

Middle-western Prairie Region

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The Region experienced another of those "unique" fall migrations. Robert Chapel's ironic suggestion that the arrival of autumn's first hard freeze announced the time to go look for hummingbirds, seemed to capture the season's flavor. Following last spring's stressful fallout, many observers expected the autumn flight to show depleted passerine populations. Instead, Regional songbird reports were ambiguous, with a majority of correspondents suggesting that numbers were near average. In contrast, the Region was awash with the rarer loons, jaegers, and Snowy Owls. Perhaps the most salient aspect of the season was the remarkable number of rarities; no fewer than fourteen boldfaced species are contained in the narrative. Several correspondents suggested that relatively fine early fall weather allowed most migrant passerines to overfly the Region. There was considerably less speculation about what factors produced the rarities.

Abbreviations: Carl.L. (*Carlyle L. in Clinton, Fayette, and Bond Co., IL*), Jax.P. (*Jackson Park on the Chicago lakefront*); H.B.S.P. (*Headlands Beach S.P., OH*); L. Cal. (*L. Calumet, Chicago*); O.N.W.R. (*Ottawa N.W.R., OH*); R.E.D.A. (*Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, MO*), S.C.R. (*Squaw Creek N.W.R., MO*); Spfld. (*Springfield, IL*).

Loons to Wood Stork

It was a phenomenal fall for rare loons. Red-throated Loons were reported in every state with unprecedented numbers on s. L. Michigan. Inland birds included three in Indiana, two in Illinois, Kentucky, and Ohio, plus singletons in Iowa and Missouri. On L. Michigan, 24 Red-throateds were counted off Chicago (*vide DJ*) and 35 were reported on the Indiana lakefront (KB). Pacific Loon reports were even more spectacular, with sightings in every state except Kentucky. Reports included

singletons at Rathbun Res., IA Oct. 11 (†RCu); Clinton L., IL Nov. 10–14 (GL, m.ob.); Red Rock Res., IA Nov. 3, 7 & 18 (†AJ, †m.ob.); Saylorville Res., IA Nov. 5 (SD); Hurshtown Res., IN Nov. 17 (JMc, † *et al.*); Navy Pier, Chicago, Nov. 19–24 (†RHu, m.ob.); Montrose, Chicago, Nov. 21 (†RHu); Smithville Res., MO Nov. 23 (CH, PMc *et al.*); Caesar's Creek Res., OH Nov. 25 (†NK *et al.*); and Illinois Beach S.P., Dec. 7 (ASt). The Region experienced a typical Red-necked Grebe flight with five in Illinois, two in Indiana, one in Missouri, and one in Iowa. The southernmost Eared Grebe report came from the Brown Power Plant ash pond, Mercer, KY Sept. 20 (BPB). Western Grebes were reported at 15 locations in Iowa; ten birds were seen in Missouri—one of which was near St. Louis Aug. 7 (EK); eight were seen in Illinois, including three at Clinton L., Nov. 14–17 (MD *et al.*); and two appeared along the Indiana lakefront.

Am. White Pelicans peaked at 4700 in Iowa and >700 in Carroll, IL; several wandered E to Ohio, where the peak count was six at Ottawa N.W.R., Sept. 28 (DO *et al.*). An imm. Brown Pelican spent several days (at least Nov. 1–7) at Lock & Dam 18 on the Mississippi R. (CFu, †JF, †DBo, DK, m.ob.); this bird was seen in both *Des Moines, IA*, and *Henderson, IL*. Another poorly seen Brown Pelican was reported on a local pond in *Franklin, OH* Sept. 18 (†RHf, RMc). The Double-crested Cormorant explosion continued this fall with astronomical counts of 15,000 at Kelly's I., OH Sept. 28 (TBa) and 8000 at

