Illinois & Indiana



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he spring season was generally warm and dry. March was 7° F warmer than average, and May was 5° F warmer than average, making this one of the five warmest spring periods since 1895. Despite the early warm temperatures, a killing frost hit most of the Region 4 April, bringing cold temperatures and strong northerly winds that halted migration for at least 10 days. May was particularly dry across the Region, many areas receiving less than a third of normal rainfall levels. Seventeen-year periodical cicadas emerged in northwestern Indiana and the Chicago region, providing several bird species an abundant food supply. There were several uncommon and rare species in the Region this spring, including King Eider, Western Grebe, Tricolored Heron, Reddish Egret, Swallow-tailed Kite, Prairie Falcon, Yellow and Black Rails, Purple Gallinule, Snowy Plover, Curlew Sandpiper, Red-necked Stint, Black-headed Gull, Townsend's Warbler, and Lazuli Bunting.

Abbreviations: Bellrose Reserve (Frank Bellrose Waterfowl Reserve, Pulaski, IL); Carl. L. (Carlyle L., IL); Dunes (Dunes S.P., Porter, IN); F.W.A. (Fish and Wildlife Area); Goose Pond (Goose Pond F.W.A., Greene, IN); Horseshoe L. (Madison, IL); Jax. P. (Jackson Park, Chicago); Montrose (Montrose Pt., Lincoln Park, Chicago); Wakarusa (Wakarusa Wastewater Treatment Facility, Elkhart, IN).

WATERFOWL THROUGH GALLIFORMS

Indiana's only report of Ross's Goose consisted of a single at Kankakee F.W.A. 12 & 17 Mar (KJB, JKC, JJM et al.). A lingering Snow Goose in *Carroll*, IL 19 May (TAM) and 3 in Fulton, IL 17 May (LLH) were expected. Mute

Swans were widespread and seen in good numbers in Illinois, with 62 at Spring L., Tazewell 20 May (KAM) and 61 at Wolf L. 3 Mar (WJM). After their weak showing in winter, all dabbling ducks except Wood Duck and Blue-winged Teal provided peak counts that were below normal in Illinois. Especially noticeable was the reduced presence of American Wigeon, with no counts greater than the 80 tallied at Santa Fe Bottoms, Clinton, IL 8 Mar (DMK) and at Carl. L. 25 Mar (DMK). For the 2nd consecutive spring, a male Cinnamon Teal was recorded in Indiana, this one a one-day wonder at Goose Pond 24 Apr (LWS). In contrast to the dabblers, bay ducks were noted in significant concentrations following a good winter season. Representative high counts from Illinois included 24,000 Canvasbacks and an outstanding 24,000 Lesser Scaup 7 Mar along the Mississippi R. in Hancock (AGD), 465 Redheads at Clear L., Mason 22 Mar (R&SB), and 7231 Ringnecked Ducks at L. Chautaugua N.W.R. 16 Mar (R&SB).

Reports of Harlequin Ducks included a male and female 20 Mar in Chicago (GAW), a male in Wilmette, IL 13 Mar (JP), and 2 males on the Mississippi R. in Rock Island 10

Feb-23 Mar (SMF et al.) that shuttled between Illinois and Iowa. Illinois reported 2 Surf, 4 White-winged, and 2 Black Scoters, with a late Surf Scoter at Lyerla L., Union (KAM) 26-28 Apr. Indiana reported 9 Surf Scoters, including 7 at Eagle Creek Park 22 Mar (LP, DW). Representing a good flight of White-winged Scoters were 2 on Brookville Res. 8 & 11 Mar (WHB) and an inland bird on L. Monroe 10-27 Mar (JD, DRW, MC); a maximum of 3 was reported at the lakefront at Dunes 18 Mar (BJG). Indiana's first

spring record of King Eider (p.a.) occurred at Dunes 10 Mar when an imm. male flew by in the company of a number of Aythya species (KJB, JKC, JJM et al.). A nice total of 200 Buffleheads and an exceptional 3000 Common Goldeneyes were counted 7 Mar on the Mississippi R. in Hancock (AGD). A female Common Goldeneye observed away from L. Michigan in Chicago 25 May (ph. SSp) was very late. Low winter numbers of Common Mergansers continued into spring, the highest total consisting of 570 in Grundy, IL 10 Mar (DFS); the latest individual was at L. Monroe 8 May (DRW). The 28 Ring-necked Pheasants 5 May in Pecatonica (DTW) and the 63

Greater Prairie-Chickens 12 Mar at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area (RES) provided noteworthy high counts. Reported Ruffed Grouse included a drumming male 9 May (MC) and a female with 8 young 15 May in Morgan-Monroe S.F. (JD).

