meeker DMF, peak migration 5/15–18 (17 south counties). Arrived north 5/14 Beltrami DPJ, 5/15 Aitkin KJB and Todd JSK. High count 5/25 Anoka (9 at Rice Creek) KJB.

Common Yellowthroat — Seen in 38 south and 24 north counties. Early south 5/1 Nicollet MJF, 5/4 in seven counties. Early north (median 5/7) 4/28 Wadena PJB, then no reports until 5/11 Clay, Kanabec, Morrison and Otter Tail.

Hooded Warbler — Early south 5/5 Hennepin †DCZ, 5/23 Anoka (Linwood L.) KJB, 5/24+ Dakota/Scott (Murphy-Hanrehan) m.ob. Only north report: 5/24 **Beltrami** (Diamond Point Park, Bemidji) †TJB (*The Loon* 74:241).

Wilson's Warbler — Reported from 34 south and 22 north counties. Early south 5/4 Freeborn AEB, Hennepin SLC and Meeker DMF, 5/5–6 in six counties. Early north 5/11 Beltrami DPJ, St. Louis JRN and Todd JSK, 5/14–15 in seven counties. Late south 5/27 in five counties, 5/29 Washington DPS. High count 5/17 Goodhue (39) KJB.

Canada Warbler — Seen in 18 south and 15 north counties. Early south 5/5 Goodhue RA, 5/14 in three counties. Early north 5/15 Aitkin KJB, 5/16 Carlton LAW and Morrison WLB. Late south (away from known breeding areas) 5/27 in four counties. High counts 5/25 Anoka (16 at Rice Creek) KJB, 5/27 Beltrami (7) DPJ.

Yellow-breasted Chat — One seen 5/6 Rice (Northfield) †NRS.

Tanagers through Snow Bunting

Summer Tanager — More reports than usual: 4/21–27 Hennepin (imm. male at Wirth Park in Minneapolis, earliest ever) CE, ph. CFa, m.ob., 5/9 **Blue Earth** (imm. male at Mankato) MJF, 5/10–13 **Wabasha** (imm. male at Wabasha) WGA, CBe, †PHS, 5/11–20 Mower (near Austin) SJ, †PSc *et al.*, 5/11+ **Cottonwood** (imm. male for



Spotted Towhee, 3 May 2002, Rice Lake State Park, Steele County. Photo by Peder Svingen.

about ten days at Mountain Lake feeder) m.ob., 5/14 Kandiyohi (photographed) *fide* RSF, 5/28–29 Steele (imm. male at Owatonna) †NFT, RBJ, PL *et al.* The Wirth Park bird was picked up and rehabilitated after being diagnosed with a fractured coracoid (SKS).

Scarlet Tanager — Seen in 25 south and 18 north counties. Early south 5/4 Dakota ADS, TAT, Goodhue OWB and Washington DFN, 5/5 Rice TFB and Scott DWK. Early north 5/11 Todd JSK, 5/15 in four counties. Second county occurrence 5/22 Wilkin JJS. High counts 5/23 Anoka (8) KJB, 5/26 Dakota (9) ADS.

Western Tanager — Most reports since this species' Spring 1995 invasion (*The Loon* 67:180–181). Males seen 4/25 Cook (earliest date north, Croftville Road) †SPe, 4/27 – 5/4 **Wabasha** (earliest date south, Wabasha) GK, †CBe, m.ob., ~5/6–13 Olmsted (Rochester) SH *et al.*, ph. †PHS, 5/12–14 **Cass** (Pequot Lakes) JSB, m.ob., 5/12–16 Becker (Cotton L.) †KHa, †BAB, 5/16 **Wilkin** (Breckenridge) †SPM, DKM. Reported without details from six more locations.

Spotted Towhee — Only documented report: 5/13 **Steele** (male at Rice Lake S.P.) ph. †PHS.

Eastern Towhee — Reported from 23 south and 7 north counties. No reports from Northeast region, and only Yellow Medicine in Southwest, Lac Qui Parle in West-central. Early south 4/13 Freeborn AEB and Houston MHF, 4/19 Anoka CRG. Early north 4/26 Crow Wing PSP, 5/4 Clay RHO. First county occurrence 5/16 **Benton** HHD, JJS.

American Tree Sparrow — Observed in 28 south and 16 north counties. Late south 5/4 Hennepin WCM, 5/5 Big Stone RBJ, 5/18 (record late south date) Lac Qui Parle NSp. Late north 5/12 St. Louis JRN, 5/15 St. Louis TPW. High count 3/24 Wright (92) DFJ.

Chipping Sparrow — Reported from 41 south and 28 north counties. Early south (recent median 3/26) 4/7 Hennepin, Mower and Ramsey. Early north (median 4/14) 4/10 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, then daily arrivals 4/13–16. Highest count 5/15 Mille Lacs L. (487) KJB.

Clay-colored Sparrow — Reported from 31 south and 24 counties. Early south 4/21 Dakota TAT and Fillmore NBO, 4/26–28 in seven counties. Early north 4/24 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 4/25 Kanabec CAM. High count 5/15 around Mille Lacs L. (23) KJB.

Field Sparrow — Observed in 33 south counties beginning 4/7 Freeborn AEB and Hennepin TAT, 4/10 Rice TFB. Early north (recent median 4/23) 4/14 Otter Tail DTT, SMT, 4/26 Douglas REH. All other north reports: Clay, Morrison, Todd.

Vesper Sparrow — Seen in 38 south and 20 north counties. More reports than usual from Northeast, including multiple locations between 4/17 and 5/20 in Lake m.ob., 5/14 St. Louis ALE. Early south 4/6 Meeker DMF, 4/7 Freeborn AEB. Early north 4/14 Otter Tail DTT, SMT, 4/15 Morrison WLB. Record high count 4/21 Wilkin (80 at Manston W.M.A.) PHS.

Lark Sparrow — Observed in 14 south and 5 north counties, including 5/15 **Mur-**

ray (Lowville Twp.) †DFJ, 5/26 **Cass** (Heartland Trail) †DRu. No reports from Northeast. Early south 4/20 Goodhue BRL, 4/28 in three counties. Early north 5/4 Clay RHO and Traverse RBJ, 5/15 Polk EEF. Unusual location 5/28+ Hennepin SLC (nested, see summer report).

BLACK-THROATED SPARROW — Sixth state record **4/16–17 Clay** (Moorhead) †RHO *et al.* (*The Loon* 74:238–239).

Savannah Sparrow — Reported from 27 south and 21 north counties. Early south (recent median 3/31) 4/13 Meeker DMF, 4/14 Dakota TAT and Hennepin SLC. Early north 4/13 Todd JSK, 4/19 Lake JWJ and Wilkin KJB.

Grasshopper Sparrow — Observed in 14 south counties beginning 5/4 Rice TFB and Washington DFN, 5/6 Pipestone PHS. All north reports: 5/11 Todd JSK, 5/15 Morrison JJS, 5/25 Douglas m.ob.

Henslow's Sparrow — All observations: 5/14+ Winona (Great River Bluffs S.P.) PHS *et al.*, 5/16+ Goodhue (Frontenac) m.ob, 5/17–19 Brown (Sleepy Eye) †BSm.

LeConte's Sparrow — Early south 4/17 Hennepin TAT, 4/29 Dakota TAT; also reported from Cottonwood, Murray, Rice, Stevens. Early north 5/5 Roseau JMJ, 5/12 Wadena PJB and Wilkin SPM, DKM; also seen in Clay, Otter Tail, Polk, St. Louis.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow — All south reports: 5/15 Jackson (Timber Lake W.P.A.) BRB, 5/16 Hennepin (Old Cedar Ave., Bloomington) †PEB, 5/27 **Murray** (Hiram Southwick W.M.A.) †CRG, †CBe *et al.* Only north report: 5/20 Traverse (Mud L.) KJB.

Fox Sparrow — Reported from 17 south and 17 north counties. Early south 3/22 Freeborn AEB, 3/28 Rice TFB. Early north 4/1 St. Louis NAJ, 4/2 Crow Wing PSP. Late south 4/26 Washington DPS, 5/6 Carver CRM. Late north 5/3 Becker BRK, 5/10 St. Louis TPW.

Song Sparrow — Observed in 43 south and 28 north counties. See winter report for overwintering south. Early north 3/26 Todd JSK, 4/7 Wadena PJB, migration peaked 4/12–16 (22 reports). High count 4/14 St. Louis (**46** at Duluth) JRN.

Lincoln's Sparrow — Reported from 36 south and 19 north counties. Exceptional report **3/5–24** Hennepin (Mound Springs Park, Bloomington) †SLC; likely overwintered since migrants unexpected before April (median 4/10, earliest ever 3/29). Early south 4/11 Watonwan DLB, 4/16 in three counties, 4/17–20 in seven. Early north 4/13 Clay RHO, 4/24 Otter Tail SPM, DKM. Late south 5/24 Stearns DRu, 5/25 Hennepin SLC.

Swamp Sparrow — Seen in 29 south and 20 north counties. Overwintered south (see winter report); first migrants 4/10 Hennepin TAT and Rice TFB, 4/12–13 in four counties. Early north 4/14 St. Louis FJN, 4/17 Polk EEF.