Carl.L., Oct. 10 (DK). A Neotropic Cormorant was present in *Jackson, IL* Jul. 27–Aug. 8 (DK, DM, RD). Most surprising was a soaring *Anhinga* in *Washington, IA* Sept. 17 (†SD). Both Snowy Egrets and Little Blue Herons were more widespread and plentiful than normal; the peak Snowy count was 70 in *Madison, IL* July 21 (KMc), and the Little Blue maximum was 100 at O'Fallon, IL Sept. 17 (KMc). Tricolored Heron reports were also up, with singletons at Cooley L., MO Aug. 4 (J&EZ); Chain-of-Rocks, IL Aug. 9 (DK, LA); an immature at Carl.L., Aug. 22 (†DBo); and an adult at H.B.S.P., Sept. 8 (RHn, LRo, EB). A count of 708 Cattle Egrets at Waubonsie W.M.A., IA Sept. 9 (SD) was most impressive. The only identified White-faced Ibis was at Sauget, IL Aug. 22 (VK). Unidentified *Plegadis* ibis were reported at Carl.L., Sept. 29 (DK), at Pine Creek W.M.A., IN Oct. 1–3 (†BD *et al.*), at Schell-Osage W.M.A., MO Oct. 5 (SA), and at Killdeer Plains W.M.A., OH Nov. 10 (†DO). Two imm. **Wood Storks**, first discovered at R.E.D.A., Aug. 10 (PB), were still present the following morning (†DE, JH, LG), but then moved across the Mississippi R. to Wood R., in *Madison, IL*, where they remained until Aug. 17 (WR, DK, †DJ, m.ob.).

Waterfowl to Cranes

A Fulvous Whistling-Duck at Chain-of-Rocks, *Madison, IL* Aug. 8–9 (†DBo, LA, DK, m.ob.), provided a pleasant surprise for Illinois birders. Greater White-fronted Geese were well represented in the fall flight, with reports from every state except



Kentucky. The easternmost report consisted of two at Killdeer Plains W.M.A., OH Nov. 10–13 (DO, RHa, SW). Ross' Geese were also quite prevalent, with high counts of 16 at S.C.R., Nov. 19 (DE) and seven at Baldwin L., IL Nov. 9 (DBe). The Region's only Brant report came from Cleveland, where one was seen Nov. 15–17 (TL, m.ob.). Selected peak duck counts include: 400 Wood Ducks at Coon Island W.M.A., MO Sept. 5 (PMc), 40,000 Green-winged Teal at L. Chatauqua N.W.R., IL Nov. 2 (RCh), 20,200 Mallards at LaSalle Co. Nuclear Plant (C&JMc), 2000 N. Shovelers at Lake Chatauqua N.W.R., IL Sept. 28 (RCh), 3000 Canvasback at Pool, IA Nov. 23 (TK), and 4500 Lesser Scaup at West Okoboki, IA Oct. 30 (SD). The Region's only Eur. Wigeon was at Clarence Cannon N.W.R., MO Oct. 26–27 (SV). An ad. ♂ Harlequin Duck arrived at Whiting Park, IN Oct. 24 (JBo), only to be shot by a hunter in mid-November. Oldsquaw were unusually widespread at inland sites, with reports from every state except Kentucky. Scoters were also plentiful, with all 3 species reported in every state.

A well north of range Black Vulture at Illinois Beach S.P., Oct. 19 (†ASt, †PS, *et al.*) provided the first Chicago area record in several decades. Other notable Black Vulture reports included 50 at a roost near Lawrenceport, IN in October and November (SBk) and >50 at the East Bend Power Plant, Boone, KY Sept. 21 (LMc). It was a remarkable fall for Mississippi Kites, with reports from every state except Missouri and Ohio. Most of the sightings apparently involved birds lingering in breeding areas. These included an adult at Des Moines, IA Aug. 17 & 27–30 and Sept. 2, plus an immature at that location Sept. 13 (PW); three, including a juvenile being fed, in Pike State Forest, IN Aug. 16 (JcP, ML, AT); nine adults and one immature at Union County W.M.A., IL Aug. 17 (RD); an immature in Jefferson, IL Aug. 27 (DBo, VK), and an adult in lower Hickman bottoms, Fulton, KY Aug. 24 (BPB). An out-of-range adult was seen in Normal, IL Aug. 16 (†GL). Only six N. Goshawks were reported in the Region. The main Broad-winged Hawk flight apparently circumnavigated the Region; the only sizable count consisted of >1000 at Urbana, IL Sept. 22 (RCh *et al.*). The latter hawk movement also included an imm. Swainson's Hawk (†RCh). A well described imm. Ferruginous Hawk was among the raptors migrating past Illinois Beach S.P., Oct. 18 (†RHu). An imm. Golden Eagle wandered S to Green River Res., KY, where it was seen Nov. 27



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(DRo). Merlin numbers continue to increase across the Region; the 78 reported were scattered across every state except Kentucky. The peak Merlin count was 21 at Illinois Beach S.P. Oct. 18 (RE *et al.*). An imm. ♀ Prairie Falcon was discovered roosting on the Mid-America Energy building in Davenport, IA Oct. 31 and was still present Nov. 1 & 2 (JF, CE). The only other Prairie Falcon report came from Philo, IL, where one was seen Dec. 2 (RW).

