

bird in *Hennepin* May 14 (TT *et al.*). Michigan had reports in *Kent* May 9 (GWr) and an individual banded at Vermilion, *Chippewa* May 22 (WJ), far n. of normal. Kentucky Warblers were found at scattered Wisconsin locations, including territorial birds in *Dane* and *Grant*. In Minnesota an individual was reported in *Olmsted* May 8 (*fide* JB), and the *Nicollet* bird returned for the 3rd consecutive year. Michigan had three different birds Apr. 30–May 1 at Metrobeach, *Macomb* (DL, EC), and individuals in *Washtenaw* May 13 (MK), and in *Muskegon* May 14 (JG, HG). A Yellow-breasted Chat was reported in *Otter Tail*, MN May 18 (CSc).

Tanagers to Finches

Michigan had Summer Tanager reports in *Kalamazoo* Apr. 26 (JG, JPi) and in *Kent* May 12 (BJ). Minnesota had a single report from Winona Apr. 28–29 (m.ob.), while Wisconsin had reports in Milwaukee May 15 (JF), *Door* May 18 (RB), and Madison May 25 (PA). **Western Tanagers** made appearances in Wisconsin: *Waukesha* Apr. 25 (FH) and Devil's Lake S.P., May 2–6 (KLa). Minnesota had a single report in *Kandiyohi* May 4–7 (*fide* RF). A **Blue Grosbeak** was photographed May 29 at Vermilion, *Chippewa* (JH, LO), providing Michigan only its 3rd state record, while in Wisconsin another was found in *Door* May 17 (CSc). Minnesota had its 4th state record for **Painted Bunting**, a male in *Cook* May 23–24 (AR, RRa). Another male appeared in Michigan May 17 at 2 different feeders in *Benzie* (DW, FL).

A Lark Bunting present May 15 in *Marquette* (CW, SW), and a Sharp-tailed Sparrow May 30 at W.P.B.O. (JK, m.ob.) provided noteworthy Michigan sightings. Henslow's Sparrow, an increasingly rare Minnesota species, returned after 2 years absence to *Wabasha* (*fide* CS). Harris' Sparrows successfully overwintered in *Benzie* (KW) in Michigan and *Wautoma* (DN) in Wisconsin. The **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** in Wisconsin remained into March at a feeder w. of Beloit.

Corrigendum

Minnesota's 3rd record for Brambling (*FN*: Vol. 48:1) was found October 22 in *Cook* (H. Marsh).

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Middle-western Prairie Region

KENNETH J. BROCK

Spring migration was characterized by a series of waves interspersed between deep wide troughs. This pattern generated a markedly unbalanced spring passage. Advancement of the first wave, a waterfowl movement that followed the late February warm spell, was stalled by cold weather in March. Mid-April brought strong southerly winds that produced an unprecedented number of early passerine records. Though early arrivals were distributed across the Region, the magnitude of this event was most graphically captured by Paul Clyne's observations in Chicago's Jackson Park. Using data collected over 15 years, Paul calculated that this spring's mean arrival date for 155 migrant species was a full six days earlier than average. Heavy April rains across southern reaches of the Region produced local flooding as the ground remained saturated following last year's deluge.

Though May was generally warm and dry, most correspondents judged the birding mediocre at best; good passerine numbers occurred only on a few days, with many birdless days in between. Indeed, many local birders deemed the April passerine flight better than May's; the traditionally strong May migration was recorded only in eastern Ohio.

Along the Mississippi River system wader ranks were seriously depleted; last summer's flooding apparently destroyed invertebrate fauna in the floodplains, thereby eliminating a major food source for many waterbirds. Residuals from the winter invasion produced impressive Red-necked Grebe counts and respectable winter finches. Seasonal highlights included several rarities (especially in the western states), excellent rails, and an upsurge in bitterns.

Abbreviations: L. Cal. (*Lake Calumet, Chicago*); Jax. P. (*Jackson Park on the Chicago lakefront*); G.M.R.O. (*Greater Miami River Oxbow, Dearborn, IN*); S.C.R. (*Squaw Creek N. W.R., MO*); Spfld. (*Springfield, IL*)



No Place to Land

Birds in the Balance is the National Audubon Society's migratory bird conservation program. It is a science-based campaign that integrates national and international policy initiatives with efforts to promote public awareness of birds and local actions to conserve their habitats in the Americas. Building on National Audubon's historical commitment to bird conservation, *Birds in the Balance* saves habitat for hundreds of familiar bird species that command our imaginations with their diversity, flight, and song.

Bird Migration The changing of the seasons gives life its rhythm. Birds' long-distance journeys, undertaken twice a year, provoke in us a sense of wonder. Long-distance migrations seem almost supernatural, stranger even than fiction. Billions of anonymous birds on the move; navigating with pinpoint accuracy between the places they breed and the places they spend the winter. In the northern latitudes we witness the departure

of birds in the autumn and their return in spring. People living in warmer latitudes experience an influx of feathered visitors while northerners think about Halloween and Thanksgiving. The drama of bird migration plays against a backdrop of seasonal variations in climate, vegetation, day length, wind direction, and shifts in the supply of solar energy. Their fantastic journeys occur in

light and darkness, rain and drought, cold and warm, and on land and over the seas. Some are conspicuous events, others extremely obscure. An amazing array of landmarks, position of celestial bodies, magnetic fields, smells, infrasound, and inertial, gravitational, and Coriolis forces contribute to the birds' map sense. Their ability to fly nonstop across ecological barriers, like oceans, mountains, and deserts, is one of the most impressive within the animal kingdom.

