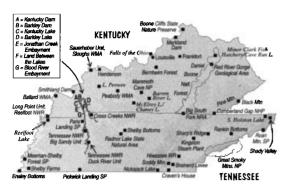
Tennessee & Kentucky



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The winter of 2006-2007 was one of the most variable on record in the Region. Temperatures were warmer than normal in December and January; in fact, January was the warmest month on record at Louisville. However, temperatures quickly transitioned to colder than normal in February. The frigid weather of early to mid-February was the coldest that the Region had experienced in several years and was responsible for a number of observations of note scattered throughout the following summary. Precipitation was overall below normal, with virtually no snow cover recorded outside of a twoweek period in north-central Kentucky in early to mid-February.

Rarity highlights included a Neotropic Cormorant, Sabine's Gull, returning Spotted Towhee, and Scott's Oriole in Kentucky and White-faced Ibis and two Common Redpolls in Tennessee. With natural and ornamental food crops seemingly in below-average supply, it was not a good winter for eaters of berries, cones, or mast, although Red-headed Woodpeckers were present in good numbers in the western portion of the Region. Northern finches and Red-breasted Nuthatches were nearly absent, with only a few Purple Finches and nuthatches present and virtually no Pine Siskins.

Abbreviations: Ballard W.M.A. (Ballard, KY); Ensley (Ensley Bottoms, including the EARTH Complex, in sw. Shelby, TN); Jonathan Creek (embayment of Kentucky L., Marshall, KY); Kentucky Dam (at n. end of Kentucky L., Livingston/Marshall, KY); Long Point (Long Point Unit Reelfoot N.W.R., Fulton, KY); Pace Point (Pace Point, Big Sandy Unit, Tennessee N.W.R., Henry, TN); Sauerheber (Sauerheber Unit Sloughs W.M.A., Henderson, KY); Standifer Gap (Standifer Gap Marsh, Hamilton, TN).

WATERFOWL

Greater White-fronted Geese were again nu-

merous in the w. portion of the Region this winter, with peak counts including a new Kentucky high count of 13,250 in the vicinity of Long Point 3 Jan (GP), 7000 at Sauerheber 29 Jan (MM), and 3000-4000 at Ballard W.M.A. during the first week of Feb (CW). Snow Geese were found in large numbers during early Feb, with 100,000 in the vicinity of Ballard W.M.A. and an additional 20,000 along the Mississippi R., KY, 10,000 along the lower

Ohio R., KY 6 Feb (PH), and 15,000 at Sauerheber during the first week of Feb (MM). A Ross's Goose × Snow Goose hybrid was reported in w. Fulton, KY 22 Feb (DR, HC). An exceptionally high count of 95 Ross's Geese was made in w. Fulton, KY 22 Feb (DR, HC). There were a few reports of Cackling Geese in Kentucky, including 2 in w. Fulton 16 Dec (BPa, NM, KL, DW); 15-20 in Oldham 29 Jan (BPa); one in Rockcastle 3 Feb (RDn); and 2 in Hardin 10 Feb (RHe). All five regular goose species were reported in well above-average numbers from e. Tennessee, including reports

This Neotropic Cormorant (at right) in Muhlenberg County provided Kentucky with its second documented record, although the timing of the one-day sighting (28 February 2007) was much earlier than all previous reports in the Region. *Photograph by David Roemer.*

of Cackling Geese from two locations. In w. Tennessee, as many as 31 Cackling Geese were at Shelby Farms, Memphis, TN 9 Dec-24 Feb (JW, JRW). One to 12 Mute Swans were reported at 11 Kentucky and three Tennessee locales during the season. The wintering flock of Tundra Swans at Sauerheber peaked at 42 birds 29 Jan (MM); otherwise, 5 were on the Ohio R., Bracken, KY 18 Feb (BSt, CBC), and single imms. were reported in Pulaski, KY 7 Dec (ph. RDn), at

Bristol, TN 13 Dec-2 Mar (RK, m.ob.), on L. Cumberland, Russell, KY 15 Feb (ph. RDn), and on Middlebrook L., Sullivan, TN 16 Feb (DM).

