

18 Jul at Elm Creek NC, *Hennepin*, was the second earliest record in southern Minnesota. Very late in Wisconsin were 2 Bohemian Waxwings 6 Jun in *Vilas* (BF, KF), only the second summer record in the state.

Blue-winged Warblers are expanding their range in Minnesota, as evidenced by reports as far west as *Kandiyohi*, *Renville*, *Brown*, and *Blue Earth* this season. Tennessee Warblers appeared to linger outside their normal breeding areas in all three states and arrived south early in both Minnesota and Wisconsin. Considered noteworthy in Minnesota were Northern Parulas 25 Jun in *Anoka* (WM) and an early migrant 19 Jul in *Hennepin* (SC). Wisconsin reported Yellow-throated Warblers summering again at Wyalusing S.P., while Michigan had reports from *Allegan* and *Berrien*. In Minnesota, where the species is still considered casual, there was a pair at Sibley S.P., *Kandiyohi* (RF, JFr), and one 18 Jun at William O'Brien S.P., *Washington* (DZ). A Pine Warbler to mid-Jun in Madison (PA) was considered unusual in Wisconsin. There were 891 singing males detected during this year's Kirtland's Warbler census in Michigan, down slightly from last year's 902 birds. There were 8 reported from four Upper Peninsula counties, with successful nesting in *Marquette* for the 5th consecutive year. The only Prairie Warbler report in Wisconsin was of one on 2 Jul in *Dane* (PA). Minnesota had its first summer records for Kentucky Warbler in four years with singles 20 May–24 Jun at Minneopa S.P., *Blue Earth* (ME, et al.), 25 Jun–19 Jul at Murphy-Hanrehan Park, *Scott* (BFa et al.), and 18 Jun at Lebanon Hills Park, *Dakota* (SWe). Michigan also had an exceptional summer for Kentucky Warblers, with reports from four counties, including up to 6 individuals in *Hillsdale* (JRe).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

A pair of **Summer Tanagers** in *Hillsdale* (JRe) provided a rare summer record in Michigan. Minnesota reported a second-year male Summer Tanager 24 Jun in Murphy-Hanrehan Park, *Scott* (BFa). A Spotted Towhee was reported in Minnesota on 3 Jun at Litchfield NC, *Meeker* (DF). Both Minnesota and Wisconsin reported good numbers of Henslow's Sparrows this season. Noteworthy in Wisconsin were at least 4 Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows through Jun at Crex Meadows W.A. Troubling in Minnesota was only one report of Chestnut-collared Longspur from their traditional location at Felton Prairie, *Clay*. Also in that state, Blue Grosbeaks were more widespread this season. Perhaps the same **Painted Bunting**

that summered in Minnesota last year spent the season at Maple Grove, *Hennepin*. Dickcissels were more common this season, reaching the northern portions of the region, perhaps the best irruption since 1984. Minnesota had a its first confirmed nesting for **Great-tailed Grackle** in *Jackson* (AHe, PH). Orchard Orioles were reported more widespread than normal in Michigan this season. The **Eurasian Tree Sparrow** in Parke Township, *Clay*, was seen for the 3rd consecutive year in Minnesota. Worrisome was a possible House × Eurasian Tree Sparrow hybrid that was found at that location (PS).

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middlewestern prairie



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Mercifully, the intense drought that had plagued much of the Region ended this summer. Rain began in late May, and June was exceptionally wet. In northeastern Indiana, for example, Jim Haw noted that the June precipitation exceeded the previous maximum by more than three inches.

Abundant early summer rainfall produced lush vegetation and a generally fine breeding season for passerines. It was an especially good summer for the grassland species. Low water conditions in late spring, however, negatively impacted wetland-nesting species. Low water levels early in the nesting season apparently interfered with species that breed in emergent vegetation. As a result several correspondents noted declines in marsh bird numbers this summer.