Problems Long migrations are arduous and risky. Most landbird migrants travel at night, leaving daylight hours for feeding and foraging. Such a long distance aerial journey is a hazardous venture, especially for young birds migrating through a completely unknown world. Adverse weather, strong headwinds, lighthouses, ships' masts, and tall buildings with powerful lighting systems all represent dangers to night migrants. Yet these journeys are repeatedly accomplished despite overwhelming obstacles.

But today there are even more risks to Neotropical migratory birds. Many of those that navigate routes throughout countries in the western hemisphere are in decline. Several factors individually or in combination are responsible. Clearly, the loss and degradation of habitat is the universal and pervasive problem. Forest-dwelling migrants are experiencing a double threat; fragmentation and deteriora-

tion of woodlands on the breeding grounds and destruction of woodlands on the wintering grounds.

In the United States, migratory birds have found their forest, wetland, and grassland breeding grounds destroyed and fragmented by rapid, ill-planned suburban development. Native woodlands along rivers in the southwest have been destroyed by

overgrazing. Too often, oil spills and pollution compound the deleterious effects of other unwise habitat abuses. Poor forest management and misuse of pesticides have taken their toll. In Latin America, habitats of hundreds of migratory birds are being converted for ranching and marginal farming, and squeezed by rapidly growing human populations. Declining bird populations ought to serve as a warning that we face even further decimation of the biodiversity in the western hemisphere.

What You Can Do Above all, migratory birds are the common property and common responsibility of many nations, and are therefore of enormous value in forging bonds of interest between nations.

There is no single organization or even government that alone can save bird populations. Still, there is time and the job can be done.

Bird conservation begins at home. Start by landscaping with native plants that offer food and homes for birds and by providing clean water. Get involved in local government; fight for responsible development and to preserve and restore wildlife habitat. Volunteer time to help monitor or study bird populations or to help young people appreciate nature. Write letters to public officials asking them to support and enforce laws and international treaties that protect migratory birds and their habitats.

Your efforts are most effective when joined with those of others. Participate in organizations committed to bird conservation, including the National Audubon Society and its hundreds of chapters in the United States and Latin America. Audubon's chapters can forge a multinational citizen's network to work for hemisphere-wide migrant monitoring and protection. By doing this we may be able to prevent migratory birds from further swelling the ranks of species in danger of extinction. Audubon itself is part of a larger cooperative program, Partners in Flight, in which more than one hundred government agencies and conservation organizations are working to conserve migratory birds. Please lend your support!

If you would like more information, please write: **Birds in the Balance**, National Audubon Society, 700 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-9501



Wilson's Storm-Petrel
Migrates from Antarctic and southern South America to North Atlantic and central Pacific



Yellow-browed Tyrant
Migrates from southern South America to northern South America



Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Widespread in summer in North America, in winter in South America



Bristle-thighed Curlew
Western Alaskan tundra to islands of southwest Pacific



Wood Thrush
Migrates from eastern North America to Mexico and Central America



Sabine's Gull
High Arctic tundra to offshore waters of Southern Hemisphere



Upland Sandpiper
Northern and central North America to southern South America



Dickcissel
Migrates from midwestern prairies to northern South America



American Swallow-tailed Kite
Migrates from southeastern North America and Central America to South America



Golden-winged Warbler
From northeastern North America to Central America



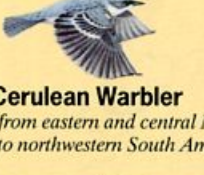
Loggerhead Shrike
Short-distance migrant within North America and Mexico



American Bittern
Northern marshes to southern United States, Central America, the Caribbean



Olive-sided Flycatcher
Migrates from northern and western North America to western South America



Cerulean Warbler
Migrates from eastern and central North America to northwestern South America



Henslow's Sparrow
Short-distance migrant of northeastern and northcentral North American grasslands



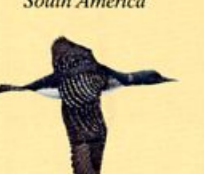
Purple Martin
Migrates from North America to Amazon Basin



Swallow-Tanager
Nomadic within South America



Northern Pintail
North America to southern United States, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central and South America



Common Loon
Migrates from northern lakes to coastal and offshore waters



Lazuli Bunting
Migrates from western North America to western Mexico



Red-headed Woodpecker
Short-distance migrant in central and eastern North America

National Audubon Society



A Wilson's Storm-Petrel
STATUS Apparently still abundant, although populations of small seabirds are difficult to monitor.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN Its nesting range in the Antarctic and Sub-antarctic is no longer remote from human activity. In those fragile environments, pollution or spills could have a serious impact. In the north Atlantic, where many storm-petrels spend the non-breeding season, pollution could reduce food supplies.



B Yellow-browed Tyrant
STATUS No evidence for any recent change in numbers.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN This flycatcher favors lowland habitats near water. These are among the first areas to be disturbed during human settlement of an area. With increasing human population and development in South America, habitat for this bird (and for many others) is likely to become scarcer.



C Yellow-billed Cuckoo
STATUS Has declined dramatically all across North America.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN In western North America, this bird requires dense riparian (streamside) woodland, a habitat that has been largely destroyed there already. Feeding on caterpillars and other large insects, the cuckoo may be vulnerable to pesticides on both the nesting grounds and the wintering grounds.