A Blue-winged Teal wintered in Washington, TN (RK, DH). The Feb cold snap brought the highest counts of Canvasbacks to the Ohio R. in Kentucky in many years, including 300 in Union 10 Feb (CC); up to 240+ at and upstream from Louisville 17-19 Feb (DR, RDv et al.); and 140 in Bracken 19 Feb (DR, RDv, LM). Redheads also showed up in good numbers at the same time, with 50 on the Ohio R., Jefferson, KY (BPa) and 110 on the Ohio R., Bracken, KY (DR, RDv, LM), both 19 Feb. The cold snap also resulted in some impressive diving duck tallies from Kentucky L., Marshall, KY, where the following peak counts were reported 21 Feb (DR): 2850 Greater Scaup (new state high count), 5000+ Lesser Scaup, and 9235 Common Goldeneyes (new state high count). Some 11,400 Lesser Scaup counted on L. Barkley, Lyon, KY 21 Feb (DR, HC) represented a new state high count.

Single Surf Scoters were present at Cane Creek Park, Putnam, TN 27 Dec (SJS), in

> Hamilton, TN 18 Feb (KC, DJ), on the Ohio R., Bracken, KY 18-19 Feb (BSt et al.), and in se. Muhlenberg, KY 28 Feb (BPa et al.). It was the best year in a long time for Whitewinged Scoters, with one to 3 reported at four Kentucky locales 29 Dec-27 Feb and an astonishing total of 21 reported from eight Tennessee locales 3 Dec-27 Feb. Single ad. male Black Scoters at Reelfoot L., Lake, TN 15 Dec (JRW) and at Ballard W.M.A. 18-21 Dec (ph.SR, et al.) were the only Blacks reported during the period. A female Long-tailed Duck was present on the Ohio R. upstream from Louisville 18-19 Feb (ph. T&CB et al.); a male was in Bristol, TN 15 Feb (RC, m.ob.). One to 20 Common Mergansers were reported at a dozen Kentucky sites, mostly during mid-Feb; they were also reported in above-average numbers in

Tennessee. A count of 1000 Red-breasted Mergansers at Pace Point 15 Feb (MT) was noteworthy.

LOONS THROUGH CRANES

There were two reports of Red-throated Loon in Kentucky: one on Kentucky L., Marshall 11 Feb (ph. DR, TD) and one at Barren River L. 16-18 Feb (ph. DR, BPa). A juv. Pacific Loon on L. Barkley, Lyon 4 Dec (BL) was the only one reported in Kentucky; likewise, one



White-faced lbis is a vagrant at any season in the Tennessee & Kentucky Region, but this individual in Lake County, Tennessee 10 (here 12) November through 9 December 2006 was especially late as well. *Photograph by Bill Pulliam*.

at Pace Point 15 Feb (MT) provided the sole Tennessee report. A few Common Loons lingered through the winter in Kentucky; a count of 50-60 on Kentucky L., Marshall, KY 21 Feb (DR) probably included some early migrants. There were two reports of Rednecked Grebe in Kentucky: one at Green River L., Taylor 29 Dec and 2 Jan (ph. BPa, AC, RDn) and one on the Ohio R., Bracken 19 Feb (ph. DR). For the 2nd winter in a row, a Rednecked Grebe and 2 Western Grebes were at Pace Point, this year on 15 Feb (MT). Two Red-necked Grebes were also at Reelfoot L. during the C.B.C. 16 Dec (fide MG). There were four reports of Eared Grebe in Kentucky: one in Muhlenberg 3-9 Dec (ph. DR et al.) and again (possibly the same individual) 28 Feb (ph. BPa, ph. DR); one on Kentucky L., Calloway 3 Jan (HC, WWe); and one on Kentucky L., Marshall 11 Feb (DR, TD). Up to 8 Eareds were present at their regular wintering location at S. Holston L., Sullivan, TN during the period (fide RK); one on the Tennessee R., Hamilton, TN 26-27 Feb (KC, m.ob.) constituted a first county record. Small or moderate numbers of American White Pelicans lingered on the lakes in the w. portion of the Region through the winter. Quite unexpected was a Neotropic Cormorant accompanying 3 Double-cresteds in Muhlenberg, KY 28 Feb (ph., †BPa, ph. DR); late in the day, the 4 birds headed off northward...one has to wonder where that bird will end up! A Great White Heron was on the Little R. near Townsend, Blount, TN 5 Dec-11 Jan (ph. WB); most of the handful of Regional records of this rare taxon have occurred in e. Tennessee over the past 15 years, including five from Sullivan. Great Egrets were reported widely across Tennessee, with 9 reported from six locations, in addition to an impressive 23 at Robco L.,