An extraordinarily cooperative Yellow Rail at McElroy L., KY Oct. 19–28 (†DRo, m.ob.) provided one of very few records for that state. A single Yellow Rail was also found at Snake Cr. Marsh, IA Sept. 19 (JF). The peak Com. Moorhen count consisted of 25 in Madison, IL Sept. 16 (KMc), and young birds were reported at Green Island W.M.A., IA (JF) and Pigeon River W.M.A., IN (Haw *et al.*). Based on counts of 25,000 at Spirit L., IA Oct. 28 (ET) and 11,119 at Lock & Dam 13, Whiteside, IL (EWa), the Region's Am. Coot population is flourishing. Sandhill Cranes are also doing well, with a mid-November peak of 26,366 at the Jasper-Pulaski W.M.A., IN, staging area (*fide* JCs). Fine extralimital Sandhill counts included 152 at Barringer Slough, IA Oct. 31 (SD) and 70 in Mercer, OH Nov. 23 (DD). One of this century's few

confirmed Whooping Crane reports involved an adult photographed at Stockton L., MO Oct. 31 (KJ); a picture was reportedly printed in the Springfield, MO, newspaper (*fide* CH).

Shorebirds

Piping Plover reports from the Iowa breeding sites included two juveniles at Port Neale Aug. 4 (BH) and two adults plus a juvenile at the Pottawattamie power plant Aug. 22 (B&LP). Single migrants were reported at Carl L., Aug. 17 (RCh), Saylorville Res., IA Aug. 21 (SD), Rend L., IL Sept. 9 (†SJu), L. Lemon, IN Sept. 6–12 (J&SH), and in Clay, IA Sept. 24 (LS). In Illinois, Black-necked Stilts lingered through August, with four at Chain-of-Rocks Aug. 8–11 (†DBo, m.ob.) and two at Sauget Aug. 22 (VK). In Kentucky, another Black-necked Stilt was discovered in a large group of waders on the Mississippi R. at Island No. 8 Aug. 24 (BPB). American Avocet flocks, ranging from five to 13 birds each, were reported in every state except Missouri.

Noteworthy peak shorebird counts included 125 Semipalmated Plovers at Ottawa N.W.R., OH Sept. 1 (EP *et al.*), 600 Lesser Yellowlegs at L. Chatauqua N.W.R., IL Aug. 31 (RCh), 164 Willets at Montrose (Chicago lakefront) Aug. 6 (RHu), 785 Pectoral Sandpipers at Say-

lorville Res., IA Aug. 21 (SD), 600 Dunlin at H.B.S.P., Nov. 2 (RHn), 1400 Stilt Sandpipers at Swan Lake N.W.R., Aug. 28 (BO), 150 Com. Snipe at L. Chautauqua N.W.R., IL Nov. 7 (VK *et al.*), and 232 Short-billed Dowitchers at Ottawa N.W.R., OH Sept. 1 (EP *et al.*). The only Whimbrel reports consisted of single birds at: Carlyle L., IL Aug. 10 & 24 (MD, DK, RCh), Metzger Marsh, OH Aug. 31 (m.ob.), and Lorain, OH Sept. 5 (RH, SW). A Long-billed Curlew at Smart Airfield, St. Charles, MO Sept. 8–14 (TBo), provided that state's first fall record since the early 1900s (*vide* CH). Hudsonian Godwits were scarce, with only three reported e. of the Mississippi R. Marbled Godwits were slightly more common, with nine birds scattered across the 4 n. states; the peak count was three at Chicago Aug. 23 (EWa, RHu). Red Knots were quite scarce, with only seven birds in Ohio, four in Illinois, four in Indiana, and two in Iowa. Inland knot reports included two at Union Slough N.W.R., IA Aug. 25 (†MK) and one at Gilmore Ponds, Butler, OH Sept. 6 (NK, DD). Baird's Sandpipers were reported in all 6 states, with 13 at L. Cal., Aug. 18 (WM), ten at Metzger Marsh, OH Aug. 31 (JDu, ST, LRo), and eight on a Mississippi R. sandbar in Carlisle, KY Aug. 25 (BPB). Most of the Region's Purple Sandpipers were on L. Erie where four were found; the only report elsewhere consisted of one in Waukegon, IL Nov. 22 (CT). Buff-breasted Sandpipers were unusually widespread with reports from every state; noteworthy observations included 20 in Boone, IL Aug. 20 (BGo), 12 in Allen, OH Sept. 8 (DD), 5+ on a Mississippi R. sandbar in Carlisle, KY Aug. 25 (BPB), and three at the Falls of the Ohio, KY Aug. 31–Sept. 1 (J&PB *et al.*). An extremely late Wilson's Phalarope at Union Slough N.W.R., Oct. 20 (MK) established a new late departure date for Iowa. It was a good season for Red-necked Phalaropes, with reports from all 4 n. states; the peak count was an impressive 18 at Metzger Marsh, OH Aug. 31 (TKp, JDu, ST, LRo). Red Phalaropes staged a strong flight, with four in Ohio, four in Indiana, three in Illinois, and two in Iowa. Inland records included singles at: Carl.L., Sept. 30 (†JV), Arcola, IL Oct. 6 (RCh), Saylorville Res., IA Oct. 13–14 (†JF, RA, ph. †m.ob.), Carl.L., Oct. 14 (DK), and Spirit L., IA Nov. 3 (ET, ph., †LS).

