BS). A huge flock of blackbirds, estimated at 1,000,000+, was seen flying over Bee. M. 21 Dec (J&SH, JD, BH). The flock consisted of approximately 300,000 European Starlings, 200,000 Red-winged Blackbirds, 400,000 Common Grackles, and 100,000 Brownheaded Cowbirds, providing Indiana high counts for all of the species except Redwinged Blackbird. The maximum seasonal count of Brewer's Blackbird (14) was recorded at Hawthorn Mines, IN 3 Dec (LWS et al.). A very late Baltimore Oriole was photographed at a feeder in Greenfield, Hancock, IN 20 Dec (ph. J&DW, fide JC).

The peak Purple Finch tally was 80 in Rock Island, IL 4 Jan (BLB, KJM). Purple Finches were well represented in downstate Indiana, with 65 birds in Washington (JSe) providing the high count. Other winter finches were quite scarce. Five Red Crossbills in Rockford 3 Dec (DTW) and one in Kane, IL 17 Dec (EES) were the only reports. Common Redpoll sightings were limited to 7 birds at Indiana Dunes S.P. 28 Jan (BJG), 3 in Cass, IL 6 Jan (EES), and one at Carl. L. 14 Dec (RSR). The highest total for Pine Siskins was 32. recorded in Highland Park, IL 4 Dec (DRD). In Indiana, Pine Siskins were remarkably scarce statewide, as the high count for the season was a paltry 4 in Greene 2 Dec (J&MG). Numbers of Eurasian Tree Sparrows were up

this winter, with a peak total of 232 in Mercer, IL 28 Dec (KJM, m.ob.).

Undocumented reports: A Prairie Falcon in *Champaign*, IL 22–27 Jan was reported without details. This species is on the Illinois review list.

Contributors (subregional editors in boldface): Jill Anderson, Susan R. Bagby, David & Ingrid Beery, Caroline Begley, Frank Bennett, Richard & Sigurd Bjorklund, Brian L. Blevins, H. David Bohlen, Gary & Lisa Bowman, Sharon & Walter Broadhead, Kenneth J. Brock (Indiana), James Brown, John K. Cassady, John Castrale, Elizabeth J. Chato, James & Angie Cole, Janet Creamer (JCr), Jiri Dadok, Donald R. Dann, Jerry Downs, Scott Evans, Brad Feaster, Carolyn Fields, Karen Fisher, Steve Freed, Urs Geiser, Jenny Girton (JGi), David Goodnard (DGd), Don Gorney, Joel Greenberg (JGr), Brendan J. Grube, Kristopher Grube, Peter B. Grube, Jess & Maureen Gwinn, Leroy Harrison, James A. Haw, Jim & Susan Hengeveld, Jed B. Hertz, Greg Hess, Cary Hillegonds (CHi), Lynea Hinchman (LvH), Aaron Holbrook, Bill Holladay, Frank R. Holmes, Yvonne Homever, Michael Hooker, Edward M. Hopkins, Roger Hotham, Steve Huggins, Robert D. Hughes, Bob Huguenard, Cathie Hutcheson (CHu), Rhetta Jack, Steve

Juhlin, Dan M. Kassebaum, Brandon Kirk, Vicki Lang, Dan Leach, Mike Madsen, Travis A Mahan, Walter J. Marcisz, Sherry McCowan Jeffrey J. McCoy, Kelly J. McKay (Illinois) Keith A. McMullen, Alan McNabb, Cathy Meyer, James Mitchell, Randy J. Pals, Larry Peavler, Keegan Ramey (KRy), Kevin Richmond, Rhonda S. Rothrock, Eric E. Secker, Jeff Sells (JSe), Wesley S. Serafin, Darrell J. Shambaugh, Bob Shelby, Craig Shillinglaw, Andy Sigler, Charlie & Sharon Sorenson, Jacob Spendelow (JSp), Alan Stankevitz (ASz), Lee W. Sterrenburg, Alan F. Stokie, Dan Stoltzfus, Douglas F. Stotz, Chris Swisegood (CSw), Michael Topp, Tammy Turner, Jeffrey Walk, Eric W. Walters, Peter S. Weber, Betsy Whitehead, Donald R. Whitehead, Dan T. Williams, Jr., Geoffrey A. Williamson, Jean & David Wright, Ken Wysocki, James P. Ziebol. The contributions of many other individuals who were not explicitly cited were critical to the preparation of this report. We thank them for their observations.

