

was also tardy. Mourning Warblers can be difficult to find in Alabama, so one on Dauphin I., Sept. 24 (J&JP) was noteworthy. A lingering Hooded Warbler was in *Iberville*, LA Nov. 2 (JVR). Early and late reports for Wilson's Warbler included single birds Sept. 5 in *Iberville*, LA (JVR) and Nov. 12 in *Benton*, AR (MM). A Canada Warbler was premature July 30 in Nashville, TN (GAF). To round out the late warbler parade, a Yellow-breasted Chat was spotted Nov. 9 in Montgomery, AL (LFG).

The Summer Tanager in Nashville, TN Nov. 5 (JSh) was late. A **Western Tanager**, only occasional far inland, was in *Dyer*, TN Aug. 21 (JRW, LVZ, JAZ). Very uncommon in Louisiana, one was spotted Oct. 12 in *Lafayette* (DP); the W. Tanager to the east Oct. 14 on Dauphin I., AL (SWM, JRW, p.a.) was rare but not unexpected. Rare and early, a ♂ Black-headed Grosbeak appeared in *Okaloosa*, FL Sept. 26 (DMW). A lingering Dickcissel was in *Benton*, AR Nov. 26 (MM).

Clay-colored Sparrows become scarce as far east as the Florida Panhandle; a late bird was at Ft. Pickens Oct. 28 (RLB, JWB, JB). Early Vesper Sparrows arrived Sept. 24 in C.P. (SWC, DLD, m.ob.) and Oct. 9 in *Washington*, AR (MM). A lone Savannah Sparrow Sept. 6 in *Okaloosa*, FL (DMW) furnished a new local arrival record, while the Grasshopper Sparrow in *Benton*, AR, Nov. 12 (MM) was significantly late. Reports of the elusive Henslow's Sparrow included singles Oct. 24 at Ft. Pickens, FL (RLB, JWB), in *Cleveland*, AR Nov. 5 (WMS, RC), and in *Shelby*, TN Nov. 8 (JRW). Sharp-tailed Sparrows are difficult to locate inland; one was spotted Sept. 25 in *Cleburne*, AR (MLB). An early Fox Sparrow appeared Oct. 9 in *Washington*, AR (MM). Harris' Sparrow is rarely seen in Florida, so one at Ft. Pickens Oct. 26 (RAD, PCT, CD, p.a.) was a surprise.

Smith's Longspur is expected in small numbers in the n.w. portion of the Region, though the 30–40 birds in *Prairie*, AR Nov. 25 (WMS, JLY) represented an unusual number. Yellow-headed Blackbirds are regularly seen rarities in s. Louisiana; this season there were 4 reports of nine birds Sept. 24–Nov. 19. In the same field in *Jefferson Davis*, LA as the concentration of Greater White-fronted Geese, there were 75,000 Boat-tailed Grackles Oct. 28 (SWC, DLD). Rare outside s.e. Louisiana, a Bronzed Cowbird was noted Oct. 13 at Ft. Pickens, FL (RAD, OEF, C&JH), and two were in *Jefferson Davis*, LA, Oct. 28 (DLD, SWC). Lone **Shiny Cowbirds** were (unpleasant) surprises Aug. 19 at Gulf Breeze, FL (RAD) and Oct. 9–10 at Grand I., LA (PW, CS, CK, GS, p.a.); there are few Regional records outside spring and early summer.

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Prairie Provinces Region

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Unusually mild weather prevailed across the Region for most of the season; even at Churchill there was no snow until November. Small bodies of water remained open until mid-November, about three weeks later than usual. Rainfall was high in eastern Manitoba, and August was wet in the Calgary area; elsewhere, the season was mainly dry. One major blot on the weather map was a violent hailstorm near Boissevain, Manitoba in late August. Up to eight inches of hail accompanied a tornado, causing local devastation of birds from passerines to waterfowl to raptors in a 10-by-40 mile region.

In general, the mild conditions allowed migration to proceed unhindered, making the season a little dull at times. Uncommon migrant water birds from the Arctic were less numerous than usual, but there was some compensation from southern and western strays. The large number of late stragglers of a wide variety of species was especially noteworthy.

Abbreviations: I.B.S. (*Inglewood Bird Sanctuary, Calgary*).

Loons to Ducks

Seventeen Pacific Loons in Alberta, Oct 4–Nov. 2, was normal, but none was seen in Saskatchewan. A Yellow-billed Loon was observed 3 times at Ghost Res., Calgary Oct. 29–Nov. 16 (J&MM, RT *et al.*). At least 13 Great Egrets were reported in Manitoba in August and September, and three in Saskatchewan; one frequented the Airdrie-Calgary area, AB, Aug. 12–Sept. 2 (OD *et al.*). A Snowy Egret spent Aug 22–27 near Regina (*vide* RKr). Three Cattle Egrets were late wanderers to Nordegg, AB, Oct. 22 (JeD), coinciding with singles at Athabasca, AB, Oct. 23 (NE), and Steinbach, MB, Oct. 30 (DF). Twenty White-faced Ibises was an excellent total at recently refilled Frank L., AB, Aug. 10 (NA).