D Bristle-thighed Curlew
STATUS Total world population is only in the low thousands.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN It relies on very specialized breeding habitat, on certain low hills in western Alaska. On its wintering range—the beaches of small islands in the southwest Pacific—it is vulnerable to introduced predators, especially during a stage in the annual molt when it becomes unable to fly.



Breeds locally in western Alaska, winters on islands in southwest Pacific Ocean.

E Wood Thrush
STATUS Surveys show a serious long-term decrease in breeding populations.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN This bird survives best in mature forest—a habitat that is becoming more and more fragmented on both its summer and winter ranges. In summer, breakup of forests into small woodlots makes the thrush more vulnerable to open-country predators, and to the parasitic Brown-headed Cowbird, which lays its own eggs in Wood Thrush nests.



F Sabine's Gull
STATUS No evidence for any recent change in numbers.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN On its high Arctic nesting grounds, this gull faces few threats except the possible impacts of oil exploration. However, it winters on southern oceans, where it may be affected by pollution, oil spills, and changes in food supplies caused by overfishing.



G Upland Sandpiper
STATUS Numbers on the central and northern prairies seem to be holding steady, but eastern nesting populations are small and isolated.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN Since it requires open grassland, the Upland Sandpiper has lost ground in many areas where development or agriculture have taken over the prairies, both on its nesting range in North America and on its wintering range in South America.



H Dickcissel
STATUS Surveys suggest that most populations are gradually decreasing.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN Reasons for the Dickcissel's decline are not well understood. Wintering on the llanos (prairies) of northern South America, it is subject to poisoning by the pesticides used on crops and is poisoned as a pest. Where it nests, in the North American Midwest, it may be affected by pesticides, cowbird parasitism, or changes in farming practices.



I American Swallow-tailed Kite
STATUS Northern populations seem to be stable at present; the status of southern populations is uncertain.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN The wide nesting range of this kite is mostly in tropical regions, where cutting of forests may affect its numbers. As a bird of prey, it is vulnerable to pesticides, which will be concentrated in the animals it eats. It is also an easy target for thoughtless gunners.



J Golden-winged Warbler
STATUS Steadily disappearing from the southern part of its breeding range.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN This warbler is being squeezed by several factors. It favors deciduous thickets for nesting, and when habitat is not ideal, it may be out-competed by the related Blue-winged Warbler. Parasitic cowbirds also have an impact, laying their eggs in warbler nests so that the warblers raise young cowbirds instead of their own offspring.



K Loggerhead Shrike
STATUS Has mostly disappeared from northeastern North America, and is decreasing significantly across the continent.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN The serious decline of this bird is all the more alarming because it is not well understood. A predatory songbird that eats large insects and even small vertebrates, the shrike may face food shortages caused by pesticides and changes in land use.



L American Bittern
STATUS Survey results show a gradual decline across North America.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN As a large bird that requires quality marsh habitat, the bittern faces many challenges. Many of the marshes have already been drained, on both its breeding and wintering grounds, and those that remain are threatened by pollution and by the invasion of exotic plants.



M Olive-sided Flycatcher
STATUS Has decreased significantly in recent years across North America.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN The reasons for this flycatcher's decline are not well understood, but one major cause may be the destruction of old-growth forest on both the wintering and the nesting grounds. Pesticides also may be having an effect.



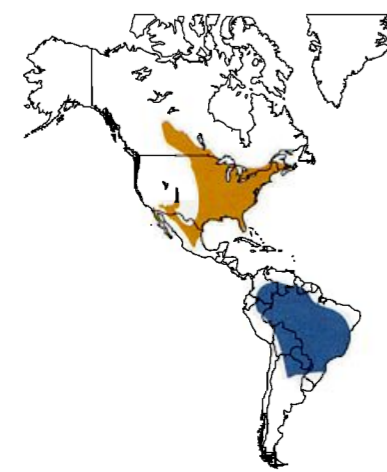
N Cerulean Warbler
STATUS The total population may have dropped by about 50% since the 1960s.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN Loss of habitat may be the main culprit. This warbler needs large blocks of tall deciduous forest in summer; breakup of forests into small fragments may reduce its nesting success. On its wintering grounds on the slopes of the Andes in South America, and where it pauses on migration in Central America, the cutting of forest also threatens its survival.



O Henslow's Sparrow
STATUS Has been decreasing seriously in recent decades, especially in the eastern part of its range.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN This sparrow survives best on undisturbed meadows and native prairies, and these habitats are disappearing rapidly. Suburban sprawl and planting of row crops have taken over many former sparrow strongholds in the Midwest. On its wintering areas in the southern United States, the remaining prairies face similar threats.



P Purple Martin
STATUS Numbers have declined seriously in some areas, especially the Northeast, upper Midwest, and Great Lakes region.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN On the nesting range, lack of natural cavities makes this species totally dependent on man-made birdhouses in many regions. Since it feeds on flying insects, the martin is vulnerable to overuse of pesticides. On its wintering range in the Amazon Basin, changes in land use may affect it.



Q Swallow-Tanager
STATUS No evidence of recent change in numbers.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN Flocks of Swallow-Tanagers travel widely in search of the particular berries and small fruits that they eat. With the destruction of habitat, the birds may have to search much farther for their food items, perhaps interrupting their nesting cycle.



R Northern Pintail
STATUS In recent decades, overall numbers have declined significantly.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN The freshwater marsh habitat that the pintail requires is under threat from a variety of sources. Some marshes are drained for agriculture, others dry up because of overuse of ground water. Use of pesticides and herbicides may degrade the quality of marshes in many regions. Mammalian predators take a heavy toll at small marshes surrounded by agricultural land.