LOONS THROUGH IBIS

Indiana reported 4 inland Red-throated Loons, while at Dunes, counts of 10 and 4 were made 18 Mar (BJG) and 28 Apr (JJM), respectively. In Illinois, they lingered late, with an imm. at Johnson Sauk Trail S.P. 10-12 May (AFS, m.ob.) and 2 at Illinois Beach S.P. 5 May (EWW et al.). The high Common Loon tally for the season consisted of 93 birds at L. Monroe 31 Mar (DRW). A remarkable 183 Horned Grebes was tallied 20 Apr at Illinois Beach S.P. (CF). Red-necked and Eared Grebes were in short supply, with reports of 4 and 5, respectively. A Western Grebe was a nice find at Carl. L. 5 May (RSH, DMK, KAM). The 7000 American White Pelicans along the Mississippi R. in Jersey 10 Mar (GAW) provided a record-high spring count for Illinois.

Numbers of American Bitterns reported were encouraging, bolstered largely by a tally



This Purple Gallinule was photographed in a Boone County, Indiana backyard on 26 April 2007. Photograph by John Cassady.

of 10 birds at Goose Pond 5 May (LWS). Good numbers of Least Bitterns were reported across the Region, with maximum counts of 5 at Mermet L., Massac, IL 5 May (FKB) and 4 at Spring L., Carroll, IL 20 May (DTW, BCW). A Great Egret 14 Mar at L. Renwick (SM) was early, and the 245 at Baker's L. in nw. Cook, IL 5 May (GAW) formed a notable concentration. The 25 Snowy Egrets in Monroe, IL 27 May (DMK) was also a nice total. A Tricolored Heron flying past Montrose 27 May (†GAW) was among the latest of Illinois's spring records for this species (p.a.). Illinois's 3rd Reddish Egret, discovered at the Chicago Botanic Gardens, Cook 19-23 May (TE,



Illinois's third Reddish Egret was found 19 (here 20) May 2007 at the Chicago Botanic Gardens, Cook County, where it remained until 23 May. It then moved northward, appearing late on 23 May at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center, Lake County, and then to Waukegan Beach, where it stayed 24-25 May. *Photograph by Carolyn Fields*.

m.ob.), posed for many photographs before wandering northward into Lake, where it visited Great Lakes Naval Training Center 23 May (BS) and Waukegan 24-25 May (JOS et al.). A Green Heron 24 Mar in Shelby, IL (KF) was rather early. An exceptional count of 14 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons was made 24 Apr in Madison, IL (FRH).

It was a banner spring for Glossy Ibis, with 9 or more reported in Illinois and 4 in Indiana. Sightings in Lenzberg, St. Clair, IL peaked with 4 there 18 May (TJD). Others included 2 at Carl. L. 28 Apr (LN, fide DMK) and singles near Farina, IL 16 May (†JWW et al.), at Fairmont City, IL 26-29 May (P&BJ, m.ob.), and at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area 22 May (RES, SAS). A single Glossy Ibis was at Goose Pond 2 May (LWS), and 3 were at Cane Ridge W.M.A. 6 May (G&LB). A Black Vulture in Porter, IN 13 May (B&MB) represented only the 3rd lakefront record.