James Hengeveld, 6354 Southshore Drive, Unionville, Indiana 47468, (jhengeve@indiana.edu);
Keith A. McMullen, 1405 DeSoto, O'Fallon, Illinois 62269, (warbler?@sbcglobal.net);
Geoffrey A. Williamson, 4046 North Clark Street, Unit K, Chicago, Illinois 60613, (geoffrey.williamson@comcast.net)

Western Great Lakes



Adam M. Byrne

ecember started out very cold, but by Christmas the Region was experiencing a warming trend. All three states reported an exceptionally mild January; Duluth, Minnesota had its warmest January on record. This long warm stretch helped many semi-hardy species to overwinter successfully, highlighted by a handful of Tree Swallows in southern Michigan! The season finished with a return to cold temperatures in late February.

Snow cover in southern areas was below average, with many areas having little or no snow most of the winter; northern areas had average to above-average snowfall.

Northern Hawk and Great Gray Owl numbers were down from last winter, but all three states reported the largest Snowy Owl invasion in many years. Other highlights were a Barrow's Goldeneye, several Gyrfalcons, Black-legged Kitiwakes, and Barn Owl in Minnesota, and Ferruginous Hawk and Eurasian Tree Sparrow in Wisconsin. Michigan had an exceptional season, with multiple Ross's Geese, a Barrow's Goldeneye, two Pacific Loons, two Western Grebes, Northern Gannet, Eurasian Collared-Doves, Spotted Towhee, and Eurasian Tree Sparrow.

WATERFOWL

Greater White-fronted Geese were reported in four Michigan counties, with a maximum of 38 in *Berrien* 21–22 Feb (TB). Wisconsin had numerous Feb sightings of Greater White-

fronteds, with the first in Dodge 2 Feb (JB) Also in Wisconsin was a late fall migrant Ross's Goose in Dane 2 Dec (ST) and 6 spring arrivals in Racine 23 Feb (EH). Michigan records were 3 on 17-27 Feb (TB, m.ob., p.a) and another 6 on 22 Feb (TB, p.a.) at Paw Paw L., Berrien and one in Huron 26 Feb (JCD). Cackling Goose was reported from all three states, with Wisconsin having 3 spend the winter in Dane (ST). Minnesota had reports from four counties, while Michigan birders found at least 25 birds in six counties Wisconsin reported a high of only 6 Trumpeter Swans 21 Jan in Winnebago (DT). An American Wigeon 17 Dec-4 Jan at Grand Marais, Cook was an unusual mid-winter record for far ne. Minnesota. Rare for Michigan were 4 Blue-winged Teal 27 Dec in Cass (SMG). Providing the first overwintering record for n. Minnesota, and one of few from anywhere in the state, were 5 Greater Scaup at Duluth, St. Louis (PHS, m.ob.).