S Common Loon
STATUS Still numerous around northern lakes, but has declined or disappeared along much of the southern edge of its nesting range.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN Parts of its nesting range are subject to disturbance by recreational development, powerboats, etc. Acid rain may have a negative effect. On its coastal wintering range, the loon is vulnerable to oil spills and other pollution.



T Lazuli Bunting
STATUS No evidence for any recent change in numbers.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN On its nesting grounds in western North America and its wintering grounds in western Mexico, increasing development is threatening the habitats favored by this bunting: streamside thickets, chaparral, and brushy canyons. As nesting habitat is broken up, cowbirds are more likely to parasitize the bunting's nests.



U Red-headed Woodpecker
STATUS Surveys show a steady decline in numbers during recent decades.
CAUSE FOR CONCERN Shortage of nesting sites may be a serious problem. This woodpecker favors open, park-like woods with plenty of dead limbs and snags for excavating nest holes, but most managed woodlots have little dead wood standing. Winter survival may depend on good crops of acorns and beechnuts, which become scarcer as mature forests are cut.



Birds in the Balance

Breeding Range Breeding and Winter Range Winter Range

Loons to Ibises

Red-throated Loons were widespread, with reports from every state except Kentucky and Missouri. Typically, small numbers of Com. Loons were scattered across the Region; the only concentration consisted of 75 at the G.M.R.O., Mar. 27 (HA). Last winter's Red-necked Grebe invasion extended well into spring, with reports from every state except Missouri. By far the greatest number of Red-neckeds appeared in Ohio, where >50 were found, including a maximum of seven at Summit L., Akron Mar. 20 (RHa, LR m.ob.). In addition, eight Red-necked Grebes were recorded in Indiana, seven in Iowa, two in Illinois, and one in Kentucky. The latter, which is quite rare for that state, occurred at a *Boone* gravel pit Mar. 12 (†LMc). Eared Grebes were also more common than normal, with eight birds scattered across all 4 eastern states. East of the Mississippi R., W. Grebes appeared at 2 locations: a remarkable four were at McElroy L., KY Mar. 27–Apr. 2 (WMn), and one was at Spfld., May 13–19 (DBo). The appearance of Am. White Pelicans in all 6 states suggests that the Region's population is expanding. Notable spring records included a flock of 100 on the Tennessee R. in *Livingston*, KY Mar. 30–Apr. 17 (CP) and four at Headlands Beach S.P., OH Apr. 12–13 (ABo). Double-crested Cormorants also continue to expand, as evidenced by counts of >1000 at Rend L., IL Mar. 20 (LSt); 324 at the G.M.R.O., Apr. 21 (JBN *et al.*); and 300 at Headlands Beach S.P., OH Apr. 16 (RHn).

For the 2nd consecutive year the Bittern report was quite positive. The highest count among this spring's 42 Am. Bitterns consisted of an impressive five in *Warrick*, IN Apr. 17–21 (JCb, ML). The really good news involved Least Bitterns, which were reported in every state except Kentucky, including a tally of 124, plus 39 nests, at S.C.R., May 31 (DE, JHi). The northernmost record, among the Region's 18 Snowy Egrets, appeared at L. Cal., May 7 (†WMz). The peak Cattle Egret count was 700 at Buchanan L., MO May 14–30 (LGw) and the same number in *St. Clair*, IL May 7 (*vide* DA). The 600–700 pairs of nesting Black-crowned Night-Herons at the L. Cal. Big Marsh have abandoned the site (JL). Perhaps as a result, for the first time in more than a decade Black-crowneds nested in Indiana; about 10 nests were found in n. *Lake* (within 6 mi of L. Cal.) Jun. 1 (JcT). Extralimital Yellow-crowned Night-Herons appeared at Forney L., IA Apr. 20 (PA, RA) and Mishawaka, IN (†JCd). The Region's only White-faced Ibis was at S. Blue L., IA Apr. 8–29 (PE *et al.*)

Waterfowl

Although the origin of extralimital Black-bellied Whistling Ducks often is problematic, the appearance of four at Swan Lake N.W.R., Apr. 5 (†JG, LM, LBu) clearly poses the potential for a first confirmed Missouri record. Small numbers of Greater White-fronted Geese appeared in the n. states; the peak count was 160 at Trumbull L., IA Mar. 19 (LSc). As usual, most of the Ross' Geese were in Iowa, where the peak count was 17 at S. Blue L., Mar. 24 (PE); the only other reports came from Illinois where seven birds were observed at 4 locations. Single Brants were reported in Jax. P., Feb. 21–23 (†PC); in Cincinnati, OH Mar. 14 (LGr ph); and in Waukegan, IL Apr. 29 (JN). Northern Pintails remained quite scarce, with a peak count



A rare migrant in Ohio, this Brant was at Cincinnati March 14, 1994. Photograph/Larry Gara.

