

## **The passenger pigeon. Vol. 60, No. 1 Spring 1998**

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# THE PASSENGER PIGEON

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Send all manuscripts and correspondence to the Editor; information for "Seasonal Field-Notes" should be sent to the Associate Editor or the appropriate Field-Note Compiler. Manuscripts that deal with information on birds in the State of Wisconsin, with ornithological topics of interest to WSO members, or with activities of the WSO will be considered for publication. All manuscripts submitted for possible publication should be typewritten, double-spaced, and on only one side of page-numbered typing paper. Illustrations should be submitted as photographs or good-quality drawings. Keep in mind that illustrations must remain legible when reduced to fit on a journal page. All English and scientific names of birds mentioned in manuscripts should follow *The A.O.U. Check-List of North American Birds (7th Edition)*. Use issues after Vol. 50, No. 1, 1988, as a general guide to style.

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## **A New Editor for *The Passenger Pigeon***

Change—it's a powerful word; the thought of it can make you break out in a cold sweat. But no matter how scary the thought of change is, it may often be necessary, beneficial and healthy, especially if a large organization is expected to improve through evolution.

A significant change has been made within WSO. For the past five years, Becky Isenring has held the demanding position as our editor. She has produced twenty consecutive issues of *The Passenger Pigeon*. Her attention to details and diversity has been evident in each publication. She has put her own stamp on the journal and helped to build its reputation as one of the finest state ornithological publications in the country.

I know that I speak for everyone in WSO when I say, "Thank you, Becky. You accepted a huge task and carried it to fruition. We have enjoyed five years of informative reading during your literary reign. May you now enjoy many years of *The Passenger Pigeon* from the other side of the fence . . . as a member who finds this excellent publication one of the great perks of WSO membership."

To be sure that no interruption in the production schedule would occur when she stepped down, Isenring encouraged Tod Highsmith of Madison to replace her. His qualifications are many but two stand out in my mind; Tod is both a bird lover and an environmental writer.

Highsmith traces his roots in ornithology back to his ninth grade science teacher, Dick Wanie of Fort Atkinson. Growing up on thirty acres of wooded land outside Fort Atkinson gave Tod the perfect setting to test the field marks he learned from Wanie.

Highsmith attended graduate school at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst during the 1980s, where he earned his Ph.D. studying the singing behavior of Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers. In 1989, he went to work for Manomet Bird Observatory, the largest bird banding station on the east coast, as a scientific writer and editor. His most satisfying accomplishment at Manomet, he says, was helping to start a program called the Birders' Exchange, which collects used binoculars, books and other equipment from North American birders for distribution to conservation and education groups in Central and South America.

The "ocean birding was great," says Highsmith, but "having to travel on six lane highways whenever you wanted to go anywhere" convinced Tod to leave the urban East and return to the Midwest in the early 1990s. He settled in Madison, where he continues to write for Manomet's *Conservation Sciences* magazine and contributes to publications such as Cornell University's *The Living Bird*.

How privileged we are that Highsmith considers *The Passenger Pigeon* another great stepping stone to advance his career as an environmental writer! When I

challenged Tod about the editorial changes we might expect to see, he quickly pointed out that Stan Temple had successfully set the editorial course for the Nineties. Becky continued the tradition and Tod sees no reason to alter the trend as long as an equal mix of research and data/field notes are printed. Highsmith says feedback from readers suggests that more articles on personal birding experiences and on Wisconsin's ornithological history would be appreciated, so he will try to comply. You can also expect a more comprehensive glimpse into the variety of ornithological research being conducted throughout Wisconsin.

Tod's office is in his home which overlooks the wooded shoreline of Lake Monona. He lives there with his wife of four years, Joan Braune, who is also a birder. Together they have tallied up a terrific yard list which includes warblers, eagles and Sandhill Cranes. Besides his daily writing, Tod is working hard to complete his Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas block in Jefferson County.

Highsmith says he is happy living in a "friendly, old fashioned neighborhood" where he can now walk to the grocery store, restaurants and theaters. For the moment, "there are no six lane highways in (his) life!"

We're glad you chose to return home, Tod. Welcome aboard.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim ANDERSON". The "Jim" is written in a cursive, flowing style, while "ANDERSON" is in all caps with a more structured, blocky appearance.

*President*

## Samuel D. Robbins, Jr. at 75: An Interview with the Author of *Wisconsin Birdlife*

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*In December 1996, at the time of Sam Robbins' 75th birthday and the 50th anniversary of his ordination as a minister, Sumner Matteson visited Sam at his west Madison home, where he resides with his wife Shirley, to discuss his lifelong passion for bird observation and study, as well as his views and beliefs shaped by decades as a small town minister in Wisconsin. Charles Kemper first interviewed Sam in 1978, with the text appearing in the 1982 summer and winter issues (Vol. 44, Nos. 2 and 4) of The Passenger Pigeon. The reader may wish to refer to these issues, as well as past writings (Appendix A) to appreciate fully the life and thought of one of our most distinguished ornithologists.*

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*by Sumner W. Matteson*

**SM:** As you look back on your life, Sam, what were the early experiences that helped shaped your attitudes toward nature?

**SR:** I think I started to make my first daily bird lists in Belmont, Massachusetts, back in 1932. I was 10 years old, and I did this because I wanted to keep up a bit with my older brother, Chandler, who was doing a little of the same thing. I received lots of encouragement from my parents. Mother and Dad [Rosa Seymour Robbins and Samuel D. Robbins] were naturalists, and they took us out for hikes in the neighborhood. Mother's father was a world

famous botanist, Arthur Bliss Seymour, and although my dad was in an entirely different field—speech pathology—he liked his nature hikes, and he took us kids along. I marveled at what he knew and learned a great deal from him. They had no car, so whatever we did was done on foot or by public transportation. Mainly, we hiked around the woodlands and some of the open fields within a mile of our home.

Dad was a very good teacher. He had exceptional ears and a good memory for bird sounds. One little incident I remember occurred on one of our hikes when we came across a bird that



sang “Bee-bz-bz-bz.” Dad said simply, “Sam, remember that. That’s a Golden-winged Warbler.” From that moment on, I have recognized that song instantly whenever I’ve heard it.

Both Chan and I were blessed with unusually good ears. I have had mine tested several times, and people doing the testing say they have rarely seen ears that are as sensitive to high pitches as mine. I feel that this was a very great gift. Along with a better than average memory, my hearing ability has given me a great deal of enjoyment and resulted in an eagerness to learn more and more.

What we had back then was Ralph Hoffman’s *A Guide to the Birds of New England and Eastern New York* and Frank Chapman’s *Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America*. Now those were field guides that predated Peterson’s by a long time. They would describe museum specimens, you might say, more than real live birds, but they were the only field guides we had and we used them a great deal.

No such books were available for my Dad, whose interest in birds was going strong as a teenager. I never knew this until I was working on my own book and Walter Scott came across an old manuscript in *The Oologist*. Walter found that around 1905, Dad wrote an article about an Osprey nest in Maine. He was then a 17-year-old kid. How he learned his birds, I don’t know. I do know that he did have a couple of birding companions in those days. Whether one taught the other or whether they were just fellow learners, I don’t know.

Many things I learned from my dad, not only about the identification of birds but also about their behavior. In the spring of 1932, which was the first

year that I was really seriously keeping bird lists, Dad took my brothers and me up to what we call “Rock Meadow” to listen for woodcocks. It was late enough in March that we figured there should be woodcocks there. Dad knew exactly where to go to find them, and when we got near the area, before we heard any woodcocks, we met up with a fellow who was also out birding. While we were conversing, a woodcock sounded up and this other birder called out, “That’s a nighthawk!” Dad corrected him and said, “No, that’s a woodcock.” And then he went on to explain that the woodcock arrives in late March, while a nighthawk couldn’t be expected until May. He said if we listened, we would hear it follow up with its flight song, and that’s exactly what happened. This fellow became thoroughly convinced that Dad was right and he was wrong. And here we kids were learning some things about both woodcocks and nighthawks from that experience.

**SM:** I am fascinated about how your father came to know these birds, especially without anything like the Peterson field guide and without recordings of birds. Is it your belief that he spent a lot of his free time out in the field?

**SR:** Certainly he spent quite a bit of time in the field. I really don’t know how much. As I said, I don’t know how much of that time he was alone and how much time he may have spent with friends who had similar interests, but I do think in retrospect that Dad had the ears and the memory that it took to learn the sounds that birds make. He passed on to us this importance of listening for these sounds.

He had pet names for certain birds. A White-breasted Nuthatch was “John the Clown Bird” because it would go



Figure 1. Sam Robbins as a teenager, relaxing after one of his first field trips to Cape Ann in northeastern Massachusetts (spring, mid-1930s; photo courtesy of Robbins Family Archives).

down the tree trunk head first. A Pileated Woodpecker was "His Royal Highness." He helped us set up a small bird feeder right outside our bedroom window and taught us how to hold seeds in our hands and have the birds feed from them. I think that dad's expertise was pretty much with local birds because I don't think he went on many extended field trips to other places. I think he was competent on water birds, but he didn't go to see them very often. **SM:** Tell me about Ludlow Griscom. In the 1978 interview with Kemper, you said that Griscom was one of the first to validate sight records.

**SR:** Griscom predated Peterson in that regard. He was an ornithologist at Harvard University. I think he taught courses at Harvard, but he was a very active field man. [Griscom was Research Curator of Zoology at Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology from 1927 to 1948.] Before he came to Har-

vard, he was in New York City and wrote a book on the birds of the New York City region. He became very well known and recognized as a real pioneer in field identification of birds. Most of the scientific work in those days was done under the assumption that if you had the collected specimen, you had proof of its occurrence; sight identifications were not trusted. Griscom, however, maintained that sight records could be trusted. I think Peterson built very much upon what Griscom did and then developed his field guide on that basis.

In those days, the Massachusetts Audubon Society invited people to send in annual lists at the end of the year, and Chan and I very faithfully did this. Interestingly, the Society's checklist had a column for "seen" and a column for "heard." I don't think I've ever seen that distinction made in any other checklist, but the implication was that

a bird that was only heard was kind of a second-rate citizen. People had accepted the idea that you could identify birds by sight, but there was not nearly the acceptance that birds could be identified by ear.

**SM:** You mentioned in Kemper's article that Owen Gromme told you more than once that when anyone came to the Milwaukee Public Museum with a supposed record of a rare species, the categorical question was: "Where are the feathers?"

**SR:** I can still hear him say those words. He was quite frustrated by this.

**SM:** So Griscom was the one who "proved to collectors that you could identify by sight and by sound." How did he actually prove that? How did he change years of tradition?

**SR:** Griscom did plenty of collecting himself, and I suspect that what he did was to identify birds by sight and sound and then collect the specimens to prove the point. There's a little story about Griscom collecting a bird out in my home town of Belmont. One time, on a Sunday morning, when the discharge of firearms was strictly forbidden, Griscom came across a rarity. I think it was a Blue-winged Warbler. He collected the bird, and he hadn't any more than got the specimen and his gun back in the trunk of his car when a police car drove up. The policeman asked Griscom, "Hey, did you hear a shot around here someplace?" And Griscom's reply was: "I certainly did, officer! It was off in that direction!"

**SM:** How much importance did you place on exploring the natural world as an adolescent?

**SR:** Well, it was the bird world more than the natural world. My interest in nature was pretty much restricted. I learned plant life to some extent, and

I think I probably learned that from my mother as much as from my father, but I didn't pay near the attention to plant life that I did to bird life.

One time, before I was a teenager, the author Thornton Burgess once had a radio program for a few weeks in which he featured bird songs. Whether he did the whistled imitations of bird songs, or whether somebody else in the studio did them I'm not sure. He ended the series of programs with a contest. He invited his listeners to send him on a postcard the names of 25 birds whose songs he was going to imitate. So he whistled his 25 birds, and my mother, my brothers Chan and Roger, and I, all put down our answers on postcards. When we sent our cards in, we assured Burgess that we had all worked independently, that we were not in cahoots. Burgess was going to award a prize—his own leather-bound *Birds You Should Know*—to the 25 highest scorers. Our family won 4 copies. I think Chan had every answer right, and the rest of us each missed one. The prize was a nice little book to have, and the way in which we got it was kind of interesting.

I remember my first bird glasses. I still have them here: little 4-power opera glasses, they weren't prism binoculars. There were two pairs, and they were for the entire family. Both of them had the same magnification, but one had a nice wide eyepiece, and the other one didn't, so we always wanted the one with the eyepiece. I don't think we ever fought over these glasses, but we waited impatiently for our chance to use them if we were on a hike and one of us had it and one didn't. Prism binoculars were available in those days, but they were too expensive for our family, and so we got along as best we

could. I may have been college age before I bought my own binoculars.

We had no car in our family. My parents weren't wealthy by any stretch of the imagination, and Dad's work did not require him to have a car. Public transportation served for going back and forth to his job every day. He had his own private school for stammerers called the Boston Stammerers' Institute. Dad was a real pioneer in the field of speech correction, and he saw that field develop a great deal during his lifetime. Eventually he joined the faculty of Emerson College in Boston, which is a college that specializes in speech. There's a clinic there now that's named in honor of my dad.

Birding was very much a side hobby with him; he was a hiker. Mother and Dad were very faithful, regular church members, so what hiking we did was mainly on Sunday afternoons.

**SM:** When you were growing up, what was the environment like around Belmont?

**SR:** Belmont has always been strictly a residential town near Boston. So it's got practically nothing in the way of industry. There were some wealthy landowners who kept substantial areas of woods in their natural state. So we had good woodland birding close by us. Cemeteries were favorite places to see birds. The bigger the cemetery and the bigger the city, the more important a cemetery is because it's an island of greenery in the midst of a concrete jungle. I grew up a couple of miles from the famous Mount Auburn Cemetery that attracted birds the way Central Park in New York has done. This cemetery was one of the most favorite places to go to see warblers in spring. There were also a couple of ponds nearby that we would visit that were

good for waterfowl. We didn't have very much in the way of open fields; it was pretty much woodland birding that we did.

**SM:** Other than your father, who was an early influence, do you remember other people who inspired you?

**SR:** I remember that we belonged to the Brookline Bird Club, which is a local Boston area club of amateur birders who love to go on field trips together and observe what they see and hear. Nobody was collecting birds. We got rides to take us to some new areas that we weren't able to get to before. I think there were a couple of people in the bird club who were very good at bird identification who taught my brothers and me some things, but mostly I think it was the other way around. My brothers and I had learned enough so that we were teaching the rest of those people quite a bit. But I'm sure they were helpful in getting us going more into birds.

There came a time when we met a man named George Baker Long, who was fairly elderly, widowed, and caring for a handicapped daughter. He had just developed an interest in birds, and he turned out to be a very avid bird lister. Once we got to know him, he would call us and invite us to go different places with him and to bird together. Now I don't think he taught us very much about birding. Again, it might have been the other way around. He showed great mutual respect and admiration for what we knew, and he sure took us to places where we saw things that we would never have had a chance to see. We were very grateful for this.

I never had the chance to hobnob with Griscom the way I wish I could have. There was a Harvard Ornitholog-



ical Club that Griscom was connected with. Chan, as a student at Harvard, got the benefit of that. I was green with envy with the fact that I was just a little too young to be able to get in to that Club.

I was the youngest of the three boys. Chan is three and a half years older than I, and so we often went out together. I'd say he was a mentor. We got along very well. Roger was interested in birds, but not to the extent that Chan and I were. I think partly this is because Roger was into athletics in school and neither Chan nor I had the athletic gifts, so we spent more time out on bird hikes and began keeping our lists.

**SM:** So Chan and you went birding regularly. Did that continue for several years?

**SR:** Right up until the time I left home to go to college because Chan was still living at home most of the time that I was still in high school. Chan went to Harvard, and we lived only four miles from the Harvard campus.

Chan and I used to hike around and listen for any bird sound or see any movement. Chan was the one who taught me the value of "pishing." If we felt there were some birds nearby in some shrubbery, he would get on one side and I'd get on the other and we'd do some pishing. Then we'd call out to each other what we were seeing. We used the same methods, and whether Chan learned them from someone else, I don't remember.

Dad taught us something about how to recognize that birds were present and how to try to approach them without flushing them.

**SM:** What did he advise?

**SR:** Just move very slowly. If the bird that you wanted to see was in a tree and there was some shrubbery in between,

try to get over by that shrubbery, so your movements would be unobtrusive.