Minnesota had near-average numbers of

VOLUME 60 (2006) NUMBER 2

Harlequin Ducks in Cook and Lake; away from L. Superior, a female and imm. 8 Jan-22 Feb at Fergus Falls, Otter Trail (SPM, m.ob.) represented a 3rd record for this w.-cen. location Wisconsin reported several singles from various locations along L. Michigan and 3 in Sheboygan 14 Jan (RH), while Michigan had 2 at both New Buffalo and St. Joseph, Berrien and 2 in Manistee (BAA). Michigan birders reported a Surf Scoter at Douglas, Allegan 4 Dec (RB) and 2 at St. Joseph, Berrien 8 Feb (CB, JTW, m.ob.); Wisconsin had one in Milwaukee 28 Jan (DT). Unexpected were 2 Whitewinged Scoters at Duluth, St. Louis, MN 11 Feb+ (CF, m.ob.). Wisconsin had fall migrants linger through 27 Dec in Door (R&CL), and Michigan reported low numbers from eight counties. In Wisconsin, a few Black Scoters spent the winter along L. Michigan in Ozaukee (TU); Michigan's birds were on the opposite shoreline, with 4+ through 7 Jan in Berrien and 3 in Allegan 15 Jan (RB). Longtailed Duck numbers were down this season; the largest concentration was 1000+ in Manitowoc, WI 5 Dec (DT). Despite very few reports from L. Superior, Minnesota birders found single Long-taileds in six inland counties All three states reported ad. male Barrow's Goldeneyes: one from fall-9 Feb at Omena Pt., Leelanau, MI (MB, AMB); one throughout the period in Milwaukee, WI (m ob); and one at L. Pepin, Wabasha, MN 19 Feb (ph. NC, PEJ).

GROUSE THROUGH VULTURES

Sharp-tailed Grouse continue to decline in Wisconsin, where only 14 were found in *Burnett* and *Taylor*; Michigan had 2 in *Chippewa* 3 Jan (JCD). Wisconsin reported a high of 5 Greater Prairie-Chickens 17 Dec in *Portage* (DTe) Lost Nations S.G.A., *Hillsdale*, MI hosted 10 Northern Bobwhite (JR), an increasingly difficult species to find in Michigan.

Red-throated Loon was reported from three Michigan counties, with a peak of 5 on 4-13 Dec in Allegan (RB); Wisconsin had 2 linger through 21 Dec in Ozaukee (TU) and singles in Sheboygan 3 Feb (AH, KK) and Milwaukee 12 Feb (AS, TP). Rare for Michigan were 2 Pacific Loons in Baraga 10 Jan, with one remaining through 3 Feb (p.a., JK). Wisconsin had a Common Loon in Milwaukee 3 Jan (JF); Michigan had the species in five counties, including 15 on 4 Dec in Allegan (RB). Piedbilled Grebe wintered in Otter Tail, MN (SPM et al) and in Dane, WI (ST). Michigan had four Dec and two Jan reports of Horned Grebe, while Wisconsin had only one in Walworth 29 Jan (WM). Impressive in Michigan were 23 Red-necked Grebes 29 Jan in Benzie (RB) and 16 in Marquette 17 Dec (LFT); Wisconsin had one 8 Feb in *Ozaukee* (DT). Rare in Michigan were Western Grebes 8–9 Dec in *Alger* (SCH, p.a.) and 28 Feb in *Marquette* (SH, p.a.).

A Northern Gannet was found stuck in the ice at Grosse Pointe Farms, Wayne 8 Dec and later died in captivity (fide BR); if accepted, it would be Michigan's 10th state and 3rd winter record. Wisconsin hosted 4 wintering American White Pelicans near their nesting grounds in Brown, as well as one on the opposite side of the state in Buffalo 28 Dec (T&IB). Continuing the trend of uncommon wintering birds, Wisconsin recorded Doublecrested Cormorants in five counties, with 12 in Brown 28 Dec (T&IB); birds in Bay and Wayne, MI were more expected. Providing further evidence of the mild winter was a Great Blue Heron in Otter Tail, MN (SPM et al.): Wisconsin had a few dozen Great Blues in 12 counties. Rare for Michigan were 2 Great Egrets in Wayne 1 Dec (WGP) and 2 more in Monroe 17 Dec (JJ). Becoming more frequent were numerous Dec and Jan Turkey Vulture reports in Michigan; the first spring migrants were noted by 2 Feb.