Jaegers to Murrelets

The Region experienced the largest jaeger flight since the mid-1950s, with 88 birds reported.

SA A record number of Pomarine Jaegers were reported across the Region. Although it is possible that some of these individuals might have been counted at more than one location, the final tally included eight in Ohio, seven in Illinois, six in Iowa, six in Indiana, and three in Missouri. Most were juveniles and all acceptable sightings were made in November or early December. Notable records within this throng included: three–four juveniles at Huron, OH Nov. 30 (†ES, TH, JM *et al.*) a total of three at Saylorville Res., IA, between Nov. 10–22 (†SD, †JDI), three juveniles at Miller Beach, IN Nov. 11 (†JMc), a total of three different immatures at Spfld. between Nov. 8–26 (†DBo, DO, JDu, VK *et al.*), three juveniles at Huron, OH Nov. 29 (†JDu), a total of three birds at Red Rock Res., IA, during the interval Nov. 16–30 (†JF, †TK, †CE, †RCu), two on Carl.L., Nov. 16 (†DBo, DM, DK), two at R.E.D.A., Nov. 20–27 (one lingered through the end of the period; KL), and one was at Smithville Res., MO Nov. 23 (†PMC, m.ob.). A cursory exam of past fall reports revealed that the Region's previous fall Pomarine maximum was 18 in 1988.

Parasitic Jaegers were also plentiful, with 17 in Indiana, 16 in Ohio, and singletons in Illinois and Missouri. Additionally, some 27 unidentified jaegers were reported.

The ever-expanding Laughing Gull population was reported in every state except Missouri. Inland sightings included a juvenile at Runnells W.M.A., IA Aug. 17 (†SD, RCu) and a first-year bird was at Kentucky Dam Aug. 24 (BPB). An ad. Mew Gull was discovered with Ring-billed Gulls at Saylorville Res., IA Nov. 29 (†SD), providing one of few reports from that state. The only adequately document-



Red-necked Phalarope at Saylorville Reservoir, Iowa, August 11, 1996. Photograph/Reid Allen.



Found on the Lake Michigan beach at the Migrant Trap, Hammond, Indiana, October 19, 1996, this bird was apparently a third-year Kelp Gull. This species of the southern hemisphere has occurred several times on the coast of Louisiana and Texas, but not inland in North America. Photograph/Jon L. Dunn.

ed California Gull was an adult at Michigan City Harbor, IN Nov. 9 (†KB, †JCd, SBg, CFi, BJa). Inland Thayer's Gull reports included: a first-year bird at Carl.L., Oct. 30–Nov. 18 (DK), 17 birds from 7 locations in Iowa, a first-year bird below Kentucky Dam Nov. 17 (BPB), and a first-year bird at Buck Creek S.P., OH Nov. 9, 10, 16, & 17 (†DO). The season's only Iceland Gull report consisted of a first-year bird in Jax.P., Nov. 24 (PC). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen in every state; noteworthy reports included an adult above Barkely Dam, KY Oct. 4–5 (BPB *et al.*), a first-year bird at the latter site Nov. 5 & 6 (BPB), an adult at R.E.D.A., Nov. 12 & 18 (KMc, JV), a first-year bird at Red Rock Res., IA Nov. 27 (†SD), and a first-year bird at Kentucky Dam Nov. 9+ (BPB). The Region's first Kelp Gull, a 3rd-year bird, was found on a L. Michigan beach at the Migrant Trap, IN (about one km from Illinois) Oct. 19 (†KB, †JD, †m.ob. ph., v.t.); it was seen at the same location the following morning (RHu, †RCh), and Oct. 26 at the Gary landfill (RHu *et al.*). Black-legged Kittiwakes were unusually widespread this fall. Reports included seven in Indiana, five in Illinois, two in Iowa, two in Ohio, and one in Missouri. For the 2nd consecutive year the Region enjoyed a plethora of Sabine's Gulls. State tallies were seven in Illinois, five in Indiana, three in Iowa, and two in Ohio. Early Sabine's arrived at Beverly Shores, IN Sept. 4 (BGu) and Lorain, OH Sept. 6–7 (TL, †JPg); the peak count was four at Carl.L., Sept. 28 (KMc, DK, DBo).