**SM:** Why did you move to Madison? Why didn't you stay in the East?

**SR:** Wanderlust, the desire to be out on my own. Madison allowed me to do this in easy stages because during my first two years in college here, I stayed with my mother's sister and her family. I came to Madison in 1939, just about the time *The Passenger Pigeon* and WSO got going. I missed by just a few months being a charter member.

Local bird clubs had only recently started in Milwaukee, Green Bay, Madison, Racine, and Waukesha. In Madison, we had basically two clubs: the Madison Bird Club that was a forerunner of an Audubon chapter and made up of interested birders, and the Kumlien Bird Club. I don't think The Madison Bird Club involved professional people at all at that particular stage. The more professional scientists all gravitated to the Kumlien Bird Club, which was connected to the university. This had people like [Aldo] Leopold, [A.W.] Schorger, Leon Cole, and a good many other people who were involved in ornithology on a professional level; these were almost entirely university people. But the Kumlien Bird Club members didn't get out in the field very much. They were doing more in the way of research. In terms of just getting out and observing birds and keeping records of when they arrived and departed, very few people were doing this. When I came on the scene, I got the feeling right away that I was more experienced in bird identification.

One of the first things that WSO did in *The Passenger Pigeon* was to publish field notes. WSO received field notes

from only a few people, and when I started putting my field notes into the hopper, my name appeared in some of these field notes reports more than anybody else's, which simply meant that I was a more active field observer than most of the other people here. This eventually changed. The bird clubs became stronger, and eventually we got more local clubs started in different cities, and the interest gradually broadened.

Another development was the Christmas Bird Count. I think there had been a Madison Christmas Bird Count off and on way back in the years before World War I. But nothing steady occurred until WSO got organized and they started publishing Christmas Bird Count results. In the first couple of years, they published about a dozen counts. Then during World War II that number published dropped to maybe only six or seven counts per year. Eventually, when I was asked to become associate editor of *The Passenger Pigeon*, I thought, "Gee, we ought to do better than this." I made a few contacts in different cities, and pretty soon the number of counts published doubled, tripled, then leveled off for a while. We still weren't getting full statewide coverage. As time passed, I contacted a few more people. The response was beautiful. Now we have 80 or 85 circles (each a 15 mile diameter circle) covered per year.

In those early years of WSO, the ornithological interest was pretty much centered in southeastern Wisconsin. We used to speak about the Racine-Madison-Green Bay triangle. All the bird clubs were in that area. The Racine club was called the Hoy Nature Club.

There were two clubs in Milwaukee.

One was called the Milwaukee Bird Club, and I think it was the one that appealed to the more professionally minded people. There was also an active group of birders connected with the City Club. I think that's the only name that I ever associated with it. Members were largely women, and somebody like Mary Donald probably would still know something about that. Ivy Balsom was one of the leaders of that group. Gertrude Nunnemacher was involved in it, but I think that they were simply people who liked to go on field trips together. Probably not the most experienced birders. Dixie Larkin was a prominent person in that group eventually, and Dixie was instrumental in organizing what was called the John Muir Club, which consisted of a bunch of teenage boys. They became some of the most avid birders in the Milwaukee area. Some of these boys have gone on to achieve outstanding success in ornithology. There's Gordon Orians in Oregon, George Treichel in California, Dan Berger, and Helmut Mueller.

I believe the Green Bay Bird Club was started by Earl Wright at the museum at Green Bay. Members helped to organize WSO and hosted one of the first WSO conventions. The Green Bay Club just disbanded within the last year. I was up there in the fall of '97 to speak to a new group that has taken its place.

Eventually, a group got started in Appleton. Nell Rogers was a good strong field birder, and I think she got some people going in a bird club there in Appleton. Daryl Tessen probably would know something about that.

Even as late as 1960, relatively little birding was being done in northern and western Wisconsin except by con-

servation wardens and some research individuals.

Another thing that illustrates how narrow the interest was can be traced back to the late 1950s when I was asked to be editor of *The Passenger Pigeon*. I was associate editor from about 1946 or so until the late 1950s when I was asked to serve as editor. I can well remember that when I took over as editor, the barrel was empty. There wasn't a manuscript of any kind for me to use in the first issues. This meant thinking up new ideas and convincing people to do some writing. One of these ideas was to have a series of articles devoted to birding hot spots—some of the prime places to go in Wisconsin to look for birds. So I wrote up the Mazomanie area and a couple of others, and other people did the same. We planned to save these pieces and eventually put them out in book form. In a few years, we had 25 or 30 collected and decided to put them out in book form. But most of them were within the southeast triangle. We had very few spots in the northern half of the state. This was because birders hadn't been there. They didn't know where the hot spots were.

So we put out the first edition of *Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts*. I think we covered about 30 areas. Thankfully, Daryl Tessen took this project over 15 years later and made a much more complete volume out of it, but that's the difference between 1960 and 1976. We just didn't know much about northern Wisconsin's bird activities.

There were people out in other areas doing some very good work. Wallace Grange was a real fine researcher; he investigated the status of woodland birds in Wood County. There was a fellow up in Sawyer County, near Hayward, named Karl Kahmann, who was

quite active in the early years of WSO, but again I don't think he had a bird club there. He was just someone who had an interest in birds, and he managed to keep in touch with people from the triangle. There were scattered individuals like that, but no other clubs that I knew of in those early years.

**SM:** I wanted to ask you about some of the individuals who were very important in the early years. Let me start with Aldo Leopold. What was your impression of him? Of course, he died in 1948, so did you get a chance to know him?

**SR:** Yes, I knew him. I met him at Kumlien Club meetings, and we got to know each other reasonably well. It was my regret in retrospect that I never took a course under him. I should have. It didn't fit in with my major interest at that time. He was working with grad students. I think he had already become very well known and had established a very strong reputation. It was during the time that I was here, if not before, that he served on the Wisconsin Conservation Department's Commission that preceded the DNR Board.

I thought the world of Leopold. I was a youngster compared with everybody else he was involved with, but he never treated me as just a little kid. He treated me like an adult before I really was one. I have really warm feelings toward him and much respect.

I don't remember that we did any field work together other than we paid attention to the birds near the shack. At Kumlien Bird Club meetings, members always asked for a recent bird observation by anybody. I don't think Leopold hardly ever contributed to this. I just assumed this was because of his work; he just didn't have time for birding trips, hikes, just for the sake of see-

ing birds. He was too busy with more important things. I was the guy out in the field a lot. I think, at first, when I reported a few rarities, they were met with a certain amount of questioning. If somebody said that they thought my report was of a very unusual bird and asked how I identified it, I would describe what I had used for identification field marks. People like Walter Scott and Norv Barger came to my aid and helped people accept what I said at face value.

**SM:** Could you tell me about Walter Scott [1911–1983; Wisconsin Conservation Dept. and WDNR administrator and historian; first editor of *The Passenger Pigeon*; former WSO president]? I met him a few times in the mid-1970s and was impressed by his dedication to conservation issues.

**SR:** Walter Scott was a remarkable bundle of enthusiasm. He seemed to have boundless energy to put into many different causes. He really did have some wide interests, but I remember him also as a very sincere and friendly person. To illustrate the kind of thing that Walter did that isn't done by many other people, if some newspaper clipping pointed out something good that somebody had done, Walter would sit down and write a little note to that person and congratulate them. Now how many people do that? He was just an appreciative and outgoing person.

Walter was instrumental in organizing WSO. He was anxious not only that this organization get started, but also that we'd get started doing a bunch of worthwhile things. It was when I was a sophomore at the university that Walter assembled a team to prepare a preliminary checklist with migration graphs. He included Earl Loyster from the Conservation Department, Norv

Barger who had just joined the Department, me, and Elton Buzzewitz, a grad student from Watertown. I thought, "What am I doing on this committee supposedly talking about Wisconsin birds when I'm only in my second year here?" But I think Walter appointed me because he felt that I was such an active birder and that I'd had so much experience with birds in Massachusetts that I had probably had a better grasp of Wisconsin birds than many of the people here. We published the checklist booklet, and now it's been through four more revisions.

Buzzewitz was killed during World War II, and Roy Lound worked on three of the checklist booklet revisions. It turned out for the latest revision that Norv and I were still here from the original team and we asked Stan Temple to round out the team. That's a project which is still going, but this got started through Walter's initiative.

He also envisioned *The Passenger Pigeon* becoming a fine magazine. It had to start out as a mimeographed newsletter, but you start small. He was its first editor. Then he went into the service; he served in the Pacific during WW II, and Norv Barger became the editor at that time.

Walter was a very competent birder in the field, but he didn't get out very much because of the pressure of so many other things that occupied his time. His responsibilities with the Conservation Department increased through the years. When the time came for his retirement, one of the people who spoke at his retirement party referred to him as the "conscience of the Conservation Department"—an interesting term to use, but a very apt one in his case. I was never privy to some of the meetings where



decisions were made, but people who were felt that Walter was the person who, more than any other, kept them on track as to what their fundamental purpose was as custodians of the land and all its creatures.

He was such a sincere person, and his interest in history was well known. He wrote 100-year summaries of conservation activities. When I started work on *Wisconsin Birdlife*, I knew right away who I wanted to do the bibliography, and he did an outstanding job. This became quite difficult in his last years because he lost his hearing, and some of the last conversations I had with him, I had to write down what I wanted to say. He'd read it and then orally respond to what I was writing, but he couldn't understand a word I said unless I wrote it down.

To illustrate how he and I shared similar beliefs, in my first parish in Neillsville, I was planning what we called, and still call, a "Layman Sunday." This was a Sunday when a service would be conducted and a sermon would be preached by a layman. I asked Walter to preach. He drove from Madison to Neillsville and delivered an outstanding sermon. I think he was addressing the stewardship theme that we on the earth are not owners of it; we are custodians of it. We can enjoy it while we have it, but we have the responsibility to pass it on. God didn't intend it for just one generation but for all generations. This was around 1947 or 1948, long before the idea was popular. In religious circles, we've talked about stewardship as long as I can remember. I can remember first hearing the word stewardship used in terms of conservation of natural resources. I think this happened during a course I took as an undergraduate. I have just

associated stewardship with conservation since the word go, and Walter had too.

**SM:** He was a remarkable individual. What about A. W. Schorger [1884–1972; naturalist, ornithologist, UW-Madison Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Management]? What was your knowledge of him?

**SR:** I didn't know Schorger nearly as well, but again I had great respect for him. He was the dean of the field birders during the time I was here in college. Everybody looked up to him and knew that he had the last word. Anything that Schorger said he saw, you believed right then and there. He was a collector. He would usually identify his birds without collecting them, but when he came across something rare, he wanted to collect the specimen. This didn't go over all that well with some of the other field birders during those days, but you might say that Schorger belonged in the transition age between the collector and the field observer.

**SM:** What was his personality like?

**SR:** It was pretty gruff. He was very friendly to a point with people that he really knew, but he wasn't the kind of outgoing person who would welcome a newcomer and bring him in the way Scott and Barger would. He did have great respect for other people. When I say "gruff," I don't remember that I ever heard cuss words coming out of his mouth. He had, however, a great expression for which he's been royally famous: when he came across a real rarity, he would say, "Oh my God!" Bill Foster could tell you stories about "Oh My God!" experiences that he had with Schorger. I have a couple, too.

I took Schorger out one time north of Madison. We were looking for a Ruff

that had been discovered out on the Norway Grove pond. We didn't see it, but on the way back we saw an Eastern Bluebird on the wire. He said, "Oh my God! I haven't seen one of those near Madison in 10 years."

Schorger was a real scientist and a researcher of old newspapers. He was very thorough in digging up information about turkeys in the nineteenth century. I remember calling Schorger after I moved to Adams County and became aware that there were a few turkeys in the southern part of the county. When I told Bill about this, he said, "Those birds had to be remnants of the Baraboo Hills' transplants from back in the 1930s." I contacted him at the time that I heard about the death of the last of those turkeys, and I asked him to write an article about this for *The Passenger Pigeon*. He did. I think he was slower to accept my observation skills than some other people, but eventually he did respect me very much.

**SM:** What about Norv Barger [1908–1997; Wisconsin Conservation Dept. biologist; first WSO president]? What were your impressions of him?

**SR:** Norv Barger was the person more than any other who took me under his wing when I came here as a college freshman. I think at that time he was still engaged in sign painting. It was shortly afterwards that he joined the staff of the Wisconsin Conservation Department. He was a real field birder. I think I got acquainted with him because he knew my aunt and uncle with whom I was staying. He had already befriended my cousin, who lived in Madison, and who was interested in birds. Norv showed me some of the nice places to see birds. We enjoyed field work together. He encouraged me and

helped me get to know other birders here. There were times that he would take me to WSO conventions when I probably just wouldn't have gone otherwise, and we did have some extended trips.

**SM:** Was there anyone back then who taught you more than you knew, or did you feel that you knew more than anyone?

**SR:** I think I knew more than most of them. I know this sounds bigheaded on my part. I don't mean it that way. The only course I took in college that involved birds significantly was a zoology course taught by Art Hasler, who was a fish expert. Half of his course was on birds. It was in the spring of the year and when it came time for field trips, he simply turned them over to me and said, "You know these birds better than I do. You take them on the trips and show them." There weren't any other professors teaching bird related courses. There was no John Emlen on campus at that time.

I was going to say a little bit more about Norv Barger. He was very active in the early years of WSO. Perhaps not quite as much with the creative ideas as Walter Scott had been, but he did have ideas that he developed. I think he was the one who planned what is now known as the WSO Book Store. I'm not real sure whether Scott had any part in that planning, but Norv Barger was the one who really organized it and stuck with it for some years before Harold Kruse took it over.

Norv was much more of a field man than Walter had been. Again, maybe because of various time commitments and so on, but Norv just loved to get out in the field. He was instrumental in collecting and publishing seasonal field notes in *The Passenger Pigeon* and

was the one who held that these field notes ought to be preserved. So, soon after I settled in Wisconsin, he asked me to be the field notes editor of *The Passenger Pigeon*. He wanted to encourage individual research projects, but he was dealing much more with the amateur rather than with the professional on college campuses.

Norv had a work schedule that he had to follow, and of course when I was a college student, I had my class schedule to follow. I think much of the time, I would just go out by myself for a short period early in the mornings, but some of these trips were weekend trips.

One of the funniest experiences oc-

curred during a late afternoon in May when I was going out to Hoyt Park. My college friends and I used to call it Sunset Point and go there for supper picnics. I had left a little early because I wanted to stop at the nearby cemetery to look and listen. But I didn't have my binoculars. I'd do what I could with my ears.

When I got to the cemetery, I detected a strange song I didn't know. So I listened and thought, "How do I get a look at this bird?" The only way to do it was to crawl under the wrought-iron cemetery fence. I crawled under the fence and walked to the trees where the bird was singing. The bird was up so high in the tree that I still couldn't tell what it was, but the bird kept singing repeatedly. It was driving me nuts because I thought, "This is a rare bird, and I can't identify it." The best thing I could do was to write down how the song sounded to me. I almost always carried paper and pencil with me, but had none that day. I crawled under the fence again, and just as I did, a bus stopped and a bunch of the kids heading to the same picnic were getting off. "What in the world was I doing crawling under a fence?" I told them I had heard a rare bird, and I begged from them pencil and paper. So they went on to the picnic, and I sat there at the side of the road writing down a description of the bird song.

Then I heard a car pull up. I fully expected the driver to be a policeman; it was Norv Barger. I told him what I was doing. He listened to the bird. We both crawled under the fence to try to get a look at it, but we couldn't see it any better. Norv said, "You stay here, and I'll go back." Pretty soon he came back with a wife and two pairs of binoculars. The singer turned out to be a

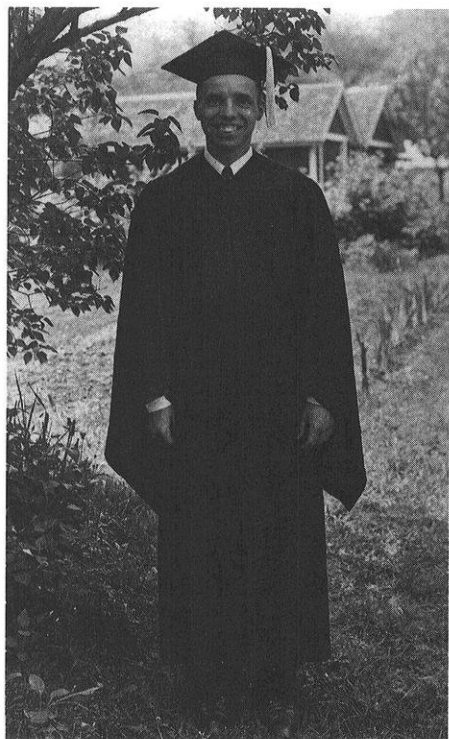


Figure 2. Sam graduating from UW-Madison with a B.S. in Natural Sciences, School of Education (May, 1943; photo courtesy of Robbins Family Archives).