RAPTORS THROUGH DOVES

A Ferruginous Hawk in Crawford 7 Jan (p.a., RZ) provided Wisconsin's 2nd winter record. Golden Eagles were again seen in good numbers. All three states also reported Gyrfalcons. Wisconsin had four separate sightings, with one consistent bird in Ashland (RyB). Michigan had singles 29 Dec at Manistique, Schoolcraft (RBA), 3 Jan at Sault Ste. Marie, Chippewa (JCD), and 27 Jan at Sugar I., Chippewa (TRW). An ad. gray morph near Hastings, Dakota, MN 25 Dec+ (ph. JPM, PEB, m.ob.) may have been a returning individual from last winter. Birders at Duluth, St. Louis, MN reported ad. gray morphs 29 Dec (PHS) and 23-29 Jan (MLH, ph. PHS), sightings that may have involved the same bird, and a juv. 21–28 Jan (PHS, KRE, BAW). The only Prairie Falcon reports came from Minnesota, with individuals 31 Dec in Ross Twp., Roseau (JMJ, SAS) and 8 Feb in Freeland Twp., Lac Qui Parle (BJU).

Wisconsin had a Virginia Rail through 31 Dec in *Columbia* (ASh), as well as several Killdeer in Dec and one 29 Jan in *Sauk* (AS). Very late in Michigan were a Spotted Sandpiper 14 Dec at Muskegon Wastewater, *Muskegon* (DV) and a Willet from fall–1 Jan at Whiting Power Plant, *Monroe* (LEH, ATC, DOB, m.ob.); not nearly as late but still noteworthy were 2 Sanderlings 4 Dec in *Berrien* (DCV, JTW) and a Dunlin 2 Dec in *Monroe* (TWe). A Wilson's Snipe through 20 Feb at Duluth, *St. Louis*, MN was n. of normal.

Michigan had snipe linger through 11 Dec in Berrien (DCV, JTW), 17 Dec in Monroe (ATC), and 20 Feb in Kalamazoo (fide RS). Providing a rare Jan record was a very optimistic American Woodcock displaying 19–30 Jan in Berrien (MM, JTB, CB).

Wisconsin birders were treated to excellent gull numbers and diversity, highlighted by a Mew Gull 31 Dec-15 Jan (m.ob.) and a California Gull seen in early Dec (JI, DT) and again 24 Jan (SL), all in Milwaukee. They also reported dozens of Thayer's Gulls from every county along L. Michigan, 16 Iceland Gulls from seven counties, 6 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, dozens of Glaucous Gulls, and numerous Great Black-backed Gulls, including an amazing 22 in Kewaunee 21 Jan (DT). In contrast, Minnesota reported 4 Iceland, one ad Lesser Black-backed, and 2 Great Blackbacked Gulls. Excellent finds were Blacklegged Kitiwakes 4 Dec at Coon Rapids Dam Park, Anoka (GP) and 7-24 Dec at Black Dog L., Dakota/Hennepin (ph. JPM, AXH, m.ob) in Minnesota, and 1 Dec at Belle Isle Park, Wayne (ATC) and 10-30 Jan along the Saginaw R., Bay (DD) in Michigan. Wisconsin's 2nd Band-tailed Pigeon wintered at a feeder in St. Croix (ph. JA). Eurasian Collared-Doves were reported from all three states. Unusual for n. Minnesota were mid-winter reports from Grant (BJU) and 8 birds in Otter Tail (m.ob.); s. Minnesota had reports from five counties, including 10 at Comfrey, Brown 28 Jan-15 Feb (BTS et al.) and a first county record in Nicollet (RMD). Wisconsin had one 17 Dec in Columbia (P&GS) and 16 counted on three C.B.C.s; Michigan had 2 in Berrien 29 Jan+ (TB, AM), along with the continuing birds in Grand Traverse.