Overall most correspondents deemed the season near average. Other than some extraordinary nesting records (e.g. *Selaphorus* hummingbird and Painted Bunting), there were few rarities. Perhaps termination of the drought was the season's most noteworthy event.

Abbreviations: H.B.S.P. (Headlands Beach S.P., OH); R.E.D.A. (Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, St. Charles, MO); S.C.R. (Squaw Creek N.W.R., MO).

LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

It was a fairly typical summer for the Region's loons and grebes. The only noteworthy report involved a Pied-billed Grebe adult and four young seen in *Menifee*, KY, 13 Jun (MKe, TBi); this county is in e. Kentucky where few nesting records exist. A Western Grebe lingered in Springfield until 4 Jun (HDB). Summer-period American White Pelicans were reported in every state except Ohio; the easternmost record consisted of a singleton at L. Lemon, IN, 3 Jun (J & SH). The largest Double-crested Cormorant colony, among several active Illinois sites, consisted of 200 nests along with 1000+ birds at Carlyle L. 19 Jun (KAM, KDa). An additional 318 cormorants and 40 nests were observed at Coralville Res., IA, 9 Jun (MCD).

Low water levels, due to the dry late spring, negatively impacted the nesting of both bitterns. Reports suggest that the large heron and egret colonies in the Region continue to prosper. The peak Great Blue Heron nest count consisted of 502 at Clear L., IL, 1 Jun (VK, JWk). Noteworthy among other species reported in this group was a mixed colony of Snowy Egrets, Cattle Egrets, and Little Blue Herons in Sikeston, Scott, MO, which contained hundreds of nests (M. Bulander). Tricolored Herons reported in the spring summary at Carlyle L., IL, and Pickerel Creek, OH, lingered until 7 Jul (DKa) and 1 Jun (JHd, DS), respectively. Green Herons received few comments, although this species was

deemed more numerous in w.-cen. Indiana than in recent years (AWB). The Lake Calumet Black-crowned Night-Heron colony contained an estimated 200 nests this year, but high water levels likely inhibited nesting success (WJM). This species also nested again along Mill Creek, *Hamilton*, OH (TU), and groups up to 100 at the Falls of the Ohio (MB, BPB), suggest that colonies near Louisville, KY, remained active this summer. Also of note was the successful nesting of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons in a suburb of Columbus, OH (*vide* RHn).

The only *Plegadis* ibis reports were of 1-4 White-faced Ibis that occurred in Iowa and Missouri, where this species is regular. The season's most exciting rarity was Missouri's second imm. **Roseate Spoonbill**, which appeared at Swan Lake N.W.R. during the first week of July and remained for several days (m.ob.). The slow but persistent northward expansion of Black Vultures continued this summer with a 1 Jul sighting in *Kankakee*, IL (†DSt).

WATERFOWL THROUGH CRANES

Snow Geese are becoming a regular component of the Region's summer avifauna. This summer up to 4 were reported in Iowa, 13 were at Carlyle L., IL, 19 Jun (DKa, KAM), and up to 10 were at Muskrat L., MO, 4 Jun (DAE). In Ohio the Trumpeter Swan introduction program resulted in 3 pairs with 12 young at Magee Marsh W.M.A., one brood at Killbuck W.M.A., nesting in Ashland and Muskingum Counties, and a failed nest in Sandusky County (*vide* RHn). Summer Gadwall numbers were up this season, with reports from every state except Kentucky and Ohio. In Missouri, where this species was deemed unusually numerous, a record 21 Gadwalls were counted at S.C.R. 2 Jun (DAE); in Iowa it was the second-most abundant dabbler after Mallard and Blue-winged Teal (JJD). Missouri's 2nd summer Cinnamon Teal, a male, was at S.C.R. 4 Jun (JHi, DAE). Northern Shovelers were also widespread this summer, with reports from every state except Indiana and nesting reported at Big Island, OH, where two broods were seen 15 Jul (VF).

