

# Iowa & Missouri



## Bill Eddleman

1831 Ricardo Drive  
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701  
(eddeleman@clas.net)

Most of the Region was extremely dry during August, especially in Iowa (second-driest August in 131 years) and northwestern and north-central Missouri. Heavy rains in Missouri in late August and November, and moderate rainfall in Iowa during September, did little to fill dry wetlands and shallow lakes. Southeastern Missouri and parts of the Ozarks had normal to above-normal rainfall, however. Temperatures were normal to below normal in much of the Region through September but turned cold at the end of September and early October, dropping to well below freezing in parts of Iowa and to freezing in northern Missouri and the eastern Ozarks. Cold temperatures returned in northern parts of the Region in early November, with subzero temperatures appearing in Iowa by the end of the season.

The cold, dry conditions resulted in poor migrations of geese, dabbling ducks, and shorebirds, and in few outstanding movements of passerines. However, good numbers of diving ducks appeared in Iowa and northern Missouri, several rare gulls appeared in both states, a few breeding species lingered in both states, and some western species appeared in eastern Missouri.

**Abbreviations:** C.A. (Conservation Area), E.B.C.A. (Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, MO); Grammar (Grammar Grove, IA); Hitchcock (Hitchcock W.M.A. hawkwatch, IA); O.S.C.A. (Otter Slough Conservation Area, MO); R.E.D.A. (Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, MO);

S.O.C.A. (Schell-Osage Conservation Area, MO); S.C.R. (Squaw Creek N.W.R., MO); S.L.R. (Swan Lake N.W.R., MO); W.A. (Wildlife Area).

## LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

Red-throated Loons at unusual sites included singles at Thomas Hill Res., Randolph, MO 2 Nov (PHa) and Saylorville Res., Polk, IA (juv.) 9–16 Nov (†AB, †SSP). An ad. Pacific Loon at Mozingo L., Nodaway, MO 2 Nov was also at an unusual site (DE, PK, TR). A strong migration of Common Loons included a peak 167 at Saylorville Res., Polk, IA 3 Nov (the most since 1991; AB, RC) and at least 130 at Clear L., Cerro Gordo, IA 4 Nov (CJF, RG). More Horned Grebes were seen in Iowa than in several years, beginning with 3 at Saylorville Res., Polk 5 Oct (AB). Peaks were 13 at Linn 7 Nov (DR), 11 in Marion 11 Nov (AB), 10 in Appanoose 22 Nov (RC), and 5 at Rathbun L., Appanoose 27 Nov (AB). Single Red-necked Grebes were at Little Wall L., Hamilton, IA 21 Oct (KLP, †SSP), Thomas Hill Res., Randolph, MO 1 Nov (JU et al.), and Green Hills Golf Course L., Chillicothe, Livingston, MO 9 Nov (SK). Initial concentrations of American White Pelican appeared in Iowa 30 Aug: 5500 at Jester Park, Polk (BEn) and 5000 at Red Rock, Marion (AB). Pelicans peaked at 8500 on Saylorville Res. in early Oct (AB, JJD). Late Double-crested Cormorants included one at R.E.D.A. on 3 Nov (Keith McMullen) and 4 at Mozingo L., Nodaway, MO 22 Nov (DE, PK). A late American Bittern was at Hunkah Prairie, Prairie S.P., Barton, MO 5 Nov (Cyndi Evans).

Four Snowy Egrets at R.E.D.A. 11 Oct (BR, MT) and an incredible single at Montrose L., Henry, MO 2 Nov (†JE) were very late. Cattle Egrets, hard to find this fall in Iowa, included singles at Hawkeye W.A., Johnson 19–31 Oct (CE, JH, JF), Adair 31 Oct (JS), and Allamakee 4 Nov (FL). The largest movements of Turkey Vultures in Iowa came the 3rd week of Oct: 208 at Hitchcock 17 Oct (MO) and 88 in Allamakee 14 Oct (FL); the Hitchcock total of 2812 was a record (MPr).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH FALCONS