Yellow-throated Warbler. Norv was from North Carolina originally and I think he probably recognized the song, but he wanted to be sure. With the binocs, we finally confirmed the identification, and in short order, half of Madison's ornithologists were out at the cemetery looking at that bird.

**SM:** Let me take this opportunity to ask you about your method for remembering bird calls. How do you keep your memory fresh?

**SR:** I think I have an unusual memory, but I don't think I've trained it. I was just blessed with it.

**SM:** So in other words, when you hear a bird, you remember it from that moment on? You always recall it?

**SR:** On several occasions, I've heard a bird that I hadn't heard for eight or 10 years and recognized it just like that. I'm lucky that way; it's just a gift.

**SM:** Has there been any other bird that you've heard in Wisconsin that you haven't known right away?

**SR:** Oh yes. When I first met up with Yellow-headed Blackbirds, which I hadn't come across out in New England, I had to learn a new song that I hadn't experienced previously. But in terms of birds that I had once learned, forgotten, and then run across, it would be hard to remember a time that that has happened.

Right now, with some hearing loss, I can hear a song that does not register with me as a song that I learned before, but it is the same song. There are certain overtones that I'm not picking up, so what I'm hearing is different than what I learned. In a sense, I'm having to relearn a few songs of birds that I once knew perfectly well, but now I can't catch the full song that I used to be able to hear.

**SM:** Do the high-end notes give you a problem?

**SR:** Not always. This is a puzzling thing. When Bill Foster and I are out together, he hears things that I don't hear, and I hear things that he doesn't hear, and it's not always the high-pitched sounds. Sometimes it's low-pitched notes. For example, I can't hear the high-pitched sounds of Cedar Waxwings, Brown Creepers, and Golden-crowned Kinglets, and for some reason I also can't hear the low-pitched "peent" call of the Woodcock, nor distant calls of Black-capped Chickadees.

But all in all, I have been blessed with a combination of unusual hearing and an unusual memory. This memory generally extends to call notes. I think this is one of the things that has been a source of amazement to a lot of other people when I've been out on field trips. If I can hear a call note and can identify the bird right away, for example as a Red Crossbill, some people are amazed.

**SM:** Tell me about that, because you have to have spent quite a bit of time in the field learning call notes.

**SR:** Yes, it comes with experience. I don't know how you can teach call notes to other people very well.

**SM:** You mentioned you get out with Bill Foster. Where do you go?

**SR:** Locally, we visit the U.W. Arboretum, the Middleton ponds, and various places around the Madison lakes. We go to Mazomanie, to the Pine Bluff area, to Lodi Marsh, and to Fish and Crystal lakes. We bird the Norway Grove area, Goose Pond, and more distant spots like Horicon, Milwaukee, and Two Rivers.

**SM:** Which of your experiences afield in Wisconsin has been most memorable?

**SR:** I think I would rate the times I have gone to Plainfield and experienced the



booming of the Greater Prairie-Chicken as particularly memorable. You would show up at the Hamerstrom's house about two o'clock in the morning, if you didn't happen to be staying overnight. Here was a place that looked as if it hadn't had a coat of paint for a good many years, but here lived a lovely couple of scientists. They fed us a little bit of breakfast and sent us out in the dark. I didn't know where in the world I was. They'd direct us to follow such and such a line to get to a blind. You'd get in the blind and you'd think that you couldn't possibly sit in such cramped conditions for a couple of hours straight. But once the excitement developed out on the dancing ground before your eyes, you would forget about how cramped you were and would just sit amazed to see those birds dancing, courting, confronting, and booming. To me, that was a memorable thing the first time I did it, and I think the wonder was only slightly less with each repetition.

There is another incident that I recall very fondly. When we lived in Adams County, we became acquainted with the birds on the Leola Marsh. We knew what it would be like to be out there on an early spring morning just as it was getting light. I had with me for an overnight guest S. Paul Jones from Waukesha. I took him out on the marsh the following morning and the Ruffed Grouse were drumming, the Prairie Chickens were booming, the Sandhill Cranes were trumpeting, and over Paul's face came the most wonderful look of recollection. I wish I had a photograph of his face as he listened to that marsh music. He said, "We used to hear things like this in Waukesha County years ago!" That one sentence spoke to something that's been tran-

spiring over a long period of time. He was reliving something that had been very precious to him in those early days. I have never forgotten that incident. How privileged I was to help open up this book of memories for Paul.

In connection with my book, I went to the Historical Society library and dug out many of his old field records. They helped me improve my understanding of what bird life was like back in his heyday. Another bird club, by the way, that was started fairly early and I think is still going strong was the Benjamin Goss Bird Club at Waukesha, and now there is a club named for Paul Jones at Oconomowoc. Paul was a very likeable fellow. I never knew that much about what research he did. But he would submit his field notes quite regularly to *The Passenger Pigeon*. And I had an occasion to look over those notes when they came in. I felt that he was a very active and accurate field observer, and he was one who pretty much limited his field work to his own local area.

**SM:** Any other experiences that stand out in your mind as exceptional?

**SR:** I can still remember quite vividly the day we discovered Wisconsin's first Ruff. I was with a carload of people from Madison. Norv Barger was driving; his wife, Clara, was along. I think Mary Walker may have been with us. We stopped at the Norway Grove pond in the middle of May and right away were aware of a lot of shorebirds. One of the first sounds I heard came from a Dowitcher, so I looked for it. In so doing, I passed over a bird that seemed like a pigeon in the water, but I had to check out that Dowitcher first to satisfy my ears. Then, I went back to look at the pigeon. Well, it wasn't a pigeon. It was a shorebird that had a pretty in-

flated area around its neck and throat. We didn't know what in the world that bird was at first. We didn't know for sure until we got back home and borrowed a couple of European field guides from Bill Foster. Then we confirmed that this bird was a Ruff.

So discovering the first Ruff in Wisconsin was a moment that will linger in my memory. Many people eventually saw that bird, but I'll think twice before I ever give up on a pigeon wading in water.

Another thing that really stands out is the years (1960–68) that we lived in Roberts in St. Croix County. I remember when I left Adams County to move to Roberts I thought, "Oh boy, my birding interests are going to really suffer here because I'm going into an area that is not nearly as exciting for birds as the one I am leaving." But I said that simply without knowing what to expect. Nobody that I knew of had birded much there. I was pleasantly surprised to find that Roberts was a wonderfully rich birding area.

One of the spots that made it especially so was just northeast of town. It was a wet area all year long, but in the spring, it would flood and develop into a particularly nice place for shorebirds. I had some memorable shorebird experiences there. I knew that DNR bought the north end of that land for waterfowl production. I expressed to somebody in the DNR the wish that they could develop that south end for shorebirds in spring and fall. I thought a fairly simple thing to do would be to plow the land around the edges so that you would keep the vegetation off and maintain a nice shallow wet area. I thought it could become one of the finest shorebird migration spots in the state. I still think that. As far as I know,

DNR still owns the land there. As far as I know, they haven't done a thing about my recommendation to them, but a year ago at a grassland symposium, I was speaking to someone who is now working in that area for DNR. In looking through the old files, he found my recommendations, and he expressed a real interest in this. I haven't been back there lately to know whether the area has changed significantly, but I still think that could be developed into an area that would be good for shorebirds every year. It would require only a minor investment of time and equipment. We took our son, Rick, out there once and observed both species of Godwits, Piping Plover, and a splendid display of "Willie-spinners" (Wilson's Phalaropes). It was just a bonanza. I think that something like that could happen just about every year.

**SM:** Owen Gromme [1896–1991, famous Wisconsin bird artist]. What was your impression of him?

**SR:** I found Gromme to be a very interesting person to talk with, and I wish to high heaven that I had had many more conversations with him than I did. Once I got started on *Wisconsin Birdlife*, I travelled to the museum and read his notebooks. We had known each other for a long time. I remember that when Gromme first announced he was starting work on his book, *The Birds of Wisconsin*, I became very interested in the project. I filled out many forms on my observations in the early 1940s. In 1942, my parents were due to have a 25th wedding anniversary. I thought how nice it would be if I could give them as a wedding anniversary present a copy of this new Wisconsin bird book that probably would have some of my field records in it. So I planned to give

them a copy of Owen's book. Well heavens, look what happened. It never came out till long after my parents 50th anniversary and then after their death. But I was interested in the project and had been in conversation with Gromme about that book in its early stages.

Time went on, and I had relatively little occasion to go to Milwaukee. If I visited the Milwaukee Public Museum, it was to see the exhibits; it wasn't to see the people there. But Gromme and I knew each other on a first name basis, and whenever we did meet, we would have some nice conversations. Gromme was enthusiastic, very dedicated to his work, and a very talented person. He was a real conservationist at heart, and I felt we had a lot in common. I don't think I shared his appreciation of hunting, but that didn't make any difference.

The time came when Gromme decided that he didn't want to write the narrative parts of what eventually became *Wisconsin Birdlife*. He wanted to devote his years to painting. He must have thought highly enough of me to ask me if I would take over the writing project. At the time he asked me, I was so engrossed in preparing a master's thesis that I couldn't take on another project right then and there, but I said that if he would still be interested at the time I finished that, I would consider it. So the very day I sent my thesis off to my faculty advisor at UW-Stout, I sent a note to Gromme and said, "I finished the thesis. Do you still want me to take over the writing of the book?" "Yes, we do," he replied.

**SM:** Did you spend any time in the field with the naturalists Paul and Emma Hoffmann?

**SR:** Very little. I knew them. We would

see each other at WSO conventions. Paul and Emma were good contributors of articles to *The Passenger Pigeon* when I was the editor, so we corresponded quite a bit on those. I remember particularly an article on Black Terns that they sent in for publication. They were photographing terns on Big Muskego Lake. One of the photographs Emma must have taken. It was in their boat, and a Black Tern was perched on Paul's cap. I ran copies of two similar photos. The caption for one was: "Paul Hoffmann examining Black Tern," and the caption for the other was: "Black Tern examining Paul Hoffmann."

**SM:** What about Joe Hickey [1907–1993, UW-Madison Wildlife Ecology Professor]? What were your experiences with Joe?

**SR:** Again, they were very spotty in terms of frequency. Joe came to the University here at Madison about the time I left. We overlapped a little bit. In that brief overlap period, I can remember one time that he and somebody else and I were going to do a big May Day count, and I was living down on North Murray Street on the third floor of a house. I had set my alarm clock to go off so I would be ready when they picked me up. The alarm clock did not awaken me. I don't know if this was the clock's fault or if I slept right through it, but I became aware of a flashing light. I wasn't wide enough awake to fully grasp the situation, but I was aware that they were there to pick me up. They were flashing a spotlight from their car through my bedroom window; the light reflecting off the ceiling awakened me, but I was not wide enough awake to let these people know that I was now awake. So I went over to the window and started waving my

hands up and down and only then did it dawn on me to turn on a light in the room. So I turned the light on and quickly dressed. I don't recall what birds we found, but I remember the stupid way in which the day began.

**SM:** Did Joe ask you what kind of a bird you were trying to imitate while waving your arms?

**SR:** Well, Joe had a sense of humor, and I'm sure he rubbed that one in. You know Joe had a New York accent, and he used it to play games with me. Whenever we saw a marsh hawk, he referred to it as a "mash" hawk. I think this was his way of pointing out that he could detect in my speech the New England tendency to mispronounce an "r." Joe was a lot of fun. He was a very good field observer. He loved to be out in the field watching birds, much more so than other university professors.

Joe had trained early as a field ornithologist. He was part of the Bronx County [NY] gang of young birdwatchers that eventually also included Roger Tory Peterson in their membership. He grew up with a lot of confidence in bird identification both by sight and sound, much more so than many native Wisconsinites. I really didn't see very much of Joe, but we did correspond occasionally.

He was very supportive and interested when I began *Wisconsin Birdlife*, and he was very encouraging, to the point of asking whether I could take a sabbatical from my minister's job for a year to work on the book. I had to write him and say that the question of a sabbatical was not possible. I just had to plug away on it in my spare time. Nowadays, ministers are given sabbaticals, but I never had one.

**SM:** What about Carl Richter [1903–1977; Green Bay naturalist; author of

*Breeding Birds of Oconto County*]? Did you have any dealings with him?

**SR:** We corresponded, but I rarely met him. He never came to WSO meetings. He was not exactly a recluse, but he acted a little bit that way. I think he felt that he didn't have very much in common with the other birders in the Green Bay area. I think he felt that the Green Bay birders didn't appreciate oologists. He was an oologist and a very competent one.

I didn't meet him until the time that I started work on *Wisconsin Birdlife*. One of the first things I did when I undertook that project was to contact Carl. I knew that he had kept extensive field records, and I knew he was getting along in years. I wanted to get his data as best I could. So I designed a special kind of report form just for him to report his egg work. He was very accommodating. I went up to see him, and we went out in the field one morning. He and I enjoyed this because we were both quick to pick up things with our ears. We just had a glorious morning together. And he showed me different areas where he used to do his egg collecting. These were Oconto Marsh and Peshtigo Marsh. Many of the records he shared hadn't been reported, so this turned out to be a fortuitous move that really paid off and made the book a better one. And we did it just in time because he died before I finished the book.

**SM:** In the 1978 interview, you make reference to your "graph paper method" for keeping bird records. Describe that for me.

**SR:** At the beginning of the month, I make a list of those birds that I am most apt to see that month. I list these birds in the left hand column and then I draw 30 or 31 columns, depending on

the number of days in the month. At the end of each day, I take a few moments to write down how many individuals of each species I remember seeing or hearing that day. Let me show you (Figure 3). Here is April, 1989. The birds that I saw are all listed along with the dates I did the observing, the estimated numbers, and a code indicating the county where the observation was made. I've been doing this since 1939. I have several notebooks of these records. There are very few months I've missed, and only a few months have incomplete records.

**SM:** Are there specific sites that you have gone to every year? Or are these observations you've made from wherever you have been?

**SR:** They are observations from wherever I've been. I try to indicate where I have gone.

**SM:** Have you ever made an attempt to summarize these records for a particular locality?

**SR:** I'm going to leave it to somebody else to do that.

**SM:** In the 1978 interview, you say: "It's a simple matter to go back to some of these records and determine where a given bird like a Chestnut-sided Warbler was found, when you first saw it, when it became fairly numerous, when it began to drop off."

**SR:** None of the other records that I found in Gromme's file or records from any other source give me much information on abundance. I have found these records of mine to be of tremendous value in giving me this information.

**SM:** One of your significant accomplishments was organizing the federal Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) in the state. Tell me more about the origins of that effort.

**SR:** Well, let me enlarge on that a little bit. Before my brother Chan conceived the idea of the federal Breeding Bird Survey and began to organize it, we talked with the WSO Board of Directors about trying to organize some kind of a summer count for Wisconsin. At the time, we were envisioning getting these going in a linear way so that you could compare figures from 1960 with 1961, '61 with '62, and so on for the same given areas. When I presented this to the Board of Directors, they said it would be a very desirable thing, but asked if I really thought that I would get many people involved. This would have been in 1960. I realized that most people put their binoculars away at the end of the spring migration and didn't take them out again for a few months, but I felt they were missing a great bet because of the summer birds that we have, particularly during the month of June before the song period ceases. We could get some significant information.

So the WSO directors finally said: "Go ahead and do one count, and we'll find some others." So we began this project in 1961 and ran it for five years. By the fifth year, we had 75 different areas covered. I summarized the counts in *The Passenger Pigeon* each year. I learned by 1965 that Chan was developing the federal Breeding Bird Survey project. I recognized right away that his methods were far superior to the ones we were following because they would give comparisons between different areas. I encouraged Chan to do this, and he said that he had been wanting to get something like this started; but he, too, had been fearful that he couldn't get people to go out birding in June. When he saw what success we were having in Wisconsin, he



[illegible]

Figure 3. An example (from April 1989) of Sam Robbins' "graph paper method" of keeping bird records. Sam has been tallying his sightings in this manner since 1939.

decided that it was worth a try. So in a way I think we gave him a boost in organizing that project, which has proved to be so successful.