A Tundra Swan at Chestermere L. near Calgary Oct. 29 (TK) had a bill pattern at the borderline between "Whistling" and "Bewick's." Good swan counts included 16,900 Tundras at Luck L., SK, Oct. 17 (M&BG), 2000 Tundras at Eagle and Namaka lakes, AB, Oct. 16 (AS), and 70 Trumpeters at Frank L., Nov. 3 (CW). An errant Mute Swan stayed at Ft. McMurray, AB, from mid-June–mid-September (FKo). White-fronted Geese again peaked near 400,000 birds near Eston, SK (*fide* RDi).

Less frequently reported in fall than spring, two Eur. Wigeon were seen at Barrier L., AB, Oct. 18 (RDu), and two were at Calgary Oct. 25 (SM). Luck L. held 4900 Canvasbacks Oct. 17 (M&BG), and >30 Greater Scaup at Frank L., Oct. 7 (CW) was a good count for Alberta. An imm. ♂ **Common Eider** at Saskatoon Nov. 27–Dec. 3 (SS, BL *et al.*) and an ad. female near Gardiner Dam Nov. 30 (BL) provided Saskatchewan's 4th and 5th records.

The only out-of-range Harlequin Ducks were a pair at Cold L., AB, Oct. 9 (RT, MV), while two males at Churchill Oct. 8 (BC) were late. The biggest concentrations of n. ducks were 11 Oldsquaws at Blackstrap L., SK, Nov. 15 (RKr), 17 Surf Scoters (along with 21 White-winged) near Birch Hills, SK, Oct. 9 (BL), and 16 Surf Scoters at Frank L., Oct. 7 (CW).

Vultures to Woodpeckers

Eighteen Turkey Vultures at Dry I. Buffalo Jump, Sept. 4 (TK) was a large concentration for Alberta. Broad-winged Hawks migrated past Windy Point, Sheep R., AB in amazing numbers: 212 in 5 days Sept. 13–21, with a peak of 89 including 47 in

one kettle Sept. 19 (WS). Rough-legged Hawks were scarce Region-wide, but 87 furnished a one-day record at Windy Point Oct. 12 (WS). This year's Golden Eagle migration counts in Alberta totaled 3821 in 80 days at Mt. Lorette (PS *et al.*), 2195 in 51 days on a parallel migration route at Barrier L. (RD *et al.*), and 826 in 53 days at Windy Point. Smaller raptors strongly favored the route through Windy Point.

A Sharp-tailed Grouse at Churchill Nov. 13 (PR) was the first seen there in many years.

A Black-necked Stilt visited Wakamow Park, Moose Jaw, SK, Sept. 13–14 (D&HB). Shorebird survey totals at Luck L. included 1760 Lesser Yellowlegs and 1840 Hudsonian Godwits Aug. 3 (M&BG). The season's shorebird rarities were: a **Spotted Redshank** at Moose Jaw Sept. 2–6 (D&HB); three **Purple Sandpipers** at Churchill Oct. 7, with two remaining Oct. 20 (DH); and three Red Phalarope sightings at Frank L., Sept. 12 and Oct. 16 & 23 (CW).

Six Parasitic Jaegers in Alberta included three at Cold L., Oct. 9 (RT, MV). An ad. Little Gull accompanied 1500 Bonaparte's Gulls at Grand Beach, MB, Oct. 30 (Rko *et al.*). An ad. **Glaucous-winged Gull** at Jumping L., SK (BL) was the 4th reported in Saskatchewan. Glaucous Gulls were only found in Alberta, but a Glaucous X Herring Gull was observed at Regina Nov. 3 (RKr); perhaps hybrid gulls are under-reported in this Region. Great Black-backed Gulls visited Churchill Oct. 26 (BC, JH) and Oak Hammock Marsh, MB Nov. 13 (Rko), and single imm. Sabine's Gulls were seen at Namaka L., AB, Sept. 8 (GC) and Long L., near St. Paul, AB, Sept. 16 (SBe). Also most

noteworthy at Churchill were an **Ivory Gull** Oct. 26 & 30 (PR, JaD) and 19 Black Guillemots Oct. 9 (BC).

A Band-tailed Pigeon turned up at I.B.S., Sept. 3 (RD). Nineteen Black-billed Cuckoos were banded at Delta, MB, compared with a total of seven in 1992–1993 (PG). Snowy Owls were generally scarce and late in arriving; most were adults. The only concentration of Short-eared Owls reported was near St. Albert, AB, with up to 18 at the end of November (PM, DN *et al.*).

Black Swifts totaled 36 at Bow Valley P.P., AB, Aug. 6 (MP) and 25 near Mt. Lorette Sept. 3 (PS); one was late at Mt. Lorette Sept. 14 (PS). Canada's first reported **Magnificent Hummingbird** was an extraordinary visitor to Kananaskis P.P., AB, Aug. 13–Sept. 18 (N&KS *et al.*); the possibility that it was a hybrid is being investigated. Not quite so rare were a probable **Anna's Hummingbird** at Barhead, AB, Oct. 15 (IN) and a Rufous Hummingbird at Saskatoon Sept. 27–29 (PhT, BL, SS). The only rare woodpecker was a Red-bellied at St. Laurent, MB, Oct. 15 (FK).