of 100 at the G.M.R.O., Mar. 3 (PW). Missouri's first Garganey, an unbanded ad. male, was at Busch Conservation Area Apr. 2–3 (†JVb, †DA, m.ob.). Male Eur. Wigeons were seen in the Sangamon R. bottoms near Buckhart, IL Mar. 15–17 (†DBo, DO) and at Conneat, OH Mar. 23 (†TH, ES *et al.*). The Harlequin Duck reported at Spfld. in the winter summary lingered until Mar. 12 (DBo) and a very tardy ad. male was seen on 3 occasions between Mar. 16–25 in *Grundy*, IL (†JM, ph). Virtually all of the Region's Oldsquaw were in Ohio, where some 34 were counted; the only other report consisted of two inland birds at G.M.R.O., Mar. 19–22 (DSy, m.ob.). All 3 scoters were unusually common and widely distributed. Inland Black Scoter reports included an alternate-plumaged male at Big Creek L., IA Apr. 9–13 (MP, m.ob.) and one in *Allen*, OH Apr. 17 (DDi). Ten Surf Scoters were distributed across every state except Kentucky; one ranged as far s. as central Missouri, where it appeared May 5 (CR). A well described ♀ *Barrow's Goldeneye* was at Lake Spfld., Feb. 18 and Mar. 4 (†DBo, LA, KR). Nesting Hooded Mergansers were reported in Illinois, Iowa, and Ohio. Ruddy Ducks were scarce across the Region; the peak count was 95 at Nimisila Res., OH Apr. 10 (BL).

Osprey to Cranes

It was not a good season for hawks; no significant flights were reported in the Region. Underscoring raptor scarcity, the season tally for the Indiana Dunes hawk flight was only 1455 birds, the lowest spring total since 1987. Indiana's second *White-tailed Kite* was seen briefly May 18 at a *Warrick* coal mine in the s.w. corner of the state (†JCb, AT). Mississippi Kites continue to permeate the Region; in addition to returning birds at established nesting areas in *Union*, IL and Pike S.F., IN, three were seen in Iowa. Nesting Bald Eagles were reported in every state except Kentucky and Missouri. The Region's total of 13 N. Goshawks was slightly below normal; reports included four from Illinois, four from Indiana, three from Iowa, and two from Ohio. The Broad-winged Hawk flight apparently circumnavigated the Midwest as the Region's maximum count was only 83 at Maumee Bay S.P., OH Apr. 23 (ES). A fine count of 150 Swainson's Hawks was made at a roost in *Waubensie* S.P., IA Apr. 16 (B&LP). Within their regular range Golden Eagle reports included two from Illinois, one from Indiana, and two from Iowa. Farther e. a Golden Eagle was seen at Maumee Bay S.P., OH Apr. 23 (ES). The spring total of 24 Merlins was in accord with increased numbers in recent years. The season's only Prairie Falcon was seen at Rantoul, IL Mar. 27 (RCh).

The Iowa Gray Partridge population may be in trouble; this species was described as "now hard to find" in *Sioux* (JVd) and "gone" from c. Iowa (DT). Ruffed Grouse, found in *Lucas*, IA May 7 (JSi) and *Wayne*, IN May 9 (*vide* WB), was outside its normal range. It was a very good season for the hard-to-find rails. A dead Yellow Rail, found Apr. 5 at Sangamon L., IL (DBo), was followed by 5 additional sightings in that state; the peak consisted of two at Herrin May 2–4 (LSt, TF, m.ob.). In addition, this furtive species was flushed at Otter Creek marsh, IA May 6 (JF). Most remarkable, however, was a Black Rail that delighted scores of Chicago birders as it spent more than 13 hours May 30 burrowing in sand among grass tufts at Montrose Harbor (KH, †DJ, m.ob.). An impressive dozen King Rails was reported across the Region; the easternmost record involved three at Magee Marsh W.M.A., OH (RHa). Rare anywhere in the Region, a Purple Gallinule seen May 24 at Sweet Marsh, IA provided a colorful surprise for local birders (JF, RPi, MP). The Region's Sandhill Crane population is thriving. In addition to fine migration counts, such as 1280 at L. Cal., Mar. 12 (CA), birds returned to Otter Creek M., IA, where nesting has been successful the past 2 years (*vide* JF) and a pair with a chick was found in *w. Steuben*, IN (Haw).

Shorebirds

Virtually every correspondent provided negative comments about shorebird numbers. The absence of habitat and extensive flood damage were deemed limiting factors in some quarters, but fine habitat in other areas failed to produce shorebirds. The Region's best reports were at S.C.R., but local observers felt numbers should have been considerably higher. One bright aspect of the rather dismal shorebird flight involved Am. Golden-Plovers. Small to modest numbers appeared in every state, but an impressive >30,000 in *Champaign*, IL Apr. 20–21 (RCh, MD), provided the Region's highest spring count in 8 years. A Snowy Plover, seen at S.C.R., Apr. 15 (MR), provided local excitement. Encouragingly, Piping Plovers appeared in 4 states, with two in Illinois, eight in Iowa, 18 at S.C.R., and two in Ohio. One of the latter was photographed at Headlands Beach S.P., Apr. 20–21 (KM *et al.*) Though less widespread than last year, Black-necked Stilts reappeared this spring, with six birds at 3 central and s. Illinois locations. Respectable Am. Avocet counts included 28 at Clinton L., IL Apr. 13 (RCh), 15 at Forney L., IA Apr. 15 (TK), 15 at Riverton, IA Apr. 16 (TK), and 13 at Headlands Beach S.P., OH Apr. 16 (RHn, LR). Willets were recorded in every state except Kentucky, and two, seen at Cone M., IA Mar. 27 (JSc), were quite early. Whimbrels were widespread, with reports from every state except Indiana. Notable records included 14 at Mosquito Creek Res., OH May 27 (CW); 13 at Walborn Res., OH May 25 (LR); five at McElroy L., KY May 23 (WM); and one in *St. Charles*, MO



Piping Plover at Headlands Beach State Park, Ohio, April 21, 1994. Photograph/Larry Rosche.

