

Middle-western Prairie Region

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Following a few balmy days in the first half of March, the balance of the season was cool and wet. This inclement weather pattern produced flooding along the Mississippi River and generated local meteorological "fall outs" across much of the Region.

Though the March weather did not affect the waterfowl passage, ambient meteorological conditions in April almost certainly contributed to a below par hawk flight. The high waters provided abundant habitat for waders, a factor that may account for a superb shorebird flight, which must rank as one of the Region's better spring migrations in memory.

Retarded by unfavorable weather, migrant passerine numbers were low prior to mid-May, producing numerous late arrivals especially in northern portions of the Region. Weather-generated passerine waves swept the Region near mid-month, generating migrant concentrations that stirred adrenaline levels of even the most stolid birders. The intensity and breadth of this wave was illustrated by comments from Kent in Iowa: "On 13 May, there was a widespread fallout of migrant passerines..." Schlabach in eastern Ohio wrote: "The period May 10-13 was excellent for migration—probably the best I have ever seen." In keeping with the migration's slow start, many migrants lingered, yielding numerous late records.

Unfortunately, the Missouri report was apparently lost in the mail and failed to arrive in time to be included in this summary.

Abbreviations: H.B.S.P. (*Headlands Beach S.P., OH*), L. Cal. (*Lake Calumet, Chicago*); Jax.P. (*Jackson Park on the Chicago lakefront*); Spfld. (*Springfield, IL*).

Loons to Ibises

A winter-plumaged Red-throated Loon at Little Wall L., IA Apr. 22-24 (†MPr, †m.ob.) constituted the Region's only report. The Com. Loon flight was punctuated by an unprecedented spring build-up of 130

birds on L. Michigan off Beverly Shores, IN Apr. 8 (KB *et al.*). The largest Pied-billed Grebe concentration in several years was recorded Apr. 12 when 282 were counted at L. Manawa, IA (B&LP). Red-necked Grebes reports were above average in the w. states, with six in Iowa, and singletons in Illinois and Indiana. Western Grebes were scarce, even in Iowa where this species is regular; singles were reported from *Gibson, IN* Apr. 12 (GBo) and Union Slough N.W.R., IA May 17 (MK). American White Pelicans continued their expansion with reports from every state. Noteworthy records included 40-83 s. of the Ohio R. in *Marshall, KY* Mar. 16-Apr. 6 (TSh *et al.*) and one at Buck Creek S.P., OH May 19 (DO). Perhaps the Regional Double-crested Cormorant population explosion was most aptly described by Rosche's comment: "...thousands passed through everywhere." An *Neotropic Cormorant* at an abandoned *Cook* quarry May 20 (†RHu *et al.*), provided one of few records—and the first spring record—for Illinois. The most exciting event involving Pelicaniformes, however, was the appearance of multiple *Anhingas* in the Chicago area. A female was discovered at Mckee Marsh, *DuPage, IL* Apr. 22 (†RE, †JM ph.) and remained though Apr. 29 (†WM). Incredibly, two birds were seen gliding over Jax.P., Apr. 28 (†PC). These constituted the first n. Illinois records of this species.

It was another good season for Am. Bitterns, with 28 reported in 5 states; the peak count was four at Goose Lake Prairie S.P., IL May 15 (CA). Though down from last spring's extraordinary count, Least Bitterns were also widely reported. Noteworthy among a flurry of Snowy Egret reports was an early arrival at Caesar Creek L., OH Apr.

Female Anhinga at McKee Marsh, DuPage County, Illinois, April 24, 1995. First record for northern Illinois. Photograph/ Joe B. Milosevich.