White-throated Sparrow — Reported from 38 south and 25 north counties. Overwintered Hennepin TAT, DCZ (see winter report); early south 3/13 Freeborn AEB, 4/1 Olmsted CRM. Overwintered north (see winter report); migrants reported 4/12 St. Louis JWJ, 4/13 Carlton LAW and St. Louis JRN. High counts 4/28 Wadena (97) PJB, 5/5 Polk (82) EEF.

Harris's Sparrow — Seen in 30 south and 15 north counties. Overwintered through 4/28 Carver RMD. Probable early south migrants 4/13 Meeker DMF, 4/24 Freeborn AEB, peak migration 5/4–7 (15 counties). Early north **4/13** Clay RHO (but see winter report), 4/26 Todd JSK, peak migration 5/11–14 (11 counties). Late south 5/20 Lac Qui Parle FAE and Stevens JJS, but also see summer report. Late north 5/20 Lake m.ob. and Polk EEF. High counts 5/6 Pipestone (40) PHS, 5/12 Wadena (33) PJB.

White-crowned Sparrow — Reported from 25 south and 16 north counties. Early

south 4/24 Washington DFN, 4/26 Hennepin OLJ. Early north 4/25 Kanabec CAM, 4/26 Cass WLB and Todd JSK, SDu. Late south 5/20 Hennepin DWK, 5/21 Lac Qui Parle FAE. Late north 5/21 Lake JWJ, 5/26 Roseau AXH, PHS.

GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW — One at a feeder since 12/27 lingered through 5/1 **Cook** (Grand Marais) DFP, †KMH. Third state record.

Dark-eyed Junco — Seen in 34 south and 21 north counties. Late south 5/15 Hennepin TAT, 5/24 Stearns DRu. High count 4/14 Polk (807) EEF.

Lapland Longspur — Seen in 12 south and 8 north counties in all regions. Late south 5/7 Dakota TAT, 5/8 Big Stone KJB. Late north 5/19 Pennington JMJ, 5/20 Lake JWJ *et al.* High counts 3/27 Dakota (4000) TAT, 4/21 Meeker (1000s) DMF.

Smith's Longspur — Only report: 4/15 Clay (Felton Prairie) ph. DAC.

Chestnut-collared Longspur — First county record 4/13 **Renville** (2 in Hawk Creek Twp.) †RPR. Also reported 4/15+ Clay (Felton Prairie) m.ob.

Snow Bunting — Late south 3/30 Meeker DMF; also reported from Dakota, Wright. Observed in nine north counties, including (late north) 5/18 St. Louis m.ob., 5/21 Lake of the Woods MHK.

Cardinals through Orioles

Northern Cardinal — Observed in 32 south and 15 north counties as far north as Marshall (Old Mill S.P.) in Northwest, Lake of the Woods (3/27, female at Roosevelt, GMM, JMF) in North-central, and Lake (Two Harbors) in Northeast.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak — Seen in 36 south and 27 north counties. Early south 4/14 (ties earliest south) Sherburne RMN, LMC, 4/25 Fillmore NBO and Freeborn AEB, 4/26 Washington TEB. Early north



Smith's Longspur, 15 April 2002, Felton Prairie, Clay County. Photo by Dave Cahlander.

(median 5/3) 5/4 Kanabec CAM and Todd JSK, 5/5 in seven counties. High count 5/19 Wadena (21) PJB.

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK — Male at feeder 5/24–26 Clay (Moorhead) †RHO, ph. DDM, †PHS, m.ob. (*The Loon* 74: 240–241).

Blue Grosbeak — Only report: 5/19+ Murray NED.

LAZULI BUNTING — Males seen 5/16 **Scott** (Louisville Swamp) †BAF, SHF, 5/23 **Kandiyohi** (Long L.) GEB, ph. DAC, 5/26 **Otter Tail** (North Turtle L.) †EJE, †DTT, †SMT, 5/29 Otter Tail (Star L.) †AMR.

Indigo Bunting — Observed in 27 south and 15 north counties. Early south 4/24 (ties record early date) Rice TFB, 5/4 Hennepin OLJ and Le Sueur MJF, LWF, peak migration 5/11–16 (14 counties). Early north (median 5/10) 5/7 Todd JSK, 5/14–16 in six counties.

PAINTED BUNTING — An adult male was record early 4/24–29 **Aitkin** (near Aitkin) †BBr, ph. †PHS, †DTT, †SMT, †MH, m.ob. (*The Loon* 74:237–238). Tenth state



Painted Bunting, 25 April 2002, near Aitkin, Aitkin County. Photo by Peder Svingen.

record but the sixth since 1994!

Dickcissel — Only reports: 5/27 Anoka KJB, 5/29 Murray NED.

Bobolink — Reported from 29 south and 19 north counties. Arrived slightly after the recent medians south (5/3) and north (5/5). Early south 5/4 Washington DFN, 5/5–7 in seven counties. Early north 5/8 Traverse KJB, 5/10–15 in nine counties. High count 5/11 Wright (33) DFJ.

Red-winged Blackbird — Observed in 71 counties. Overwintered in Otter Tail; presumed migrants 3/26 Todd JSK, SDu, 3/27 Otter Tail DTT, SMT and St. Louis JRN. No significant high counts.

Eastern Meadowlark — Reported from 24 south and 9 north counties. No reports from the Southwest or Northwest regions, but seen in Douglas (REH) and Lac Qui Parle (SWe) in the West-central region. Arrived south 3/18 Houston MHF, 3/26 Mower RDK, RCK. Early north 4/7 Lake

JWL, 4/13 Cass WLB and Kanabec CAM.

Western Meadowlark — Reported from 30 south and 17 north counties, including St. Louis in Northeast region. Early south 3/19 Freeborn AEB, 3/22 Cottonwood (flock of 16) EPD and Jackson KJB. Early north 3/17 Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 3/20 Todd JSK, SDu.

meadowlark, sp. — Seen 4/20 Goodhue PEB, 5/31 Cook †MeM, TV.

Yellow-headed Blackbird — Seen in 37 south and 23 north counties. Arrived after medians south (3/29) and north (4/10). Early south 4/2 Carver RBJ and Jackson MJC, 4/10–14 in seven counties. Early north 4/14 Grant DTT, SMT, 4/17–21 in five counties. Three reports from Lake, including 5/19 (female at Beaver Bay) JWL. Albino seen 5/11 Murray (section 16, Murray Twp.) NED.

Rusty Blackbird — Reported from 14 south and 7 north counties. Arrived south

3/22 Meeker DMF, 3/26 Dakota ADS. Early north (but see winter report) 4/7 St. Louis PHS, 4/13–14 in three counties. Late south 5/11 Le Sueur SWe, 5/16 Sherburne PLJ. Late north 5/14 St. Louis DCZ, only May report.

Brewer's Blackbird — Reported from 17 south and 17 north counties. Arrived later than recent medians south (3/12) and north (4/1). Early south 3/30 Waseca JPS, only March report. Early north 4/13 Polk EEF, 4/19 Wilkin (110 at Rothsay W.M.A.) KJB.

Common Grackle — Seen statewide. Early north 3/27 St. Louis JRN, 3/28 Otter Tail DTT, SMT, but also see winter report. High count 5/4 Polk (1000) EEF.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE — Found for the fifth consecutive year at Grovers L., 5/6+ Jackson (3 males, 4 females) †PHS, m.ob. Also seen 5/9–21 **Nicollet** (male at Swan L.) DDM, †JPE, 5/10–12 **Murray** (male at Hiram Southwick W.M.A.) †PCC, †CRG, m.ob., 5/27 Lyon (male at Lyon County landfill) †RJS.

Brown-headed Cowbird — Observed throughout the state. Early south (but see winter report) 3/12 Dakota TAT, 3/23 Le Sueur CRG. Early north 4/9–12 St. Louis m.ob., 4/13–14 in five counties.

Orchard Oriole — Seen in 24 south and 15 north counties, including Beltrami (2 locations) and Cass (6th consecutive year in Meadow Brook Twp., WLB) in North-central, Carlton (Cromwell, MSS, GL) in Northeast, and Pine (Hinckley, ph. JMP) in East-central. Many reports from feeders in Northwest. Early south 5/4 Dakota ADS, TAT and Freeborn AEB, 5/5 Winona GLS; first county occurrence 5/16 **Benton** HHD, JJS. Early north 5/18 Carlton MSS, GL and Otter Tail SPM, DKM, 5/21 Grant JJS and Todd JSK. Peak 5/25 Clay (**20** at south Moorhead, ties record high count) RHO.

Baltimore Oriole — Reported from 36

south and 25 north counties. Arrived on time. Early south 4/29 Freeborn AEB and Hennepin WCM, only April reports. Early north 5/4 Crow Wing PSP, 5/5 Kanabec and Otter Tail. High count 5/15 circumventing Mille Lacs L. (**71**) KJB.

SCOTT'S ORIOLE — Single males at feeders **3/20 – 4/23 Wright** (Monticello) ph. BAL, **4/17–21 Olmsted** (Oronoco) †GE, ph. †AXH, †PCC, †PHS, m.ob. Second and third state records, respectively (*The Loon* 74:189–191).