A female Canvasback in *Madison*, IL, 19 Jun (CM, JMa), was most unusual for this southern location. Redheads, which are regular nesters in northwestern Iowa, bred again this summer, with a brood noted in *Palo Alto* 25 Jun (*vide* LAS). Other unexpected summer ducks included a male Common Goldeneye in *Madison*, IL, 19 Jun

(CM, JMa), a female Bufflehead at Marble L., IA, 8 Jul (LAS) and a male in *Vermillion*, IN, 24 Jun (AWB). Hooded Mergansers appear to have had a good breeding season, with young reported in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Missouri. Most surprising was the discovery of an ad. male Common Merganser at S.C.R. 2-4 Jun (JHi, DAE). Though Ruddy Ducks were reported in all six states, nesting was confirmed in only Illinois and Ohio.

The Region's breeding population of Osprey expanded this summer, with nesting at new locations in Indiana and Kentucky. A nest containing a chick was observed at Potato Creek S.P., IN, (*vide* JSC) and a nest, apparently active since 1997, was discovered at the TVA Paradise Power Plant., *Muhlenberg*, KY (DR, BPB). The Mississippi Kite's expansion into the Region continued, with reports from all six states and nesting in every state except Ohio. Noteworthy among the nesting reports was the 2 Jul discovery of an active nest and chick in Reelfoot Lake N.W.R., KY, to provide that state's first confirmed nesting record (BPB, MM). Another kite wandered e. to East Fork S.P., OH, where it was photographed 5 Jul (FR, ph.). Two active Northern Harrier nests were observed at the Peabody W.M.A., KY, during the summer (MM, BL, JG).

In Missouri, Greater Prairie-Chicken numbers were deemed steady this summer (*vide* JWa), and several correspondents painted a brighter picture for Northern Bobwhite. Following this season's pattern for marsh species, King Rail reports were sparse: one in Illinois, 2 in Missouri, and a pair in Ohio. Despite the weak breeding season, the Common Moorhen population has rebounded nicely from its nadir a decade ago. Modest numbers were reported in all six states, with nesting confirmed in three. Sandhill Cranes strengthened their foothold as a breeding species in the Region. In Illinois 5 pairs nested in *Winnebago* (DW) and single pairs with young were reported in *Kane* and *McHenry* (DKi, GS). Nearby Indiana had at least 10 pairs scattered across the northern tier of counties (*vide* AWB).

SHOREBIRDS

The first returning American Golden-Plover was reported at R.E.D.A. 24 Jun (m.ob.); in w. *Fulton*, KY, 9 Jul (KL) another provided one of the earliest fall records for that state. Piping Plovers had a mediocre nesting season at the traditional Iowa nesting sites. Two adults and three

young were seen at the MidAmerican Energy Ponds near Council Bluffs 9, 12, & 29 Jun (BKP, LJP), and 2 pairs each had 2 young at Port Neal near Sioux City (BFH). The only migrant Piping Plover report involved 2 birds at Miller Beach, IN, 2 Jul (BG). Black-necked Stilt reports declined noticeably this summer; the Region's only submission consisted of 1-2 seen in *Pulaski*, IL, 1-10 Jul (FB). A total of 17 American Avocets was reported in three northern states, a typical total for the summer period. Willets appeared in every state except Kentucky; the peak count consisted of 32 at Michigan City Harbor, IN, 9 Jul (BG). It is difficult to assess the Upland Sandpiper season. The only out-of-the-ordinary comment noted "many on territory" at Pawnee Prairie, *Harrison*, MO, 12 Jun (SK). On the Great Lakes, Whimbrels were reported only in Indiana, but inland birds were recorded at two locations. One appeared at Coralville Res., IA, 7 Jun (†MCD, †CE) to provide that state's 2nd summer record, and another was at Meredosia N.W.R., IL, 10 Jun (TL et al.). One of the season's most remarkable records involved a flock of 19 Hudsonian Godwits that flew past Miller Beach, IN, 30 Jul (BG). Not only does this report provide one of the Region's few summer records, but this number is unprecedented for such an early date. Marbled Godwits were scarce, with reports only from Iowa where 2 were at L. Rathbun 26 Jul (TNJ) and one was at Coralville Res. the following day (MCD).