KITES THROUGH SANDPIPERS

A Swallow-tailed Kite was observed in Lake, IL 9 May (DWi), providing the 5th state record (p.a.). Extralimital Mississippi Kites included imms. 10 May in Kankakee, IL (JBH) and 14 May at the L. Decatur dredge ponds (MFD), plus an ad. 23 May s. of Mokena, Will, IL (ABH). Northern Harriers lingered through mid-May, with sightings 18 May in s. Ogle, IL (TAM) and 17 May in Lake, IL (KAM). Two imm. Northern Goshawks

were reported: one 23 Mar-8 Apr at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area (RES, CLH et al.) and another 14 Mar at Goose Pond (DRW, DB). A Rough-legged Hawk tarried at Goose Pond 5 May (LWS). Among 9 Golden Eagles reported from Indiana was a tardy imm. in Columbia City 20 May (IJM); 2 imms. in Lawrence 7 Mar (CLH) were the only ones in Illinois. A late Merlin was observed in Galena, IL 19 May (JWW). Most unusual was a Prairie Falcon 16 May near Farina, Fayette (p.a., †JWW, TLE, SAS) that provided the latest spring record for Illinois; one that wintered at Hawthorn Mines, Sullivan, IN was last seen 4 Mar (DRW).

An incredible 6 Yellow Rails were recorded 17-18 Apr at Karl Bartel Wildlife Sanctuary, *Marion*, IL (TAM, RES, TDF); 5 others were reported from Illinois, and a calling bird at Goose Pond 15-17 Apr (LWS et al.) provided Indi-

ana's sole report. It was another great spring for Black Rails, with 6 singles reported: 15 Apr in Fayette, IL (DMK), 29 Apr in Massac, IL (FKB), at Hardy L., IN 17 May (JDW, fide JSC), 18 May at Illinois Beach S.P. (EWW), 25 May at Goose Pond (LWS), and 31 May at

Muscatatuck N.W.R. (MM). A Purple Gallinule was found at Mermet L. 5 May (FKB), where the species has previously nested, and a very cooperative individual was found in a tiny wetland near Thorntown, Boone, IN 24 Apr (H&RS-C, BB, m.ob.), remaining there until 7 May.

With only 11 prior Snowy Plover records for the Region, 3 in one season was remarkable. One was at the L. Decatur dredge ponds 30 Apr-2 May (MFD, ph. TAM), another was at Rend L. 28-29 May (ph., †DMK et al.), and the 3rd was found

at L. Gibson 20-21 May (CEM, ph. G&LB, LP). Seven Piping Plovers were reported across the Region. A maximum count of 11 Black-necked Stilts was made 7 May at Goose Pond (LWS), while a group of 8 birds at East Cape Girardeau, Alexander 25 Apr (KAM) represented the high for Illinois. American

Avocets were well represented in Illinois as well, with a high count of 14 at Montrose 27 Apr (OM).

A large group of 58 Solitary Sandpipers was at Paradise L., Coles, IL 30 Apr (EWW) Carl. L. hosted 300 Greater and 1200 Lesser Yellowlegs 15 Apr (DMK), and 44 Willets were observed at the L. Decatur dredge ponds 30 Apr (MFD). Upland Sandpipers were in short supply across the Region. A rare inland Whimbrel at Goose Pond 30 Apr (LA) provided the season's only record of the species (p.a.). Godwits arrived early and were plentiful. Among 26 Hudsonian Godwits seen in Illinois, one 12 Apr at Bellrose Reserve (KAM) and 14 at Carl. L. 15 Apr (DMK) provided record-early arrival dates. An early Marbled Godwit was at Carl. L. 25 Mar-1 Apr (DMK, TAM, KAM), while 5 at L. Monroe 11 Apr (DRW) were record early for Indiana. The largest group among 17 Marbled Godwits seen in Illinois was of 6 at Carl. L. 22 Apr (DMK). The report of 6 Red Knots 25 May in Waukegan, IL (EWW) was noteworthy, as this species is scarce in spring. A Western Sandpiper at Carl. L. 30 Mar-1 Apr (DMK, ph. TAM) was exceptionally early; another at Goose Pond 28 Apr (LWS, IC, J&SH et al.) provided Indiana's first Apr record; and 12 at Carl. L. 26 May (DMK) tied the record spring high count from Illinois. A Least Sandpiper 19 Mar at Bellrose Reserve (KAM) provided Illinois's 2nd earliest arrival date. The Region's first Red-necked Stint



of an amazing three different individuals seen in the Region this spring; prior to this season, the state had just eleven total records of the species. *Photograph by Dan Kassebaum*.