Geese were sparingly reported in Iowa but

**SA** Rice fields in se. Missouri were identified as breeding sites for Black-necked Stilts nearly 20 years ago. This habitat might also harbor numbers of migrants. Fifteen American Bitterns were tallied in rice fields near Dexter, Stoddard, MO 5 Oct (JE; record high). Highlighting this fall, and first reported in Jun, were numerous Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, peaking at 21 at Dexter 11 Oct and last reported 17 Oct (JE). A site near Hornersville Swamp, Dunklin had 2 on 16 Aug (JE). High counts of raptors included 10 Mississippi Kites near Hornersville 17 Aug and a record 20 Northern Harriers 11 & 17 Oct at Dexter (JE). During rice harvest at Dexter 11 Oct, a Yellow Rail and a record 400 Soras were counted (JE). With acreage of rice predicted to increase in Missouri, and with loss of natural wetlands, birders should target this habitat for future census work.

**SA** Again this autumn, all three scoters appeared in both states and were joined by Long-tailed Ducks. The 7 individual Surf Scoters in Iowa were at three locations: Pool 13, *Clinton* 29 Oct (Paul Van Nieuwenhuysse); Diamond L., *Poweshiek* 27-30 Oct (MPr) and 11-13 Nov (JH, †MPr); Saylorville Res. 14 Oct (AB), 8-11 Nov (DT et al.), and 25 Nov (AB); and Polk City Wildlife Area 9-12 Nov (AB). Missouri sites were Thomas Hill Res., *Macon* 3 Nov (JB), Creve Coeur L., *St. Louis* 8 Nov (MT), and L. Contrary, *Buchanan* 11 Nov (JHi). An early White-winged Scoter was on the Mississippi R. in *Scott*, IA 9 Oct (†Chuck Leib). By 17 Nov, there were 7 at Lock & Dam 14 (SF, DR, JF), which dwindled to one by the end of Nov. Four single White-wingeds were at three Missouri sites: R.E.D.A. 2 Nov (Dave Becher); Creve Coeur L., *St. Louis* 8 Nov (MT); and Maryville Sewage Lagoons, *Nodaway* 11 Nov (DE). The earliest Black Scoter in Iowa was one at Saylorville Res. 8-27 Nov (DT, †KLP, †John Rutenbeck); Missouri sightings were of 2 at Thomas Hill Res., *Macon* 1-3 Nov (JU, Della Rhoades et al.) and one at Winfield Dam, *Lincoln* 8 Nov (MT). The first Long-tailed Duck in Iowa was at Saylorville Res. 4 Nov, where numbers peaked at 11 on 30 Nov (AB et al.). In Missouri, single Long-tailed Ducks were at S.C.R. 4 Nov (TR), Smithville L., *Clay* 6 Nov (KM), and Maryville Sewage Lagoons, *Nodaway* 9 Nov (DE).

were more abundant in Missouri. The only Greater White-fronted Geese in Iowa were at Hitchcock, peaking at 300 on 21 Oct, with the last 75 there on 23 Nov (MO). Large concentrations of Snow Geese included 250,000 over Hitchcock 23 Nov (MO) and 330,000 at S.C.R. 19 Nov (TR). At least 2000 Tundra Swans were at Wexford, *Allamakee*, IA 4 Nov (FL), and the latest was one on the Mississippi R. in *Scott*, IA 27 Nov (SF). Numbers of dabbling ducks were generally poor, the notable exception being 800 Blue-winged Teal during the season's first big push of migrants at Dunbar Slough, *Greene*, IA 21 Aug (JJD). Diving ducks were present in very good numbers, however, with peaks of 4180 Ring-necked Ducks at S.C.R. 4 Nov (TR), 7100 Lesser Scaup at Saylorville Res., *Polk*, IA 3 Nov (RC, AB), and 200+ Buffleheads at S.L.R. 24 Nov (SK).