Inland Ruddy Turnstones appeared in above-normal numbers. A tardy spring migrant at S.C.R. 2 Jun (DE) provided Missouri's 2nd summer record. The earliest fall turnstones were a flock of 8 adults at Carlyle L., IL, 27 Jul (DKa); another appeared at the Brown Power Plant, *Mercer*, KY 31 Jul (NE). Single Red Knots made appearances at both ends of the season. A late spring migrant was at Carlyle L., IL, 5 Jun (DKa, KAM) and an early fall bird was at Conneaut, OH, 30 Jul (PL et al.). Three Semipalmated Sandpipers lingered at S.C.R. until 2 Jun (DE) to provide Missouri's 3rd summer record. An extraordinarily late Least Sandpiper was still at the Brown Power Plant, *Mercer*, KY, 16 Jun (RD). Northbound White-rumped Sandpipers tarried in the Region this spring, providing June records in every state except Indiana. The peak count consisted of 31 at Dugout Creek W.M.A., IA, 3 Jun (LAS) and the latest was in Springfield 12 Jun (HDB). Interestingly, overzealous

southbound Baird's Sandpipers were reported in two states on 22 July. One was seen at L. Shelby, IL (RTC), and the other, which was at the Paradise Power Plant, *Muhlenberg* (MB), provided an all-time early arrival date for Kentucky. July Dunlins are quite unusual in the Region, consequently 2 at S.C.R. 17 Jul (DE) were noteworthy. Also most unexpected was an incredibly late ad. Stilt Sandpiper that loitered at Carlyle L., IL, until 16 Jun (DKa). A 30 June Short-billed Dowitcher at Orland, IN (Haw), was an early fall migrant. The presence of June female Wilson's Phalaropes at three Iowa locations suggested local nesting. The evidence was even stronger at Big Island, OH, where a male giving distraction displays 28 Jun was joined by a juvenile in late July (VF). There is only one previous breeding record for Ohio (*fide* RHn).

GULLS THROUGH TERNS

Laughing Gulls appeared in typical summer numbers, with 4 in Illinois plus 2 each in Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio. Single Franklin's Gulls wandered e. to Ohio, where they were seen at Caesar Creek L. 7 Jun (LG) and at Buck Creek S.P. 22-23 Jul (DO). The established Lake Calumet Ring-billed Gull colony had an estimated 5000 nests this season (WJM), and the small colony at Meinking Marsh, *Dickinson*, IA, was again active, with eight nests counted 15 Jun (NB).

Common Terns were unusually widespread this summer. In Kentucky an adult and a second-summer bird seen at farm pond in s. *Warren* 19 Jun (DR) provided one of few "mid-summer" records for that state. Also in Kentucky, Least Terns had a rough breeding season. Heavy late June precipitation flooded most nests along the Ohio R. Re-nesting occurred and 64 nests with eggs were counted above Paducah 17 July (BPB). Elsewhere Least Terns experienced more hospitable conditions. A survey along the Mississippi R. below the Ohio R. yielded 10 colonies containing 720 pairs (R. Renken), and an unexpected nesting attempt was made at R.E.D.A.—which is miles from known nesting areas—where a pair was noted 19 Jun (CM). At the MidAmerican Energy Ponds, Iowa's traditional breeding site, 11 Least Terns were counted 29 Jun, but eggs or young were not observed (BKP, LJP). As expected, small numbers of Black Terns appeared in most states; the peak tally consisted of 60 at Union Slough N.W.R. 9 Jul (MCK).