OWLS THROUGH WARBLERS

An ad. Barn Owl was found dead 20 Jan after crashing into a window at North Oaks, Ramsey, MN (KN, KK, ph. AXH). Echoing last winter's record-high numbers in Minnesota were over 125 Northern Hawk Owls this year, all in n. Minnesota within the coniferous forest zone. Michigan had birds at Shelter Bay, Alger (SCH, LFT) and Soo Junction, Chippewa (PKB, RB). Minnesota also had an above-average total of 66 Great Gray Owls for fall and winter 2005-2006, including a first county record in Norman 26 Feb+ (ph. PBB), this was way below expectations following last winter's estimated 5225 Great Grays Wisconsin had a few Great Grays in Bayfield (RyB), and Michigan had singles at Munising, Alger 18 Feb (SCH) and at Brimley, Chippewa (RB). Wisconsin's largest concentration of Long-eared Owls was 10 in Waukesha (DG), while Michigan had 2 at Sarett NaSA On the heels of last winter's record-high numbers of Northern Hawk and Great Gray Owls, this winter saw one of the best Snowy Owl invasions in memory. Preliminary counts from Minnesota indicate that no fewer than 161 Snowy Owls were reported in 2005–2006, more than 105 of which were found during the winter season; this will be considered the state's 2nd largest invasion. Wisconsin birders reported at least 118 Snowy Owls from more than half the state's counties. Michigan had many fewer birds but still tallied over 30 different owls in 13 counties.

ture Center, Berrien (CB, MM). All three states reported Short-eared Owls, highlighted by a remarkable 18 at Shiawassee N.W.R., Saginaw, MI 26 Feb (BG, CS, LA). An injured Boreal Owl was found 18 Feb in Menominee, MI (DBJ); Minnesota reports included a dead Boreal in Aitkin and singles lurking around bird feeders in Cook and St. Louis. Exceptional were 8 calling Northern Saw-whet Owls in Sauk, WI 7 Feb (AH), while Michigan had up to 3 all season at Belle I., Wayne, one 3 & 7 Jan at Independence L. Park, Washtenaw (MJS), and one 25 Feb at Muskegon S.G.A., Muskegon (BI, LU).

Minnesota had a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker winter in Fillmore (NBO) and a female American Three-toed Woodpecker in Koochiching and 4 in Lake of the Woods. Black-backed Woodpeckers were reported from seven Minnesota counties but only from Forest 9 Jan (DT) in Wisconsin. Wisconsin had exceptionally high numbers of wintering Northern Flickers; reports were received from nearly every county. Rare winter finds were Eastern Phoebes at Lakeside, Berrien, MI 17 Dec (KS) and Columbia, WI 22 Dec (p.a., P&GS). Nothing better illustrates the season's mild temperatures than the unprecedented overwintering Tree Swallows at Pointe Mouillee S.G.A., Monroe, MI; there were 24 birds 29 Dec, with 3 remaining through at least 15 Feb (LW, AMB, TS, m.ob.). Wisconsin reported Carolina Wrens from 10 counties, including 5 in Dane 17 Dec (CC); Minnesota had reports from seven counties, with firsts in Freeborn 17 Dec+ (AEB, RBJ, NFT), Pine 1 Jan (RBJ), Blue Earth 9-15 Jan (SD, ph. DBM), and Mille Lacs 23 Feb (fide HS). A Marsh Wren at Minnesota River Valley N.W.R., Scott, MN 28 Dec-22 Jan (DWK) provided an unusual mid-winter record. Michigan had the only Ruby-crowned Kinglets in Berrien (JTW) and Lapeer (MS).