Apr. 16 (TB, †JVb *et al.*). Hudsonian Godwits were scarce e. of the Mississippi R.; w. of the river, however, an excellent count of 310 was made at S.C.R., May 11 (MR). It was an above-average spring for Marbled Godwits, with reports from every state except Kentucky and Missouri. Peak counts included 20 at Lakin Slough, IA May 15 (PA, RA); 20 at Big Creek S.P., IA May 27 (E&EA); and four at the G.M.R.O., Apr. 15 (GM). The easternmost Marbled Godwit appeared at Ottawa N.W.R., OH May 14 (FD).



Ruddy Turnstones were surprisingly widespread, with reports from all 6 states. Noteworthy among myriad reports were: 72 at S.C.R., May 25 (MR); 50 at Metzger M., OH May 22 (RHn); 30 at Big Creek S.P., IA May 27 (E&EA); 24 at Coralville Res., IA May 17 (JF); and seven at McElroy L., KY May 23 (WM). Always rare inland, three Red Knots were at Decatur, IL Jun. 3 (MD, RCh). White-rumped Sandpipers were recorded in every state, including 10 at McElroy L., KY May 23 (WM). At S.C.R., Baird's Sandpipers peaked Apr. 21 when >250 were counted (DE). Further e., single Bairds' were reported at Decatur, IL Jun. 3 (RCh) and in *Franklin*, IN May 10 (†WB). Contradicting the general shorebird flight, excellent Pectoral Sandpiper counts were recorded in *Champaign*, IL, where >15,000 were seen Apr. 20–21 (RCh, MD), and in *Butler*, OH, where 500 were tallied Apr. 24 (DDi). Most of the Region's Dunlin were in Ohio, where 2000 were counted at Winous Pt., May 20 (RHn). Unusual for the spring migration were one–four Buff-breasted Sandpipers at S. Blue L., IA Apr. 29–May 20 (PE). Reports of Ruffs included a female near Savoy, IL Apr. 20 (†RCh); a male at Willow Slough W.M.A., IN May 12 (EH); and a male at Kingsbury W.M.A., IN May 18 (†CF). Dowitchers were scarce; the peak Short-billed count was 90 and the Long-billed maximum was only 20. Dwindling phalarope numbers were underscored by Region totals of only 11 Wilson's and two Red-neckeds.

Gulls to Terns

Laughing Gull sightings included four in Illinois, four in Indiana and one in Kentucky. Franklin's Gulls were numerous only in the w. states; only ten birds were reported e. of the

Mississippi R. An imm. Little Gull was seen in *Cook*, IL Apr. 24 (LBi). Iowa's first nesting Ring-billed Gulls were discovered May 18, when a colony of 17 nests was located near Spirit L. in *Dickinson* (JDi). One of the season's few rare larids was an ad. California Gull discovered Mar. 5 at Clinton L., IL (†RCh). The latest of three Illinois Iceland Gulls was a first-year bird that lingered at Waukegan until May 14 (†DJ, JN). The only other Iceland was at Michigan City harbor, IN Apr. 7 (†JCD). Still rare at inland sites, an ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull that appeared at Huntington Res., May 28 (†JMc, †Haw), established a first record for n.e. Indiana. Glaucous Gulls were plentiful, with 52 reported from the Great Lakes. Inland, a first-year Glaucous wandered w. to Roberts Creek L., IA, where it was seen Mar. 10 (JF). Great Black-backed Gulls continue to increase on L. Michigan, where more than 30 were reported this spring.

Except for Caspians, which appeared in good numbers on the Great Lakes, tern counts were disturbingly low across the Region. Four very early Caspian Terns, seen at Muscatine, IA Apr. 19 (PP, BB), tied the early arrival date. Common Terns were frightfully scarce; the peak count was only 45 at Lorain, OH May 6 (TLp). Forster's Terns fared only marginally better, with a high count of 65 at Lorain, OH May 6 (TLp). Least Tern reports included 12 in *Jackson*, IL May 20 (VK), seven at 3 locations in Iowa, and six in *Fulton*, KY May 18 (CP). Black Terns have all but disappeared in the e. states, where the maximum count was 9 at Spencer L., OH May 8 (NK). Mercifully, modest counts are still being made w. of the Mississippi R., where 485 were seen at Blue L., IA May 25 (SD).

Doves to Swallows

A wary, unbanded White-winged Dove appeared briefly in Columbia Apr. 23 to provide Missouri's first confirmed state record (KMc, †PMc, SH, JW ph). Barn Owl reports are increasing in the Chicago area. A road-kill Barn Owl was found in Hammond, IN Mar. 24 (*fide* JBo) and another flew over during a dawn raiting expedition at L. Cal., Apr. 24 (†WMz *et al.*). Elsewhere, nesting occurred in *Jay*, IN (JCt) and *Pulaski*, IL (KMm), and a perched bird was noted in *Boyle*, KY Apr. 1 (FL). In Indiana an E. Screech Owl celebrated the season's premier celestial event by calling during the May 10 eclipse (JMc). The three Snowy Owls, seen in DeKalb, IL Mar. 22–23 (RF), were remarkable for such a late date. Other interesting owl reports included a calling N. Saw-whet at Sand Ridge S.F., Mar. 12–25 (KR) and the mating display of two Short-eared Owls in *Newton*, IN Mar. 27 & Apr. 9 (JMc).