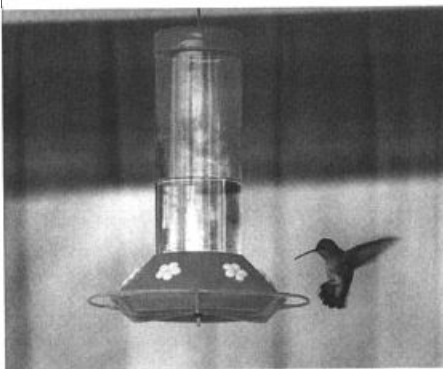
Indiana's 2nd-largest Com. Tern flight ever was recorded Sept. 24 when 7930 were

counted flying past Michigan City Harbor (†DP). Least Terns lingered in nesting areas with eight adults and two young at the *Pottawattamie*, IA, power plant Aug. 13 (B&LP), one bird at Port Neal, IA Aug. 10 (BH), one at L. Gibson, IN Aug. 25 (GB), and six–seven juveniles on a Mississippi R. sandbar in *Carlisle*, KY Sept. 8 (BPB). Elsewhere, Least Tern reports included a juvenile at Riverton W.M.A., IA Aug. 13 (SD), a first-year bird at L. Lemon, IN Aug. 22 (J&SH), three (including at least one juvenile) over Kentucky Dam Aug. 24 (BPB), and one at Swan Lake W.M.A., KY Sept. 8 (BPB). Vying for honors as the most popular bird of the season was an extremely cooperative Asian *Marbled Murrelet* that remained at Beaver Creek Res., *Seneca*, OH Nov. 12–18 (TW, †FV, †JDu, ph., m.ob.), where it was seen by some 300 people (*vide* VF).

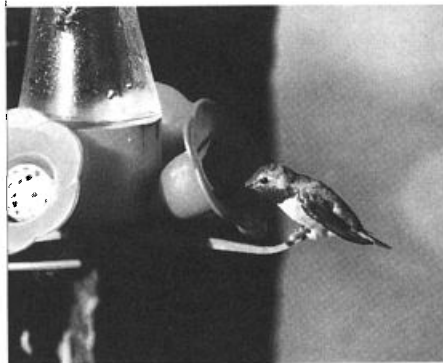
Cuckoos to Woodpeckers

A surprisingly large count of nine Yellow-billed Cuckoos was made Aug. 4 at Ottawa N.W.R., OH (EP, *et al.*). Barn Owls nested in *Union*, IL, where a nest was found Sept. 30 (KMc), and in a *Dearborn*, IN, barn where four chicks fledged in late August/early September (A. Parker, *vide* JCs). A migrant Barn Owl was also seen on the Chicago lakefront at Montrose Nov. 8 (KH, m.ob.). The single Snowy Owls that appeared on the Chicago lakefront at Jax.P. (PC) and Montrose (JPu) Nov. 12 proved to be the vanguard of a major flight across the Region. The heaviest movement was in the Chicago area, where 41 were reported, included a daily maximum of nine Nov. 23 (DJ *et al.*). In addition, 14 were reported in Indiana (13 on the lakefront), four in Ohio, four in Iowa, and three in Missouri. The largest Com. Nighthawk movement consisted of 700 birds counted near L. Lemon, IN Aug. 28 (J&SH).