Minnesota had fewer Townsend's Solitaires than usual, with 4 in Cook, 2 in Sherburne, and singles in Kandiyohi and Lac Qui Parle. Wisconsin had 8 solitaries at their regular wintering grounds in Sauk (m.ob.) and one in Ashland (RyB). One at Brighton S.R.A., Livingston 15 Jan+ (LEH, PKB, ATC, m.ob.) was very unusual for s. Michigan. Michigan enjoyed its best Varied Thrush invasion in recent memory, with at least 6 birds in five counties. Minnesota had an above-average

year, with 24 Varied Thrushes in 19 counties, while Wisconsin reported single birds in eight counties. A Gray Catbird 17 Dec in Marquette (LFT, GC) was rare for n. Michigan; other reports were singles 28 Dec at Humbug Marsh, Wayne (DOB), 1 Jan at Pointe Mouillee S.G.A. headquarters, Wayne (LEH), and 20 Feb at Bath, Clinton (JR). Minnesota had catbirds at Tofte, Cook 5 Jan (AB, PR) and Oakwood Cemetery, Olmsted 23 Jan-12 Feb (JWH). Wisconsin and Minnesota had Brown Thrashers successfully overwinter, while Michigan had 2 birds in Dec. An early Dec American Pipit in Kenosha, WI (DT) was not uncommon, but a Jan bird in Milwaukee (m.ob.) was exceptional; Michigan had an amazing 7 pipits in three counties. Both Wisconsin and Minnesota reported overwintering Yellow-rumped Warblers, while Michigan had Pine Warblers 2-19 Dec at Shiawassee N.W.R., Saginaw (SFK) and 19-30 Dec in Baraga (JK).

TOWHEES THROUGH WEAVER FINCHES

Michigan hosted its 4th Spotted Towhee 17 Dec-27 Jan at Hancock, Houghton (OM, m.ob.), and Minnesota had one at Cook, St. Louis (E&CR, m.ob.). Michigan had good numbers of Eastern Towhees, including an extraordinary 5 at St. Joseph, Berrien 6 Feb (BT); Wisconsin had one 16 Dec-21 Jan in Waupaca (DT). Michigan had Chipping Sparrows in four counties, while Wisconsin had 4 Savannah Sparrows (p.a.) in Dec. The only Harris's Sparrows reported were visiting Wisconsin feeders in Dane 18 Dec (RHe) and Marathon 10 Feb (DB). A phenomenal flock of 5000+ Snow Buntings was recorded 22 Jan in Shawano, WI (DT).

Michigan had Rose-breasted Grosbeaks linger through mid-Dec in Baraga (LW, GW) and early Jan in Walton Twp., Eaton (RCF, LRK) and one 24 Dec at Whitefish Pt., Chippewa (LD). Wisconsin had a Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Bayfield 16 Dec (AW) and very late Indigo Buntings visiting feeders from fall—3 Dec in Waukesha (DG) and in Brown 1 Jan (RM). Michigan had numerous Eastern Meadowlarks, with at least 18 birds in six counties, and a rare winter Yellow-headed Blackbird in Monroe 18 Dec (JV). Wisconsin birders found late Rusty Blackbirds in Waukesha 21 Dec (DG) and Brown 28 Dec (T&IB).

An ad. male Bullock's Oriole treated Michigan birders by visiting a feeder at Brighton, Livingston (CH, m.ob.); if accepted, it will be the 4th state record.

Most winter finches were reported in low to moderate numbers this winter. The only Hoary Redpoll reports were from ne. Wisconsin in *Brown* 9 Dec (EF) and *Forest* 25 Jan (DT). Good numbers of Evening Grosbeaks were reported in both Michigan and Minnesota; the latter had 200+ in three different counties, plus sightings in another 11 counties; Wisconsin's highest total was 200 in *Menominee* 29 Jan (DT). A Eurasian Tree Sparrow 18 Feb in Kenosha, WI (p.a., NW) will join a handful of state records, while Michigan's first record from last fall lingered through the period in Cass (D&MJ, m.ob.).