We gave up on our first project as

soon as Chan's got started. So by 1966, we switched from our "summer bird survey" to the North American BBS. The summary that we finished recently is a 26 year summary, 1966-91.

**SM:** In your 1978 interview, you also said: "I have been doing some thinking about writing a little booklet of meditations, religious meditations based upon my observations of nature. This could help other people see for themselves the things in nature that lead to an understanding and appreciation of God. It would make them better environmentalists, better stewards of the world we live in. I think it could do a lot of good." Have you given any further thought to that project?

**SR:** Not exactly. But what I have done instead is to write a column every week for backyard bird lovers through *The Country Today*. I began writing that in January 1977. I had an article in the first issue they ever published. I think I've missed only three weekly issues in that 20 year period. If I took a vacation, I would write an article ahead of time so they would have something to use. I still get quite a bit of feedback on my articles. Rarely a week goes by that I haven't received a letter. These letters are so appreciative that if there was such a thing as an apostle to the backyard bird watcher, I probably fulfill that role to some extent. Maybe someday I might tackle a book that does this in a more direct way. I don't know if you remember seeing it or not, but we did publish in *The Passenger Pigeon* a few years ago a poem I wrote titled "Only God can make a bird."

**SM:** So your writings in *The Country Today* have led to a greater appreciation of God?

**SR:** I think that most anyone who reads those articles would recognize that there are religious overtones to what I write. The word stewardship covers a lot of my feelings. We here on earth don't really own anything. All of crea-



Figure 4. About to begin work on one of his first articles for *The Country Today*, Sam, a high school guidance counselor at the time, is pictured here in his office at Cadott High School, 12 miles east of Chippewa Falls, Chippewa County, Wisconsin (fall, 1977; photo courtesy of Robbins Family Archives).

tion essentially is God's and is intended for all God's creatures and all generations. I feel that I am very much a part of God's creation and that God intended that we have a harmonious relationship with all of nature. I accept the idea that I am responsible to try to keep the natural world in as good condition as possible, so I have taken a deep interest in conservation matters. I feel that the coming generations have just as much right to enjoy the things that I enjoy, so I want to be sure that I do my part to keep things in good shape.

For one particular moment in time I may be responsible for a particular plot of ground that I own, but I don't really own it. I have the responsibility for it because some previous owner

passed it on to me, and I want to pass it on to people who come after me. I also feel that from a larger perspective, there are going to be growing societal needs: land needed for industry, land needed for transportation, land needed for agriculture, land needed for recreation, land needed for commercial enterprises, and so on. The larger the population becomes, the more intense is the competition for this land. We have to take a very broad view of this in terms of determining which land is best suited for what purposes and then try to make policy decisions that will reflect the best use that preserves the land for generations to come. Land use is not just a conservation issue but an issue our society is facing in every way. There is such a great tendency for people to be selfish about this. Short sighted. We need to take everybody's need into consideration and particularly those of the coming generations.

**SM:** How, then, can we develop a more ethical regard for the land?

**SR:** To me, it all starts with one's belief in God. If you accept the idea that all of this is God's creation and we human beings are here as children of God, then we have a fundamental responsibility to protect the land. The relationship between a person and God is one of love.

**SM:** Have you felt the presence of God in the outdoors?

**SR:** Very much so. The more I have come to know birds and their habits and migration patterns, the more convinced I am that all of life is a part of the whole creative process I associate with God. In my mind, the Bible asserts that God created everything; and science and evolution help us to understand the process by which God has ac-

complished all of this. When I think of the unique feathering of birds, it is abundantly clear that human beings can't manufacture bird feathers. I can't go to a store to buy a bird feather that will operate as well; these things are created in a way that's beyond our human understanding. So the more I learn about birds, the more respect I have for the Creator.

**SM:** Here you are at your 75th birthday and you have just had the 50th anniversary of your ordination. What does the future look like for Sam Robbins as far as continuing to bird and travel?

**SR:** I have quite a few places that I would love to travel to, but I realize that when it comes to trying to go to new places and see new birds, my energy limitations are going to restrict me to what I call roadside birding. I have never been a real strong hiker, probably because I've got just too much stuff to carry around with me every place I go. I get tired so quickly. I couldn't begin to do the things that you do when you go out and collect Trumpeter Swan eggs. That sounds to me like something for athletic gymnasts and that kind of thing. I have more and more become a roadside birder simply because of my limited strength. I could explain this very nicely and say that I am just plain too big around; it has made a lot of field work difficult.

Just to give you an illustration of this, last winter Bill Foster, his wife, and I went up to northern Wisconsin. One of the things we really wanted to do was help Bill find a Spruce Grouse, which is one of the birds that he had never seen. So we got in touch with Larry Gregg. That happened to be a winter when the snow was not particularly deep. Larry said, "Come along, and we will help you hike out in the swamp."

Well, when I got there and I saw what hiking this was going to involve, I gave up. I couldn't do it. And Jimmy, Bill's wife, said she wasn't going to do it either. But Bill wanted to see this Spruce Grouse bad enough that he hiked out with Larry. It was easy for Larry; he has done this kind of thing all the time. Bill was utterly fagged out when he got back. Jimmy and I stayed out on the road and did some birding there, and when we got back to our starting point, Bill was all smiles and was thumbs up. I wish I had had a camera to capture the look on his face. A real look of triumph and satisfaction. I would have dearly loved to have been there with him, but when it comes to trampling through the brush with no trails, it's just plain too hard for me.

But even when I was younger and healthier, I did not particularly enjoy some of the more difficult hiking. This business of climbing hills and really getting back into the brush where you have to go to see some birds is simply beyond me now healthwise, so I have got to live with certain limitations. I realize that something can happen any moment that may make a major change in my health condition, but if I continue to have sufficient strength, health, and energy, I am anxious to visit new places and try to see birds that I am less familiar with.

I enjoyed very much an Elderhostel trip to Texas last winter. I didn't see any new life birds, but that wasn't important to me. What was important was that I developed a better acquaintance with a whole bunch of birds that I have rarely encountered before. I would like to get back to Arizona. I have been there a little bit when our son lived in Phoenix. We'd go there every now and then. I'd love to go to New Mexico for

waterfowl. I have only been to Florida once. I don't know whether I'm real anxious to try a pelagic trip. I've never been on a real honest to goodness pelagic trip, but I think this would be real fun if I could do it and keep my tummy in place. I would love to see the fall shorebird migration around Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. I have never done this. There are places in the Rocky Mountains that would be great to go to, but again what can you do if you are limited to roadside birding? A lot of those specialties that you would really look for are probably just out of reach.

**SM:** Is there any place in Wisconsin you haven't been? And what is your favorite area for birding in Wisconsin?

**SR:** If you had asked me that question back when I started work on *Wisconsin Birdlife*, I would have given you several key areas of the state that I didn't know much about. So I made it a point during my first two or three years of work on that book to get out into some of those areas. I think I filled in the worst of the blanks in terms of statewide coverage. I had an advantage I think that lots of other people don't have: I moved about every 10 years from one location to another. This gave me a good chance to sample bird life in quite a variety of locations. I am sure that there are still places in the state that I don't know nearly as well as I might. There are some areas around the Eau Pleine Flowage that I visited but not nearly as much as I would have liked. Other places are the national forests up north where I have never really spent much time. But, overall, I am probably more familiar with most areas of the state than most people.

One hankering that I've had that I've never fully satisfied is to be up on

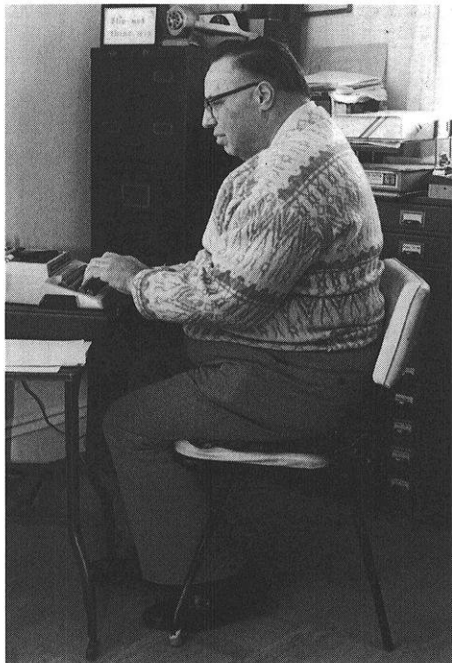


Figure 5. Sam Robbins at home, working on a draft of *Wisconsin Birdlife* in Medford, Taylor County, Wisconsin (winter, 1980; photo courtesy of Robbins Family Archives).

Wisconsin Point in Superior at a time when there's a "fallout"—a large number of visiting migrants, exhausted after a long travel. I have been there and camped overnight when I thought the migration would be good, but I have never seen a real fallout there. There are hawk observation points I would like to spend more time at, and I would like to spend some time at night in areas where they trap owls. I haven't done much of any of that. Another place that I have visited only rarely that intrigues me is Seagull Bar up in Marinette, but there again the trouble is it's a long hike over soft sand, and I don't think my energy level would permit this now the way it used to.

It could be that there are some areas

along the Illinois border that I don't know nearly as well as one might. I was quite intrigued with one of the atlas reports that came from a fellow working down in the Brooklyn Wildlife Area where he found a Worm-eating Warbler. I didn't know there were any Worm-eating Warblers there. At other places down there, they recorded a Prairie Warbler about a year and a half or so ago. I would never have guessed that a southern bird like that was in there. There may be other places in the southern tier of counties that we're overlooking.

One of my favorite areas that I did visit often was the area around Roberts and Hudson in St. Croix County. I did a lot of birding there in the 1960s and have returned a few times since then. That is an area I never tire of because of the nice variety of birds, especially during the migration and the summer season.

Another thing that I remember enjoying so very much and that I never get enough of is canoeing on the Bois Brule River. John Degerman used to take me down the river once every year just out of the goodness of his heart. He wanted to learn the birds, and he knew I could teach him the bird songs, so we would canoe the river. The chorus of birds you get, with the Winter Wrens and the Parula Warblers, is just heavenly. So that became really an all-time favorite trip of mine. I don't think I've been on the Bois Brule River for 20 years.

There is another area that intrigues me from a mysterious point of view, but I would want to go with somebody who knows the area very well. That area is the Wolf River bottoms between New London and Hortonville. My interest in that area comes from reading the



reports of Prothonotary Warblers that Father Dayton used to write. These were reports that he used to send in to Owen Gromme. He did his observations in the early years of the 20th century, but he described year after year Prothonotary Warblers in those river bottoms.

In the early 1970s, I had no idea whether the habitat was still adequate. Nobody had been reporting from there for years. I stopped there one July day on my way to Green Bay and found that not only was the habitat still acceptable, but I heard a Prothonotary Warbler singing and this was past the song period, about the 20th of July! I made it a point a couple of years after that to get over there in June. There were Prothonotary Warblers there every time. So I am presuming that these birds were probably present as breeding birds and they were also present during those early years. To really get a handle on this, a person needs to go in a canoe. There are so many backwaters out there that I would get lost if I tried it myself. I talked with Daryl Tesen about this and he had the same feeling: he doesn't know that area well enough to pilot a canoe through there. But with someone who is familiar with the area, we might discover more Prothonotary Warblers and other southern river bottom birds, such as Yellow-billed Cuckoos and Cerulean Warblers, too. I would like to be a part of a team that goes there some time.

I'm not an avid bird lister. I keep lists, and if you give me time, I will count up a list and tell you how many I have got on my life list, but right now I don't know what I've got. I enjoy seeing a lifer almost as much as the next fellow, but I enjoy just as much seeing a rare bird I have seen before. So I keep going afield often.

Bill Foster and I go birding once or twice a week together, and we go where we hope we will get greater varieties of birds. Bill is good for me, and I think I am good for him, and in that way, we complement each other. So I hope to keep on doing this, and to maintain my list of arrival and departure dates. I always send them in to WSO so they can continue to become a part of the broad basic knowledge that may be useful to other people.

I will tell you, Sumner, when I was writing *Wisconsin Birdlife*, I could find in *The Passenger Pigeon* all kinds of first arrival dates for birds that would help me to tell people when to expect certain species in different parts of the state, but I could not find much in the way of peak dates. I could also not find much in the way of departure dates, and often times, I was just driven back to my own records. These little charts I showed you help you to gauge when the peak migration period is as well as the first and last dates of occurrence. I wish to high heaven that more people who are keeping these kinds of records would publish them in *The Passenger Pigeon*. I think they are much needed.

**SM:** Over the years since 1939, have you had experiences with species that have declined?

**SR:** One of the prime cases that comes to mind is the Bewick's Wren. I rarely encountered Bewick's Wrens before I moved to Adams County in 1951. I was very pleasantly surprised when I moved to Adams to find that I could hear Bewick's Wrens from my backyard every year. There were four or five singing males scattered around the city. Here was this bird that seemed to be so rare other places; it seemed to be present in some numbers up our way. This continued for much of the time that we

lived there. I noticed that by about 1958 or so, I wasn't hearing these birds as much as I used to. When I made trips back there after moving away in 1960, I couldn't find one anymore. It took a while for it to sink in to me that this bird had just plain disappeared. I think it's disappeared from Wisconsin. I don't think we have had a state record for years now, and when the DNR was asking for recommendations for what birds to consider as endangered, I pointed this out to them. Bewick's Wren wasn't on their list at first. It has disappeared over this whole part of the country, and I really have no explanation for it.

Another case in point is the Piping Plover. Again, I rarely saw Piping Plovers any time, but I could always go up to Wisconsin Point in Superior in the summer and find a Piping Plover at two or three different places. Not any more. In that case, I think it was the dune buggies that destroyed their nests and scared the birds away, but that bird doesn't nest in Wisconsin anymore, does it?

**SM:** No, it hasn't since 1983. The Duluth-Superior Harbor used to have as many as eight nesting pairs back in the late 1970s, and now there are none. [Ed. note: Sumner found a breeding pair in May, 1998, at Chequamegon Point, Lake Superior.]

**SR:** Just recently, the pronounced decline in grassland species has been staring us all in the face. I think what made me aware of that was not so much my field observations as my analysis of the Breeding Bird Survey data. I can recall when I first noticed that these species were declining. I called DNR's attention to it, and they followed through and saw that, yes indeed, the Western Meadowlark particularly had declined

seriously. I have looked back at my records from when we lived in Mazomanie from 1948 to 1951. On almost every May/June field trip, I heard six or eight or more Henslow's Sparrows in that area. I haven't heard a Henslow's Sparrow out in the Mazomanie area for years and years. Again, this is evidence of a decline. We might attribute some of that to changes in land use, but I suspect it's more than that. The Red-headed Woodpecker decline concerns me a great deal. I see far fewer of those than I used to.

**SM:** Enough to warrant listing as endangered or threatened in the state?

**SR:** I would say a lot more study is needed before listing should be considered. I would nominate it, however, as a Species of Special Concern. That's a hard bird to find in northern Wisconsin now.

The Purple Martin situation is also cause for concern. About the only place where I can find a Purple Martin in Madison in summertime is out on the west end of Lake Mendota right by the Mendota boat landing. Now, I haven't investigated all around Lake Mendota or Lake Monona, so there may be other colonies that I'm not aware of, but on my field trips nowadays, I have missed Purple Martins a lot more than I have found any, and I suspect this is a fairly serious condition. I suspect it is more pronounced in the western half of the state than it is the eastern half. If I am along Lake Michigan or Green Bay, I see fair numbers of Purple Martins there, but in the western half of the state, I just don't find them.

**SM:** Why do you think they have declined?

**SR:** I think that some of this could be traced to prolonged cold spells during

the nesting season. Somewhere I have seen in print something to the effect that if the temperature stays under 50 degrees Fahrenheit for as much as 72 consecutive hours that Purple Martins cannot survive. I think we have had a few cold spells now and then, and this would explain why one part of the state could be affected much more than another part. So I am suspicious, but I haven't performed any individual studies and have only analyzed Breeding Bird Survey data. The Breeding Bird Survey data, however, show a pronounced decline.