Once again the autumn hummingbird news was dominated by *Selasphorus* reports; this time, however, the season was also flavored by the Region's first representative from the genus *Cynanthus*. Illinois' first **Broad-billed Hummingbird**, a female, which attended a feeder on the w. side of Trivoli, *Peoria*, IL Nov. 7–23 (†DBo, VK, †DJ, ph., v.t., m.ob.), was captured and the identification confirmed by measurements (MD). Adult ♂ Rufous Hummingbirds visited feeders in Fordland, MO Aug 1–3 (JSh), Springfield, MO Aug. 6–10 (LRi), near Sprit L., IA Aug. 21–23 (†LSc, †JF, ET, ph.), and in Luckey, OH Sept. 8–Nov. 13 (RFR, GS, ph.). In addition, an imm. female was netted and measured in Urbana, IL Oct. 7 (SBl, EWA, †RCh, †BC) and an imm. male was captured, banded, and mea-



A first for Illinois was this female Broad-billed Hummingbird in Trivoli, Peoria County, November 22, 1996. Photograph/Joe B. Milosevich.



In Luckey, Ohio, this adult male Rufous Hummingbird was present for much of the autumn of 1996. Photograph/Raymond Froelich and Gwen Schult.

sured in Springfield, MO Oct. 29 (LRi). Other Rufous/Allen's type *Selasphorus* hummingbirds were found: in Guthrie, IN Sept. 26–Nov. 11 (J&SH, *et al.*), Trigg, KY Nov. 17 (BPB), Sedalia, MO Nov. 1–14 (Mrs. A. Hancock), and Columbia, MO Nov. 18 (†PMc). The peak Red-headed Woodpecker counts included 27 in *Greene*, IL Sept. 30 (DBo) and 25 in the Lake of the Ozarks S.P., MO Sept. 28 (PMc).

Flycatchers to Warblers

Late Alder Flycatchers were recorded Sept. 17 at Beverly Shores, IN (JMc, SJa), Spfld., Sept. 24 (DBo), and at H.B.S.P., Sept. 29 (LRo). The only out-of-range W. Kingbird was seen in Evanston, IL Aug. 26 (IM). A tardy Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was still in *Lawrence*, MO Nov. 5 (BGi). Peak swallow concentrations included 2000 Purple Martins at Lorain, OH Aug. 21 (RH, SW), 50,000 Tree Swallows at Lake Chatauqua N.W.R., IL Sept. 28 (RCh), 3000 N. Rough-winged Swallows at Mark Twain N.W.R., IL Sept. 22 (DBo), 10,000 Bank Swallows at Metzger Marsh, OH Aug. 21 (RH, SW), 150 Cliff Swallows at Universal, IN Aug. 17

(AB), and 2000 Barn Swallows at L. Manawa, IA (B&LP). An imm. **Pinyon Jay** appeared at the Faylan and Lloyd Crim feeding station in rural *Boone*, IA Nov. 30 (†JDi, †MP, †TK, ph.), to provide that state's 2nd record. Red-breasted Nuthatches were scarce across the Region with <9 reported in each state. A surprisingly early migrant Veery appeared in Jax.P., July 23 (PC). A Sept. 29 Bloomington, IN, nocturnal Swainson's Thrush count (by ear) yielded an impressive 120 birds (JLi, RT). In addition, a late Swainson's lingered in Des Moines, IA, until Nov. 14 (†RCe). A Wood Thrush remained at Tower Grove Park, MO, until Oct. 15 (JV). Both of the Region's Varied Thrushes appeared in the Chicago area. A female was in Lincoln Park Oct. 25–27 (KH, MD) and a male was in Waukegan Nov. 24+ (*vide* RBi). One of the season's most provocative reports involved an unidentified wagtail that flew over the H.B.S.P., beach Sept. 9 (†KMT). Following last fall's invasion, N. Shrikes returned to a more typical pattern, with five birds reported in the 4 n. states. The largest Loggerhead Shrike count involved a family group of four in *Sangamon*, IL Aug. 1 (DBo).

An out-of-range White-eyed Vireo appeared in *Cerro Gordo*, IA Sept. 7 & 9 (AJ, RG). Record-late Warbling Vireos were recorded at Grammer Grove W.M.A., IA Sept. 28 (MP) and in Shades S.P., IN, on the amazing date of Oct. 26 (†AB, †Jcd). Some fine vireo counts were logged this fall, with 12 Warblings at H.B.S.P., Sept. 14 (RHn, EB, LRo), 12 Philadelphias in Iowa City Sept. 15 (CE), and ten Philadelphias at H.B.S.P., Sept. 21 (RHn, EB, LRo). In addition, an extremely early Philadelphia Vireo arrived at Fox Island S.P., IN Aug. 16 (Haw). The fall migration failed to resolve the issue of how detrimental the harsh spring was on the warbler population. Correspondent comments were typical, covering virtually the entire spectrum. In Iowa, Kent's assess-