8 (ST, CM). The only Tricolored Heron appeared at Medusa Marsh, OH May 8 (LRO). The only sizable Cattle Egret counts consisted of 150 in *St. Clair*, IL Apr. 22 (KMc, DK) and 40 in *Fremont*, IA May 27 (TK). An early May survey at Ottawa N.W.R., OH yielded only two Green Herons, raising concern about this species (*vide* LRO). An Apr. 29 census of the L. Cal. Black-crowned Night-Heron rookery yielded 1066 birds (WM), suggesting that the colony remains sound. An erythristic Black-crowned, with bright rufous-orange replacing normally white areas of the face and underparts, was also seen at L. Cal., May 7 (WM). Iowa's 2nd Glossy Ibis record was logged May 18 when two were discovered at Riverton (†TK, †JF, †B&LP, ph.); one was still present May 22 (†RSi). This species also appeared at 2 Ohio locations, where singletons were reported at Pickerel Creek W.M.A., May 6 & 11 (†RHa, KMe, m.ob.) and Magee Marsh May 9 (VF). The only extralimital White-faced Ibis was at Goose Lake Prairie S.P., IL May 15 (†CA, JM, m.ob.).

Waterfowl

Noteworthy aspects of an otherwise typical Greater White-fronted Goose migration included a very late bird in Jax.P., May 14–15 (†PC, TJ, ph.) and one at H.B.S.P., Apr. 1 (RHn), where this species is rare. An increasing Ross' Goose population, plus more careful scrutiny of Snow Geese flocks, has produced a significant increase in reports of this diminutive species. In addition to this spring's peak count of 65 Ross's Geese at Willow Slough, IA Mar. 18 (SD), 13 were

seen in *Winnebago*, IL Mar. 8–16 (†BG, m.ob.), two adults were in Glencoe, IL Mar. 19 (†LB), and a singleton wandered e. to *Pike*, OH Mar. 4 (†DO). The Region's only Brant was at Sheldon's Marsh, OH, where it was seen Mar. 19 & 21 (FD, JDu, ST).

Noteworthy maximum puddle duck counts included 3000 Green-winged Teal at Riverton, IA Mar. 19 (TK), 1709 N. Pintail at Saylorville Res., IA Mar. 11 (BE), >1000 Blue-winged Teal at Clinton L., IL Apr. 12 (RCh), and 560 Am. Wigeon at Little Portage, OH Apr. 1 (VF). Rare dabblers included seven ♂ Cinnamon Teal in Iowa, plus two in Illinois and a winter Eur. Wigeon at Castalia, OH that lingered through Mar. 5 (TL). The bay duck passage was average, with peak counts of 3000 Redheads at Sandusky Bay, OH Mar. 20 (VF) and 8000 Lesser Scaup at Magee Marsh, OH Mar. 25 (RHa). Hands down winner of "best duck of the season award" was a ♀ Common Eider that appeared below Red Rock Dam, IA Jan. 27 and was seen sporadically through Apr. 7 (TS, †m.ob., ph.), providing Iowa's 2nd record. Interestingly, some observers believed this bird showed characters of the w. race *v-nigra*. Following the typical spring pattern, small numbers of scoters appeared at many inland sites, especially e. of the Mississippi River. Noteworthy among these was a Surf and four White-winged Scoters at Kentucky's Falls of the Ohio, Mar. 13 (A&TR). The largest Ruddy Duck concentrations consisted of 831 at L. Manawa, IA Mar. 31 (SD) and 600 at both Sandusky Bay, OH Apr. 8 (JP) and LaDue Res., OH Apr. 16 (CH).

Hawks to Cranes

The spring flight did not produce good numbers of migrating hawks. For the 3rd consecutive year, hawk numbers at the Indiana Dunes decreased and daily maximum counts across the Region were low for most species. For example, the Region's highest Broad-winged Hawk tally consisted of only 80 birds in *Tuscarawas*, OH Apr. 18 (ES); this suggests that meteorological steering currents deflected migrating raptors around the Midwest. The good news involved the appearance of Illinois's 2nd White-tailed Kite, an adult seen over Washington Park, *Sangamon*, Apr. 21 (†DBo). On May 12 a pair of Mississippi Kites returned to the Des Moines, IA area (JCl, m.ob., ph.), and five were seen at South Hickman Bottoms, *Fulton*, KY May 20 (CPE). These observations are consistent with recent Regional expansion. Bald Eagle highlights included a maximum of 64 at Coralville Res., IA Mar. 4 (CE) and 13 nests containing eggs in Indiana (*vide* JCs). Late May N. Harrier sightings in *Dickinson*, *Palo Alto*, *Kossuth*, and *Johnson*, IA suggested possible nesting (*vide* TK). The return N. Goshawk flight was surprisingly strong for a non-invasion year, with 11 birds reported in Illinois, Iowa, and Ohio. In direct contrast to the seasonal trend of low migrant counts, an exceptional tally of 95 Red-shouldered Hawks was made Mar. 13 at Maumee Bay S.P., OH (LY). The only extralimital Swainson's Hawk was seen May 6 at Havana, IL (GW, RSA, m.ob.). The 29 Merlins reported in the Region was typical for recent spring flights. An imm. gray-morph Gyrfalcon reported during winter at Clinton L., IL was last seen Mar. 5, (†RCh, m.ob.). The Region's five Prairie Falcons were all in Iowa, where this species is rare but regular.