**SM:** What about other species?

**SR:** I suspect that we are getting declines in Whip-poor-wills. I also suspect that in northern Wisconsin it's pretty hard nowadays to find Screech-Owls. They seem to be numerous in the southern part of the state, but I rarely find them farther north. When I lived in St. Croix County, I found them during the first two to three years that I was there, and then nothing after that. When I lived in Chippewa County, I found them the first couple of years, then nothing after that. I don't think my evidence is strong enough to really do any flag waving on it, but I am suspicious that there are declines.

Regarding waterfowl, I find Pintails are awfully hard to find nowadays. Black Ducks—well, when I was a kid growing up in New England, you had lots of Black Ducks and no Mallards, but now even out there, it's the other way around. They've got mostly Mallards and very few Black Ducks.

**SM:** Did you see a decline in Loggerhead Shrikes?

**SR:** Yes; this was quite pronounced. I didn't see many Loggerhead Shrikes until we got to St. Croix County in 1960. But then for three to four years, I found Loggerhead Shrikes on almost

every summer field trip I took. I don't know if it was 1964 or 1965, but I was noticing that the places that had had them in previous years no longer had them. When I moved away from there in 1968, I think I had probably been through a couple of years without seeing one. So, definitely, that picture has changed since the 1940s-50s.

**SM:** What about the Greater Prairie-Chicken? Fran Hamerstrom indicated that there used to be Prairie-Chickens in every county in the state.

**SR:** When I came to Wisconsin in 1939, I heard people talk about Prairie-Chickens and about how they used to be everywhere. But by the late 1930s, they had just about disappeared from the southern counties. There was some indication out in the Mazomanie grasslands that you might still hear one. I made a point of going out there a couple of times with friends and we heard Prairie-Chickens just a few times, probably around 1940 or so, and that was the last. So I got in on just the tail end of the stand of the Prairie-Chicken in southern Wisconsin.

Let me say a few words about the Peregrine Falcon. One vivid experience I remember occurred in the summer of 1937. I came out from Massachusetts and spent a few weeks with relatives here. I camped out on a sandbar in the Wisconsin River one night, right below Ferry Bluff. All night long the screaming of the Peregrine was going on. I don't know if we got any sleep that night or not. I presume that the parents were feeding young all that time, and it just seemed as if they were doing it 'round the clock. They put on a great show. I'd have to check my records as to how many times I saw Peregrines out there after that time, but they soon disappeared.

**SM:** In your “Best of the Nest,” a collection of articles written for *The Country Today*, one that really struck me as different from all others, and which was probably the most moving, was the piece (Appendix B) titled “Still Singing.”

**SR:** That was about the Hermit Thrush.

**SM:** The Hermit Thrush, as well as about the young girl who lost her life. What kind of response did you have to that piece?

**SR:** My editor thinks that was the best one I ever wrote, and I agree that it was one of my best. He was very much touched by it. Several people wrote very appreciatively about that piece.

**SM:** What were you thinking when you wrote it?

**SR:** I had been involved in this girl's life. She was a parishioner of mine. I discovered the bird near the time that this girl died, and I just naturally put two and two together. I wrote a poem

at the end. I don't get into poetry very much, but it does happen on a few occasions.

I wrote a poem one time after I saw a tree cut down. In that case, I was just struck by how in just a few minutes time you could take down a tree that probably had been growing for 100 years or more. The stark contrast between the slowness of the growth and the quickness of the fall really got to me.

**SM:** I also read your piece about the crows. What is your feeling about the impending crow season?

**SR:** I am very much against it, and I think that the legislators in the state capitol know this, the DNR Board knows this, and some of the DNR people. I just think that whole thing is going to detract from public appreciation of hunting in general. I think the fact that people would stoop to such things as the willful destruction of crows that they don't want to use for anything is awful. Crows will just be target practice for them. I think this is some of the worst kind of stewardship.

**SM:** That's essentially why you were against the crow season, isn't it? That it serves no purpose?

**SR:** Right. It's just catering to the killer instinct in people that I think needs to be controlled and kept under wraps.

I remember once coming across a kid who was trying to shoot a Snowy Owl. We got to talking and he said, “I know that owl's around, and I am looking for it.” I asked him if he would actually shoot that owl if he found it. He began to feel a little sheepish about it. I told him a few things about Snowy Owls and about how they migrate from Canada, how they feed on other creatures and so on, and told him about the feathering that an owl has. To



Figure 6. Four year old daughter Betsy Ann is captivated by a migrant Yellow-rumped Warbler that came into Sam's back porch, city of Adams, Adams County, Wisconsin (September, 1959; photo courtesy of Robbins Family Archives).

make a long story short, he decided that killing a Snowy Owl was a very bad idea.

I did the same thing one time with a youngster up in Solon Springs. I had stopped at a restaurant for breakfast, and outside the restaurant, there was a colony of Cliff Swallow nests on the side of the building. A kid was out there throwing stones at the nests, knocking them down. So I interrupted my breakfast and went out and said some of the same things, partly to shame the guy, but more to educate him. He quit.

I like talking to people. I like lecturing especially when there is give-and-take afterwards where people can ask questions or make comments. I don't like this one-way-street type of thing where I am doing all the talking and never any listening. I have enjoyed writing the articles for *The Country Today*. I don't know which book I could say that I enjoyed more—the scholarly one on Wisconsin birds, or the much more casual one for backyard birders.

Related to my scholarly efforts, I feel that my role in research has been more the collecting and compiling of data that we get from other people, such as with the Breeding Bird Survey, than individual research studies of my own. I think I have made some discoveries about Connecticut Warblers that were new to the ornithological community. I did the same thing with LeConte's Sparrows some years back, but those instances are few and far between. I accomplish more by collecting data from many people, putting these together, and then analyzing them in a way that makes sense.

When I lived in St. Croix County in the early 1960s, I would make two or three trips up to the northwestern part

of the state every year. One particular June morning, I was just driving along a stretch of road east of Solon Springs with the window down when I heard a Connecticut Warbler. I recognized that song instantly. At that time, the Connecticut Warbler was thought to be a very rare summer resident. Owen Gromme had a nesting record of it on one of his museum expeditions, but the bird community thought of the Connecticut Warbler as being a bird of the swamps. Here I was in dry jack pine area when I heard a song that really surprised me. I drove a little bit further. By golly, I heard another one, and I got the idea to make the trip a Connecticut Warbler expedition. To make a long story short, in two hours driving—maybe 12 miles—in that jack pine area, I found 41 singing Connecticut Warblers. I just drove back and forth on some of the side roads. Then I wrote this up and took a few other occasions to go to some other jack pine areas. I found Connecticut Warblers there, too. I read the literature to see if other people had been finding this bird in jack pines, and I couldn't find any references. So I wrote an article in *The Passenger Pigeon* called "New Light on the Connecticut Warbler." I began getting feedback from people in Minnesota, and received a letter from Earl Godfrey in Canada. Earl said that he had started finding Connecticut Warblers in jack pine, and when other people read this article and they started checking jack pine areas, they began finding Connecticut Warblers, too. Now we've got quite a different idea as to its habitat preferences. In certain jack pine barrens in northern Wisconsin, this is a fairly numerous bird.

In the case of the LeConte's Sparrow, I had mistaken its song. I had



heard it several times over a period of years and assumed that it was an abbreviated Savannah Sparrow song, but one morning while I was in St. Croix County, I heard the song real well and recognized it was not that of a Savannah Sparrow. I finally hunted the singer down, and I got a look at it. For the first time in my life, I felt that I knew the song of the LeConte's Sparrow. Having learned that song, I found that if I was out real early in the morning, I could hear that song in quite a few places. So I deliberately explored extensive grass meadows in a few places in the northern counties, and I found LeConte's Sparrows all over the place. Again, this was a kind of habitat that people had not associated with this bird. They thought of it as a marsh bird, and here I was in dry upland grass meadows. I corresponded with Carl Richter about this, and he mentioned that most of his observations were in swampy areas but that he had sometimes found them in dry grass areas, too. So eventually I began examining all my records obtained by hearing this bird. I noticed that most of the records that I had were real early, before it got light, and that anytime after about six o'clock in the morning, I stopped hearing this bird. That was another reason why other people hadn't been hearing this bird. On some WSO convention trips up north, I began to point out the song to other observers. Once other people learned the song, they found it in more places. So I wrote an article called "New Light on the LeConte's Sparrow."

In 1973, the AOU decided to split the Alder and Willow Flycatchers. Once this was done, the question became: Which of these do we have in Wisconsin? I had some information in

my field notes that I could draw upon to help answer this question because the identification is mostly by sound. You can hardly tell these birds apart by looking at them. But the songs were enough different that I could recall my first experience with what we now call the Willow Flycatcher; that was out here near Black Earth in the summer of 1937. I met up with this bird, and for the life of me, I didn't know what it was. It looked like an Alder Flycatcher. It did not sound like the Alder Flycatchers I had grown up with in New England. What finally tipped me off was a statement in Peterson's first field guide that said that birds west of Ohio sing a different song. He verbalized "Wee-bee-o" for the Alder and "Fitz-bew" for the Willow. He didn't call them Alder and Willow; he simply called them different songs of the Alder Flycatcher. So, from that time on, I put down in my notes any time I heard an Alder Flycatcher an "E" for east or "W" for west. I had a lot of data at the time the split was made, so I went back over my records. It seemed to me as if the east-west designation was wrong, that it was more of a north-south designation. So I put all of this together for an article in *The Passenger Pigeon*. I wrote that article primarily upon my own observations, and I concluded that northern Wisconsin had Alders, southern Wisconsin had Willows, and that there was quite a band of overlap, rather narrow in the western part of the state, but becoming broader as you moved east in the state. I think that time has proved this a fairly accurate assessment. There are a few more areas of overlap than what I anticipated at that time, but the general picture has held true. We were ahead of just about all of the other states in

determining which flycatchers were present, simply because I had these data going back several years.

**SM:** What was your impression of Roger Tory Peterson [1909–1996]?

**SR:** Very likeable man, soft spoken, very sincere, very creative; at the time that I knew him, his fame was already established. I did not feel that he was a person who would not associate with beginner-type people simply because he had reached the prominence he had. I can recall in the early 1980s when Chan came out with his revision of his field guide [*Birds of North America*, Golden Press] just as Peterson did—I think they were just two or three years apart. Some of the reviewers made the point that these two fellows were competing against each other and that they were potential rivals. My impression was just the opposite: that they were friends much more than rivals.

One issue I brought up with Roger, and I was surprised by his opinion, was Cowbird control. The issue about whether we needed to take measures to control Cowbirds was being batted around quite a bit in 1993. I wondered what Roger's point of view on this was. He felt that we should do little or nothing in the way of Cowbird control. He felt that it wasn't as big an issue as some people were making it out to be. I didn't agree with him on that. I think the situation with Kirtland's Warblers and Golden-cheeked Warblers is pretty well documented at least when you're dealing with some endangered species and very limited habitat. We almost have to choose between Cowbirds and those warblers. I'm afraid it's reached a point where we need to be making those choices.

**SM:** Have there been other issues that

have especially captivated your attention?

**SR:** I have spoken out on the wise use of pesticides for a long time. I did it when I was editor of *The Passenger Pigeon*. This was primarily during the DDT era when we lost elm trees and robins. We devoted an entire issue of *The Passenger Pigeon* to this subject. We had articles written by four different people, and we had reprints of these sent to all of the chemical companies in Wisconsin. We didn't realistically expect we would change any minds and practices, but we felt that we wanted our voices to be heard, and we wanted people in these chemical companies to know that they were dealing with something that was a lot bigger than what they were recognizing at the time.

There were communities that had special town meetings on whether or not to use DDT. There was an option at that time to use methoxychlor instead of DDT; it had much less effect on other creatures. But it was more expensive. Some communities did decide to go to the more expensive stuff to try to control dutch elm disease. I think I became interested in this issue partly through Chan because Chan was part of a team that was studying some of the effects of DDT on wildlife shortly after World War II when the use of DDT was in its infancy. He knew more about it, and I think he was raising some issues on this, but being a government employee, I don't know whether some of the reports that he made got shoved under the table for political reasons. I'd like to talk to him about this some time.

**SM:** So he may have known about DDT's effects well before the public knew?

**SR:** I think so. I would say that Chan

and I never had as much a chance to communicate about things like this that many people might think brothers would. We'd see each other once or twice a year, and whenever we'd get together, we'd have a million other things to talk about. I just have never had the chance to discuss with Chan a lot of the things I would have liked to through the years.

**SM:** When did you first notice the impact of DDT on songbirds?

**SR:** It was the Robin situation that first came to light.

**SM:** Tell me about that. What happened?

**SR:** The widespread use of DDT coincided with the spread of dutch elm disease, and when dutch elm disease reached southeastern Wisconsin, there was enough known about how this was devastating the elm trees in the eastern United States that communities were gung ho on trying to do something to save their elm trees. And I would say that this probably centered around Milwaukee and its suburbs and Madison and its suburbs as much as any other place. The people who were trying to stop dutch elm disease were using DDT like crazy; it was only as this was going on and people began seeing dead Robins all over their lawns that the picture began to emerge that DDT was, first of all, not stopping the spread of dutch elm disease, and secondly, it was having a serious effect on some of our songbirds. It was most noticeable with the Robins because the elm trees that people were trying to save were in suburban areas where Robins were particularly conspicuous. When people began finding dead Robins all over the lawns, they began to be much more concerned.

I remember attending a hearing one

time when I thought it was very obvious that there was a link between DDT use and songbird loss. One fellow from the university here, I forget his name, was travelling around the state to all of these different hearings and promoting the idea that these chemicals should be used. He was denying that there was any evidence this was the cause of the decline of some songbirds. I just felt like throwing mud in his eye. How could he stand up there and say something that was blatantly wrong?

**SM:** And then around that time Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*.

**SR:** I'm sure that had an effect, too. I felt very much in agreement with her and thankful that she was such an effective spokesperson on this issue.

**SM:** Rachel Carson opened everyone's eyes. No question she had a big impact. By this time, you had met Bill Foster and were spending a lot of time birding together, something you continue to do. Tell me about him.

**SR:** Bill grew up in Tennessee. He is a self-taught birder. He did not belong to organizations or have parents who encouraged him and taught him birds. He had to learn everything by himself. But he did a good job of it. He was very much interested in birds as a boy.

Bill's a private individual. And he's done some very significant things for our country. He was very much in the forefront of the school desegregation issues that affected our country. He doesn't talk about it very much, but from what he does tell me, I think that he was a very influential person and calming influence in some rather explosive situations. One of the ways in which we're different is that I love to go to meetings with other bird people, and you couldn't get Bill near a meeting if his life depended on it.



Figure 7. Sam with longtime birding companion Bill Foster at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum, Madison, Wisconsin (September 1997). Photograph by Sumner W. Matteson.

Bill and I first met in the mid-1950s, shortly after he came to Wisconsin to teach in the law school. I don't remember just how we happened to meet, but we hit it off together because we were both competent field ornithologists. We had occasion to go out in the field together once or twice and we just so enjoyed each other's company that whenever I had occasion to come to Madison, which was rather infrequent, we'd get together. Or if anything brought him up to where I was living, we'd get together and do a little birding. When I retired and moved to Madison, Bill and I were both relishing the thought of getting together much more often. So here we are going into the field about once a week, just enjoying each other's company, aging together, and gradually losing our hear-

ing together. I think we've been good for each other.

We've been to Texas together a couple of times, Florida, Montana, and Colorado. I think he's felt that because I've lived so much of my life without going to some of these fancy bird places that he just gets a big kick out of helping me broaden my experiences.

As much as I like being with other people at times, I also like equally well the times when I can be alone. And the times when I am alone, I think I've become more observant. I wish to high heaven that I knew more about what I'm looking at. I see plant life, but I don't know much about botany. I think about my uncle, Frank Seymour, who combined a career as a minister with that of a botanist. Most of his life was

spent in Massachusetts, but he did come out here for pastorates at Appleton and Tomahawk for a few years. He wrote a book on the flora of Lincoln County while he was here. He wrote books on the flora of New England. He really was an outstanding botanist. How I wish I had his knowledge and understanding of plant and animal life! I feel as if I know only a tiny fraction of the natural world. If I knew more, I would appreciate more of it, but every new level of appreciation I have makes me think more reverently of a divine creator.

**SM:** Tangentially, the history of ornithology is full of examples of ministers and other religious people who became interested in and studied birds. Gilbert White, for example, is renowned for his *The Natural History of Selbourne*. What was it about the ministry that attracted you, and at what age did you become interested in wanting to serve God?