DOVES THROUGH VIREOS

The expansion of Eurasian Collared-Doves accelerated this summer, with nestings and reports from new locations in four states. White-winged Doves also continue making inroads into the Region. Single birds were reported at two Iowa locations: *Hamilton* 1-18 Jun (†B. Frankhauser et al.), and at a farm near Grime 27 Jun (†R. Bartelt). Single undocumented White-wingeds were also reported in Missouri and Ohio. The latter, which was at a backyard feeder in Bellefontaine 10 June (R. Rinehard, M. Misplon et al.) has been accepted by the Ohio committee as that state's first **White-winged Dove**. Cuckoos were reported in normal numbers except in n. Ohio, where Larry Rosche estimated the ratio of Yellow-billed to Black-billed Cuckoos at 30:1, while in Illinois Douglas Stotz deemed this the worst summer in years. A Greater Roadrunner in *Laclede*, MO, 25 Jul (J. Wallmark), was well ne. of this species' expected range.

SA An amazing hummingbird story unfolded in Mason City, IA. In that fine town an unusual female hummingbird was detected at Rita Goranson's feeder during the summer. With considerable effort the bird was ultimately identified on 19 July as belonging to the genus *Selasphorus* (†RG, †JLW, †CJF, PH). The field marks were consistent with a female Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird. The plot thickened in late July when someone reported finding a hummingbird nest in the Goranson neighborhood. Rita visited the nest site and discovered, to her amazement, that a female *Selasphorus* hummingbird, presumably the same bird that visited her feeder, occupied the nest. The female was actively feeding two young birds. Unfortunately the youngsters fledged immediately after Goranson's observation. Owners of the yard containing the nest did obtain low-quality video of the female and young, which has been provided for the Iowa Records Committee. Identification of the the female's mate remains unclear, however, the Records Committee is still investigating this remarkable event. This scenario certainly provides compelling evidence for the Region's first breeding *Selasphorus* hummingbird, at least as a 50% partner.

It was a better-than-average season for Barn Owls, with nesting reported in every state except Kentucky. In late July a Burrowing Owl was discovered in extreme nw. Iowa (*Lyon*) where this species is casual; the bird was seen again 1 Aug (†DCH). Single Short-eared Owls, seen at opposite ends of the state, suggest that this species still nests in Iowa. The only comments regarding Common Nighthawks came from Illinois, where poor numbers were noted again this summer in the central part of the state (KAM) and numbers were still low in Chicago (EW). A 17 Jul calling Chuck-will's-widow in *Elliott* (EM) was quite unusual for e. Kentucky. Several Missouri reporters perceived a decline in numbers of both Chuck-will's-widows and Whip-poor-wills (*vide* JWi).

Summer Yellow-bellied Sapsucker reports from n. Iowa included a pair with young observed at Oak Hill Cemetery in *Emmit* 11 Jun (LAS). Lingering spring migrant Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were reported in early June in several states, the latest 8 Jun at Purdue University N. Central, IN (SB). Also tardy was an Alder Flycatcher at S.C.R. 2 Jun (DE). Mid-summer Alders reported in Illinois at Nachusa 29 May–23 Jul (AH) and 24 Jun in *Lake* (CF) suggest possible nesting in that state. Western Kingbirds were well-represented among the breeding species this summer, with 5 nests in Illinois and 4 in Iowa, plus nesting in Missouri. A pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers in sc. *Randolph*, IL, from late May through late June may have nested (DN et al.). Some 16 Loggerhead Shrike nests were found in both Illinois (m.ob) and s. Indiana (JSC). Bell's Vireo numbers were typical this summer; a nest at Buck Creek S.P., OH, a traditional breeding Ohio site, was found abandoned in early June (DO).