EXOTICS

Wisconsin reports Great Tits in four counties a Eurasian Siskin specimen collected in *Iron*, and a European Jay at a feeder in *Sheboygan* 16 Dec

Contributors (subregional editors boldfaced): Larry Abraham, John Agger, Brian A Allen, Ronald B. Annelin, Tim Baerwald, Jeff Bahls, Patrick K. Baize, Chris Barrigar, Al E Batt, Ty & Ida Baumann, John T. Baumgartner, Patrick B. Beauzay, Ann Belleman, Dan Belter, Ryan Brady (RyB), Rick Brigham (RB), Paul E. Budde, Marlin Bussey, Adam M Byrne, Cheryl Carbon, Nadav Cassuto, Allen T. Chartier, Greg Cleary, Jim C. Dawe, Louis Dombroski, Robert M. Dunlap, Susan Duppstadt, Dan Duso, Kim R. Eckert, Richard C Fleming, Cheri Fox, Jim Frank, Elaine Fredericks, Susan M. Goens, Bob Grefe, Dennis Gustafson, Skye Haas, Lyle E. Hamilton, Richard Henderson (RHe), Michael L. Hendrickson, Chris Hensick, Anthony X. Hertzel, Scott C. Hickman, John W. Hockema, Randy Hoffman (RH; Wisconsin), Aaron Holschbach, Eric Howe, John Idzikowski, Robert B. Janssen, Paul E. Jantscher, David B Johnson, Brian Johnson, David & Minu Johnson, Jeanie M. Joppru, Jerry Jourdan, Steve F Kahl, Joe Kaplan, Kevin Kearns (KK), Kraig Kelsey (KrK), Douglas W. Kieser, Leah R Knapp, Steve Lubahn, Ray & Charlotte Lukes, Mike Mahler, Dennis & Barbara Martin, James P. Mattsson, Robert Mead, Steven P Millard, Owen Mills, Andre Moncrief, William Mueller, Brad Murphy (Michigan), Kris Nielsen, Darrin O'Brien, Nancy B. Overcott, Walter G. Pawloski, Gregory Pietila, Tom Prestby, Bill Rapai, Jack Reinoehl, Peg Robertson, Eunice & Cedric Roivanen, Russ Schipper, Kirk Schrader, Paul & Glenda Schwalbe, Mike J. Sefton, Al Shea (ASh), Harriet Sinell, Tim Smart, Brian T. Smith, Shelley A. Steva, Aaron Stutz (AS), Michael Supernault, Peder H. Svingen (Minnesota), Carolyn Szaroletta, Louis F. Taccolini, Dar Teide, Daryl Tessen, Steve Thiessen, Nels F. Thomp-

son, Nancy Tibbits, Bill J. Unzen, Lena Usyk, Tom Uttech, Dayle Vanderwier, David C. Vinnedge, Jake Volker, Linda & Gary Wadaga, LaRue Wells, Thomas R. Wheeker, Ben A. Wieland, Nancy Wisowaty, Tom Wood (TW), Jonathon T. Wuepper, Adrian Wydeven, Ric Zarwell.

Adam M. Byrne, 11771 Rachel Lane, DeWitt, Michigan 48820, (byrnea@msu.edu)

S.L.N.W.R. and S.C.N.W.R. were huge and

Iowa & Missouri



Robert Cecil

he first ten days of December were frigid reminders of winter's potential for making us miserable and for driving typical lingering birds out of the Region, including waterfowl, gulls, and semi-hardy passerines. For Missouri, it was coldest such period in almost 30 years; in Iowa, it hit -19° F in Cedar Rapids on 7 December and produced subzero temperatures somewhere in the state during the first week and a half of the month. More seasonable temperatures then returned in the middle of the month, then warmed up considerably by the third week. Snowfall was widespread and light in Iowa; in Missouri, it was primarily limited to the northern and central parts of the state.

"Delightful January" seems an oxymoron, but delightful it was. Depending upon the calculation and the state, it was either the warmest or second warmest January ever recorded. Ice vanished throughout Missouri and well into Iowa, and the balmy temperatures lured small to moderate numbers of numerous opportunistic species northward. Waterfowl, gulls, Turkey Vultures, and some passerines reappeared in January and early February, in some cases making it to northern Iowa. January precipitation was below normal for the Region except for southeastern Iowa

and southeastern Missouri.