Shelby 6 Jan (JRW). Tardy or wintering American Bitterns were present in Muhlenberg, KY 9 Dec (RDn, HC, ME) and in Greene, TN 18 Dec (DM); one at Brainerd Levee, Chattanooga, TN 22 Nov-16 Dec (RS, KW, ph. KC) ultimately furnished the 2nd record for the Chattanooga C.B.C. (fide KC). A White-faced Ibis in Lake, TN 3-9 Dec (NM, ph. MT et al.) was a stunning and unexpected winter record of this vagrant to the Re-

Returning Ospreys again set record-early dates, with single birds at the Tennessee R., Hamilton, TN 24 Feb (CD), Knox, TN 27 Feb (SHo), Greene, TN 28 Feb (DM), and L. Barkley, Trigg, KY 28 Feb (HC). One found during the Knoxville C.B.C. 30 Dec and one in Hawkins, TN 1 Feb (SHu) were likely win-



Sabine's Gulls are rare but regular fall migrants in the interior East and Midwest, but this juvenile in Lyon County, Kentucky established a first winter record for the state 16 (here 23) December 2006 through 3 January 2007. *Photograph by David Roemer.*

tering. There were several reports of interesting Red-tailed Hawks: a dark- or intermediate-morph Harlan's in Rockcastle, KY 8 & 23 Dec (ph. RDn); a dark-morph calurus in Pulaski, KY 17 Dec (RDn); a light-morph ad. calurus in s. Warren 8 Ian for at least the 3rd year in a row (DR); and a dark- or intermediate-morph Harlan's in Pulaski 27 Jan (†RDn). One to 2 Rough-legged Hawks were noted at several Kentucky sites through the period; the lone report from Tennessee was from Gibson 7 Dec (MG). One to 3 Golden Eagles were reported at six Kentucky and three Tennessee sites 3 Dec-18 Feb, an above-average showing. It was another decent winter for Merlins, with single birds (possibly 2 in one instance) reported at nine Kentucky and seven Tennessee sites during the period. A Peregrine Falcon was at a recent wintering site in Washington, TN (RK); a pair around the regular nesting location below Chickamauga Dam, Hamilton, TN was seen copulating 4 Feb (fide KC). In w. Tennessee, 2 birds were seen on three occasions at Ensley 6 Jan (JRW), in Memphis 8 Jan (KD), and at Paris Landing S.P., Henry 15 Feb (MT).

Six Virginia Rails were heard at three sites in se. Muhlenberg, KY 30 Dec (BPa, AC); 3, plus a Sora, were reported on the Savannah, TN C.B.C. 2 Jan (fide WRP). Virginia Rails were present at Standifer Gap throughout the period, with a high of 13 on the Chattanooga C.B.C. 16 Dec (DPa); a Sora was also there 26 Feb (ph. J&VL). Southbound flocks of Sandhill Cranes continued through the C.B.C. period, with one to 60 reported on eight Kentucky counts; the mild weather that continued into Jan resulted in a large number of birds short-stopping in w. Hardin, KY without proceeding farther; the peak count at this locale was a new state high count of 6000 estimated there 30 Jan (DR). The cold weather of early Feb forced most to retreat a bit farther southward, but as soon as the cold weather broke during the 3rd week of the month, birds were moving northward in full force, with numerous flocks reported during the last week of the month.