**SR:** That's an interesting question with sort of a "roundabout" answer. My parents were faithful church goers, and so we kids went to church and Sunday school regularly. I can't say that I had any inkling or desire to enter the ministry during those years. As a matter of fact, I kind of chafed at it.

When I left home and went to college, and was more on my own, I didn't go to church much and I lived with an aunt and uncle who didn't go to church much, but I was very much interested in the student group connected with the congregational church here. So I would go to their Sunday evening social affairs. The minister to students at that time was a fellow whom we called "Parson Jim"—Jim Flint. I developed a great admiration for him and through him began to see religion

differently. He had a sincere love for people, and he put into practice what the Christian faith was all about. So I started going to church a bit more often.

Between my sophomore and junior years in college, I spent a summer working at a Salvation Army camp in the New York City region. They had long church services for their kids on Sunday mornings; some of these impressed me. It wasn't the brand of religious service and practice that I especially enjoyed, but because of the dedication of people leading these programs, I turned toward taking the church more seriously. While I had had no desire to be a minister, I think my parents had instilled in me a desire to use my life in some kind of an occupation where I could be of service to people. I really thank my parents for that great emphasis.

What a person who chooses to be a minister needs to feel at some point along the line is that God calls that person to enter the profession. I felt all along a sense of a real relationship to God. My parents had helped me feel that God was calling me to a life of service. The question was, what kind of service, how to channel that sense of calling. The channeling didn't come until I was between my junior and senior year in college.

One Sunday between my junior and senior years in college, I sat in church here. Alfred Swan preached a sermon that dealt with the duel between Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr and how the minister at that time in the funeral oration had spoken so powerfully against dueling that dueling practically disappeared in the country after that time. I thought to myself, "By golly, if a minister can really make that kind of



a difference, then maybe that's what I really should do." Alfred Swan, incidentally, presided over Joe and Lola Hickey's marriage, and on his twenty-fifth wedding anniversary he did the same for Shirley and me!

Now, preceding this realization of deciding to be a minister had been a period of wandering in "no man's land." I had started college with the idea that I wanted to be a math teacher, but I struggled with calculus to the point that I decided that math was not for me. This would have been 1939-40. Having that idea knocked out of me, there was nothing to take its place.

I eventually went to A.H. Edgerton, who was a counselor to students here, and he gave me a whole battery of tests during my sophomore year. In one of these tests, he scored my aptitude or interest—I'm not sure how much was aptitude and how much was interest. He said, "I'll score you for a teacher." And then he said, "You turn out moderately high here." And I said, "How about as a scientist?" I was thinking about my bird interest, and he said, "You score moderately high here." What about school administrator? "You don't score quite so high here." I named several other possible occupations. Then he said, "Let me guess some. I want to score you for a farmer." I laughed at that. I never grew up on a farm. I hardly knew which was the front end of a tractor. He said, "You score very high as a farmer!" So then he said, "Let me score you for a minister. This scores very high." And I said, "Well, that's interesting, but I'm really not interested there." He said he was looking for something where there was both aptitude and interest. He explained that aptitude and interest are not the same things.

As a result of all of this, I decided to change my major to natural science. I would study to teach science in high school. A few months after that and after my Salvation Army experiences and contact with Alfred Swan, I began to think seriously about possibly training to be a minister. What had shown up on Professor Edgerton's tests came back to me, and it gave me great encouragement. And, Sumner, I needed that encouragement because as soon as I breathed to my friends that I was considering this, the universal reaction was: "No, don't do it! Not you!" I asked "why?" and they said that a minister had to be able to communicate and talk effectively. He needed to be an orator. I said, "I agree that I am no orator, but I just wonder whether with the right kind of training, I could learn some better speech habits." The chorus of discouragement that I got at that point was loud and clear.

You see, I mumbled. I didn't articulate my words well at all. I didn't project my voice. I had taken a speech course in college, but it hadn't really done that much good.

Next chance I had back home, I talked this over very seriously with my dad because of his interest in speech. He referred me to a friend on the Emerson College faculty who could help evaluate my chances of developing acceptable speech habits. So I spent an hour with him, and at the end of that time, he asked me point blank: "How badly do you want to be a minister?" I was able to say, "I want it more than anything else in the world." Then he said, "Then, you can do it, but it's going to take a lot of hard work." My mind was made up, so I went on into the seminary. Fortunately, I got a first class speech teacher in seminary who

did a lot to help me undo some bad habits and replace them with good ones. I still slip into some of my old habits in conversation and let my voice drop to a level that somebody can hardly hear. But when it comes to conducting a church service, my voice really booms out. So I think I made the grade in that.

When I was ready to start my senior year in college, World War II was going, and I was getting pretty close to being drafted. I found that I only needed 18 credits to graduate. I had already received a notice from the Belmont Draft Board for a physical exam, so my dad questioned whether I should even try to start my senior year in college. My main reason at that time for trying to start my senior year: there was a language attainment exam offered right at the beginning of the semester. If I could pass that language attainment exam, then one of the hurdles to graduation would be out of the way. I thought I could go and take that test and pass that hurdle. The question was, could I pass the test? I was not properly prepared for it. Dad finally said, "Sam, go ahead and start your senior year, take the test, and then withdraw and get your fees back. If you pass the test, I'll pay your travel expenses from Boston to Madison; if you fail the test, you pay them." It was a deal. I took the test, and I passed it. Then, because I didn't hear anything more from the Draft Board, I said, "Why withdraw? I'm already started." I wouldn't be able to get in 18 credits, but I could get 16. I was signed up for courses that were essential for getting into Seminary. They had sent me a list of college courses that they expected an entering student to have, so I got started with 5 courses. By this time, I was receiving

notices from both the Madison and Belmont draft boards, and the two boards got mixed up in their communications with one another. The Madison Draft Board gave me a different kind of a physical test than what the Belmont Draft Board wanted. All of this ate up time and resulted in me getting in my semester. So then the question came, do I start my second semester? I thought I had everything to gain and nothing to lose so I did. Soon after I began, the Draft Board sounded like it was ready to draft me. My parent's minister heard about this and he stormed the Draft Board and said, "You've got no business drafting that guy!" He said, "He's been accepted in Seminary. Seminary students receive deferments." He convinced the Draft Board to leave me alone. I finished college with a Bachelor of Science degree in the School of Education. Then I started Seminary.

**SM:** Because World War II was such a popular war in the sense that so many men felt that they had an obligation to serve, did you feel any guilt about not serving?

**SR:** In a sense, yes, but I registered as a conscientious objector, and so I would not have been active. I would have participated in some kind of alternative service.

**SM:** Could you elaborate on what was behind your application as a conscientious objector?

**SR:** I don't know if I could do this in a few words. I know that I'm not as close to my thinking on this subject as I was back then, but I simply felt that God had intended that this be a world of peace based upon love. While I could understand that there were forces of evil that threatened our world, and that some pretty strong measures had

to be taken to restrain such evil, I also felt that nobody wins a war. We've got to learn to find different solutions.

The more I see around me, the more I think about the orderly world of interdependence that I'm a small part of, and I think of this as happening not by chance but by God using an evolutionary process to manifest conditions facilitating interdependence. Serving others means living a life of interdependence, which is contrary to the thinking that war brings.

I think the thing that probably affects me most deeply is something that's very hard to put into words, Sumner, but I'd like to think and hope that when the final curtain comes down for me, I will hear some divine voice say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

**SM:** Have you ever found your interests in the church and birding to be at odds with one another?

**SR:** I have always tried to put the church career first. To do this through the years when we had WSO conventions that would last a whole weekend, I would stay through a Saturday night banquet and leave for home about 10:00 or 10:30. I might not get home until three or so the next morning and catch a few winks, but I would always be in my place in the pulpit on Sunday morning. I did not miss what I would call my primary responsibility in order to enjoy some bird occasions. And if I had to choose between something that I was expected to do with the church and going to chase a rare bird that had just been spotted, I would put the church first. I think I've been consistent in that all through my ministry.

My feeling in all of the parishes that I have served is that in the first few years I work to strengthen the church

and help the lives of individuals. I find for a while that I am successful in reaching new people, but after a while, this tends to level off because the people who are going to respond to my ministry probably have already responded. By and large, it struck me that after about eight years in a parish, it became time to move, not because of any unpleasantness, but because I felt I accomplished most of what I was going to accomplish and that my time could be spent better in a new situation. My replacement might reach people whom I hadn't reached, and so I thought that change every few years was mutually beneficial. And so it turned out that I moved about every eight or nine years.

Today, although retired, I still think that there are church responsibilities I can handle. I have to be delicate about it because I don't want to interfere with the work of our minister in our church. I don't want to present myself as competing with our present minister. I want to be a pew sitter, and I think there are lots of things that pew sitters can do. So I keep on with various kinds of church activities.

In terms of bird work, I think I still can be helpful in some ongoing projects. If I have a chance to promote International Migratory Bird Day, I've tried to do it. I've tried to do something with the Breeding Bird Atlas project, but I feel that I'm not going to improve my skills in bird identification now because my hearing is gradually deteriorating. I think my eyes are a little bit less reliable than they were just a few years ago. Maybe I can still do some kind of original work in analyzing data and presenting some important things. But I don't know that there are many new things for me to try.

Shirley, by the way, has been a great partner throughout all these years. She has her interests, and these are somewhat different from mine. We've learned how to encourage each other in exploring our own interests. We like to talk about things and share them, but any time I go on a field trip, she would probably prefer to stay home. If we're traveling together, she always has a book with her, so that if I stop and see some birds, she'll read her book, while I look at the birds.

Shirley is very much into genealogy, and I have had considerable interest in genealogy, too. Sometimes we go on trips and go to cemeteries and look up stones where some of our ancestors were buried; we've done things like that together. Musically, we've been part of a bell choir. Three of the six people in it are Shirley, our daughter Betsy, and me. I had to give up singing in choir because I don't sustain my breath well enough, but we sang in choirs together for a long, long time, and our church activities have really been some of the main things that we've done together.

**SM:** What is the secret to your successful marriage?

**SR:** The fact that we've been in love with each other is a very natural answer to that. But I would point out as I have pointed out to a great many couples, it's one thing to love each other in a face-to-face relationship, and it's much more important to develop a feeling that you love each other because you share the same objectives in life. You have the same hopes and dreams. I think Shirley and I have done that right from the word go. We sensed that we had common objectives and aims in life so that we could say face-to-face, yes, I love you, but more importantly

we can say that we love the same goals in life; and we're going to walk together hand-in-hand, arm-in-arm, and heart-in-heart toward these. Inevitably, the time is going to come when one of us is gone. But if you have that sense of direction in life, life doesn't stop when you lose your partner. You continue on toward your life goal. So we discuss this very much with couples that I have married, and we have, Shirley and I, started out that way and we're still doing it.

**SM:** You mentioned sharing the same life's goal. What is that goal?

**SR:** Serving God. Trying to practice in this world the principles of love that we think ought to be universal.

**SM:** You just had your 75th birthday. You recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of your ordination. As you think about these two events, which are very important, how do you view them, and what sort of feeling do you have?

**SR:** I guess I'd say that they're milestones that encourage you to look back and remember some of the things that occurred in the years before. I do derive enjoyment from remembering things, but I try not to make too much of them because I'm still much more interested in what lies ahead in the future. I had occasion to say this at the 50th anniversary of my ordination. I was expected to say something about what I was feeling at the moment, and I said that I enjoy looking back on things, but my main focus is still on the future. I think that's the way we ought to live our lives.

In March 1997, the University of Wisconsin Press turned to Sam to help revise Owen Gromme's *Birds of Wisconsin*, which has been unavailable since late 1990. Sam was charged with revising

the range maps, time lines indicating when a species is present, and descriptions of status: "Everything on each page that faces the bird paintings." He also wrote a new introduction to the book. The most challenging aspect, however, was making needed changes to bird nomenclature:

"When Gromme began his work in 1941, the fourth edition of the *AOU* [American Ornithologists' Union] *Check-List of North American Birds* was in vogue," he recalled. "By the time he completed his work in 1963, the fifth edition was out. Since then, the sixth edition of the *Check-List* appeared in 1983, with supplements printed subsequently. I found that several bird names—both common and scientific—had to be changed in Gromme's book."

Relying on his *Wisconsin Birdlife* and *Passenger Pigeon* issues, Sam completed the project before the September 1997 deadline. The updated and revised book is scheduled to appear in book stores before the end of 1998. "The re-issue of Gromme's book gives me great pleasure," he said. "I'm quite thrilled that a whole new generation of birders will have access to it."

Approaching the new millennium, Sam continues to plan birding trips across the state, write articles for *The Country Today*, participate in the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas Project and in DNR projects, such as the statewide Black Tern survey, guest lecture at various conservation meetings, counsel and inspire aspiring ornithologists, and, of course, when invited, deliver rousing church sermons to the enthralled faithful.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### Appendix A. Publications by Samuel D. Robbins, Jr.

#### Books/booklets

- 1942. *Wisconsin birds—checklist with migration graphs*. Wis. Soc. Ornithol., Madison, 36pp. (with N.R. Barger, E.E. Bussewitz, E.L. Loyster, and W.E. Scott); 1st rev. ed. 1950 (with N.R. Barger and R.H. Lound); 2nd rev. ed. 1960 (with N.R. Barger and R.H. Lound); 3rd rev. ed. 1975 (with N.R. Barger and R.H. Lound); 4th rev. ed. 1988 (with N.R. Barger and S.A. Temple).
- 1961. ed. *Wisconsin's favorite bird haunts*. Wis. Soc. Ornithol., Madison 77pp.
- 1988. *Best of the nest*. Eau Claire Press Co. 77pp.
- 1991. *Wisconsin birdlife: population and distribution, past and present*. Univ. Wis. Press, Madison. 702pp.

#### Passenger Pigeon Articles

- 1942. Christmas bird counts near Madison, Wisconsin. PP 4(3):79–81
- 1943. A review of Wisconsin's bird-life in 1942. PP 5(1):1–5



1946. Reminiscences of Wisconsin birds. PP 8(3):78–83.
- 1947a. 1946 in review. PP 9(2):48–54.
- 1947b. The 1947 nesting season. PP 9(4):133–137.
1948. 1947 in review. PP 10(2):69–77.
- 1949a. The 1948 nesting season. PP 11(1):21–28.
- 1949b. 1948 in review. PP 11(2):66–72.
- 1950a. 1949 in review. PP 12(2):58–63.
- 1950b. Three rare stragglers in Wisconsin. PP 12(4):152–155.
1951. 1950 in review. PP 13(2):70–74.
1953. How to keep field notes. PP 15(1):23–27.
- 1956a. A glimpse of Superior-land (with S.T. Robbins). PP 18(2):66–73.
- 1956b. Black rail sight records. PP 18(4):171.
1957. Spraying must be controlled! PP 19(4):147–153.
1958. Another glimpse of Superior-land. PP 20(4):162–167.
- 1959a. Fun with fall warblers. PP 21(2):57–65.
- 1959b. A Ruff in Wisconsin. PP 21(2):73–74.
- 1960a. 1959 in review. PP 22(3):133–139.
- 1960b. Another February “Christmas Count.” PP 22(3):142–146.
1961. The 1961 summer bird count. PP 23(2):52–60.
1962. 1960 in review. PP 24(3):69–79.
1963. The 1962 summer bird count. PP 25(3):91–102.
- 1964a. Ornithological progress in Wisconsin, 1939–1963. PP 26(1):3–12.
- 1964b. The Groove-billed Ani in Wisconsin. PP 26(1):26–28.
- 1964c. The 1963 summer bird count. PP 26(2):71–83.
1966. Wisconsin’s summer bird count: 1961–1965. PP 28(2):47–62.
1968. Shorebirds deluxe. PP 30(1):31–32.
1969. New light on the LeConte’s Sparrow. PP 31(3):267–274.
1970. Extreme arrival and departure dates. PP 32(3):83–137.
1971. Wisconsin breeding bird survey: 1966–1970. PP 33(3): 115–136.
1972. A Curve-billed Thrasher visits Buffalo City. PP 34(1):47–49.
1973. New light on the Cape May Warbler. PP 35(4):159–161.
- 1974a. New light on the Connecticut Warbler. PP 36(3):110–115.
- 1974b. The Willow and Alder Flycatchers in Wisconsin: A preliminary description of summer range. PP 36(4):147–152.
1977. The breeding bird survey in Wisconsin, 1966–1975. PP 39(2):225–247.
1982. Wisconsin’s breeding bird survey results: 1966–1980. PP 44(3):97–121.
1984. Five years with the records committee. PP 46(4):129–133.
1986. Northern woodpeckers visit Taylor County. PP 48(3):122–124.
1987. Only God can make a bird. PP 49(1):67–68.
1988. Some unanswered questions about Wisconsin birdlife. PP 50(3):187–190.
1989. WSO: the first fifty years. PP 51(1):7–17.
1995. BBS equals “Beleaguered bobolinks and sparrows.” PP 57(2):67–75.
1996. The breeding bird survey in Wisconsin: 1966–1991. (with D.W. Sample, P.W. Rasmussen. and M.J. Mossman). PP 58(2):81–179.