Ospreys at Grammar set a new season high of 40 (MPr, BPr) and a daily high of 10 on 14 Sep. A late surprise was a pair of Mississippi Kites with chick at Carl Junction, *Jasper*, MO 25 Aug (Dave Henness). Season totals of Bald Eagle at Hitchcock and Grammar were 729 and 271, respectively, the latter a new high (MPr). Broad-winged Hawks totaled 712 at Grammar, with a one-day high of 567 on 20 Sep (MPr). Imm. Swainson's Hawks were along the Skunk R., *Story*, IA in Aug (KLP, SSP); top day for this species at Hitchcock was 522 birds 30 Sep (MO). Record numbers of Red-tailed Hawks (3000+) were counted at Hitchcock through Nov (MO), and the Grammar total was 817 (MPr). Perhaps the most interesting raptor sighting of the season was a *Ferruginous Hawk* at Union Hills W.M.A., *Cerro Gordo*, IA 14 Oct (†; fide PH). One to 2 Merlins were reported in 11 counties in Iowa, beginning with one at Waterman Twp., *O'Brien* 5 Sep (DK). The 10 reports in Missouri were mostly in the w. counties, but single e. birds were at Winfield Dam, *Lincoln* 13 Sep and

Caruthersville Catfish Farms, *New Madrid* 5 Oct (JE). Single Prairie Falcons were reported from Iowa in *Guthrie* 29 Aug (†Jeff Nichols), *Pottawattamie* 14 Oct (†MO), *Pottawattamie* 20 Oct (†Jerry Toll, †MO), and in *Woodbury* 27 Oct (†Gerald L. Von Ehwegen). A Prairie Falcon in Missouri was at an unusual e. site, Clarence Cannon N.W.R., *Pike* 16 Nov (†Michael Bathke, JB, PHA).

#### GROUSE THROUGH TERNS

The only Greater Prairie-Chicken reports were of 29 at Dunn Ranch, *Harrison*, MO 15 Nov (SK) and one at Montrose Pastures, *St. Clair*, MO 21 Nov (JE). Yellow Rail sightings included one each at Snake Creek Marsh, *Greene*, IA 20 Sep (AB, Ann Johnson) and Waterman Twp., *O'Brien*, IA 6 Oct (DK); 4 near St. Anthony, *Marshall*, IA 7 Oct (†Carl Kurtz, fide JJD); and one at a Wetland Reserve Program site, *Linn*, MO 9 Oct (SK). A very early individual was at S.L.R. 27 Aug (John Guthrie). Two, one-year-old female *Whooping Cranes*, raised and fitted with radio transmitters at Necedah N.W.R., WI, spent part of their fall in Iowa. Beginning in early Sep, they foraged on the Upper Mississippi River N.W.R. and near New Albin and the Upper Iowa R., *Allamakee* (Ric Zarwell). The 2 cranes departed 7 Nov, when temperatures fell.

Single Piping Plovers were reported from Hawkeye W.A., *Johnson*, IA 22-23 Aug (CE, †THK) and Stockton Res., *Polk*, MO 17 Aug (CB). Two late Black-necked Stilts were at the Caruthersville Catfish

Farms, *New Madrid*, MO 12 Oct (JE). There were two reports of juv. *Hudsonian Godwits*: at Union Slough N.W.R., *Kossuth*, IA 7 Sep (†MCK) and at Coralville Res., *Johnson*, IA 2-24 Oct (BSc, JF, THK). A single Spotted Sandpiper at S.L.R. 24 Nov was very late (SK). One to 2 juv. Red Knots were at Pinchey Bottoms, *Marion*, IA 1-9 Sep (†AB, ph., †JG, †JJD). Another was photographed at Terra L., *Polk*, IA 8-16 Sep (†JG, †AB). There were three Iowa reports of the very rare fall migrant White-rumped Sandpiper: up to 2 at Jester Park, *Polk* 23-25 Aug (†AB), with singles at Dewey's Pasture, *Palo Alto* 30 Aug (†LAS) and in *Marion* 2 Sep (†AB). Concentrations of Pectoral Sandpipers were 2760 at Red Rock Res., *Marion*, IA 28 Aug (AB, RC) and 550+ at Big Lake S.P., *Holt*, MO 13 Aug (MR; record high). Four remained at S.C.R. 19 Nov (TR). Among the 11 reports of Buff-breasted Sandpiper in Missouri were 3 birds reported from a part of the state where they are rarely seen, at Caruthersville Turf Farm, *New Madrid* 1 Sep (JE). A single male Ruff was at Mud L., *Buchanan*, MO 13 Oct (†LL). Another casual shorebird was a *Red Phalarope* at Owego Wetland, *Woodbury*, IA 14 Sep (†BFH).