(p.a.), molting into alternate plumage, was found 23 May at Wakarusa (JAH, JK, LP, DS et al.) by a group searching for the Curlew Sandpiper found 22 May by Dan Stoltzfus during a routine survey. Just Indiana's 2nd Curlew Sandpiper, the bird was in alternate plumage (ph. JKC) but unfortunately stayed



A Curlew Sandpiper found by Dan Stoltzfus at Wakarusa Wastewater Treatment Facility in Elkhart County was a second for Indiana 22 May 2007. *Photograph by John Cassady*.

for only one day. An unusually large spring assemblage of 26 Baird's Sandpipers was noted 29 Apr at Carl. L. (DMK). Among a fine total of 21 Stilt Sandpipers was Indiana's highest ever spring total, 11, which was recorded at Goose Pond 15 May (DRW). The 200 Wilson's Snipe at Santa Fe Bottoms, Clinton, IL (DMK) 17 Mar made a notable count. A Wilson's Phalarope 26 Mar–2 Apr at Bellrose Reserve (KAM) was exceptionally early; this species peaked with a nice tally of 12 at Big L., Brown, IL 28 Apr (TW). Two Red-necked Phalaropes were reported from Illinois and one from Indiana.

GULLS THROUGH SAPSUCKERS

An apparent Laughing Gull x Ring-billed Gull hybrid returned for the 4th consecutive year to Chicago 23 Apr (MLB, fide WJM). A Franklin's Gull graced TNC Kankakee Sands 13 Mar (JK, BKB), providing Indiana's earliest spring record. The ad. Black-headed Gull at Montrose 23 Feb (IWH, AH) was there almost daily until 25 Mar (m.ob.). A late firstcycle Iceland Gull was at Illinois Beach S.P. 18 May (EWW). A Caspian Tern found 17 Mar at Wolf L., Hammond, IN (MT) and 2 Caspian Terns at Chicago's L. Calumet 26 Mar (WJM) were record early, as was a Forster's Tern at L. Monroe 25 Mar (MC). A large group of 725 Common Terns was seen 15 May at Winthrop Harbor, IL (EWW).

White-winged Doves continued to show up with some regularity in Illinois. Individuals were noted at Springfield 1-3 May (ph. VMK), at Montrose 30 Apr and 8 & 10 May (RDH; ph., †GAW et al.), and in Evanston 26 May (ph., †JIE et al.). Among 6 Barn Owls re-

ported in Illinois, one 23 Apr at Montrose (RDH, ph. KH et al.) was away from known nesting locations. Seven Long-eared Owls were at Carl. L. (DMK) 17 Mar. A recordhigh spring count of 38 Short-eared Owls was tallied 3 & 7 Mar at Peabody R. King F.W.A., St. Clair, IL (TUM et al.). Northern Saw-whet Owls were noted 8 Mar at Carl. L. (DMK) and 2 Apr in Chicago (IS, ph. EIT).

A nice count of 65 Common Nighthawks was made 12 May at Horseshoe L., Madison, 1L (KAM, DMK), while 8 Chuck-will's-widows heard in Greene-Sullivan

S.F. 10 May (LWS) furnished a fine count for Indiana. A Whip-poor-will at Ferne Clyffe S.P., Johnson, IL 2 Apr was early (KAM), as were the 10 Chimney Swifts in Johnson, IL 26 Mar (KAM). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird 5-10 Apr in Massac, IL (FKB) was early, and 90 at Mode 8 May (KF) represented a recordhigh spring count for Illinois. A first-year fe-



This cooperative Townsend's Warbler was the fifth to be documented in Illinois. It lingered 5-9 (here 6) May 2007 at La Bagh Woods Forest Preserve in Chicago. *Photograph by Kanae Hirabayashi*.

male Rufous Hummingbird first noted in Nov 2006 at Jim McLane's feeder in *Gallatin*, 1L remained until 13 Apr (CH, KAM). A female Yellow-bellied Sapsucker tarried in Indianapolis 7-18 May (LP).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS

An early Olive-sided Flycatcher was in McLean 30 Apr (MJW). The maximum count of 7 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers came 26-27 May in Chicago (GAW), while 14 Leasts at Jax. P. 8 May (PRC, SLC) was the high. Twenty-five Willow Flycatchers were count-

ed along the Indiana lakefront 23 May (JKC et al.). A sizeable group of 5 Western Kingbirds was in Madison, IL 30 Apr (FRH), another was in Massac, IL 13 Apr-5 May (FKB), and a singleton was reported in Newton, IN 21 May (AS, fide IIM). A Scissortailed Flycatcher was discovered 5 May at Horseshoe Lake F.W.A., Alexander, IL (ph. ID et al.). A Loggerhead Shrike 29 Mar at Montrose (ph. RC) provided a rare sighting for ne. Illinois. A Warbling Vireo 2 Apr at Mermet L., Massac, IL (KAM) was early. Bell's Vireos arrived early as well, with one 24 Apr at Carl. L. (KAM) and another at Goose Pond 27 Apr (DRW), the latter providing the first Apr record for Indiana in 45 years. A nice tally of 26 White-eyed Vireos was made 25 Apr in Jackson, IL (KAM). A singing Yellow-throated Vireo at L. Monroe 24 Mar (DRW) furnished the first Mar record for Indiana. Lingering Blue-headed Vireos were noted 27 May at Jax, P. (G&SD) and in Chicago's Lincoln Park (GAW). Two Fish Crows heard and seen 21 Apr in Springfield (VMK) were away from their normal areas. There is no evidence that West Nile Virus has decimated local Blue Jay populations, as 12,000+ were recorded along the lakefront this spring. Among these was a record high tally of 3009 at Dunes 1 May (KJB).

Cliff Swallows were early, with one in Gol-

conda, IL 24 Mar (EWW). A Redbreasted Nuthatch 18 May at Montrose (KAM) was the latest of just 4 reported from Illinois. Brown Creepers were reported in reduced numbers and departed early; the latest report in Illinois was 6 May at Jax. P. (JSM, PRC). Winter Wrens were also scarce, but one 20 May in Jackson (RMR) was quite late for s. Illinois. Record early for Illinois were 2 Sedge Wrens 23 Mar at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area (CLH). Contrastingly, Marsh Wrens were late to arrive in Illinois, the earliest seen 17 Apr in Marion (TAM). A Golden-crowned Kinglet at Dunes 19 May (JKC, JM,

RJP) provided the 2nd latest record for Indiana, and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet lingered in Beverly Shores, *Porter*, IN until 26 May (KJB, SRB, JKC, LSH). Overall numbers of thrushes and thrashers were below normal. The peak of 12 Hermit Thrushes noted at McHenry Dam, *McHenry*, IL 7 Apr (DTW) was especially low. The wintering female Varied Thrush in Rochelle, IL was seen until 17 Mar (m.ob.). A notable total of 400 American Pipits was recorded 15 Apr at Carl. L. (DMK), and a fine total of 1690 Cedar Waxwings was tallied at Dunes 15 May (KJB).



This Lazuli Bunting was photographed at Sand Bluff Bird Observatory, Winnebago County, Illlinois 29 April 2007. Photograph by John Longhenry.

WARBLERS

Most warblers were present in normal numbers across the Region. An Orange-crowned Warbler 2 Apr at Ft. Massac S.P. (KAM) was notably early. In Indiana, a record spring total of Nashville Warblers was reported, the maximum tally consisting of 19 at Ft. Harrison S.P., Marion 29 Apr (DG). Northern Parulas at Rend L. 25 Mar (EWW) and at Mississippi Palisades S.P., Carroll, IL 26 Mar (ASt) were early. The 75 Magnolia Warblers in Chicago 15 May (GN) provided a high tally. A female Audubon's Warbler was reported without details at Carl. L. 6 Apr (DMK); rarer still was an ad. male Townsend's Warbler 5-9 May in Chicago (MF, m.ob.). An early Palm Warbler was found in Elkhart, IN 26 Mar (DS). A total of 30 Blackpoll Warblers was logged 19 May along L. Michigan in Indiana (KJB, JKC, SRB, EMH et al.), tying the single-day lakefront record; 21 were at Carl. L. 12 May (KAM). A Cerulean Warbler found in Martin 2 Apr (JR, JG) provided a new early spring record for Indiana, and an eager Prothonotary Warbler 2 Apr at Ft. Massac S.P. (KAM) was record early for Illinois. A singing, apparently territorial Worm-eating Warbler at Dunes between 11 (MT) & 26 May (SRB, JKC, LSH, KJB) was exciting, as there are no breeding records for the species at Dunes. Providing a record-early arrival for cen. Illinois was a Louisiana Waterthrush 18 Mar in Shelby (KF), while a Connecticut Warbler 5 May in Shelby (KF) tied previous arrival records for that area. A nice total of 27 Wilson's Warblers was noted in Chicago 27 May (GAW).