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH GULLS

One or 2 Spotted Sandpipers wintered in Kingsport, Sullivan, TN (RP, m.ob.). Early or vagrant shorebirds included a Greater Yellowlegs in Todd, KY 21 Jan (ph. DR, MB); 3 Lesser Yellowlegs at Sauerheber 24 Feb (HC, ME, RDn); a Greater Yellowlegs at Rankin Bottoms, Cocke, TN 26 Feb (MS); and a Pectoral Sandpiper in s. Warren, KY 26 Feb (DR). Single late Greater Yellowlegs were at Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mts. N.P., Sevier, TN 14 Nov–13 Dec (WB) and Ensley 9 Dec (MTOS).



Great Black-backed Gulls, rare in Kentucky, appear to be increasing; this secondcycle bird was present at Kentucky Dam 6 (here) and 7 February 2007. *Photo*graph by Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr.

A tardy Western Sandpiper was present at Jonathan Creek 15 Dec (HC, BH). A few Least Sandpipers were seen off and on in w. Kentucky during the period, but they disappeared during the cold spell of Feb; the peak count was 109 at Jonathan Creek 29 Jan (BH).

A first-year Franklin's Gull was in *Pulaski*, KY 1 Dec (ph. RDn). The mild early winter period enticed good numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls to linger into midwinter in the Region, with 7000-10,000 estimated on Kentucky L., KY 11 Feb (DR, TD). It was an odd winter for

Ring-billed Gulls, with below-average numbers reported across the Region prior to the cold snap in early Feb; however, up to 40,000 may have been present on Kentucky L., KY 11 Feb (DR, TD). Greatest numbers of Herring Gulls occurred during the Feb cold snap, with peak counts including several hundred at Kentucky Dam 6-7 Feb (BPa); 85 on the Ohio R. at Covington, Kenton, KY 15 Feb (FR); at least 105 at Cave Run L., Rowan, KY 16 Feb (BPa); 200+ in the vicinity of Markland Dam on the Ohio R., Gallatin, KY 18 Feb (DR, RDv); and 415+ in the vicinity of Mel-

dahl Dam on the Ohio R., Bracken, KY 19 Feb (DR, RDv, LM). The only reports of Thayer's Gull were of an ad. below Kentucky Dam 7 & 10 Feb (ph. BPa et al.), an ad. at Barkley Dam 21 Feb (DR, HC), and a first-winter bird in Lake, TN 2-9 Dec (TW et al.). A first-winter Iceland Gull was at Pace Point 7 Feb (MT). A handful of reports of Lesser Black-backed Gull came from the lakes in the w. portion of the Region; however, the Feb cold snap brought reports of one to 2 on the middle Ohio R., KY where county firsts were reported for Gallatin (ph. DR, RDv) and Jefferson

(JBe, PB, ph. BPa), 18 and 19 Feb, respectively. There were two reports of Great Blackbacked Gull, a second-year bird below Kentucky Dam 6-7 Feb (ph. BPa) and 2 first-year birds over Markland Dam on the Ohio R., Gallatin, KY 18 Feb (DR, RDv). One of the highlights of the season was a juv. Sabine's Gull at L. Barkley, Lyon, KY 16 Dec-3 Jan (vt. SW, et al.), a species exceedingly rare in winter anywhere in North America. Small numbers of Forster's Terms were reported throughout w. Tennessee during the season,

peaking at an unusually high 50 at Lick Creek W.M.A., Benton, TN 3 Dec (MT). Two were in Marion, TN during the Nickajack Lake C.B.C. 30 Dec (fide KC).