Finches through House Sparrow

Pine Grosbeak — Reported from six north counties as late as 3/17 Becker BRK, 3/23 St. Louis ALE.

Purple Finch — Observed in 22 south and 22 north counties. Late south 5/13 Fillmore NBO, 5/25 Ramsey Nsp.

House Finch — Reported from 30 south and 13 north counties in all regions. No significant counts.

Red Crossbill — Only reports: 4/18–20 Olmsted (max. 5) m.ob., 4/24 St. Louis PHS.

White-winged Crossbill — Seen in five south counties as late as 5/4 Nobles (3) NED, **5/18 Meeker** (2 at Litchfield) †DMF. Observed in six north counties, including 5/16 Wilkin SPM, DKM.

Common Redpoll — Reported from 5 south and 17 north counties. Late south 4/3 Big Stone KJB, 4/4 Stearns DCT, MAJ. Late north 5/2 Jackson NAJ, 5/16 St. Louis (2) FJN. High count 4/10 St. Louis (350) FJN.

Hoary Redpoll — Approximate total of 11 individuals reported from Beltrami, Lake, St. Louis, Todd. Documented 3/1–3 Beltrami (Bemidji) †DPJ, 4/11 Beltrami (different bird) †DPJ.

Pine Siskin — Reported from 19 south



Scott's Oriole, 21 March 2002, Monticello, Wright County. Photo by Betty A. Lored.

and 16 north counties in all regions, but only Murray in the Southwest.

American Goldfinch — Seen statewide.

Evening Grosbeak — Reported from 14

counties in the north. Only report from the Northwest region: 3/2 Becker BRK. No reports from the south. No significant counts.

House Sparrow — Seen in 65 counties.

Contributors

AAB Al A. Bolduc
 ADB Andrew D. Bicek
 ADS Andrew D. Smith
 AEB Al E. Batt
 ALE Audrey L. Evers
 AMR Alma & Marvin Ronningen
 AWJ Andrew W. Jones
 AXH Anthony X. Hertzell
 BAB Betsy A. Beneke
 BAF Bruce A. Fall
 BAL Betty A. Lored
 BAP Bruce A. Pannkuk

BBB Bruce B. Baer
 BBr Boyd Bremner
 BCM Chris Mansfield
 BEO Bridget E. Olson
 BiM Bill Marchel
 BJM Barbara J. Martin
 BKY Ben K. Yokel
 BLA Betty L. Ammerman
 BLa Bill Lane
 BRB Brad R. Bolduan
 BRK Byron R. Kinkade
 BRL Bill R. Litkey

BRN	Bill R. Nelson	FJN	Frank J. Nicoletti
BRT	Bill R. Tefft	FTM	Fr. Tom Margevicius
BSe	Blaine Seeliger	FVS	Forest V. Strnad
CAK	Chuck A. Krulas	FZL	Fred Z. Leshner
CAM	Craig A. Menze	GE	George Eckman
CAS	Carol A. Schumacher	GEB	Glenn & Eunice Buchanan
CBe	Chris Benson	GEN	Gary E. Nielsen
CE	Claudia Egelhoff	GK	Grant Knuth
CFa	Chris Fagyal	GL	Gene Letty
ChH	Chad Heins	GLS	Gary L. Simonson
CJT	Carol & Jim Tveekrem	GMM	Gretchen M. Mehmel
CKu	Chris Kurtz	HHH	Herb H. Dingmann
CLB	Cindy L. Butler	HJF	Herbert J. Fisher
CMB	Charles & Marie Boudrye	JB	Jonas Benson
CMC	Carol M. Crust	JCG	Janet C. Green
CMG	Clare & Maurita Geerts	JEB	Jerry E. Bonkoski
CMM	Chet & Miriam Meyers	JEP	Jim E. Pomplun
CMN	Connie M. Norheim	JEZ	James E. Zimmerman
CRG	Colin R. Gjervold	JGa	John Gaspard
CRM	Craig R. Mandel	JJS	Jeff J. Stephenson
DAB	David A. Bartkey	JJW	John W. Wieland
DAC	David A. Cahlander	JKS	Jerry & Karen Steinbach
DAG	David A. Grosshuesch	JLF	Jeanette L. Fisher
DBz	Dedrick Benz	JLH	James L. Howitz
DCT	Dianne C. Tuff	JLU	Janice & Larry Uden
DCZ	Dave C. Zumeta	JMF	June M. Foss
DDC	Donna & Doug Carlson	JMJ	Jeanie M. Joppur
DDM	Dennis D. Martin	JMP	Jackie M. Potts
DDW	Dennis D. Wiesenborn	JPE	John P. Ellis
DEC	Don E. Crust	JPM	Jim Mattsson
DFJ	Doug F. Jenness	JPr	Jerry Pruet
DFN	David F. Neitzel	JPR	John P. Richardson
DFP	Dave & Flossie Palmer	JPS	Julian P. Sellers
DKM	Diane K. Millard	JR	Jeremy Ridlbauer
DLB	Diane L. Brudelie	JRi	Janet Riegle
DLE	David L. Evans	JSB	Jo & Steve Blanich
DMA	Diane M. Anderson	JSc	John Schladweiler
DMF	Dan M. Floren	JSK	John & Susan Kroll
DMP	Daphne & Meyers Peterson	JWH	John W. Hockema
DNO	Don N. Orke	JWL	James W. Lind
DOK	Don O. Kienholz	KAK	Karla A. Kinstler
DPJ	Douglas P. Johnson	KAR	Kathryn A. Rivers
DPS	David P. Sovereign	KCH	Ken C. Hood
DRB	David R. Benson	KEO	Ken E. Oulman
DRu	Dorothy Russell	KG	Karol Gresser
DSC	David S. Carman	KHa	Kay Hartness
DTr	Dave Trauba	KIM	Kim I. Metz
DTT	Dan T. Thimgan	KJB	Karl J. Bardon
EEF	Eve E. Freeberg	KMH	Ken & Molly Hoffman
EJE	Eddy & Judy Edwards	KRE	Kim R. Eckert
EPD	Edward P. Duerksen	KRS	Karen R. Sussman
FAE	Fred A. Eckhardt	KVH	Katie V. Haws

KWR	Kim W. Risen	RHO	Robert H. O'Connor
LAW	Larry A. Weber	RHy	Rick Hoyne
LBF	Linda B. Felker	RJe	Robert Jessen
LK	Leslie Kottke	RJS	Roger J. Schroeder
LMC	Linda M. Cooper	RLE	Robert L. Ekblad
LWF	Lawrence W. Filter	RLR	Ronald L. Refsnider
MAJ	Murdoch A. Johnson	RMN	Robert M. Nelson
MBr	Mary Broten	RNS	Richard N. Smaby
MeM	Melinda Macey	RP	Rich Peet
MH	Mike Hendrickson	RPR	Robert P. Russell, Jr.
MHF	Marilynn H. Ford	RSF	Randy S. Frederickson
MHK	Martin H. Kehoe	RWS	Robert W. Schroeder
MJC	Mary Jo Christopherson	SAS	Shelley A. Steva
MJF	Merrill J. Frydendall	SDu	Sue Durrant
MKE	Mike K. Engh	SES	Steven E. Schon
MME	Molly M. Evans	SGW	Steve G. Wilson
MRN	Michael R. North	SH	Steve Houdek
MSS	Mark Sparky Stensaas	SHF	Susan H. Fall
MWS	Mike W. Steffes	SJ	Scott Johnson
MWY	Mary Wyatt	SKS	Sharon Koval Stiteler
NAJ	Nancy A. Jackson	SL	Sharon Lind
NBO	Nancy B. Overcott	SLC	Steve L. Carlson
NED	Nelvina E. De Kam	SMT	Sandy M. Thimgan
NFT	Nels F. Thompson	SPe	Shawn Perich
NRS	Nathan R. Senner	SPM	Steve P. Millard
NSp	Nancy Sparrow	SPS	Steve P. Stucker
OLJ	Oscar L. Johnson	STW	Sylvia T. Winkelman
OWB	Bill Bruins	SWa	Stuart Wagenius
PAN	Patricia A. Newman	SWe	Steve Weston
PBD	Pat & Bob Dewenter	SWS	Susan W. Seymour
PCC	Philip C. Chu	TAT	Tom A. Tustison
PEB	Paul E. Budde	TEB	Tom & Elizabeth Bell
PEJ	Paul E. Jantscher	TFB	Tom F. Boevers
PH	Paul Hertzell	THK	Thomas H. Kent
PHe	Paul Hetland	TJB	Timothy J. Blackwood
PHS	Peder H. Svingen	TLF	Tim L. Friesen
PJB	Paul J. Binek	TPB	Terry P. Brashear
PL	Paul Lehman	TPW	Terry P. Wiens
PLJ	Paul L. Johnson	TV	Tim Voigts
PME	Paul M. Egeland	WCM	William C. Marengo
PMJ	Paul M. Johnson	WEN	Warren E. Nelson
PSc	Pat Schmid	WGA	Wendy & Greg Arens
PSP	Pam S. Perry	WHL	William H. Longley
PWP	Paul W. Pedersen	WJP	Walter J. Popp
RA	Renner Anderson	WLB	William L. Brown
RAE	Ron A. Erpelding	WMS	William M. Stauffer
RBJ	Robert B. Janssen	ZL	Zeann Linder
RCK	Rose C. Kneeskern		
RCS	Rolf C. Smeby		
RDE	Roger D. Everhart		
RDK	Ron D. Kneeskern		
REH	Robert E. Holtz		

Abbreviations

m.ob.	many observers
H.P.B.C.	Hastings-Prescott Bird Count
W.S.H.C.	West Skyline Hawk Count

Nesting Habits of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers in Cass County

Michael R. North

In 1999, I found the first two nests of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (*Poliophtila caerulea*) recorded in Cass County, Minnesota (North 2000). Both nests were constructed in jack pine, an atypical substrate for Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and I speculated that the species may be pioneering use of a new habitat type. In 2000, I found nine nests constructed by seven pairs of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and located four to seven additional likely-breeding pairs. All nests and all probable breeding pairs but one found in 1999 and 2000 were in the area immediately north of Sylvan Reservoir in Cass County (Figure 1). This note reports on my observations of Blue-gray Gnatcatcher breeding in 2000.