Additional *Passenger Pigeon* Contributions

Obituaries, book reviews, and paragraphs for “By the Wayside.”

Newspaper Articles

1977–present. Weekly column: “From the Robbins Nest” in *The Country Today*.

Magazine Editing

- 1946–1951. Associate editor, *The Passenger Pigeon* (included compilation of material for seasonal field notes, “By the Wayside” column, Christmas bird counts, and May Day counts).
- 1953–1959. Editor, *The Passenger Pigeon*.
- 1960–1969. Associate Editor, *The Passenger Pigeon*.
- ?–1970. Compiler for the Western Great Lakes Region for *Audubon Field Notes*.

Appendix B. "Still Singing." by Sam Robbins. (Reprinted with permission from *The Country Today*)

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This is not one of my happiest days. Earthly life has just ended for one of my most beloved parishioners: 15-year old Sheila, retarded and crippled since birth, denied many of life's experiences that the rest of us take for granted, yet both a giver and receiver of happiness.

Earthly life is ebbing for a second parishioner, lying comatose in the local hospital. When I went to see her this morning, what should I find near the door outside but a dead hermit thrush.

There was no scratch, drop of blood or other sign of injury. Was he careless, guilty of "inattentive driving" when he slammed into a brick wall? Did he mistake reflections in a window for open air? Was he frantically trying to escape a pursuing predator when the tragedy occurred? Had something gone wrong with his internal guidance system?

Statistically speaking, one can chalk this up to one of many hazards birds must face in their migratory journeys. My guess is that this thrush spent the summer somewhere in western Ontario and was headed for wintering territory in Louisiana or Texas. He and his buddies probably crossed many miles of open water while passing over Lake Superior.

If a bird tries this without having stored up a large supply of fatty tissue to sustain itself, a watery grave is likely. If a bird attempts to fly in a storm, a sudden gust of wind might trigger a fatal collision.

A bush in a strange area might seem to offer suitable nighttime shelter, but perhaps it is a favorite hiding place for a prowling cat. If the bird is flying on a cloudy night, the steel finger of a tall television tower may bring the journey to a sudden, untimely end.

Dozens of other hazards can be named. Statisticians tell us that up to 80 percent of the passerines that fledge in field and forest one summer will not live to see their first birthday. Statisticians tell us the average bird that survives the difficult first year will not live beyond the age of five.

But when I looked upon that little bundle of feathers this morning, I wasn't interested in statistics. Under other circumstances, I might have spread the feathers and marveled anew over the strange combination of barbs, barbules and barbicels that hold a feather together and make flight possible. Or I might have remembered the study made years ago that revealed that the average number of feathers on a hermit thrush is approximately 1,850.

When asked which is my favorite bird song, I vote first for the rollicking winter wren. The hermit thrush is a not-too-distant second.

My eyes were moist when I thought about that song and gazed near my feet at the bird that would never get to sing again.

So now I am playing a recording of that song to myself as I write. I really don't need to. I've heard it so many times in years gone by that it has etched itself indelibly in my brain at both conscious and unconscious levels.

My first visit to the summer home of the hermit was in the foothills of the White Mountains in New Hampshire when I was 5 years old. Perhaps the indel-

ible etching began back then. For there we could stand by the shore of the lake in front of the cottage and hear thrushes sing from the woodlands across the lake. By the time I was 15, I had visited this spot several times and learned to look forward especially to sunset, for it was then more than any other time of the day that the thrush concerts were offered.

There were three kinds of thrushes—veeries, wood and hermit thrushes—all lovely and melodic in their own way. Somehow the hermit became my favorite.

I gazed at the dead thrush, and yet I heard a song. I thought of Sheila, and I heard a voice. Where does memory leave off and continued presence begin? Can they be separated? These are the lines I shall read at Sheila's funeral tomorrow:

*Alas, sweet thrush, how motionless you lie,  
How soft the speckled feathers of your breast,  
Immaculate your reddish tail is dressed;  
You've wandered far from home of last July.  
How I loved your evening song as dark drew nigh;  
Your voice oft ushered in my day's-end rest;  
Your trills brought peace, the thrills of heaven blessed,  
But now so still! Dear thrush, you had to die?  
I looked, I felt, I listened. And then I heard!  
From deep within I still catch your whispers soft;  
No longer are you merely a lifeless bird;  
Though wings are stilled, your spirit flies aloft.  
A new dimension dawns upon my soul;  
Your presence now is part of my living whole!*

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"Alert," (Great Horned Owl), by *David Kuecherer*

# The 1997 Wisconsin Christmas Bird Counts

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*The 1997 Christmas bird count will not soon be forgotten. Unseasonably warm weather before and during the count period resulted in a record 153 species and such first-time Christmas count rarities as Pacific Loon, Mew Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull and Northern Waterthrush.*

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*by William L. Hilsenhoff*

The 1997 Wisconsin Christmas bird counts produced an unusual number of species that are rarely found on Christmas counts, resulting in a record 153 species being found statewide. This most likely was the result of very mild temperatures in late November and throughout December, which caused most lakes to remain open, enticed many migrants to linger in Wisconsin, and provided excellent conditions for making the counts. There was little or no snow throughout the state to force birds to feeders and the sides of roads, streams, and lakes, but this did not seem to matter. Most of the common species occurred in about normal numbers, except for migrant waterfowl, which remained in unusually high numbers because of all the open water. Prior to 1994, the most species found on a Wisconsin Christmas count was 139 (1987 and 1993), but that record was shattered in 1994 when 147 species were reported. The 153 species found this year will be difficult to exceed in future years, but

with an ever-increasing number of well-qualified observers and increased participation, I believe that this record will also be broken when there again is warm weather preceding the count period and favorable weather during the count period.

There were many unusual sightings that highlight the 1997 counts. Seen for the first time on a Christmas count in Wisconsin were a Pacific Loon at Green Lake, a Mew Gull at Milwaukee, and a Lesser Black-backed Gull and Northern Waterthrush at Madison. An Orange-crowned Warbler at Montello and a Swainson's Thrush at Milwaukee are only the second Christmas count records for these species. Found for the third time were a White Pelican at Lake Geneva and a King Rail at Poynette. Two Eastern Phoebees were seen at Milwaukee (fourth record) and Barrow's Goldeneyes were observed at Gurney and Milwaukee (fifth record). Three Spruce Grouse seen at Phelps and a Gyrfalcon at Appleton were the sixth records for these species. Seen for



the eighth time were Trumpeter Swans on three counts, a Lincoln's Sparrow at Bridgeport, and a Baltimore Oriole at Appleton. Other rarities included a Sandhill Crane at Montello and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Appleton (ninth records); a Black Scoter at Milwaukee; Peregrine Falcons at Green Bay, Milwaukee, and Hales Corners; and Marsh Wrens at Milwaukee and Madison (tenth records).

#### LOCATION AND DETAILS OF THE COUNTS

Details of the weather and participation on each count are reported in Table 1. Weather during the count period was generally ideal, except for a lack of snow to force birds to feeders, roadsides, and areas of open water. The large amount of open water was very attractive to waterfowl, and greatly enhanced their numbers on many counts. The number of counts (90), number of field observers (1,240), number of counts with 10+ field observers (46), number of party hours (3,654), and hours listening for owls (186) were all records, which along with the ideal weather probably contributed to the record number of species that were found. There were new counts at Cassville, Minoqua, Norske, Seymour, Spooner, and Warrens. The latter was not compiled because it included only 1.5 party hours of field observation. Counts at Grantsburg, La Farge, Nelson, Pensaukee, and Stevens Point, which were not included last year for various reasons, were welcomed additions this year. Reports of counts taken last year and not received this year included those at Burlington, Ephraim, Medford, Milton, and Plainfield.

The location of each count is shown in Figure 1. Counts are numbered in groups from north to south and west to east. An alphabetical listing of counts follows and includes the count number (Figure 1); the location of the count center; and the name, address, and telephone number of the compiler. Data from counts that include areas in other states are only for species and participation in Wisconsin.

**Appleton** (48); Jct. Hwys. 47 and 125; John Shillinglaw, 1952 Palisades Dr., Appleton, WI 54915; (920) 731-4222. **Arpin** (41); 0.5 mi. N Jct. Hwy. C and Oak Rd.; Dennis Seevers, 5969 Butter-nut Rd., Arpin, WI 54410; (715) 569-4260. **Ashland** (3); Jct. Hwys. 2 and 118; Dick Verch, 906 Ellis Ave., Ashland, WI 54806; (715) 682-5453. **Baraboo** (64); Jct. City View Rd. and Hwy. A; Kenneth Wood, 3971 Forshaug Rd., Black Earth, WI 53515; (608) 767-3343. **Bayfield** (2); T 50 N, R 5 W, S-22; Albert Roy, Jr., 906 Water St., Ashland, WI 54806; (715) 682-5334. **Beloit** (79); Jct. Tracy and Eau Claire Rd.; Brad Paulson, 15034 Carroll St., Broadhead, WI 53520; (608) 879-2647. **Black River Falls** (27); Jct. Hwys. H and 54; Judy Allen, W12866 River Rd., Black River Falls, WI 54615; (608) 488-4154. **Blanchardville** (67); 2.5 mi. SW of Blanchardville; David Willard, Bird Division, Field Museum of Natural History, Roosevelt Rd. at Lakeshore Dr., Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 922-9410 ext. 269 (work) or 663-3749. **Bridgeport** (61); Hwy. 18 bridge over Wisconsin R.; Al Shea, 2765 Northwynde Passage, Sun Prairie, WI 53590; (608) 825-6232. **Brussels** (33); Jct. Hwy. 57 and Stevenson Pier Rd.; Charlotte Lukes, 3962 Hillside Rd., Egg Harbor, WI 54209; (920) 823-2478. **Burlington** (not taken); Jct. Hwy A and Crossway Rd.;

Table 1. Details of the Counts.

Name of Count	Date	Sky	Snow Inches	Wind Dir.	Wind Mph.	Temp. °F		Observers		Parties	Party Hours	Owling Hours
						Low	High	Feeder	Field			
Appleton	12/20	Cloudy-Clear	0	NW	10			14	29	18	93.50	2.00
Arpin	12/20	Clear	3	SW	5	10	30	1	7	4	21.00	0.00
Ashland	12/20	Clear	tr.	SW	5-10	22	38	0	6	3	21.00	0.00
Baraboo	12/30	PCI-Cloudy	tr.	N	0-5	10	30	1	10	5	33.00	2.00
Bayfield	12/30	Snow-PCI	4	NW	8-15	18	22	7	8	3	25.00	0.00
Beloit	12/27	Clear	5		0-5	6	30	3	15	8	46.50	1.50
Black River Falls	12/20	Clear	tr.		0-5	16	28	12	5	3	15.25	1.17
Blanchardville	12/19	Cloudy-PCI	1	NW-SE	calm	27	42	0	7	4	30.25	3.50
Bridgeport	12/31	Clear	tr.	N	10-15	5	19	0	6	4	37.50	5.00
Brussels	12/27	Snow-Clear	tr.		10-15	17	25	8	10	5	32.50	0.50
Cable	12/20	Cloudy-PCI	1		calm	12	25	4	13	7	26.00	0.00
Caroline	1/3	Cloudy	tr.	SW-W	5-15	35	48	8	4	3	24.00	2.00
Cassville	12/28	Cloudy	tr.	SSW-S	10-15	24	32	2	8	5	29.33	1.83
Chippewa Falls	12/27	Partly Cloudy	0	W	0-5	12	26	0	14	6	42.00	0.00
Clam Lake	12/26	Cloudy-PCI	4	W-NW	5-15	16	28	0	6	3	26.50	1.75
Clyde	1/3	Cloudy	0	W-SW	5-10	39	48	0	14	5	31.00	0.00
Columbus	12/26	Clear-PCI	2		8-18	24	34	0	1	1	9.75	0.00
Cookville	1/1	Clear	4	SW	20	25	43	2	5	2	13.00	2.00
Durand	12/20	Clear	0	W	5-10	19	35	0	14	5	30.00	0.00
Fifield	12/21	Clear	3	S	0-10	4	30	23	6	4	27.00	0.00
Fond du Lac	12/21	Clear-PCI	2	N	0-5	10	34	0	10	4	33.00	5.00
Fort Atkinson	12/28	Cloudy	3	S	10	20	32	10	13	6	24.00	0.00
Fremont	12/29	Cloudy	tr.	NW	0-10	23	28	0	10	6	39.50	0.50
Gilman	12/28	Cloudy-Snow	2	SE	5	22	27	5	10	5	46.75	3.75
Grantsburg	12/20	Clear	1	W	5	7	31	0	12	7	36.75	0.00
Green Bay	12/20	Cloudy	tr.	N	5	20	34	21	26	15	90.00	9.00
Green Lake	1/3	Cloudy	tr.	SW-N	5-15	35	48	1	11	4	17.50	2.00
Gurney	12/27	Partly Cloudy	8	SSW	0-10	4	21	0	8	5	30.00	0.00
Hales Corners	12/21	Mostly Cloudy	1		calm	16	30	3	27	10	39.50	0.33
Hartford	12/30	Cloudy	2	NW	0-10	17	24	0	13	6	68.25	1.75
Herbster	12/22	Cloudy	1		calm	23	27	7	9	4	28.50	0.00

(continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Name of Count	Date	Sky	Snow Inches	Wind Dir.	Wind Mph.	Temp. °F		Observers		Parties	Party Hours	Owing Hours
						Low	High	Feeder	Field			
Holcombe	12/30	Snow	1	E	5-10	19	25	0	10	6	38.80	0.00
Horicon Marsh	12/20	Cloudy-PCI	1	W-SW	0-10	30	34	1	7	6	32.00	0.00
Hudson	1/1	Clear-PCI	tr.	SW	9	22	42	0	9	4	22.75	0.00
Kenosha	12/21	PCI-Cloudy	1	N	5	29	36	0	2	1	11.00	0.00
Kettle Moraine	12/27	PCI-Clear	2	W-SW	0-5	10	18	1	5	4	31.75	0.50
Kewaunee	1/3	Cloudy	0	WSW	12-20	35	51	1	24	9	53.00	0.00
Kickapoo Valley	12/21	Clear-Cloudy	2	N	5-7	11	28	0	6	4	25.00	1.00
LaCrosse	12/20	Cloudy-PCI	1	NW-WNW	1-10	23	34	3	26	11	64.00	0.50
Lake Geneva	1/3	Cloudy-Mist	0	SSW-E	10-15	42	53	9	30	15	75.00	11.50
Lakewood	12/30	Cloudy	3	NW	10-15	16	24	0	1	1	8.75	0.00
Luck	12/27	Clear-Cloudy	3		0-20	21	33	7	16	9	31.00	0.00
Madison	12/20	Mostly Cloudy	0	SSW	10-14	15	32	18	78	35	240.50	33.70
Manitowish Waters	12/20	Partly Cloudy	3	var.	0-3	15	25	10	6	4	26.00	1.00
Merrill	12/20	Clear	2	NW-SW	3-8	6	31	1	3	2	15.00	0.00
Milwaukee	12/20	MCI-Cloudy	2	N	7-15	24	35	5	51	17	92.00	1.50
Minoqua	12/27	Cloudy	3		0-10	4	23	0	3	2	14.25	0.00
Montello	12/22	Cloudy-Snow	0	NE-NW	10	27	30	9	9	5	38.50	4.00
Mount Horeb	12/28	Cloudy	3	S	5-10	20	31	26	48	23	116.00	4.00
New Franklin	12/21	Clear-PCI	0	NW-NE	4-5	13	35	27	5	2	13.00	0.00
New Richmond	12/20	Clear	tr.	S	0-8	18	30	1	6	3	16.50	0.00
Norske	12/29	Cloudy	tr.		0-5	18	30	1	3	3	24.00	4.00
Oconomowoc	12/21	Cloudy-MCI	tr.	SSW	0-5	18	36	0	18	7	53.00	3.00
Oshkosh	12/20	Cloudy-Clear	tr.	N	6-8	34	36	2	17	11	52.50	0.00
Oxbo	12/20	Clear	1		calm	22	39	3	16	5	7.00	2.00
Pensaukee	12/19	Clear-Cloudy	tr.	SW	0-5	29	41	0	4	2	18.50	2.00
Peshigo	12/20	Cloudy	tr.	NNE	5	31	32	0	6	3	24.50	1.00
Phelps	12/20	Cloudy-PCI	3	W-NW	3-3	20	25	2	8	4	25.00	0.50
Platteville	12/21	Cloudy	1		calm	20	27	2	8	4	13.00	1.00
Plymouth	12/20	Cloudy	1	SW	15	30	32	3	14	6	29.00	5.00
Poynette	1/3	Foggy-Cloudy	0	N	0-10	30	50	17	20	11	73.25	4.25
Racine	1/3	Rain	0			40	52	4	15	5	38.00	0.00