OWLS THROUGH FINCHES

Eurasian Collared-Doves are still scarce in e. Tennessee n. of Chattanooga, so reports from Washington (DH) and Carter (TM) were noteworthy, as was a first county record for Clay (BHS). The Inca Dove in Hamblen, TN lingered through 14 Dec (BBr). Two to 4 Long-



This male Cape May Warbler in Trigg County 16 December 2006 furnished a first winter record for Kentucky. *Photograph by David Roemer.*

eared Owls in *Muhlenberg*, KY during the period (BPa et al.) were the only ones reported in the Region. It was a better winter for Shorteared Owls, with one to 10 reported at seven Kentucky and four Tennessee sites during the period; one in *Union*, TN 24 Feb (CC) was a county first. The only report of a Northern Saw-whet Owl in Kentucky was of one heard in *McCreary* 3 Jan (RDn, JD); in Tennessee, one in Pickett S.P., *Fentress*, TN (JF) and one on the Bristol C.B.C. 31 Dec (JM) were the only reports away from Roan Mt., a regular breeding area.

The number of winter hummingbirds in the Region was somewhat reduced this year, with fewer oddities in the mix. Red-headed Woodpeckers were numerous in bottomland forests of the w. portion of the Region again this winter; they were especially conspicuous at Ballard W.M.A. and in Land Between the Lakes N.R.A. Vireos tarrying included a White-eyed in Warren, KY 29 Dec (†DB) and a Blue-headed in Knox, TN 2 Dec (CG); another Blue-headed was seen at Bartlett, Shelby, TN 25 Jan (RI).

Fish Crows continue to be regularly reported in winter along the Tennessee R. in Knox, TN; future reports will not be noted in this summary absent additional developments. Common Ravens continue to spread farther outside the mts. in upper e. Tennessee, with reports from Washington, Sullivan, and Hawkins. The earliest Tree Swallows were 3 at Booker T. Washington S.P., Hamilton, TN 18 Feb (DJ); as has been the trend in recent years, the species had moved into the state in significant numbers by late Feb. Very few Red-breasted Nuthatches were present in the Region this winter; one to 4 were reported on only six Kentucky C.B.C.s and three Tennessee C.B.C.s.

Tallies of 9 House Wrens and 4 Sedge Wrens during the Reelfoot Lake C.B.C. 16

Dec were unusually high (fide MG); the only other reports of House Wrens were of single birds in Greene, TN 18 Dec (DM); during the Savannah, TN C.B.C. 2 Jan (fide WRP); and on three Kentucky C.B.C.s. One to 2 Marsh Wrens were reported at three sites in Kentucky and six sites in Tennessee 16 Dec-6 Jan, but 9 at Standifer Gap 16 Dec during the Chattanooga C.B.C. (DPa) was exceptional. Reports of Sedge Wrens away from Reelfoot L. included single birds at Standifer Gap 16 Dec (DPa); at Shelby Farms, Memphis, TN 17 Dec (MTOS); in w. McCracken, KY 18

Dec (BPa, SR); and at Heritage Marsh, White, TN 21 Dec (SJS, WWa). Single Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were in Knox, TN 10 Dec (SHo) and 17 Jan (MD). Eastern Bluebirds were numerous early in the winter (24–273 reported on 28 of 29 Kentucky C.B.C.s), but following the Feb cold snap, very few individuals appeared to be present in many portions of n.cen. Kentucky, suggesting that mortality may have been high in this area. Below-average numbers of Cedar Waxwings were present in Kentucky into early Jan (one to 124 reported on 17 of 29 Kentucky C.B.C.s), but influxes



This Common Redpoil spent 18 (here 27) February into March 2007 at Hohenwald, Lewis County, Tennessee; another was in Tipton 9 January through 16 February 2007. There are only a handful of records of this species for the state, and prior to the Tipton bird, none from western Tennessee. Considering the very poor flight of this species south of Canada in this winter, these records are all the more remarkable. *Photograph by Bill Pulliam*.

or waves of birds were noted in mid-Jan and early Feb. Only 4 Gray Catbirds were reported in Tennessee, all from the e. half of the state; this is still somewhat high but considerably lower than last winter.