Early Ruby-throated Hummingbirds arrived in Pomona, IL Apr. 22 (KMm), in Charleston, IL Apr. 23 (BHT), and near Iowa City, IA Apr. 24 (JF). Red-headed Woodpeckers drew few comments except in Chicago, where this spring's decline was deemed catastrophic (PC). Olive-sided Flycatchers were decidedly scarce this spring, with only 11 reported across the entire Region. The peak Empid counts were logged along the Chicago lakefront (between Gillson and Rainbow Beach) May 22, when 15 Yellow-bellieds, 46 Willows, and 26 Least were counted (SM). An early Great-crested Flycatcher was seen Mar. 21 in Hopkins, KY (BW). A W. Kingbird was noted May 27 at the *LaPorte*, IN site where last year's nesting occurred (CF), and for the 9th consecutive year at least 2 pairs nested in industrial areas near downtown St. Louis, MO (DA). The Region's only Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was seen near L. Cornelia, IA May 18 (MP, BP). Swallows arrived early across the Region. Noteworthy dates included five Tree Swallows at Brown's L., IA Mar. 12 (BHr), a N. Rough-winged at Akron, OH Mar. 27 (CH), and Bank Swallows at Spfld. (DBo) and in *Polk*, IA, (AJ) both Apr. 11.

Jays to Shrikes

Fish Crows are expanding farther into the Region. Extralimital spring records included calling birds at Roaring River S.P., MO Apr. 17 (†PMc), Uniontown Lock & Dam, IN May 25 (†JMc), and along the Mississippi R. in *Louisa*, IA April–May 4 (†KMc, †PP *et al.*). Following the winter Red-breasted Nuthatch invasion a sizable return flight was documented across the Region; the peak count was six at Jax. P., Apr. 24 (GW). An impressive six Bewick's Wren



were recorded in c. and n. Illinois; another wandered eastward to Headlands Beach S.P., OH, where it was seen May 21 (†LR). This past winter's toll on the Carolina Wren is still being assessed. In Iowa sightings were restricted to the s. counties (*fide* JF), in Indiana an estimated 60% decline occurred in some areas (*fide* ABr), and in Ohio this species suffered losses at the n. edge of its range (*fide* LR).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher numbers were well above normal as indicated by high counts of 86 in *Union*, IL, May 7 (*fide* VK), 50 at Headlands Beach S.P., OH Apr. 24 (RHn, LR), and 40 at Euclid Beach S.P., OH Apr. 29 (FG). One–two ♂ Mountain Bluebirds were observed associating with E. Bluebirds in *Greene*, IA Mar. 6–13 (†RT, †ET, †JF, †MP), providing one of few records for that state. Several correspondents commented that *Catharus* thrush numbers were down; however, Veery and Swainson's Thrush counts were deemed excellent in n.e. Ohio (LR). An unusually late Gray-cheeked Thrush was seen in Hammond, IN Jun. 3 (JBo). The wintering ♂ Varied Thrush n. of Iowa City, IA remained until Apr. 13 (JSc, JF, TK). Am. Pipits were reported from every state except Missouri; peak counts included 73 in *Sangamon*, IL Mar. 19 (RCh *et al.*) and 50 at Cone M., IA Mar. 31 (JF). Northern Shrikes lingered at Pigeon River W.M.A., IN until Mar. 17 (Haw) and in *Ashtabula*, OH until Mar. 23 (ES).

Vireos to Tanagers

Intrepid White-eyed Vireos wandered into n.w. Iowa with singletons recorded in *Calhoun* May 3 (DSO) and at Ingham L., May 30 (SD). A Bell's Vireo, seen in Willoughby, OH May 15–16 (RHn, m.ob.), was unexpected.

White-winged Dove in Columbia, Missouri, April 23, 1994. First confirmed state record. Photograph/Paul McKenzie.

SA Birders afield in Chicago's Jackson Park May 3 paid little heed to an odd bird that looked like a remarkably dull "Blue-headed" Solitary Vireo. The vireo was still present the following day and became the center of attention when it was observed singing the burry song of the Pacific Coast form *V. s. cassinii* (†PC, JHs, TS, HR); indeed, before actually seeing the bird several experienced birders identified the song as belonging to a Yellow-throated Vireo. This bird, which remained through May 5, appeared to represent the Region's first record of "Cassin's" Vireo.

The spring warbler flight was characterized by numerous early arrivals, especially in the Chicago area, where a remarkable 14 warbler species were seen in Jax. P., Apr. 16 (PC). Overall quality of the migration varied from excellent in e. Ohio to average or below elsewhere. Warblers that were generally considered more common than normal included Tennessee, Nashville, Chestnut-sided, Prairie, and Hooded. It was also a good spring for Blue-winged x Golden-winged hybrids, as seven "Brewster's" and two "Lawrence's" were reported. Yellow-throated Warblers appear to be expanding northward. A nest was discovered at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P., IA (*fide* JF), and this species was found at 2 new locations along the Kanawee R. in n.w. Indiana. Additionally, overflights produced an unprecedented four Yellow-throated Warblers in Jax. P. (†PC), where this species is quite rare. Among Ohio's numerous spring warbler highlights was a Kirtland's Warbler that appeared briefly at Chagrin R.