Methods

In my primary survey area, I conducted intensive foot surveys for calling Blue-gray Gnatcatchers from 9 May (when the first nest was found under construction) through early June in a deciduous oak forest community north of Sylvan Reservoir, and less intensive, periodic surveys thereafter through July. In order to investigate the extent of Blue-gray Gnatcatcher breeding, I established a secondary survey area that I surveyed by vehicle. The secondary survey area covered Cass County south of state highway 210 from the Cass-Crow Wing county line west for 4.5 miles (including Hardy Lake area), and approximately one mile north of highway 210 in the vicinity of Hole-in-the Day Lake and Sylvan Lake. In the secondary survey area, I stopped my vehicle at appropriate habitats (e.g., oak forest communities) and listened for calling birds for approximately five minutes. Secondary surveys were conducted from late May through mid-June. Locations where birds

were detected were visited periodically to determine their status. If pairs were detected multiple times at the same location, I considered them probable breeders. If pairs or individuals were only detected at a location once, or if they could have conceivably been wide-ranging individuals from known pairs, I considered them possible breeders.

All nests were visited periodically until nest fate was determined. Nest trees or adjacent trees were marked with yellow flagging to assure nests could be relocated. Qualitative nest site characteristics were recorded when each nest was found. Qualitative characteristics recorded included tree species, approximate nest height and location within the tree, and habitat type (including cause of edge [e.g., road, pasture], if any). Physical measurements at nests were made on 17 August, after nest fate was determined. At eight nests I measured tree diameter at breast height (dbh) with a dbh tape, measured the distance to nearest edge and lateral distance of nest from trunk with a 100-ft tape, and estimated nest height with the aid of a 16-foot board marked in 0.5-ft increments; for one nest on private property I estimated these characteristics. Nest locations were marked on a high-resolution color infrared map (scale: 1 inch = 365 feet), and distances between nesting pairs were measured off this map. Distances between multiple nests of individual pairs were measured with a 100-ft tape. All measurements taken in English units were converted to metric units.

Since several nests were located along Cass County highway 36, which was reconstructed from a gravel road to a paved road in 1999, I hypothesized that forest clearing for road construction would

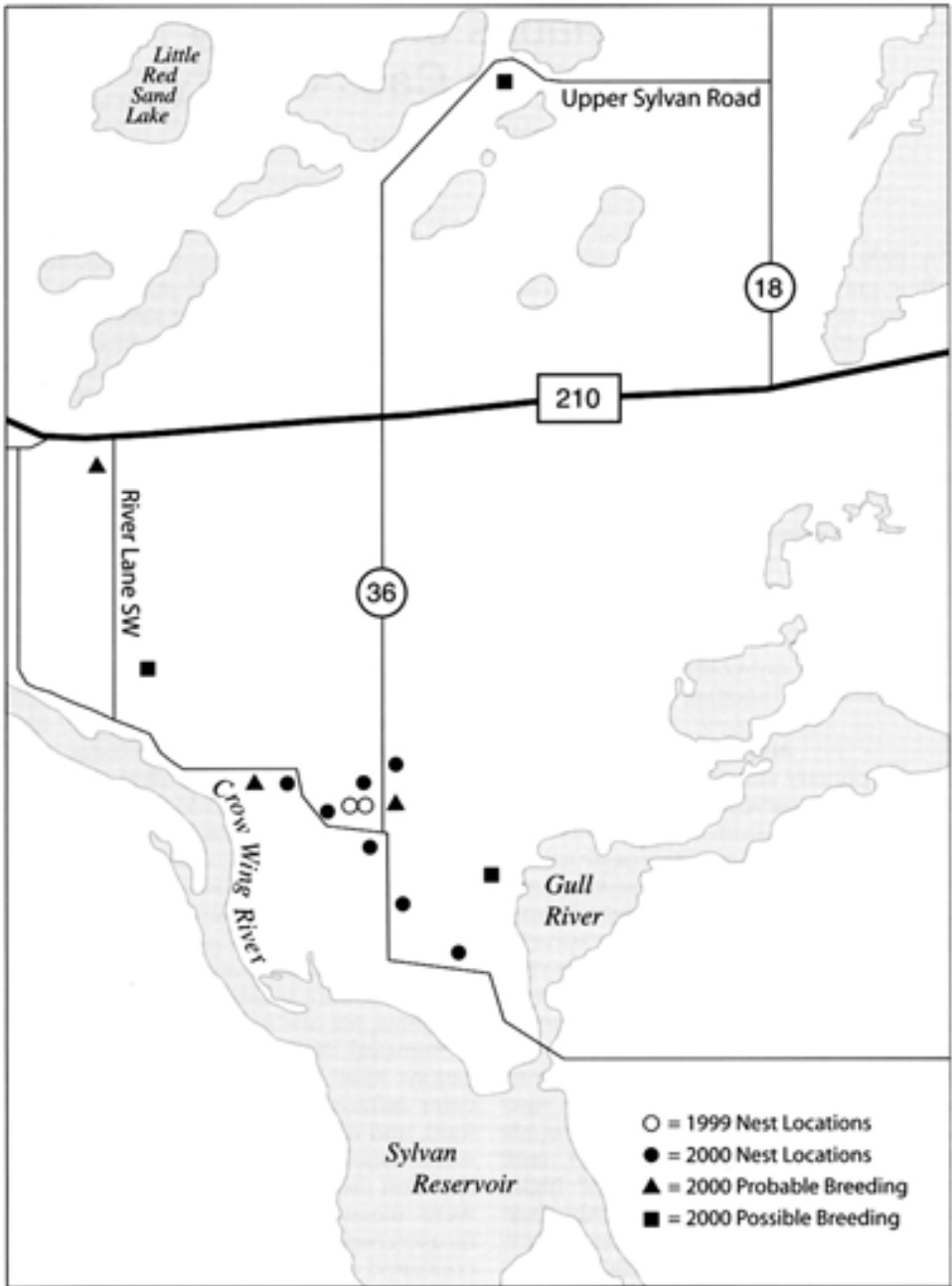


Figure 1. Locations of Blue-gray Gnatcatcher nests, and probable and possible breeding pairs, Cass County, Minnesota, 1999–2000.

Table 1. Characteristics of Blue-gray Gnatcatcher nest sites, Cass County,

Pair	Nest Tree	Nest Height (m)	Tree DBH (cm)	Tree Height (m)	Distance from Edge	Cause of Edge	Nest Outcome
1a	bur oak	9.8	22.7	15.2	11.9	rural yard	failed (incubation)
1b	bur oak	12.2	25.9	18.3	13.7	rural yard	failed (nest building)
1c	bur oak	12.2	28.8	15.2	3.7	rural yard	fledged young
2	bur oak	10.1	26.0	18.3	12.2	paved road	failed (incubation)
3	bur oak	6.7	20.6	12.2	13.1	grassland	failed (nest building)
4	bur oak	12.2	28.5	16.8	20.5	paved road	failed (incubation)
5	bur oak	13.7	33.5	18.3	15.2	grassland	successful(?) (young)
6	bur oak	10.1	33.3	14.6	4.0	paved road	successful(?) (young)
7	red oak	10.7	20 (est.)	—	—	paved road	successful(?) (young)

have adversely affected breeding in 1999. Therefore, I measured the amount of forest that was cleared during construction the previous year at points nearest four nests.

Results and Discussion

Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were first detected, audibly, on the breeding grounds 6 May. Six nests and from one to three possible breeding pairs were found during primary surveys. One of the breeding pairs constructed three nests during the course of the breeding season. One nest and three to four probable breeding pairs were located during the secondary surveys. Results of secondary surveys indicated that all breeding pairs were concentrated in oak forest communities immediately north of Sylvan Reservoir, with the exception of one disjunct probable breeding pair located near Hole-in-the-Day Lake 1.4 km north of state highway 210 (Figure 1).