The spring rail flight was unusually strong e. of the Mississippi R. Indeed, it was an excellent year for Yellow Rails in Illinois, where a remarkable seven were reported between Mar. 25–May 2; the peak count was two at Clinton L. Dam Apr. 5 (RCh). The only Yellow Rail reported outside Illinois was at Salamonie Res., IN Apr. 23 (JMc). A Black Rail was reported at Bald Bluff, *Henderson*, IL May 9 (PP). King Rails were also well represented this spring, with five in Ohio, five in Illinois, and one in Indiana. Some 20 Virginia Rails were reported, typical for the Region. Fine Sora counts included 50 at Arcola, IL Apr. 28 (MD) and 22 along the Indiana lakefront Apr. 29 (JCD *et al.*). The only sizable Com. Moorhen count consisted of 21 at L. Cal., May 6 (WM). Otherwise this species remained scarce. One moorhen was discovered at L. Vega, KY May 3 (JK), where the species is rare. As the Region's Sandhill Crane population expands, isolated nesting has com-



Female Common Eider at Red Rock Reservoir, Iowa, February 28, 1995. This bird, which remained into early April, provided a second state record. Photograph/Reid Allen.

menced in the Region: At Pigeon River W.M.A., IN a pair of cranes were observed tending a chick in May (Haw).

Shorebirds

Local evaluations of the shorebird flight ranged from dismal to the best in years; however, from a Regional perspective the spring migration yielded both good numbers and excellent diversity. The largest Am. Golden-Plover concentrations occurred in *Benton*, IN, where 5000 were found Apr. 22 (KB *et al.*) and Illinois, where >4000 were counted near Rantoul Apr. 16 (RCh). Indiana's first **Wilson's Plover** made a one-day visit to Fairfax beach at L. Monroe May 18 (JHv, DW, †EH, m.ob.), generating considerable local excitement. Piping Plovers returned to their traditional nesting site at Midwest Power Ponds, IA (formerly IPL Ponds) Apr. 16 (PA, HA); six were also seen at Port Neal, IA, another regular location, May 20 (m.ob.). A migrant Piping Plover, discovered at Miller Beach, IN Apr. 28 (JMc), constituted n.w. Indiana's first spring record since 1957. The ensconcement of **Black-necked Stilts** within the Region continued unabated this spring with the appearance of a pair on L. Michigan's shores at Miller Beach, IN Apr. 7 (†BM). In addition, two were discovered in *Fulton*, KY May 10 (CPE) and three more appeared in c. and s. Illinois in late May. Black-necked Stilts were accidental in the Region just a decade ago. American Avocets were scarce, with only five reported in Iowa and one at Metzger Marsh, OH May 15 (ES).

Solitary Sandpipers hardly lived up to their name as 55 were reported at Little Portage W.M.A., OH May 10 (VF). Willets were widespread, with multiple reports from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Kentucky; noteworthy records included an early arrival in *Gibson*, IN Apr. 1 (ML) and a peak count of 12 at L. Vega, KY May 4 (JK, BS). One-two Whimbrels were seen at 2 locations in Iowa