February temperatures were above normal for Missouri and a roller-coaster for Iowa, where temperatures were erratic but did produce the coldest day since 2001 with -26° F at Elkader. Many of the birds that ventured northward during January were squeezed out by the cold temperatures, but not for long, and most had reappeared by the end of the month. Precipitation was below normal throughout. Always of interest, winter finches were no-shows during the season: 5 Red Crossbills, 2 Common Redpolls, and a handful of Purple Finches and Pine Siskins made up the entire invasion—unless one counts lowa's possible Brambling.

Abbreviations: R.M.B.S. (Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, St. Charles, MO); S.C.N.W.R. (Squaw Creek N.W.R., Holt, MO); S.L.N.W.R. (Swan Lake N.W.R., Chariton, MO); S.L. (Smithville L., Clinton and Clay, MO); W.L.D. (Winfield Lock and Dam Lincoln, MO).

GEESE THROUGH GROUSE

Like many waterfowl species this season, Greater White-fronted Geese were lured



Inca Dove, an increasing species in the Mississippi River Valley, was detected 8-28 (here 16) February 2006 at the Springfield Nature Center, Greene County, Missouri. Photograph by Tommie Rogers.

northward during the Jan thaw, e.g., 400 on 15 Jan at Pool 19 in Iowa (CC, CE); the highest count was of 2730 on 27 Feb at S.C.N.W.R. (FD). Snow Goose numbers at

pretty typical; less typically, 40,000 wintered at the latter location (TR). A rare darkmorph Ross's Goose was identified on 20 Feb in Stoddard, MO (BL, SDi). Cackling Geese made a good showing in lowa, with 1200 on 25 Feb in Worth (†PH) and 200 in Hamilton (KW), and details were provided for small numbers s. to cen. Missouri, such as 50 on 23 Dec at R.M.B.S. (BR). Three hrota Brant at Pool 19, Lee, IA 14 Jan (†SD) would be one of about six records for the state. An actively growing Trumpeter Swan population included 135 on 15 Jan at R.M.B.S. (DR). Enigmatic was a Wood Duck in Mason City, IA 10 Jan (RG); migrants made it to Lee, IA 18 Feb (RC) and Woodbury, IA 20 Feb (GE). Small numbers of most other dabblers (apparently except Northern Shoveler) pushed into s. and cen. Iowa during the first half of Jan but departed with the return of cold temperatures in Feb; all had returned by the end of the period. Canvasbacks appeared in the usual large Dec numbers at Pool 19, while the next high count was of 357 at R.M.B.S. 26 Dec (JE). Of the other Aythya, Redheads were scarce; Ring-necked Ducks peaked at 750 on 4 Feb at S.L.N.W.R. (SK) and 108 on 5 Feb in Union, IA (SD, JG); and 419 Greater Scaup were on the Keokuk, IA C.B.C., with 100 at L. Jacomo, Jackson MO 7 Jan (BF). Sea ducks were scarce: a Black Scoter on the Keokuk C.B.C. 19 Dec., a White-winged Scoter at W.L.D., MO 1-3 Dec (DRo, JE, JU), and a total of 7 Long-tailed Ducks (five reports, all in Dec except for 2 birds at Pool 19 on 10-14 Jan; JF, JD). By far the most northerly midwinter Hooded Mergansers were up to 4 in Woodbury, IA 1-3 Feb (BH, GE); the high count was 50 at S.L., MO 7 Jan (BF). As expected, the big concentrations of Common Mergansers were on the Iowa reservoirs: 8000 each at Rathbun 16 Dec (RLC) and at Red Rock 21 Jan (JG, JB, SD). Post-C.B.C. reports of Red-breasted Mergansers were also from Iowa: 3 on 14 Jan at Pool 19 (SD) and 2 migrants on 19 Feb in Scott (CC). There were 30 Greater Prairie-Chickens at Dunn