The first three nests were found 9–10 May, during nest construction. Nests were very easy to locate during construction. During this time, pairs were very vocal near the nest, made frequent trips to the nest, and were not elusive when going to the nest. Nests of additional pairs were found 18 May, 28 May (n=2), and 7 June; replacement nests by Pair 1 were found 2 June and 9 July.

Unlike in 1999, all nests were located

in bur oak (n=8) or red oak (n=1) trees (Table 1). Modal nest height was 12.2 m (mean 10.9 m; range 6.7–13.7 m). Eight nests were located at a height in the range of 55–75% of tree height, and one nest was located in the upper canopy. Five nests were located on more-or-less horizontal lateral limbs, one on an ascending lateral limb, one in the crotch of a dead main stem, one in the crotch of a living main stem, and one in the canopy. Tree dbh ranged from 20.6–33.5 cm.

Six pairs nested in deciduous oak forest tracts and one pair (Pair 7) nested in a rural-residential yard near a paved road. Nests were located 4.0–20.5 m (mean = 11.8 m) from forest edges. Edges with the six forest tracts were created by paved roads (n=3), idle grass meadows (n=2), and a rural residential yard (n=1). The latter pair (Pair 1) also nested in close proximity to a paved road.

Individual pairs nested as close as 135 m apart (Table 2), with seven combinations of pairs nesting within 300 m of one another. For Pair 1, distances between nests were: 25.6 m from first nest (a) to second nest (b), 11.6 m from second nest to third nest (c), and 33.3 m from first nest to third nest.

For the five pairs that nested near county road 36, nests were located 2.4–32.0 m (mean 14.2 m [n=5], but 9.8 m for closest four) from the edge created by the forest and road right-of-way (Table

Table 2. Distances between nests of breeding pairs of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and distances of nests from cleared road right-of-ways, Cass County.

Pair	Nearest Neighbor		Distance (m) to Other Pairs' Nests						
	Pair	Distance (m)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	4	135	274	226	135	296	—	—	32.0
2	3	231	274	231	344	292	—	12.2	—
3	5	187	226	231	—	—	187	—	—
4	1	135	135	344	—	—	—	—	—
5	3	187	296	—	187	—	—	—	—
6	2	292	292	—	—	—	—	405	4.0
7	6	405	—	—	—	—	405	—	2.4

2). The mean amount of forested right-of-way cleared during road reconstruction in 1999 was 9.3 m (range 6.1–11.3 m; n=4). Forest clearing occurred from late April to mid-to-late May, and occurred within the forest fringe that would have been used by Blue-gray Gnatcatchers during nest site selection and nest construction in 1999. Disturbance along the forest fringe continued through June from fill hauling and grading activities. I believe road construction disrupted breeding for many pairs in 1999 and displaced some into less optimal habitat (e.g., jack pines). Many studies have documented the effects of new road construction on wildlife (e.g., Findlay and Bourdages 2000, Haskell 2000, Trombulak and Frissell 2000), but few have documented negative impacts from typical reconstruction projects, and even then usually only empirically (e.g., Forman 2000, Forman and Deblinger 2000, Haskell 2000). In fact, the Federal Highway Administration believes most road reconstruction projects qualify for Categorical Exclusions and do not require an Environmental Assessment for National Environmental Policy Act compliance (23 CFR 771.117(d)(1)). I believe studies are needed on the effect of road reconstruction on the displacement and the reproductive success of birds and other wildlife during spring and early summer in Minnesota.

Of the initial nesting effort by seven

pairs, one ended in abandonment or depredation before incubation was documented, three ended in abandonment or depredation after incubation was documented, and three hatched and likely resulted in fledging young. For Pair 1, the second nest failed before incubation was documented, and the third nest resulted in the fledging of at least four young on 14 or 15 July. This latter family group of at least six individuals was observed intact until 2 August. The last date a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was detected in the area was 7 September.

For this one particular oak community in Cass County, I believe Blue-gray Gnatcatcher is a dominant insectivorous species along with American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*), and possibly Least Flycatcher (*Empidonax minimus*) and Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*). Within the last ten years, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers have been found to be a very common species in many oak forest communities on Camp Ripley as well (Bill Brown, Natural Resource Specialist, Camp Ripley, pers. comm.). Whether the population in Cass County has always been present but undetected, or is an expanding pioneering community, is unknown. However, annual surveys of appropriate breeding habitat should provide evidence of expansion if the species is indeed expanding into southern Cass County. Furthermore, ornithologists in Crow Wing, Todd, and

Wadena counties should listen for calling Blue-gray Gnatcatchers in early to mid May, and attempt to locate nests.

My experience has been that nests are incredibly easy to locate during nest construction. Nests are also readily detected when adults are feeding young (for at least the last six days before fledging during brood-rearing, young call excitedly as an adult approaches the nest with food), and during incubation exchanges. I located the nest for Pair 5 on 28 May while watching one adult flitting about the canopy. I heard one of the adults give an atypical call note, at which time I saw the incubating adult leave the nest vicinity and the first adult then approached the nest and assumed incubation. Knowing these cues will help other ornithologists locate nests.

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13261 – 21st Avenue SW, Pillager, MN 56473.

BIRDING BY HINDSIGHT

A Second Look at Identification Resources

Kim R. Eckert

Perhaps one of the reasons I retired from working as naturalist at Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve in Duluth was I ran out of visitors who wanted to see my AARP card. At least, that's what Frank Nicoletti, who was and still is the hawk counter there, might tell you. But turning 50 and getting a card entitling me to 10%

lodging discounts was a milestone I just had to share with others. So, after Frank (and others) politely declined to look at my card for the 38th time, it was time to move on.

That was also the year I bought myself a computer for my 50th birthday. By then I was at least three times older and three



times slower than those far more adept at navigating the internet. I'm not managing to close the Geezer Gigabyte Gap either. This old Mac is now close to seven years old with perhaps a tenth of the power, speed, and memory of current computers.

But I digress. There is a point to all this. At least I think there is, if I can only remember what it is. Anyway, you have to show a bit of patience with someone who started birding so long ago with only a 1947 Peterson as my guide. Back in the 1950s and well into the 1960s, it's all there was.

Thumbing through this quaint volume now, I am struck by how out-of-date it is. Consider some of the obsolete and now-laughable 1947 bird names and spellings that were all abandoned decades later at one time or another: Pacific Loon, Green Heron, Swallow-tailed Kite, Wilson's Snipe, Black-headed Gull, Barn Owl, Alder Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, American Pipit, Harris's Sparrow, Baltimore Oriole.

As we all know, for example, Blue-headed Vireo and Baltimore Oriole became Solitary Vireo and Northern Oriole thirty years ago! On your next field trip, try calling out a Wilson's Snipe or American Pipit instead of Common Snipe or Water Pipit, and expect some funny looks. . . . (Um, how's that again? The AOU did what?!)

Now I remember what this is about. Field guides, their limitations, and where to look for more information. As has been restated endlessly in this "Hindsight" series of articles, even the best guides, *Geographic* and *Sibley* included, lack the space to completely address the more complex ID challenges. And, unfortunately, some popular field guides used by too many birders don't even manage to correctly handle some of the basics.

Previous "Hindsight" have often referred the reader to more comprehensive information found in books and journal articles that concentrate on specific groups of birds with more than their share of identification difficulties. Two "Hindsight" articles were devoted entirely to listing these resources: the Fall 1998 is-

sue of *The Loon* (70:160–165) cited some books worth buying or borrowing, while the Winter 1999–2000 issue (71:229–231) listed some articles worth reading.

Since that Fall 1998 article, by the way, some new and recommended books on ID have been published:

- The third and fourth editions of the *Geographic* field guides have come out in the last four years. While the third edition is a noticeable improvement over the second edition, I'm not so sure the fourth edition is much different from the third.

- The publication of *The Sibley Guide to Birds* is no longer news, of course, but be aware that separate Eastern and Western editions are in the works for 2003. These smaller editions will be more pocket-friendly, and the illogical and inaccurate maps of the first edition will be revised.

- The second edition of *A Field Guide to Hawks of North America* by Clark and Wheeler is a big improvement over the first, especially in its new photos and illustrations.

- Reportedly due for publication in 2003 is *Gulls of Europe, Asia, and North America* by Olsen and Larsson. I would be surprised if this book isn't far better than the now somewhat dated reference by Peter Grant.

- Two new hummingbird guides are out: *Hummingbirds of North America: The Photographic Guide* by Howell, and *A Field Guide to Hummingbirds of North America* by Williamson. I am no hummingbird expert, but I suspect Howell's book is a bit better.

- A good supplement to James Rising's 1996 sparrows guide is *Sparrows of the United States and Canada: The Photographic Guide* by Beadle and Rising.

And, since the Winter 1999–2000 issue of *The Loon*, several journal articles on specific ID problems have appeared, with these articles on three species/groups of particular interest to Minnesota birders:

Slaty-backed Gull — *American Birds* 40:207–216; *Birding* 26:243–249; *Birders Journal* 6:251.