Passerines

Fourteen Olive-sided Flycatchers concentrated in a small Winnipeg park Aug. 25 (Rko). Out of range were an E. Phoebe at Writing-on-Stone P.P., AB, Aug. 6 (PS, JS), a Great Crested Flycatcher at Lethbridge, AB, Aug. 30–Sept. 1 (RM), a W. Kingbird accompanying an E. Kingbird at Mt. Lorette Sept. 3 (PS, JS), and an E. Kingbird at Churchill Sept. 18 (BC). A Steller's Jay was at Edson, AB from mid-October–Nov. 15 (GBu), and two were in Edmonton Nov. 20–30+ (RDe). Blue Jays continued to spread into the mountains, reaching Banff, Kananaskis, and Jasper; they were also unusually numerous in the Lethbridge-Taber area (m.ob.). A Sedge Wren was a first in the mountains at Nakiska, AB, Sept. 30 (PB, PS, JS).

Rare visitors to birders' gardens included Manitoba's 3rd **Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher** in Winnipeg Oct. 23 (RP *et al.*), five E. Bluebirds in Regina Oct. 18 (KS, RKr), and a Wood Thrush in Brandon, MB, Nov. 2 (JH). Five Townsend's Solitaires were reported in Saskatchewan Sept. 15–Nov. 30. About eight Varied Thrushes were found in the Edmonton area, two in Regina, and three in Manitoba. The only N. Mockingbird report was at Edmonton Aug. 20 (PI). An apparent family group of 4 N. Shrikes in one tree at Mt. Lorette Oct. 6 (PS) was intriguing.

A Black-throated Blue Warbler was banded at Delta Sept. 19 (PG), and another was seen at Banff N.P., Sept. 24 (JM *et al.*). A Palm Warbler at Mt. Lorette Oct. 3 resembled the e. race, *hypochrysea*. A Townsend's



Warbler was banded at Beaverhill L., AB, in late August (EJ). Budworm warblers were banded in high numbers: 1100 Tennessees at Delta (PG) and the most-ever Cape Mays and Bay-breasteds at Beaverhill L. (EJ). Major Manitoban highlights included a **Hooded Warbler** at Steinbach Sept. 12 (AR *et al.*) and the province's first confirmed **Kentucky Warbler** near Winnipeg Sept. 18 (BS, GG, PG). A possible Kentucky Warbler was also reported in Winnipeg Sept. 14 (JS). Rare in s. Alberta were two Nashville Warblers at Taber Sept. 12–13 (LB). Over 100 Wilson's Warblers decorated the bushes at I.B.S., Aug. 23 (TK).

➤ Rufous-sided Towhees were conspicuous near Stonewall, MB, with up to six seen per day Aug. 31–Sept. 29 (KG). Lone Field Sparrows reached Edam, SK, Sept. 19–21 (MC, TT) and St. Adolphe, MB, Sept. 26–27 (AC). A Fox Sparrow was extremely early at Taber, AB Aug. 21 (LB). Twenty-four Orchard Orioles were banded at Delta, including three late birds Sept. 5 (PG).

➤ Single Gray-crowned Rosy Finches strayed to Lac La Biche, AB, Oct. 10 (RT, MV), Elma, MB, Nov. 18 (MM), and Edmonton Nov. 26 (BR, TT). An unfortunate Pine Grosbeak was banded at Water Valley, AB at 4 p.m., Nov. 6, and found dead 40 mi away in Calgary at 745 a.m. the next day (GrB). Eighty House Finches were estimated at Weyburn, SK, feeders (*vide* GBo), but Alberta records were again limited to one–two pairs in Calgary (SBr, JeD, RDu).

➤ Modest numbers of both crossbill species (mainly groups of <10 birds) were noted in s.e. Manitoba. Redpolls were scarce in most areas. Pine Siskins thronged cone-laden white spruce trees in s.e. Manitoba around the end of August. Escapees from the boreal-forest feeder belt were eight Evening Grosbeaks at Medicine Hat Oct. 16 (PH) and 20 at Calgary Oct. 30 (DC).

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Northern Great Plains Region

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Mild weather Regionwide contributed to a long migration season, with some early dates and many late lingerers. Major rains in October in the Dakotas virtually guaranteed good spring water levels. Freezeup was late, with most water areas open until Thanksgiving. Record late dates for the first fall frost were noted in many areas; for example, October 24 at Fargo, North Dakota.

Few vagrants were noted and peak numbers of many species were not impressive. The season was highlighted by a Yellow-billed Loon in Montana, first fall records of Prothonotary Warbler in North Dakota and Hooded Warbler in South Dakota.

Loons to Raptors

A **Yellow-billed Loon** photographed at Ft. Peck Nov. 11–25 furnished a first Montana record (CC). A late peak of six Red-necked Grebes was recorded in *Grand Forks*, ND Oct. 20 (EF), and W. Grebes remained to late November in all 3 states. Mixed pairs of Western and Clark's grebes with young were at Des Lacs N.W.R., ND and in *Phillips*, Montana.