and one in Illinois, but most of this spring's birds were in Ohio, which had 4 reports, dominated by a phenomenal 92 Whimbrels at Killdeer Plains May 22 (KA). Iowa's 4th modern **Long-billed Curlew** record was established May 22 at Blackhawk L., *Sac* (†PE). Hudsonian Godwits were unusually plentiful with multiple sightings from every state except Kentucky and Ohio; the peak count e. of the Mississippi R. was seven at Decatur, IL May 10 (RSa). Single Marbled Godwits, e. of their normal range, appeared at Sangamon L., IL Apr. 24–25 (DBo) and Michigan City harbor, IN Apr. 25 (†CPL). This species lingered later than normal in Iowa, providing several late May records; the latest consisted of eight birds at the Midwest Power Ponds May 31 (B&LP). Stilt Sandpipers were scarce, with less than a dozen reported from 3 states. Medusa Marsh, OH yielded season high tallies of 2500 Pectoral Sandpipers Apr. 3 and 2000 Dunlin May 12 (RHa). Additionally, a lingering Pectoral at H.B.S.P., May 28 (RHn) was extremely late. It was a fine year for Ruffs, with three reported (all females): Mar. 31–Apr. 1 at Riverton, IA (TSc †*et al.*), Apr. 22 at *Ringgold*, IA (†JSi), and May 1 in *Will*, IL (†JM). Once again dowitchers were in short supply; peak counts for the Region consisted of only 30 Short-billeds at Decatur, IL May 15 (MD) and 15 Long-billeds at Cypress Creek N.W.R., IL Apr. 25 (KMc). The Com. Snipe count on an Ottawa N.W.R., OH survey was a hefty 150 (EP). The generally grim situation with Wilson's Phalaropes brightened somewhat this spring with a total of six birds reported in Illinois and Indiana and a peak count of 10 in Iowa. The Region's ten Red-necked Phalaropes, included an impressive total of six in *Story*, IA May 14 (HZ).

Gulls to Terns

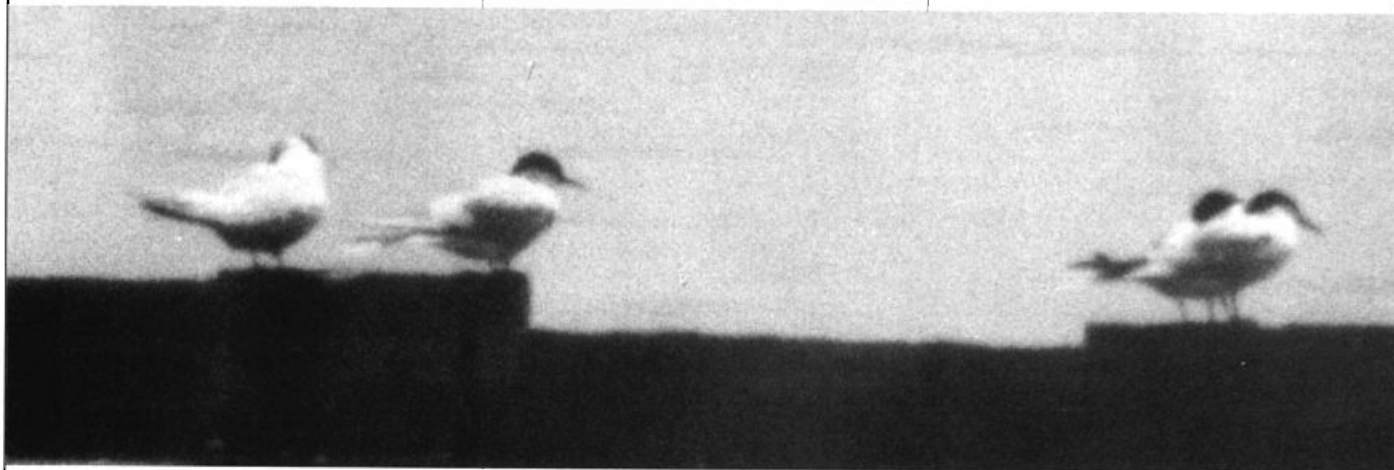
Laughing Gulls were quite common, with multiple sightings in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, plus an adult that wandered westward

to Saylorville Res., IA May 10–11 (GBr, †m.ob., ph.). Little Gull reports included one at H.B.S.P., Apr. 6 (RHn) and an immature at Decatur, IL Apr. 13 and May 14 (MD). The largest Bonaparte's Gulls concentration consisted of 2000 at Cleveland, OH Apr. 22 (FG). It was a good spring for the larger gulls on the Great Lakes; totals included: 14 Thayer's, 13 Lesser Black-backed, and 26 Glaucous gulls. The Region's only Iceland Gull, a first-year bird, was at the Port of Indiana, IN Apr. 13 (JMc).