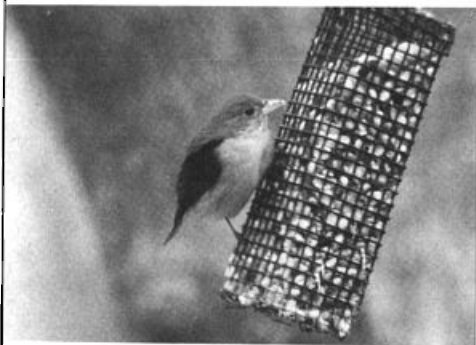


Probably a refugee from drought in the west, this Pinyon Jay that appeared November 30, 1996, in Boone County, Iowa, furnished a second state record. Photograph/Thomas H. Kent.

ment was "the early passerine migration was not spectacular with no raving comments about warbler fallouts." At the other extreme, Ohio birders Rosche and Hannikman felt it was the best fall ever for Nashville, N. Parula, Magnolia, and Bay Breasted warblers. Similarly, in Illinois Chapel deemed it a poor passerine flight, while McNeely felt the n. Kentucky warbler migration was above average. Impressive fall warbler tallies included: 17 Orange-crowneds at Moorehead Park, IA Sept. 28 (PE), 30 Nashvilles at H.B.S.P., Sept. 21 (RHn, EB, LRo), 27 Chestnut-sideds at Ames, IA Aug. 31 (PMA), 33 Magnolias at H.B.S.P., Sept. 29 (RHn, EB, LRo), and 26 Cape Mays at H.B.S.P., Sept. 14 (RHn, EB, LRo). Additionally, late birds were recorded as follows: a Tennessee at Pine Creek W.M.A., IN Oct. 29 (BD), a Chestnut-sided in Evanston, IL Oct. 8 (EWa), a Cape May in Indianola, IA Nov. 30 (JS), a Prairie in Greene, IL Nov. 10 (†DBo), a Cerulean in Carlyle, IL Oct. 2 (DK), a Worm-eating in Yellowwood S.F., IN Sept. 29 (RT, JLi), and an Ovenbird that lingered in Carroll, IA until Oct. 18 (EWi). Rare or out-of-range warbler reports included a ♂ Black-throated Blue in Middle Cr. Park., KY Sept. 7 (LMc), a Prothonotary at Gilmore Ponds, OH Sept. 7 (*vide* NK), a Kentucky in Clay, IA Aug. 27 (LSc), and a Swainson's in Springfield, MO Sept. 17 (DRi). The warbler of the season, however, was a banded Kirtland's Warbler seen at Chicago-Montrose Sept. 13-15 (†RHu, †WS, ph., m.ob.). Based on the color leg band combination it was determined that the bird was an imm. male banded in *Ogemaw*, MI, Aug. 15, 1996 (*vide* RBi).

Tanagers to Finches

A late Scarlet Tanager attended the feeder of Dick and Nancy Lynch in Iowa City, Nov. 21 (JE, TK ph.). Also quite late was a singing ad. ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak near



A most unusual feeder visitor, this very late Scarlet Tanager was in Iowa City, Iowa, November 21, 1996. Photograph/Thomas H. Kent.

Chesterton, IN Nov. 8 (Bjo). A Blue Grosbeak at Rochester, IL Sept. 24 (DBo) was also quite tardy. Rare in fall anywhere in the Region, a imm. ♂ **Painted Bunting** found dead at McCormick Place (Chicago lakefront) Oct. 10 (DS, *) provided Illinois' first specimen record. A Dickcissel lingered in O'Fallon, IL Nov. 22-Dec. 3 (†KMc).