Franklin's Gull totals peaked in Iowa at 23,000 each on Red Rock Res., *Marion* and at Saylorville Res., *Polk* (AB). The latest one was at Saylorville Res. 23 Nov (BEn). The peak number of Bonaparte's Gulls was 775 at Saylorville Res. 9 Nov (BEn). The last Common Tern sighting was of 2 at Saylorville Res., 12 Oct (†AB, BEn). Late Forster's Terns were at Pleasant Creek S.P., *Linn*, IA 6 Nov (3; †JH), Smithville L., *Clay*, MO 30 Oct (KM) and Big Lake S.P., *Holt*, MO 5 Nov (one; †TR). Least Tern persists in tiny numbers in Iowa, where an ad. was at Union Slough N.W.R., *Kossuth* 20 Aug (MCK), 3 were at Saylorville Res. 26 Aug (AB), and one was in *Pottawattamie* 18 Sep (MO).

#### DOVES THROUGH WRENS

Eurasian Collared-Dove is no longer subject to review in either state, with birds seen in 11 Iowa and 10 Missouri counties, usually in association with grain elevators or other food sources. Two migrating

**SA** It was a banner year for rare gulls in the Region. A single *Laughing Gull* was at Saylorville Res., *Polk*, IA 13 Sep (†DT). A *Black-headed Gull* was at the n. end of Spirit L., *Dickinson*, IA 2 Aug-26 Oct (TET, †LAS). Another Iowa rarity, an ad. *Mew Gull*, was below the dam at Red Rock Res., *Marion* 23 Oct (†AB). Birders in both states found *California Gulls*, including an ad. at R.E.D.A. 28 Nov (†JU) and an apparent member of the Great Plains population (*albertainensis*) at Coralville Res., *Johnson*, IA 24 Nov (†JF). A single ad. *Lesser Black-backed Gull* was at Coralville Res., *Johnson*, IA 15-17 Oct (†JF, †JH, ph. THK, BSc). What appeared at first to be a single *Little Gull* at Montrose L. C.A., *Henry*, MO 2 Nov turned out to be 2 different birds (†JE; †EW et al.). Finally, single juv. *Sabine's Gulls* were at Lock & Dam 14, *Scott*, IA 30 Sep-2 Oct (DR, SF) and Smithville L., *Holt*, MO 18-22 Sep (†Kyle Driggers, LL, TR).

Short-eared Owls were early near Montrose C.A., *Henry*, MO 18 Oct (JE). A high of 4000 Chimney Swifts was at Hitchcock 16 Sep (MO), and the latest was in *Scott*, IA 11 Oct (DR). Six **Rufous Hummingbirds** were banded in e. Missouri this fall: near Cape Girardeau 12 Oct+ (BE, LC), in *St. Louis* 13 Nov, at Chesterfield, *St. Louis* 14 Nov, in *St. Louis* 20 Nov, at Farmington, *St. Francois* 25 Nov, and at *St. Louis* City 30 Nov (LC). Surprisingly, there were no *Selasphorus* reports from w. Missouri, and the single Iowa report was referred to the records committee (*fide* PH). About half of the migrating Red-headed Woodpeckers at Hitchcock were imms., more than usual (MO).