Caspian Terns staged a strong flight on L. Michigan, providing record numbers along the Indiana lakefront, where the peak count was 497 May 2 (JMc). An early Com. Tern arrived at Jax.P., Apr. 19 (PC), otherwise the passage was typical. Most surprising was an **Arctic Tern** that associated with Commons at the Braidwood Nuclear Cooling Lake, IL May 6 (†JM, ph.). Least Terns returned to established breeding areas in *Fulton*, KY May 25 (CPE) and at the Midwest Power Ponds, IA May 27 (TK *et al.*); migrants were reported May 9 at Cypress Creek N.W.R., IL (KM), May 14 at the Rockford, IL Airport (†ABh), May 28 at Ventura Marsh, IA (CN), and four May 30 in *Jackson*, IL (TF). The Black Tern migration was somewhat better than in recent years. Despite low numbers in the e. reaches of the Region, this species was recorded in every state, with peak counts of 450 in Iowa and 120 at Spfld.

Doves to Shrikes

Missouri's 2nd **Inca Dove** reportedly frequented a suburban Rockport feeder for "some time" before being discovered by birders Mar. 6–7 (†PMc, †DE, ph.). Cuckoo reports were typically sparse in every state except Ohio, where they were recorded in good numbers (*vide* LRo). The only nesting Barn Owls were reported at 3 sites on a single farm in *Taylor*, IA (*vide* TK). A lingering Snowy Owl at H.B.S.P., Mar. 25 (RHn *et al.*) provided the only spring report. An im-



Adult Arctic Tern (center, with Common Terns) at Braidwood, Illinois, May 6, 1995. Third state record. Photograph/Joe B. Milosevich.



Inca Dove at Rocheport, Boone County, Missouri, March 7, 1995. Second state record. Photograph/David A. Easterla.

pressive 51 Barred Owls was tallied in *Knox*, IL May 6 (MB). A Short-eared Owl nest, containing 9 eggs, was found at Union Slough N.W.R., May 12 (MK). Chuck-will's-widows were reported from every state, including an e. Ohio bird in *Tuscarawas* May 10+ (ES *et al.*). The latter constituted Ohio's easternmost record. A ♂ **Rufous Hummingbird** at Mentor, OH Apr. 29–May 1 (R&DP, ph.) provided that state's first spring record and only the 2nd spring record for the Region. Migrating Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers may have been displaced westward, as numbers were down in Ohio (*fide* LRo); fine counts, including a maximum of 24 in Urbana, IL Apr. 6 (RCh), were logged farther west. Two Pileated Woodpeckers in *Clay*, IA May 13 (MO, *fide* LS) were far west of their normal range.

It was a good spring for flycatchers: Olive-sideds and E. Wood-Pewees were both widespread and more numerous than normal. Yellow-bellied Flycatchers made an excellent showing, with fine counts from every state except Kentucky. An extraordinary single day flycatcher tally was made May 28 when 40 Yellow-bellieds and 100 Least were found at A. A. Call S.P., IA (MK). The only extralimital W. Kingbird report involved two in *St. Clair*, IL May 22 (KMc). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were found in *DeKalb*, IL Apr. 22–28 (†TD m.ob.) and in *Palo Alto*, IA May 6 (MO, *fide* LS). Bewick's Wrens were more common than normal with birds at Clinton, L., IL Mar. 17 (†RCh), two in *Lee*, IA Apr. 23 (TK, RCe), a nest in *Iowa*, IA Apr. 29 (JF), *DuPage*, IL May 4 (†MS), and a pair in *Brown*, OH May 26 (BL, †NK, †RHa). The most unusual Winter Wren report consisted of 58 at Jax.P., Apr. 23 (†PC).