The newly commissioned Spotted Towhee was reported as follows: a male at Saylorville Res., IA Sept. 25 (SD), a female at Saylorville Res., IA Oct. 7 (SD), one at the Chicago Bird Sanctuary Oct. 24 (†RHu), one at L. Manawa, IA Oct. 28 (B&LP), and one in Dundee, IL Dec. 1 (ASt, m.ob.). Noteworthy among several Clay-colored Sparrow reports were singletons in Gordon Park, Cleveland, Oct. 5 (†ES), at the Migrant Trap, IN Oct. 12-19 (KB, JCd, JDu, m.ob.), and in Chicago Nov. 23-Dec. 1 (DBo, DJ, JLa, video). The season's best, and most cooperative, sparrow was Illinois' 3rd **Brewer's Sparrow**, which was discovered in Chicago's Lincoln Park Nov. 27 and remained through the period (†RHu, †DJ, JLa, DBo, m.ob., ph., v.t.). A late Lark Sparrow was still in Colfax, IL Oct. 4 (MR). An impressive count of 120 Savannah Sparrows was made in Clay, IA Aug. 27 (LSc). Remarkably, Le Conte's Sparrows were reported in all 6 states. Noteworthy records included one in Cleveland's Gordon Park Oct. 5 (†ES), one in the Sauerheber Unit of Sloughs W.M.A., KY Oct. 13 (BPB), and a total of 72 counted on the Oct. 26 annual survey in *Boone* and *Calloway*, MO (PMc *et al.*). Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were also widespread, with reports from every state except Missouri. Multiple Harris' Sparrow reports came from Illinois and Indiana; the peak consisted of six at a Hammond, IN feeder Nov. 14 (S. Metzinger, *vide* JBo). East of the Mississippi R., Yellow-headed Blackbirds reports included an imm. male at Sangamon L., IL Aug. 3 (DBo) and a female at L. Lemon, IN Aug. 24 (J&SH). An imm. Baltimore Oriole lingered at an Iowa City feeder through Nov. 30 (JE, TK, SD).

Except for Red Crossbills, the winter finch flight was nil. Only a smattering of Purple Finch, Com. Redpolls, and Pine Siskins appeared in the Region. Red Crossbill reports came from every state except Kentucky, with peak counts of 60 at Illinois Beach S.P. Nov. 2 (ASt) and 54 at L. Jacomo, MO Nov. 9 (†PMc, †DE, ph. *et al.*). The Region's only White-winged Crossbills consisted of two males at Ryder's Woods Forest Preserve, IL Oct. 23 (RBa). The entire Evening Grosbeak flight consisted of a single male seen at Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve, IL Aug. 15 (†RFi).



Brewer's Sparrow in Lincoln Park, Chicago, Illinois, November 27, 1996. Third state record. Photograph/Joe B. Milosevich.



Red Crossbills began appearing very early in the season. This adult male (of a large-billed type) showed up August 5, 1996, at a feeder in Bolckow, Andrew County, Missouri; apparently famished, the bird was feeding on sunflower seeds, and was photographed by flashlight on the feeder after dark! Photograph/David A. Easterla.

Corrigenda

The Rockport, MO, Baird's Sandpiper reported in the winter 1995-1996 summary (*AFN* 50:176) was seen Jan. 14 not Feb. 21.

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Central Southern Region

GREG D. JACKSON

Veterans of many battles, the troops responded to the call. Into the field they marched, clutching Zeiss and Leica, Kowa and Questar. Heavy were the early volleys from legions of large waders and lingering/early-migrant waterfowl; the force remained undaunted. Hordes of raptors flanked their left, a mixed band of shorebirds threatened the right. The troops engaged the strong waves of passerines at mid-field, with many opponents persisting late in the fray. It was a good day to bird.

The weather this autumn was not exceptional; there were no direct hits in our area from the tropics, though one storm brushed the coast. Temperatures were generally normal to slightly low. Precipitation in north Alabama was average, though September was wetter than usual; record rainfall was reported from west Tennessee, though.

Top raptor days at Fort Morgan, Alabama, were reported by Cimprich and Fos-

dick as October 4, 8–11, and 18–19; the peak occurred October 9. For passerines at the coast, September 13, 17, 20, and 29, and October 8–12 and 19 were notable. Following a strong front, Bob Duncan reported the best autumn warbler fallout in memory on the Florida coast September 29. Cimprich and associates had a stellar day October 19 after a front; birding also was good October 8–12 after tropical storm *Josephine* transited the northern Gulf.

I have followed a policy over the years of *personally* reviewing documentation of all rarities, basing the need on the status of the species and difficulty of identification. I must feel comfortable with the details to list a significant rarity in this column, whatever the decision of other reviewers; the exception is for a properly processed specimen. This evaluation is fundamental to the job of a *Regional Editor*. All observers, no matter their experience, are held to this standard for the sake of fairness. Again this year, I was disappointed to exclude several undoubtedly valid sightings for which I could not obtain details. I appreciate the many observers and Subregional Editors who take the time to include rarity documentation with their material, responding also to occasional queries.

Abbreviations: b. (*banded*); C.P. (*Cameron Parish, s.w. LA*); L.S.U. (*Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science, Baton Rouge*); N.N.W.R. (*Noxubee N.W.R., e.c. MS*); p.a. (*pending acceptance by the state bird records committee*); S.L.