Metropark, Willoughby May 15 (JSm, †RHa, †JP *et al.*). Most encouraging were the reports of two singing Swainson's Warblers along state highway 444 in *Calloway*, KY May 19–28 (MM *et al.*) and another at Red R. Gorge, *Powell*, KY May 28 (JBe, PB). Summer Tanagers continued their northward expansion with a half dozen reports n. of their normal range. A definite bright spot in the Iowa migration was the appearance of a ♂ W. Tanager near Swan L., Apr. 25–26 (†DDa, †TK, †JF).

Grosbeaks to Finches

The northward push of Blue Grosbeaks continued this spring with several sightings well beyond their normal range; one pushed northward to the Morton Arboretum, on Chicago's w. side, May 13 (†CA). A ♂ **Black-headed Grosbeak** at Big Creek S.P., IA May 15 (†E&†EA) was noteworthy. Clay-colored Sparrows were widely reported in Iowa; records farther east included four in Illinois, two in Indiana, and one in Ohio. One–two pairs of Lark Sparrows were found in pastures 5 mi. w. of Harrodsburg, KY (FL, WK). Henslow's Sparrows were reported from all the n. states; the peak count was ten in *Van Buren*, IA May 5–8 (JF). LeConte's Sparrows were detected only in Illinois and Iowa, where seven and three were recorded respectively. Noteworthy among the three Sharp-tailed Sparrows seen in Illinois was a very early arrival at Decatur May 7 (MD, †RPa). The only other Sharp-tailed was seen in *Polk*, IA May 20 (SD, GB). Also quite early was a Lincoln's Sparrow discovered at Potato Creek S.P., IN Mar. 21 (†JCd). The largest Smith's Longspur counts e. of the Mississippi R. involved >80 at Rantoul and Penfield, IL Mar. 27 (RCh) and 50 in *Parke*, IN Apr. 15 (ABr). The only significant Snow Bunting accumulation consisted of 300 at Ottawa N.W.R., OH Mar. 6 (RHa).

Yellow-headed Blackbirds returned to their traditional nesting area at L. Cal., where 15 pairs were observed May 30 (JL). A remarkably late ♀ Rusty Blackbird was found in Jax. P., May 26 (†PC). The Great-tailed Grackle range has significantly expanded in Iowa, where 19 reports were made in the w. third of the state (*fide* JF). A well described ♀ "Bullocks" N. Oriole was found in *Macon*, IL May 7 (†RPa, MD). Crossbills were scarce, with only 2 Red Crossbill reports and 3 White-winged Crossbill reports from the Region. Following last winter's invasion, Com. Redpolls lingered in many states until early April. The largest accumulations consisted of 200 in *Steuben*, IN Mar. 17 (Haw) and 55 at Conneaut, OH Mar. 23 (ES). Birds showing marks consistent with the Hoary Redpoll were documented in *Steuben*, IN Mar. 6 (†Haw), Michigan City, IN Mar. 12 (†LH), and *Lake*, OH Mar. 16–17 (†JP, ph.). The latest among several May Evening Grosbeak sightings occurred at Headlands Beach S.P., OH May 14 (LR).

Uncorroborated Reports

The following were seen by multiple observers and may be valid, but documenting materials were not received: single Olivaceous Cormorants in Missouri at Bilby Ranch Lake W.M.A., Apr. 28–May 24 and at Big L., May 5–7; Cinnamon Teal in *Jefferson*, IL Apr. 9 and in *La Salle*, IL May 7; Black Rail in *Saline*, IL May 4; Little Gull at Table Rock L., MO Mar. 5.; and Hoary Redpoll *La Salle*, IL Mar. 9.

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Central Southern Region

DAVID P. MUTH, PETER H. YAUKEY, AND STEVEN W. CARDIFF

The spring passed without exceptional weather and without notable coastal fall-outs, despite some weather systems with "seemingly perfect timing." Many observers waited in vain all winter for the miserable weather in the north to send vagrants to our Region. However, as might be predicted in the utterly unpredictable world of vagrancy, the northern birds waited for spring. Records included both crossbills and extraordinary coastal occurrences of King Eider, Purple Sandpiper, and Common Redpoll. The beaches of Louisiana were crawling with gulls, many of them northern vagrants. There was only moderate vagrancy from the west, highlighted by Lesser Nighthawk in Alabama, Say's Phoebe in Tennessee, and Lazuli Bunting in Arkansas. The most astonishing vagrant of all, however, was a Black-tailed Godwit, adding more luster to rice-field birding.

In the following report, all Louisiana records are treated separately. Once again, no reports were received from coastal Mississippi.

Abbreviations: A.O.U. (*American Ornithologists' Union*); F.H. (*Fish Hatchery*); L.B.R.C. (*Louisiana Ornithological Soc. Bird Records Committee*); L.S.U.M.N.S. (*La. State Univ Museum of Natural Science*); p.a. (*pending acceptance*); W.R. (*Waterfowl Ref.*).

Loons to Nighthawks

An alternate-plumaged Com. Loon calling in *Panola*, MS May 13 was fairly late (GK, VT). Four-hundred Horned Grebes Apr. 1, two-thirds in alternate plumage, had disappeared from Center Hill L., TN by Apr. 10 (SJS, BHS). Rare inland spring Eared Grebes were in *Colbert*, AL Apr. 8 (WJR, GNP) and *Adams*, MS Apr. 30 (TLS, MHu). An Am. White Pelican that provided the first wintering record for *Sumner*, TN remained until May 11 (TJW). An ad Masked Booby provided a very rare observation from shore when it flew past Dauphin I., AL Apr. 18 (JH, p.a.). American Bitterns apparently nested in *Shelby*, TN (*fide* JRW), nowadays there are few Regional nesting re-