Sedge Wrens numbers were good, with reports from every state except Kentucky. Iowa had a Regional monopoly on rare *Sylvinaes* with two ♂ Mt. Bluebirds at Kettleston Hogsback Mar. 24 (†ET *et al.*), a Townsend's Solitaire at L. Anita Mar. 18 (†MT, †ET), and a Varied Thrush in *Washington* Jan. 18–Mar. 8 (E&BH, *fide* AY). An over anxious Veery arrived at Urbana, IL on the early date of Apr. 16 (RCh).

SA In a well-documented paper (*Wilson Bulletin* 105: 542–572) Henri Ouellet argued persuasively that the Gray-cheeked Thrush population *Bicknelli*, which nests in Quebec, the Maritime Provinces, and New England, deserved species status. Using specimen data he established several physical characters that separate Bicknell's Thrush from other Gray-cheeked races—the most unique of which was a chestnut-colored tail, and determined that *Bicknelli* winters in the Caribbean, migrates in a narrow corridor along the Atlantic coast (between s. Quebec and South Carolina). This spring, however, three Gray-cheeked Thrushes, all possessing the requisite chestnut-colored tails, were seen in c. Indiana and w. Ohio. These reports are enigmatic, as Ouellet specifically looked for, but found no evidence, that *Bicknelli* had ever occurred in Central or South America. Possible solutions to this dilemma include: 1) the existence of a previously unknown Bicknell's population in Central or South American that migrates through the Midwest, or 2) the handspecimen characters listed by Ouellet are insufficient for field separation of Bicknell's from other races of *C. minimus*.

American Pipit counts of 400 at Magee Marsh, OH May 5 (VF), >100 in Urbana, IL Mar. 12 (RCh), and 96 in *Union*, IN Apr. 11 (BB) were impressive. Five N. Shrikes were reported from the 4 n. states; the latest was seen Mar. 24 in *Emmet*, IA (DH). Noteworthy Loggerhead Shrike reports included five in *Union*, IL May 6 (TF) and a nest containing 4 eggs in *Cass*, IA May 31 (MPe).

Vireos to Warblers

A White-eyed Vireo at Urbana, IL Apr. 3 (GL) was quite early. Bell's Vireos were found on 2 territories at Buck Creek S.P., OH May 21–31 (DO), where this species has been recorded in recent springs. Solitary Vireos occupied both ends of the migration spectrum, with an early arrival in *Warrick*, IN Apr. 3 (†ML) and tardy birds at 8 Iowa locations between May 23–30 (TK). A Solitary Vireo was also seen carrying what might have been nesting material May 30 at Pigeon River W.M.A., IN (Haw *et al.*) Many correspondents supplied positive comments about the warbler flight, suggesting that—at least from the birder's perspective—it was a good spring migration. Flavor of the spring warbler flight is provided by the following high counts: 11 Golden-winged in Spfld., May 15 (DBo), >200 Tennessees in Urbana, IL May 14 (RCh), 10 Orange-crowned at Moorehead Park, IA May 9 (PE), 26 Black-throated Blues at Magee Marsh, OH May 10 (VF), 175 Yellow-rumped at Ottawa N.W.R., OH May 7 (EP *et al.*), 25 Black-throated Greens at Magee Marsh, OH May 11 (KMe), nine Pine Warblers at Jax.P., May 6 (†PC), 42 Bay-breasteds at H.B.S.P., May 21 (LRO, RHn), 100 Am. Redstarts at Magee Marsh, OH May 21 (RHa), 30 Prothonotarys at Land-Between-the-Lakes, KY Apr. 22 (JBe, PB), 16 Mourning in *O'Brien* and *Clay*, IA May 29 (LS), and 80 Com. Yellowthroats at H.B.S.P., May 14 (LRO, RHn). Without a doubt the season's best single warbler sighting was a ♀ Kirtland's Warbler that inhabited the bird trail at Magee Marsh, OH May 21 & 22 (PMo, †RHa, †NK, m.ob.). An early, and out-of-range, Prairie Warbler discovered in n.w. *Carroll*, IA Apr. 30 (†MT, RT) was noteworthy. Swainson's Warblers retained their precarious foothold in the Region with an anomalous bird at Urbana, IL May 28 (†RCh) and two at Red R. Gorge, *Powell*, KY May 20 (JBe, PB). It was an especially good spring for Connecticut Warblers, with reports from every state except Kentucky; many observers offered glowing assessments of the spring flight. In c. Missouri, a ♂ Hooded Warbler was seen Apr. 28 near Ashland (†PMc), where this species is rare. A Yellow-breasted Chat in *Calhoun*, IA Apr. 19 (DS), provided a new early arrival date for that state.