Eurasian Collared-Dove — *American*

Birds 41:1371-1379; **The Loon** 72:107-110; *North American Birds* 53:348-353.

Thrushes — *Birding* 32:120-135, 32:242-254, 32:318-331 & 34:276-282.

But I'm still digressing somewhat, still not entirely addressing the topic in the title. Geezers like me, you see, often are slow to get to the point. We're even slower to catch on to new stuff. So, when that odd gull showed up in the Twin Cities late last fall, and the possibility of it being an immature Slaty-backed was raised, I was relatively clueless. (So was everyone else.) None of the standard field guides were of much help with this ID problem, of course, but neither were the other books or journal articles I had. The time, then, is long overdue to be aware that there are ID resources other than books and journals.

Recordings

Even I don't own a record player any more, and I even quit using cassette tapes a couple years ago. When working with bird songs and call notes, I rely on CDs and a minidisc recorder/player. (But don't ask me what an MP3 is!) Bird vocalizations are best learned in the field, of course, and there is only so much that studying a book or article can accomplish on this subject. Some sort of machine is necessary, and both cassettes and CDs will work as you supplement your study of sound identification at home or in the field.

There are four sets of recordings which Minnesota listeners might find the most useful:

- *Stokes Field Guide to Bird Songs: Eastern Region* (370+ species on cassettes or CDs) and *Western Region* (550+ species on cassettes or CDs). Note that Don and Lillian Stokes did none of the recordings; their name is in the title for marketing purposes. Also note the collection of eastern songs recorded by Lang Elliott are better overall than Kevin Colver's western recordings.

- *Field Guide to Bird Songs of Eastern and Central North America* (260+ species on cassettes or CD keyed to Eastern

Peterson field guide) and to *Western Bird Songs* (520+ species on CDs keyed to Western Peterson). These recordings will certainly work, but note the tracks are generally shorter than those on the Stokes recordings, and there are fewer of them. There are tracks which are better on Peterson than on Stokes, but more often the opposite is true.

- *National Geographic Guide to Bird Sounds* (180 songs on cassettes or CD keyed to the *Geographic* field guide). The tracks are long and of high quality, but there aren't enough of them.

- *Songs of the Warblers of North America* (57 species on cassettes). These recordings by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology include several tracks for each species of warbler, some of them quite surprising and atypical.

CD-ROMs

There are certainly some slick and sophisticated CD-ROMs on birds, but with one exception, I am unaware that any of them include any ID information not found in the field guides or the above recordings. That one exception is *Flight Calls of Migratory Birds* by Bill Evans (a former Minnesotan) and Michael O'Brien. Available from <www.oldbird.org>, this groundbreaking and unique CD includes flight calls of 211 migrant landbirds, many of these recorded at night, and many of which you have never heard before.

Videos

Yes, I do own a VCR, and I even know how to program it. (But don't ask me what a DVD is, however!) And there are some videos which include far more ID information than what can fit in any field guide. In a sense, these are photographic field guides in which the pictures move (and can be frozen on your VCR), and in which the text is narrated rather than printed. Though not portable into the field, a good identification video can obviously be a far superior home reference than a good field guide.

As with the CD-ROM medium, there are several fancy videos on birds, but I

am aware of only a few of them including advanced ID information unavailable in the field guides. There are three by John Vanderpoel of Peregrine Video Productions I would recommend: *Small Gulls of North America*, *Large Gulls of North America* (note its Slaty-backed Gull footage), and *Hummingbirds of North America*.

Though I haven't seen it, I also suspect Paul Doherty's *Shorebirds: A Video Guide to the Key Shorebirds of North America, Europe and Asia* would be an excellent ID reference. ABA Sales (www.americanbirding.org) also lists other videos on waders, hawks, shorebirds, flycatchers, warblers, and sparrows, but I suspect these have little or nothing not found in *Sibley* or *Geographic*.

Websites

No, I don't have a laptop, but those I've seen are not that much larger than *Sibley's* field guide. Accordingly, if you own one, why not download some of the excellent ID material available on various internet websites, and it would be just as easy to lug your laptop into the field as your copy of *Sibley*.

There are now several websites with accurate and comprehensive information which equal or surpass what the best identification references in print have to offer. Additional ID websites will certainly appear in the coming months and years. It is not easy to keep track of what is out there, however, with many sites including seemingly endless and overlapping links. Note that relatively few specific bird groups are included on ID websites, with perhaps too many sites obsessed with the subject of gulls! Also note these sites tend to be long on photos, which can take forever to download, and relatively short on text.

The following list is certainly incomplete, since there are probably other websites with useful ID information I have yet to run across:

- Patuxent Wildlife Research Center <<http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/id/framlst/framlst.html>>. Patuxent's website includes photos and basic ID information

for all North American birds. The extensive collection of photos is impressive, with many illustrating useful field marks, though the text is just basic field guide information.

- Don Roberson's website <<http://www.montereybay.com/creagrus>>. This site has many useful photos and lists of ID books and articles, and it addresses a few specific ID problems.

- Joe Morlan's website <<http://fog.ccsf.cc.ca.us/~jmorlan/id.htm>>. Website with a link to an extensive bibliography of ID articles.

- Maryland Ornithological Society <<http://www.mdbirds.org/mddcrc/pdf/rcbibliog.pdf>>. The MOS website includes an equally comprehensive list of ID journal articles.

- Frontiers of Bird Identification <<http://listserv.arizona.edu/archives/birdwg01.html>>. The archives of subjects discussed on the Frontiers listserve includes a wide variety of bird ID topics (although its members have a special fondness for gulls).

- Louisiana Ornithological Society <<http://losbird.org/index.htm>>. Currently, the LOS website includes its newsletter's articles on Myiarchus flycatchers, jaegers, Calidris sandpipers, Sterna terns, longspurs, Carpodacus finches, hummingbirds, Kelp Gull, vireos, godwits, and swallows.

- Shorebirds <<http://pw1.netcom.com/~djhoff/sbimage.html>>.

- Gulls <<http://www.bway.net/~lewis/birds/gulls.html>>. Robert Lewis' website.

- Gulls <<http://www.martinreid.com/gullinx.htm>>. Martin Reid's website.

- Gulls <<http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/Canopy/6181/gulls.htm>>. Steve Hampton's website.

- Gulls <http://larus.hp.infoseek.co.jp/gullidenti_1.htm>. A Japanese site, with probably the most extensive collection of gull photographs.

- Hummingbirds <<http://home.earthlink.net/~zoiseaux>>. Paul Conover's website.

- Hummingbirds <<http://www.hummingbirdsplus.org/birds.html>>. Bob Sargent's website.

- Red Crossbill <<http://research.amnh>>.

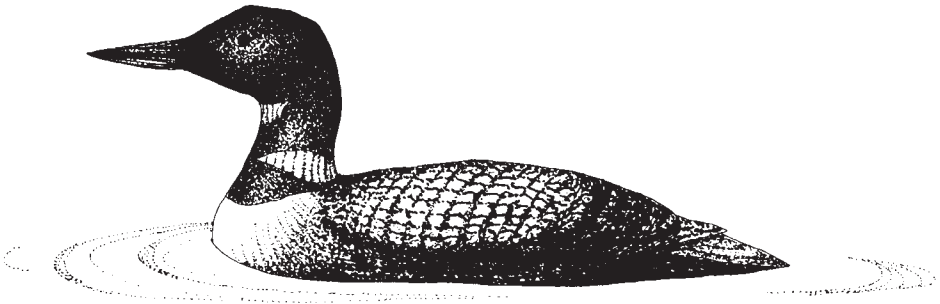
org/ornithology/crossbills/contents.html>. A website on the proposed splits of this crossbill into several species.

- Redpolls <<http://w1.157.telia.com/~u15702215/rpindex.htm>>.

To conclude, I have two requests. First, I would appreciate any input from read-

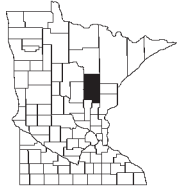
ers who know of additional CD-ROMs, videos, and websites which have useful identification material. And, second, does anyone want to see my AARP card?

8255 Congdon Blvd., Duluth, MN 55804.



NOTES OF INTEREST

A MOST UNEXPECTED AND WELCOME VISITOR: PAINTED BUNTING IN AITKIN COUNTY



— My life had been going on as usual, nothing out of the ordinary, until 24 April 2002 at about 6:00 P.M. I was standing at my kitchen window, fixing something to eat, when a flash of color at my bird feeders caught my eye. I got my binoculars out to get a closer look. Sitting on my biggest feeder was a brilliantly colored bird. When he stepped into the open I couldn't believe what I was seeing! Grabbing a notepad, I wrote down a description of the bird and where each color was located on its body. Then I pulled out my bird book

and found what appeared to be a Painted Bunting. But the book said it wasn't common to this area, nesting only as far north as Missouri, but mainly in Texas and Louisiana.