An Orange-crowned Warbler was present in ne. Hart, KY in Jan (BPa, CF), and one to 2 were reported from seven Tennessee locations 2 Dec-2 Jan. A Tennessee Warbler on President's I., Memphis, TN 17 Dec (ER) represents an exceptionally rare winter record for the Region; a Nashville Warbler in Knox, TN 9-10 Dec (†SHo) was almost as exceptional. A male Cape May Warbler in Land Between the Lakes N.R.A., Trigg, KY 16 Dec (ph.DR) represented a first winter record for the state. Palm Warblers were scarce in Kentucky this winter; in Tennessee, numbers were higher but still down from last winter's unusually high total, except for a count record total of 16 during the Chattanooga C.B.C. 16 Dec (fide KC). Single tardy Common Yellowthroats were in Pulaski, KY 5 Dec (RDn, GH), at the Brainerd Levee during the Chattanooga C.B.C. 16 Dec (KW), and on the Savannah, TN C.B.C. 2 Jan (fide WRP); 2 were found at Reelfoot L., where the species may sometimes winter, during the C.B.C. 16 Dec (fide MG).

A female Summer Tanager in Hamilton, TN 11 Dec-7 Feb (MLB) may constitute the first winter record for the county. An ad. male was at a feeder in Knoxville, TN 9-17 Dec (ph. SP); one on the other side of the county early-21 Jan (fide MD) may or may not have been the same bird. The male Spotted Towhee

that wintered ne. of Canmer, Hart, KY last year returned and was observed 12 Dec+ (CF, BBa et al.). One to 24 Chipping Sparrows were reported on 11 Kentucky C.B.C.s, with wintering documented at feeding stations in Warren (DR) and Trigg (BL, PL). A Lincoln's Sparrow was in Putnam, TN 16 Dec (KB, DC). One to 6 Le Conte's Sparrows were observed at six Kentucky and two Tennessee sites 5 Dec-28 Feb. Lapland Longspurs were present in typical numbers across the Region, although the Feb cold spell brought another wave into n.-cen. Kentucky, where up to 75 were seen in Gallatin 15 Feb (BPa) and 200+ were seen in Jefferson 17 Feb (BPa et al.). The Feb cold snap also brought Snow Buntings to n.-cen. Kentucky, with one to 19 reported from Boone, Bracken, Gallatin, and Jefferson, with a peak count of ca. 60 in w. Boone 19 Feb (LM). Single wintering Indigo Buntings were in Williamson, TN 22 Jan (JBu) and Tipton, TN 26 Feb (DPr). An ad. male Painted Bunting at a feeder in Knox, TN 13 Jan (ph. CSk) furnished only the 2nd record ever for e. Tennessee.

The only report of Western Meadowlark in Kentucky was of 2 in w. Fulton 22 Feb (vt. DR, HC). One to 11 Brewer's Blackbirds were reported in Ballard, KY 18 Dec (BPa) and Warren, KY 23 Feb (DR); 30 were in White, TN 5 Feb (DD). The rarity highlight of the winter season was an imm. female Scott's Oriole that was present in a yard n. of Frankfort, Franklin, KY early Feb+ (F&DS, m.ob.). Single wintering Baltimore Orioles were in Williamson, TN 5 Dec (JBu), in Greene, TN

18 Dec (DM), on President's I., Memphis, TN 27 Dec (ER, MW), and in Monroe, TN (RHo et al.). Purple Finches and Pine Siskins were present in extremely low numbers. The only Kentucky report of Pine Siskin during the entire period was one on the Richmond C.B.C. 16 Dec (SM). Single Common Redpolls, which are now casual in the Region, were in Tipton, TN 9 Jan–16 Feb (DPr, J&SF) and at Hohenwald, Lewis, TN 18 Feb-(ph. BPu). Six Red Crossbills made a surprising discovery in Greeneville, Greene, TN 23 Dec (DM).

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