TANAGERS THROUGH WEAVER FINCHES

A male Spotted Towhee found at Hammond Lakefront Sanctuary 26 (KJB, JKC) & 27 Apr (MT, fide PBG) provided the first record for the lakefront and 8th for Indiana. A nice accumulation of 50 Vesper Sparrows was in DeKalb, IL 12 Apr (REF). A Lark Sparrow in Spencer, IN 12 Apr (ph. DA) was rather early. Grasshopper

Sparrows were late, the first appearing 22 Apr in Union (KAM), while a Henslow's Sparrow at Prairie Ridge State Natural Area 25 Mar (SAS, CLH) was early. The 25 Henslow's Sparrows 22 Apr at Karl Bartel W.S., Marion, IL (KAM) and the 20 at Chinook Mine, Vigo, IN 12 May (PES) were notable. Two Le Conte's Sparrows at Prairie Ridge State Natu-

ral Area 9 Mar (CLH, RES) were early, and an impressive 8 Le Conte's were at Clinton L. 14 Apr (TDF et al.). The Hammond Lakefront Sanctuary hosted 3 Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows 23 May (JKC, KJB), while 3 more were tallied at Montrose 24 May (RDH). Fox Sparrows departed somewhat early, with the latest seen 17 Apr in Downers Grove, IL (REF). The high Illinois count for Lincoln's Sparrow was lower than usual, with 18 at Jax. P. 8 May (PRC, SLC). Also low was the peak of 55 Swamp Sparrows 27 Apr at Oakwood Bottoms, Jackson, IL (KAM). The Region hosted 5 Harris's Sparrows: 2 were at Moredock L., Monroe, IL 25 Apr (DJ), one was seen 5 May in Knox, IL (fide PR), one that had wintered in Floyd, IN remained until 4 May (GD), and another was in Elkhart, IN 2 May (PM, DS et al.), providing the first county record since 1932. A Darkeyed Junco lingered through 28 May at Jax. P. (PRC). Smith's Longspurs were scarce this spring, the largest group consisting of 120 birds in Montgomery, IN 19 Apr (1&SH, LWS, CCM). A strong flight of Lapland Longspurs was exemplified by a count of 1000 birds at TNC Kankakee Sands 13 Mar (JK). Snow Buntings departed 7 Apr with 2 at Montrose (LGM et al.).

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were widely reported at feeders when the buds that they normally feed upon were damaged by frost. The peak tally of grosbeaks was of 42 birds in Posey, IN 1 May (SS). An ad. male Lazuli Bunting was mist-netted at Sand Bluff B.O., Winnebago, IL 29 Apr (JLA, ph. EC); the Region has only three prior accepted records. A pair of Painted Buntings returned to East St. Louis 6 May (DMK), with a male still there 12 May (DMK, KAM). An ad. male Yellow-headed Blackbird 10 Mar at Heidecke L. (DFS) either wintered or was a very early migrant. Another good flight of Baltimore Orioles was punctuated by a longshore flight of 68 birds at Dunes 8 May (KJB et al.). Only 6 total Purple Finches were reported from Illinois, and the lone Common Redpoll was seen 17-24 Mar at

Severson Dells F.P., *Winnebago* (BCW, DTW) Indiana reported a few Pine Siskins, but none were reported from Illinois.

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