Later that evening I called a friend, John Richardson, who is an avid bird watcher, and is involved in the Audubon Club in Brainerd. I described the bird to him, and he didn't hesitate to ask if he could come over in the morning. "Absolutely," I said, "the coffee pot will be on." The next morning when I looked out at dawn, the Painted Bunting was at the feeders. Around 8:00 A.M., John showed up with another locally noted birder from Aitkin, Warren "Butch" Nelson. They both had their binoculars and big cameras. I handed them their coffee, and had them take a seat by the sliding glass door overlooking the back yard. After a 30 minute wait the bird made another appearance. I have never seen two more excited grown men. "What's the fuss fellas, it's just a bird," I said. "You don't know what you have here, Boyd. This is a rare sighting, only a few have been seen in Minnesota; this is probably the farthest north it has been sighted and the earliest," they explained to me.

After taking several pictures, “Butch” had to leave for work. When he returned two hours later, I had at least seven more people in my house that I didn’t know. Over the next five days, people from all over the state of Minnesota came to our home to view and take pictures of this marvelous little creature, who faithfully flew in to feed every hour like clockwork. We had people of all ages standing and sitting in our home and yard, patiently awaiting his appearance.

I was thrilled for all that got to see him, and sad for those who came after the Painted Bunting was gone. I must say that in over 15 years of feeding birds in our backyard, this has been the most memorable and exciting experience. My wife and I have always enjoyed watching the birds feed and hearing their songs. But this little “rainbow bird” (as my granddaughter calls him) has been a real treasure. I want to encourage everyone to get into this beautiful hobby and to share your experience with young and old alike. I certainly have become a confirmed “birder” from this experience. **Boyd Bremner, 39756 – 342nd Lane, Aitkin, MN 56431.**

FIRST WINTER RECORD OF THE DUNLIN IN MINNESOTA — During the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on 15 December 2001, I found a Dunlin on Park Point in Duluth, St. Louis County. I was checking the beach for waterfowl and other birds, and noticed a shorebird standing by a gull. I eventually got within 20 feet of it and made a positive identification. The weather had been very mild, so there was no snow or ice on the beach and the Dunlin was finding plenty of food. The bird was still there later in the day and again the next afternoon, when I came back to photograph it.



I realized that this was an unusual date for a Dunlin and left a message right away on the Duluth hotline. The second time I watched it, I took a field guide with me and compared what I saw with the field guide, which made me 100% certain that it was a Dunlin. That evening, I called in during the CBC compilation and gave a verbal description to Peder Svingen who took notes during our conversation. The bird had a “very long swooping bill” which was about three times the length of its head. The bill was dark, and the legs and feet were black. Its head and face were gray. There were no obvious markings on the face. Its upperparts were brownish-gray and the underparts were whitish except for the sides of its upper breast. This represents not only the first Duluth CBC record of a Dunlin, but also the first Minnesota winter record. **Mark Stock, 129 West 4th St., Duluth, MN 55806.**

BLACK-THROATED SPARROW IN MOORHEAD, CLAY COUNTY — On 16 April 2002, as I was walking up from the banks of the Red River below my home in Moorhead, I raised my binoculars to scan a flock of Dark-eyed Juncos feeding near my back porch and found myself looking directly at a well-marked Black-throated Sparrow. The black of the throat, flanked by bright white whisker marks, extended down the breast in a tapering bib. The rest of the breast, the belly, and the undertail coverts were a slightly grayish white, and the tail itself was largely black, but with a thin white edge. The small, conical bill was blackish gray, and the side of the face, between the white whisker mark and an equally white stripe above the eye, was black shading gradually to slate gray toward the nape. The lower half of the black eye was edged with a thin crescent of white feathering. The back and wings were a brownish gray, and from behind, the bird could easily have passed for a small junco.



I immediately called several local birders to confirm the sighting, one of whom put out word of the bird’s presence to other birders around the state. By the end of the

day, Spencer Meeks had caught the bird on videotape, and Denny Martin had photographed it. A dozen birders or so saw the bird during its short stay.

Two or three days of strong, hot winds from the west and south preceded the bird's appearance on the 16th, and the bird departed as record high temperatures in Fargo-Moorhead gave way to much colder weather. **Bob O'Connor, 1625 – 3rd St. S., Moorhead, MN 56560.**

CALIFORNIA GULLS IN CLAY AND ISANTI COUNTIES



On 25 April 2002, while scanning gulls inside the Clay County landfill from outside the fence, I noticed one which appeared slightly darker on the mantle than the numerous Herring and Ring-billed Gulls. This bird was walking around among the other gulls, giving me only partial views, when I could briefly see yellowish legs, and could tell the overall size and shape indicated that the bird was indeed a California Gull. I could not see the eye color and I wanted to refine the features already seen.

Unfortunately, at this point the bird promptly sat down and went to sleep. Although I waited for the bird to wake up, it was eventually necessary to drive over to the gate and ask for permission to drive into the landfill. When I relocated the bird, now considerably closer and without the fence obstructing my view, I was not surprised at all to see a wonderful adult California Gull with a dark iris. I was very surprised, however, when the bird began calling, causing a second adult California Gull (which I hadn't noticed) to stand up! The first bird took off and headed towards a neighboring gravel pit where other gulls were loafing, and the second bird quickly followed.

Identifying features seen on both birds included the completely dark iris visible at close range and on fully adult birds, pure yellow legs, red and blackish coloration on the gonys, completely white head and body, uniform gray mantle only slightly darker than adjacent Herring and Ring-billed Gulls, more extensive black on the primaries, and typical California Gull size and structure including long and thin bill with no gonys swelling, long primaries extending beyond the tail tip more than one bill length, and overall size between Herring and Ring-billed but closer to small Herring. An additional identification aid was added to the Clay County birds when the original bird was heard calling, since its long call is different from other Minnesota gulls.

Another California Gull was seen on 3 May 2002 in a field in Athens Twp, Isanti County, where it was seen in close proximity to both Herring and Ring-billed Gulls. I first noticed this bird because it appeared near the size of a small Herring Gull, but had bright, cream yellow legs. I considered the possibility of a yellow-legged Herring Gull, which is apparently a very rare occurrence in the North American subspecies (*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*), but was documented in Louisiana on 25 April 2002 (*North American Birds* 56:382), and reported in Minnesota in Lyon County in spring 2002. As I continued to watch this bird, however, I noted that its mantle color was consistently slightly darker than the adjacent Herring and Ring-billed Gulls, the iris was dark (when the irides of the adjacent gulls were obviously yellow), the overall size was consistently smaller than the Herring Gulls, the bill was long and thin with no swelling at the gonys, and the wingtips were more attenuated than Herring Gulls'. This bird had a few signs of immaturity, including a narrow dark tail band, a brownish tint to the coverts, a dark smudge on the scapulars, and only one faint apical white spot visible on the blackish folded primary extension while perched, and was therefore aged as a fourth-year bird.

These observations follow my sighting of three California Gulls in Wilkin County on 22 May 2001 (*The Loon* 74:50–54), in which I suggested those birds may belong to the Northern Great Plains race (*Larus californicus albertainensis*) and also pointed out that all spring sightings have occurred in western Minnesota and nearly all fall sightings

have occurred in eastern Minnesota. The overall relatively large size and pale mantle coloration again suggested that the 2002 birds were from the Northern Great Plains race, but even though two of the birds were adults, descriptions of the exact primary pattern was not possible.

The Clay County sighting occurred at a site which I have checked many times over the years expecting to see California Gulls, while the Isanti County observation was less expected, since it establishes a first county record and is the first spring record of this species to occur in eastern Minnesota. **Karl Bardon, 13073 Hastings St. NE, Blaine, MN 55449.**

RUFF IN DAKOTA COUNTY — After birding several locations in Dakota County on 23 May 2002, I decided to make a final stop at Lake Byllesby. It was already noon and the sun was shining brightly overhead. I was facing toward the sun and it was difficult to observe the few shorebirds present on the mudflats. Eventually, the flock flew to the west giving me better views. I immediately locked onto a bird that was larger than the nearby Stilt Sandpipers, Wilson's Phalarope, Dunlin, Semipalmated Plovers, and other nearby peeps. It was the largest and tallest of the entire group of shorebirds. It was taller and bulkier than the nearby Stilts and seemed more "pot-bellied." I then recognized it as a Reeve.



Viewed head-on, I could see irregular dark blotches on the whitish breast, particularly near the sides. The bill was slightly longer than the head and somewhat decurved. The legs appeared orangish. I was using a 20X scope and 8.5x44 binoculars, so it was a stretch to get some of the identifying characteristics. I did notice that the tertials were noticeably barred with alternating light and dark areas. This was very visible even at 75 to 100 yards, or more. The back was overall brownish with some irregular darker pigmented areas present. I never did get an adequate view of the tail pattern, but did note significant white in the tail while the bird was in flight and while it was preening. The bird never vocalized.