Yellow-bellied Flycatchers in Iowa were first seen at Liscomb, *Marshall* 23 Aug (MPr) and last reported at Grammar 14 Sep (MPr). Missouri sightings included one at Rock Bridge S.P., *Boone* 1 Sep (Robert Fisher, Gary Johnson) and 2 banded at the Missouri Western Campus, *Buchanan* 14 Sep (JHi). An Acadian Flycatcher found this summer at the unusual n. location of Myre Slough, *Winebago*, IA was last heard calling 13 Aug (CJF). The latest 3 birds in Iowa were in *Van Buren* 6 Sep (RC). A single imm. Acadian Flycatcher was found dead in Columbia, *Boone*, MO 10 Sep (BG). Two Alder Flycatchers were identified by voice in Iowa, in *Polk* 2 Aug (DK) and at Grammar 20 Aug (†MPr). Five were found in Missouri 13 Aug: 3 at Nodaway Valley C.A., *Holt* and 2 at Bob Brown C.A., *Holt* (MR). The latest 8 Least Flycatchers in Iowa were found at Call S.P., *Kossuth* 12 Sep (†MCK). Singles were at Nodaway Valley C.A. 13 Aug and nearby McCormack C.A., *Holt* 1 Oct (MR; late). The latest Eastern Kingbird was at Hitchcock 7 Oct (†MO; latest since 1974). A juv. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was e. of normal range at Busch C.A., *St. Charles*, MO 21 Sep (JE).

A Warbling Vireo was at Big Lake S. P., *Holt*, MO 1 Oct (MR; very late). Some 210 Blue Jays were counted at Big Lake S.P., *Holt*, MO 3 Oct (TR). Fish Crows continue to expand their range in Missouri, attested by the 2 seen at Montrose C.A., *Henry* 26 Sep (MR), with the latest at Table Rock L., *Taney* 8 Nov (Jackie West). Carolina Wrens in Iowa were reported more n. and w. than usual, including in *Cerro Gordo* (Bruce Marzinske), *Woodbury* (BFH), *Cherokee* (Dick Bierman), and *Plymouth* (JJJ). Unexpected was a Winter Wren of subspecies *pacificus* at Brookside Park, *Story*, IA 21 Oct (KLP, †SSP). Sedge Wrens were in good numbers in Missouri, with a relatively high 40 at S.L.R. 5 Aug (SK), 27 at

Nodaway Valley C.A. 13 Aug (MR), and 29 at Bob Brown C.A., *Holt* 13 Aug (MR).

### THRUSHES THROUGH WARBLERS

A Swainson's Thrush at Grindstone Nature Area, Columbia, *Boone*, MO 4 Sep was early (BG), while a very late individual was at Fellows L., *Greene*, MO 16 Nov (†Grace Jordan). A single **Bohemian Waxwing** was reported from Clayton, IA 22 Nov (†Danny Akers). A total of 52 Orange-crowned Warblers and 36 Nashville Warblers was banded on the Missouri Western Campus, *Buchanan*, MO (JHi). A Northern Parula at Big Oak Tree S.P., *Mississippi*, MO 12 Oct was late (JE). Unusually early Yellow-rumped Warblers included 4 in *Worth*, IA 30 Aug (RG, PH) and 2 in *Story*, IA 14 Sep (KLP, SSP). A Pine Warbler was in Mason City, *Cerro Gordo*, IA 25 Aug (†CJF), and other singles were at Bacon Creek, *Woodbury*, IA 10 Sep (†BFH) and Glendale Cemetery, *Polk*, IA 14 Sep (†Robert Cecil). A late imm. Magnolia Warbler was at Big Spring, *Carter*, MO 12 Oct (MR). A Black-throated Green Warbler at Watkins Mill S.P., *Clay*, MO 26 Oct (KM) and a Yellow-throated Warbler at L. Springfield, *Greene*, MO 5 Oct (Dave Catlin) were late. A high count of 18 Wilson's Warblers came from Nodaway Valley C.A. 30 Aug (MR). One very late Common Yellowthroat appeared in *Warren*, IA 25 Nov (JS). Sep records of Yellow-breasted Chat are few in Missouri, but 3 were recorded, the latest being banded on the Missouri Western Campus 13 Sep (JHi).

### TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Late Summer Tanagers included 2 at Big Spring, *Carter*, MO 11 Oct and one at Stockton L., *Cedar*, MO 13 Oct (MR), while late Scarlet Tanagers were one in *Pottawattamie*, IA 18 Oct (MO) and 2 at Big Spring 11 Oct (MR). Forty-one Song Sparrows and 31 Lincoln's Sparrows were banded at the Missouri Western Campus (JHi). A single early Lapland Longspur was at Saylorville Res., *Polk*, IA 6 Oct (AB). Smith's Longspurs are sparingly found in fall in Iowa, but reports are increasing: 3 were at Union Slough N.W.R., *Kossuth* 19 Oct (†MCK), 2 were at Owego Wetland, *Woodbury* 25 Oct (†BFH), and 7 were at Knutson's Pond, *Cerro Gordo* 14 Nov (†RG). A high of 45 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks was at Tower Grove Park, *St. Louis* City, MO (JE; 2nd highest). A count of 91 Dickcissels was logged at Bradford Farm, *Boone*, MO 12 Sep (PM; record high). The highest count was 60 at Clarence Cannon N.W.R., *Pike* 29 Sep (JE). The only Iowa report of Yellow-headed Blackbird was of a record-

large flock of 40 at Hitchcock 15 Sep (MO). An imm. male was at Morehouse, *New Madrid*, MO 9 Sep (Ryan Layton). A very early male Rusty Blackbird was at Spring Run, *Dickinson*, IA 6 Sep (†LAS). Two reports of very early Brewer's Blackbirds were of a male at Knutson's Pond, *Cerro Gordo*, IA 30 Sep (†RG) and 3 females at Pool Slough, *Allamakee*, IA 1 Oct (†FL). A very late Orchard Oriole was at Big Creek S.P. in *Polk*, IA 6 Oct (†AB), whereas the latest Baltimore Orioles were 2 in *Van Buren*, IA 6 Sep (RC). In contrast to recent years, Purple Finches were seen early and often this season. The first were 4 in *Appanoose*, IA 20 Sep (RC), and the highest count was 265 at Hitchcock 2 Nov (MO). Single Common Redpolls were first observed in *Cerro Gordo*, IA 21 Nov (CJF, RG) and at Jefferson City, *Cole*, MO 27 Nov (Barb Duncan). Four Eurasian Tree Sparrows near Buffalo in *Scott*, IA 10 Nov represented a range extension (†Dick & Kit Sayles).

**Undocumented rarities:** A Clark's Grebe was reported at Thomas Hill Res., *Randolph*, MO 7 Nov. A Ferruginous Hawk was reported at Wa-Sha-She Prairie, *Jasper*, MO 18 Nov. A single extralimital Eurasian Tree Sparrow at Columbia, *Boone*, MO was first reported 28 Nov.

**Corrigenda:** The recent report of Magnificent Hummingbird was not accepted by the Missouri Bird Records Committee. A late Yellow-throated Warbler at Bettendorf, *Scott*, IA 24 Sep 2002 should be added (†DR).

**Contributors cited** (subregional editors in boldface): Joyce Bathke, Aaron Brees, Charles Burwick, Lanny Chambers, Ray Cummins, James J Dinsmore (JJJ), David Easterla, Joseph Eades, Bill Eddleman (Missouri), Chris Edwards, Bery Engebretsen (BEn), Carolyn J Fischer (CJF), Robert Fisher, Steve Freed, Jim Fuller, Jay Gilliam, Bill Goodge, Rita Goranson, Patrick Harrison (PHa), Paul Hertzell (Iowa), Jack Hilsabeck (JHi), James Huntington, Bill Huser (BFH), Ann Johnson, Matt Kenne (MCK), Thomas H Kent (THK), Steve Kinder, Darwin Koenig, Peter Kondrashov, Larry Lade, Fred Lesher, Kristi Mayo, Paul McKenzie, Mark Orsag, Katy Patterson (KLP), Shane Patterson (SSP), Mark Proescholdt (MPr), Beth Proescholdt (BPr), Mark Robbins, Don Robinson, Tommie Rogers, Bill Rowe, Bill Scheible (BSc), Lee Schoenewe (LAS), Jim Sinclair, Ed Thelen, Mike Thelen, Dennis Thompson, Josh Uffman. ☉