SWALLOWS THROUGH FINCHES

Cliff Swallows appear to be flourishing in the Region. More than 300 nests were counted at Carlyle L., IL, 22 Jul (DKa) and the population was reportedly "exploding" in wc. Indiana, where at least 6 colonies, including one new site, were reported (AWB). Peak tallies of fall migrants included 1200 Purple Martins in *Union*, IL, 29 Jul (DKa et al.), 2000+ Tree Swallows at Clinton L., IL, 29 Jul (RTC), and 2000+ Bank Swallows at L. Chautauqua N.W.R., IL, 30 Jul (RTC). A hybrid Barn x Cliff Swallow, found in *Hopkins*, KY, in early May, remained until at least 17 Jul (BPB, MM). It was an unusual summer for Red-

breasted Nuthatches, with a pair feeding young in Dayton, OH, 19 Jun (*vide* C. Mathena), and 2 adults and 2 begging young in *Marion*, IN, 10 Jun (*vide* DG). Results of Don Gorney's careful Brown Creeper surveys suggest that Indiana was awash with summer birds; he found 41 birds and 13 nests within the state. Five Golden-crowned Kinglet territories were found at the traditional *Medina*, OH, site 19 June (RHn, SW). There was also an unsuccessful Golden-crowned nesting effort in Chicago's Morton Arboretum, where a territorial pair was present 10 Jun but disappeared soon thereafter (EW).

Though Northern Parulas are generally abundant breeders in Kentucky, active nests are rarely observed. This summer however, an unsuccessful nesting effort was attempted in a spruce just outside the second floor of a home in Pike County; this event provided only the second record of an active nest in the state (*vide* BPB). That fact that Yellow Warblers begin fall migration very early was confirmed 29 Jul when a migrant was seen on the Chicago lakefront (JL). Two Blackburnian Warbler territories were observed in the Indiana Dunes, where this species is becoming established as a breeding species (JKC, SB, et al.). Two territorial Pine Warblers were discovered in *Elkhart*, IN, 4 Jul (RHe), where this species was not previously known to nest. Worm-eating Warblers went unreported in Iowa (JJD) for the first time in 16 years. An extremely early Northern Waterthrush was found in a Chicago park 28 Jul (JL). Mourning Warblers were unusually well-represented in the summer report, with a singing male at Carlyle L., IL, 14 Jun (DKa), a territorial bird at Pigeon River W.M.A., IN, 10 Jun–6 Jul (LC, Haw, DG), and 3 territories in *Lucas*, OH (TBa, ET). A Spotted Towhee seen at Hidden Bridge W.M.A. 28 Jun (DCH) provided Iowa's first summer record. A 28 Jul flock of 35–40 Lark Sparrows, including many juveniles, at Coralville Res., OH, (MCD), is among the largest tallies ever recorded for the Region. An impressive 100+ Grasshopper Sparrows were counted at Big Island, OH, 30 Jun (VF). It was a good season for Henslow's Sparrows, with glowing reports from every state. Accidental in the region e. of the Mississippi R., the successful nesting of **Painted Buntings** in East St. Louis, IL, was most remarkable. The pair was first detected 29 Jul (DKa, KAM) and the nest, which contained at least 2 young, was located the following day (DKa, ph. m.ob.). Dickcissels

were exuberantly abundant this summer, with unusually high numbers in all 4 of the northern states. Most unexpected was a male Yellow-headed Blackbird in ne Indiana near Hometown; the bird was reported at Bob Walton's feeder 18 Jul A Pine Siskin at Ventura, IA, 5 Jun (CJF) was presumably a spring migrant, however, the intentions of a bird in Collins, MO 1 Aug (EJ), were less certain.

RECORDS COMMITTEES UPDATE: **Ohio:** The 20 Oct 1999 Pine Grosbeak in *Paulding*, OH, reported in *N. Am. Birds* 54:60, was rejected by the Ohio Committee. **Indiana:** Both the Common Crane and Western Scrub-Jay, also reported in the fall 1999 *N. Am. Birds* summary, were accepted by the Indiana Committee.

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