I immediately called several other birders. Fortunately, the word got out. Many people were able to add this bird to their Minnesota life lists. At the time, this was only the second record of this species for Dakota County — the first being found in the spring of 2001 by Drew Smith. There was a subsequent fall report in August of 2002 at the Wagner Sod Farms making a total of three records for this species in Dakota County in the last two years. **Tom Tustison, 2165 Watson Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55116.**

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK IN MOORHEAD, CLAY COUNTY — In the early evening of 24 May 2002, after several days of extraordinary songbird fallouts in the Fargo-Moorhead area, I was taking a final look in the elms behind my south Moorhead house when I noticed a male Black-headed Grosbeak thirty feet above me. The bird had a very large, pale, conical bill, a black face, and a brick-orange breast fading into a lighter shade of yellow-orange toward the belly. The orange extended in a collar to the back of the head and forward in a narrow curve from the nape to a point above and just behind the eye. The black back was streaked in this same orange, the rump was also orange, and the largely dark wings included a white shoulder bar above a narrower white wing stripe. The yellow-orange of the belly faded to white at the undertail coverts, and the tail was dark above and mostly white below.



Local birder Connie Norheim was able to confirm the sighting just before sundown, after which we put out word to other birders. In particular, I was able to get a message to Kim Eckert, who was to lead a Clay County MOU field trip beginning the next morn-



Black-headed Grosbeak, 25 May 2002, Moorhead, Clay County. Photo by Dave Cahlander.

ing. On the 25th, the field trip participants, plus a few additional birders, had good views of the bird in the elms and at a feeder below the elms. The bird was around for three or four days, during which time about 35 people saw it and several people photographed it.

This was the second Clay County Black-headed Grosbeak in the last ten years or so. The first occurred at the home of Spencer Meeks about a mile east and a half mile north of where this bird appeared. **Bob O'Connor, 1625 – 3rd St. S., Moorhead, MN 56560.**

FIRST BELTRAMI COUNTY RECORD OF THE HOODED WARBLER — On 24 May



2002, a single male Hooded Warbler was observed near the shore of Lake Bemidji in Diamond Point Park, across from the campus of Bemidji State University in Bemidji, Beltrami County. It was perched approximately 25 to 30 feet up in a birch tree. From below, the black throat was highlighted nicely against the yellow base color. When it turned its head to the side, I saw the large dark eye in the middle of the yellow face. The black extended from the throat up over the top of the head, completing the “hood”. It flew to a nearby tree and sang

briefly. The song was very distinctive, matching the word descriptions provided in various field guides. Other warblers in the area at the time included Yellow-rumped, Chestnut-sided, Yellow, American Redstart, and Palm. However, the Hooded Warbler seemed to stay more or less by itself. This was definitely a pleasant and rare surprise. From Bob Janssen's *Birds in Minnesota*, I learned that there have been no previous reports from Beltrami County. **Timothy J. Blackwood, 136B Pine Hall, 2005 Birchmont Drive N.E., Bemidji, MN 56601.**

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Compiled by Ann M. Hertzelt and Anthony X. Hertzelt

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Corrections to *The Season*

Volume 69

Add first county nesting record **House Finch** *Lyon* (L. Marshall) RJS, Summer 1996 report (*The Loon* 69:27).

Add first county record **Boreal Owl** "March" **Todd** ph. JSK, Spring 1997 report (*The Loon* 69:198). The photograph was

only recently identified and adds one to the record high total of 263 Boreal Owls during their 1996-97 irruption (*The Loon* 69:125-129).

Volume 70

Add first county record **Blue-winged**

Warbler 6/3 **Lincoln** (Hole-in-the-Mountain C.P.) RJS, Summer 1997 report (*The Loon* 70:34).

Change date for adult **Iceland Gull** to 3/12–4/9 Dakota †CRM, m.ob., Spring 1998 report (*The Loon* 70:214).

Volume 71

Add first county nesting records for **Willow Flycatcher** Lyon, **Indigo Bunting** Lyon, and **Sedge Wren** Lyon and Murray, all reported by RJS, Summer 1998 report (*The Loon* 71:14–35).

Add **Pine Grosbeak** to Cottonwood CBC 12/20 Lyon †RJS, Winter 1998–99 report (*The Loon* 71:143).

Volume 72

Add first county nesting records for **Marsh Wren** Lyon, **White-breasted Nuthatch** Lincoln, **Red-headed Woodpecker** Lyon, **Ovenbird** Lyon (Camden S.P.), and **House Sparrow** Pipestone, all reported by RJS, Summer 1999 report (*The Loon* 72:14–36).

Volume 73

Add first county nesting records for **Hairy Woodpecker** Lyon RJS, **Great Horned Owl** Lincoln RJS, RWS, and **Western Meadowlark** Lyon RJS, Summer 2000 report (*The Loon* 73:10–35).

Add **Long-tailed Duck** 4/24 Sherburne (adult female at Camp L.) †DO, Spring 2001 report (*The Loon* 73:207).

Add **Boreal Chickadee** in St. Louis SES, Spring 2001 (*The Loon* 73:220).

Volume 74

Add first county nesting records for **Northern Harrier** Lyon RJS, **Upland Sandpiper** Lyon *vide* RJS, and **American Robin** Yellow Medicine RJS, Summer 2001 report (*The Loon* 74:13–35).

The following were inadvertently omitted from the Summer 2001 report (*The Loon* 74:13–35): **Red-throated Loon** 6/1 St. Louis JJS, **Pied-billed Grebe** (possible nesting) Ramsey DFJ, **Horned Grebe** 7/30 Polk DRu, **Red-necked Grebe** Waseca (7 nests at Mott L.) JPS, **American White Pelican** 6/18 Cook (7 in flight over Lima

Grade Rd.) PEB, **American Bittern** Pope RPR, **Least Bittern** Cottonwood and Murray JJS, **Black-crowned Night-Heron** Murray and Polk, **Mute Swan** 6/9 Blue Earth ChH and 7/2 Cottonwood JJS, **Trumpeter Swan** Aitkin (5 at Savanna Portage S.P.) CLB and Wright (Pelican L.) DFJ, **American Wigeon** Beltrami, Itasca and Lake, **American Black Duck** 6/4 Polk DRu, **Common Merganser** Beltrami and Itasca, **Sharp-shinned Hawk** 6/11 Itasca BRN, **Red-shouldered Hawk** Hennepin PEB and Wright (3 locations) DFJ, **Swainson's Hawk** Stearns and Waseca, **Ring-necked Pheasant** 6/17 Lake (U.S. highway 61) PEB, **Common Moorhen** 7/21 Nicollet ChH, **Black-bellied Plover** 7/31 Lyon CRM, **Long-billed Dowitcher** 7/13 Grant CRM, **Herring Gull** Blue Earth, Carlton and Cook, **Caspian Tern** 7/10 Carver JJS, **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** in Southwest region 7/2 Cottonwood JJS, **Eastern Screech-Owl** 7/7 Ramsey JPS, **Whip-poor-will** 6/3 Anoka CRM, **Alder Flycatcher** 6/16 Wright (late migrant, singing) DFJ, **Great Crested Flycatcher** in Southwest region (Cottonwood and Murray), **Bell's Vireo** 6/22 Fillmore JJS, **Brown Creeper** 7/27 Aitkin CLB, **Wood Thrush** 7/2 Cottonwood JJS, **Blue-winged Warbler** 6/7 Blue Earth ChH, **Northern Parula** 7/28 Anoka CF, **Yellow-rumped Warbler** Anoka, **Black-throated Green Warbler** Anoka CF, **Cerulean Warbler** Anoka and Wright, **Prothonotary Warbler** Blue Earth, **Kentucky Warbler** 6/7 Blue Earth ChH, **Hooded Warbler** 6/2–23 Anoka CF, **Field Sparrow** 7/13 Norman CRM, and **Lark Sparrow** 7/17 Le Sueur CRM. *The editors deeply regret these omissions and offer their sincere apologies to Paul Budde, Cindy Butler, Cole Foster, Chad Heins, Doug Jenness, Craig Mandel, Bill Nelson, Bob Russell, Dorothy Russell, Julian Sellers, Dick Smaby, Jeff Stephenson, and Steve Weston.*

Delete **White-winged** and **Black scoters** 11/10 Dakota SWe, Fall 2001 (*The Loon* 74:89–90) as both were in St. Louis.

Delete **Nothorn Mockingbird** 11/10 Dakota, Fall 2001 (*The Loon* 74:102).

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Purpose of the M.O.U.

The Minnesota Ornithologists' Union is an organization of both professionals and amateurs interested in birds. We foster the study of birds. We aim to create and increase public interest in birds, and to promote the preservation of birdlife and its natural habitat.

To carry out these aims, we publish a journal, *The Loon*, and a newsletter, *Minnesota Birding*; we conduct field trips;



we encourage and sponsor the preservation of natural areas; we hold seminars where research reports, unusual observations and conservation discussions are presented. We are supported by dues from members, affiliated clubs and special gifts. Any or all phases of the MOU program could be expanded significantly with gifts, memorials or bequests willed to the organization.

Suggestions to Authors

The editors of *The Loon* welcome submissions of articles, Notes of Interest, color slides, and color or black & white photographs. Submissions should be typed, double-spaced and single-sided. Notes of Interest should be less than two pages. Photographs should be 5"x7". Whenever possible, please include a copy of your submission in any standard format on any size computer disk.

Club information and other announcements of general interest should be sent to the Newsletter editors. See inside front cover. Bird sighting reports for each season should be sent promptly at the end of February, May, July and November to Peder Svingen. See key to the "Seasonal Report."