Grosbeaks to Finches

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were well represented among the migrating passerines; notable among numerous good counts were 14 at a *Calloway*, KY feeding station Apr. 30 (WB). The northward Blue Grosbeak expansion took a major step when three birds appeared at feeders near South Bend, IN during the interval May 9–13 (†VI, †TSt, *fide* VR). A ♂ Lazuli Bunting, discovered in a rural yard near Spencer, IA May 28–29 (R&EH, †LS, †HW *et al.*), showed no evidence of hybridization. Among the temporal extremes were an early ♂ Dickcissel at Spfld., Apr. 6 (DBo) and very late Am. Tree Sparrow in Jax.P., May 11 (KC). It was a good spring for Clay-colored Sparrows. Five were found in the Chicago area May 10 (LB) and two were seen along the Indiana lakefront the same day (JMc, JCd). In addition, a remarkable four singleton Clay-colored were documented in Ohio, where they are casual: May 9 in Parma (†RH), May 13 at Metzger Marsh (JBr, †LY), May 21 N. Perry (†JP), and May 21 at H.B.S.P. (†RHn). LeConte's Sparrows were also plentiful; this species peaked Mar. 18 when ten were counted in *Johnson*, IL (JDe). In Iowa a record-late LeConte's, seen May 23 in *Kosuth* (JF, TK), raised the possibility of nesting. The Region's only Sharp-tailed Sparrows were seen in Iowa, where singletons were detected May 20 in *Woodbury* (BH *et al.*) and May 21 & 24 at Tomahawk Marsh (TK *et al.*). Also in Iowa, a very late Lincoln's Sparrow was found near Spencer May 30 (TK). A White-crowned Sparrow of the rarely reported *gambelli* race was seen in Beaver Creek, OH Apr. 25–26 (JDu, ST). More Harris' Sparrows than usual ranged e. of the Mississippi R., with six in Illinois and one in Indiana. Smith's Longspurs were reported in above-normal numbers; peak counts included 60 in *De Witt*, IL Apr. 15 (MD) and 50 in *Louisa*, IA Apr. 6–7 (PP *et al.*). In extreme n.w. Iowa, single Chestnut-collared Longspurs were found in *Sioux* and *Lyon* Apr. 12, by driving paved roads after a snow storm (†TK ph.).

A W. Meadowlark wandered e. to *Tuscarawas*, OH where it was seen Mar. 25–May 13 (ES). The only extralimital Yellow-headed Blackbird was in *Delaware*, OH Mar. 19 (RH). According to Kent, Great-tailed Grackles are well established in Iowa, and expanding eastward. A similar pattern emerged in Missouri, where two ♂ Great-taileds wandered E to Columbia May 13 (†PMc *et al.*). A very early Orchard Oriole arrived in Urbana, IL Apr. 16 (RCh *et al.*). Winter finches were acutely scarce across the Region. The only Pine Grosbeaks consisted of two wintering birds that lingered at Spencer, IA until Mar. 8 (†JF, †TK, LS, ph.).

Even Purple Finch were hard to find, with only a handful reported from most states. The season's only crossbills consisted of three Reds at the Morton Arboretum, Chicago Apr. 29 (CA). Single Com. Redpolls were reported from Ogden Dunes, IN Apr. 24 (JW) and North Royalton, OH May 7 (JT). The Region's maximum Pine Siskin count of only five clearly attested to a dearth of winter finches. Eurasian Tree Sparrows continued their march up the Mississippi R. valley, with reports of 25 in *Mercer*, IL and two in *Louisa*, IA (PP).

Uncorroborated Report

The following sighting was not accompanied by documentation, was reportedly photographed, and may well be valid: ad. Curlew Sandpiper May 4 at Medusa Marsh, OH.

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Male Chestnut-collared Longspur in Sioux County, Iowa, April 12, 1995.
Photograph/Thomas H. Kent.