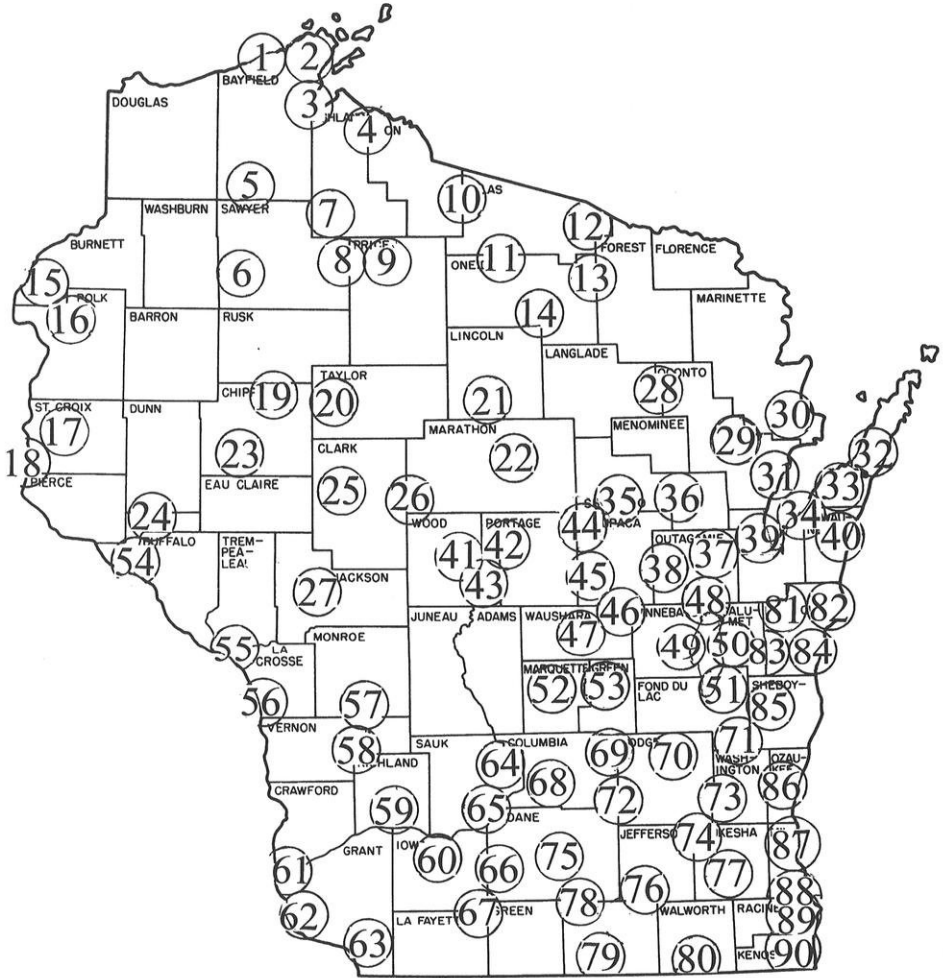


Figure 1. Locations of the 1997 Wisconsin Christmas bird counts.

Gerald DeBoer, 15935 2 Mile Rd., Franksville, WI 53126; (414) 835-4642. **Cable** (5); Cable; Connie Finch, P.O. Box 416, Cable, WI 54821; (715) 798-3890. **Caroline** (35); 2 miles W of Caroline; Mark Peterson, Box 53, Caroline, WI 54928; (715) 754-2661. **Cassville** (62); Jct. Garden Prairie Rd. and Muskellunge Rd.; William Mueller, 1242 S. 45th St., Milwaukee, WI 53214; (414) 643-7279. **Chippewa Falls** (23);

Jct. Hwys. 178 and S; C.A. Kemper, 733 Maple St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729; (715) 723 3815. **Clam Lake** (7); 7 miles SE of Clam Lake; Keith Merkel, 11722 Robin Rd., Marshfield, WI 54449; (715) 384-2383. **Clyde** (60); Jct. Hwy. ZZ and Weaver Rd.; Steven Greb, 1714 Labrador Rd., Oregon, WI 53575; 608) 221-6362. **Columbus** (72); Jct. Johnson and Jahnke Sts.; Larry Michael, 116 S. Nebraska St., Horicon, WI 53032;



- (920) 485-2936. **Cooksville** (78); Cooksville; David and Anna Marie Huset, 242 W. Church St., Evansville, WI 53536; (608) 882-5648. **Durand** (24); Jct. Hwys. 25 and DD 3 miles N of Durand; C.A. Kemper, 733 Maple St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729; (715) 723-3815. **Ephraim** (no report); Hwy. A 3 miles S of Jct. with Hwy 42; Paul and Kathleen Regnier, P.O. Box 152, Baileys Harbor, WI 54202; (414) 839-2802 or 868-2690. **Fifield** (9); Fifield Post Office; Thomas Nicholls, 2160 Draper Ave., Roseville, MN 55113; (612) 636-2592. **Fond du Lac** (51); Jct. Tower and Cody Roads; Jeff Baughman, W8985 Hwy. SS, Adell, WI 53001; (414) 626-4713. **Fort Atkinson** (76); Jct. S. Main St. and Hackbarth Ave.; Richard Wanie, W5920 Lee Dr., Fort Atkinson, WI 53538; (920) 563-6274. **Fremont** (46); Jct. Hwys. I and HH 4 miles SW of Fremont; Daryl Tessen, 3118 N. Oneida St., Appleton, WI 54911; (414) 735-9903. **Gilman** (20); 1 mile W of Miller Dam; Janice Luepke, B-894 Eau Pleine Rd., Spencer, WI 54479; (715) 659-3910. **Grantsburg** (15); Jct. Hwys. 70 and 48; Dennis Allaman, 506 W. St. George, Grantsburg, WI 54840; (715) 463-2366. **Green Bay** (39); Jct. Allouez and S. Webster Avenues; John Jacobs, Neville Public Museum, 210 Museum Pl., Green Bay, WI 54303; (920) 448-4460. **Green Lake** (53); Jct. Hwy. J and Swamp Rd.; Thomas Schultz, N6104 Honeysuckle Lane, Green Lake, WI 54941; (920) 294-3021. **Gurney** (4); Gurney; Joan Elias, HCR 780, Saxon, WI 54559; (715) 893-2358. **Hales Corners** (88); Jct. 27th St. and Rawson Ave., (Milwaukee Co. only); Mariette Nowak, Wehr Nature Center, 9701 W. College Ave., Franklin, WI 53123; (414) 524-8550. **Hartford** (73); Jct. Hwys. 60 and 83; Judy Haseleu, 337 W. State St., Hartford, WI 53027; (414) 673-5865. **Herbster** (1); Hwy. 13, 1 mile west of Herbster; Phyllis Johnson, P.O. Box 303, Cornucopia, WI 54827; (715) 742-3960. **Holcombe** (19); Chippewa-Rusk county line 1 mile E of Hwy. 27; C.A. Kemper, 733 Maple St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729; (715) 723-3815. **Horicon Marsh** (70); Jct. Main Ditch and Main Dike in Refuge; Bill Volkert, DNR, N7725 Hwy. 28, Horicon, WI 53032; (920) 387-7877. **Hudson** (18); Afton, MN; Helen Lien, 5148 29th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55417; (612) 729-5982. **Kenosha** (90); Jct. Hwys. 158 and HH (Kenosha Co. only); Ron Hoffmann, Box 886, Kenosha, WI 53141; (414) 654-5854. **Kettle Moraine** (71); Hwy. DD, W of Auburn Lake; Bill Volkert, W996 Birchwood Dr., Campbellsport, WI 53010; (920) 387-7877. **Kewaunee** (40); Jct. Hwys. 42 and D; William Mueller, 1242 S. 45 St., Milwaukee, WI 53214; (414) 643-7279. **Kickapoo Valley** (57); Jct. Hwys. T and 131; Eric Epstein, Rt. 2, Box 455, Norwalk, WI 54648; (608) 823-7837. **LaCrosse** (56); LaCrosse Courthouse; Fred Leshner, 509 Winona St., LaCrosse, WI 54603; (608) 783-1149. **LaFarge** (58); Jct. Hwys. 131 and 82; Dan Hazlett, P.O. Box 264, LaFarge, WI 54639. **Lake Geneva** (80); Interlaken Resort, Hwy. 50; Patricia Parsons, N3241 North Williams St., Lake Geneva, WI 53147; (414) 248-1232. **Lakewood** (28); Jct. Hwys. T and FR 2117; John Woodcock, 1718 Cedar Grove Dr., Apt. 3A, Manitowoc, WI 54220; (920) 684-0447. **Luck** (16); Jct. Roads 180th St. and 180th Ave. in Polk Co.; John Nygren, 920 3rd Ave., Luck, WI 54853; (715) 472-2508. **Madison** (75); State Capitol; Carol Anderson and Tony Kalenic, 4638 Bonner Lane, Madison, WI 53704; (608) 249-8836.

**Manitowish Waters** (10); Jct. Hwy. 51 and Hwy. W; John Bates, Hwy. 47, #2263, Mercer, WI 54547; (715) 476-2828. **Medford** (no report); 1.5 mi. E and 0.5 mi. N of Jct. Hwys. 13 and M east; Michael Riegert, N763 Oriole Dr., Stetsonville, WI 54480; (715) 678-2627. **Merrill** (21); Jct. South End Rd. and Hwy. 107; Alan Rusch, 3342 Westview Lane, Madison, WI 53713; (608) 274-1224. **Milton** (no report); Milton; Katy Hess, P.O. Box 81, Milton, WI 53563; (608) 868-2972. **Milwaukee** (87); Jct. Port Washington Rd. and Hampton Ave.; Marilyn Bontly and Jean Streika, Schlitz Audubon Center, 1111 E. Brown Deer Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53217; (414) 351-4200. **Minoqua** (11); Jct. Hwy 51 and Hwy 70 West; Paul Bowman, Jr., 9020 Hwy J, Woodruff, WI 54568; (715) 356-7542. **Montello** (52); Harrisville; Daryl Christensen, N6053 Hwy. Y, Montello, WI 53949; (608) 296-3068. **Mount Horeb** (66); Mount Horeb; Earl Brandt, 4670 Cedar Mill La., Black Earth, WI 53515; (608) 767-3030. **Nelson** (54); 1 mile S of Jct. Hwys. I and D; C.A. Kemper, 733 Maple St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729; (715) 723-3815. **New Franken** (34); Jct. Hwys. P and SS; Ed Houston, 2818 Sugarbush Ct., Green Bay, WI 54301; (920) 432-2999. **New Richmond** (17); 2 miles E of Boardman; Joseph Merchak, 210 Ilwaco Rd., River Falls, WI 54022; (715) 425-1169. **Norske** (44); 1 mile E of Jct. Hwy P and Rustad Rd.; Janet Avis Hewitt, E1047 Paulson Rd., Iola, WI 54945; (715) 445-2489. **Oconomowoc** (74); Hwy 67, 2 miles N of Oconomowoc; Alex Kailing, W330 N8275 W. Shore Dr., Hartland, WI 53029; (414) 966-1072. **Oshkosh** (49); Jct. Hwys. 21 and 41; Thomas Ziebell, 1322 Ceape Ave., Oshkosh, WI 54901; (414) 235-0326. **Oxbo** (8); Jct. Hwys.

EE and 70; Maybelle Hardy, 15210 Pine Creek Rd., Park Falls, WI 54552; (715) 762-3178. **Pensaukee** (31); Pensaukee; Thomas Erdman, 4093 Hwy. S, Route 2, Oconto, WI 54153; (920) 834-3416. **Peshtigo** (30); Harmony Corners; Leo Feller, 530 Rainbow Circle, Peshtigo, WI 54157; (715) 582-3373. **Phelps** (12); Jct. FR 2199 and FR 2533, 2 miles SW of Phelps; Bill Reardon, 2547 Hwy. 70 E, Eagle River, WI 54521; (715) 479-8055. **Plainfield** (no report); Jct. Hwy. BB and 3rd Ave. NW of Almond; Don Nussbaum, 1544 Ames St., Neenah, WI 54956; (414) 729-9137. **Platteville** (63); Cornelia; Tom Goltry, 660 Pioneer Rd., Platteville, WI 53818; (608) 348-9666. **Plymouth** (85); Jct. Hwys. 23 and Country Aire Rd.; Harold Koopman, 415 Caroline St., Plymouth, WI 53073; (414) 892-8101. **Poynette** (68); Jct. Hwys. 51 and CS; Mark and Sue Martin, Goose Pond Sanctuary, W7468 Prairie Lane, Arlington, WI 53911; (608) 635-4160. **Racine** (89); Hwy. H 0.5 miles S of Hwy. K (Racine Co. only); Gerald DeBoer, 15935 2 Mile Rd., Franksville, WI 53126; (414) 835-4642. **Randolph** (69); Hwy P midway between Cambria and Randolph; Larry Michael, 116 S. Nebraska St., Horicon, WI 53032; (920) 485-2936. **Rhineland** (14); Rhineland; Ced Vig, 919 Birch Bend, Rhineland, WI 54017; (715) 362-3047. **Richland Center** (59); Jct. Hwys. O and TB SE of Richland Center; Robert Hirschy, University of Wisconsin Center-Richland, 1200 Hwy. 14 West, Richland Center, WI 53581; (608) 647-6186. **Riveredge** (86); Jct. Hwy. 33 and Lakeland School Rd.; Mary Hollebeck and John Rank, c/o Riveredge Nature Center, P.O. Box 26, Newburg, WI 53060; (414) 375-2715. **Sauk City** (65); 2.5 miles SE of Witwen; Becky Isenring, 6869 Taylor

Road, Sauk City, WI 53583; (608) 643-6906. **Seymour** (37); Jct. Hwy. C and Culbertson Rd.; Daryl Tessen, 3118 N. Oneida, Appleton, WI 54911; (920) 735-9903. **Shawano** (36); 3 miles N of Lunds; Mark Peterson, Box 53, Caroline, WI 54928; (715) 754-2661. **Shioc-ton** (38); Jct. Hwys. M and 54; James Anderson, Mosquito Hill Nature Center, N3880 Rogers Rd., New London, WI 54961; (920) 779-6433. **Spencer** (26); Jct. Hwys. F and 153; Janice Luepke, B-894 Eau Pleine Rd., Spencer, WI 54479; (715) 659-3910. **Spooner** (6); Jct. Hwys. 63 and K; Mary Griedbach Cahow, 513 Dale St., Apt. #3, Spooner, WI 54801; (715) 635-2978. **Spruce** (29); 1.5 miles N of Spruce on Hwy. B; Jerry Smith, 6865 Fredrickson Road, Lena, WI 54139; (920) 829-6353. **Stevens Point** (42); Old Main Bldg., U.W.-Stevens Point; Nancy Stevenson, 1890 Red Pine Lane, Stevens Point, WI 54481; (715) 341-0084. **Stockbridge** (50); 3 miles SE of Stockbridge; Carroll Rudy, W3866 Hwy. H, Chilton, WI 53014; (920) 849-9021. **Sturgeon Bay** (32); Jct. Hwys. 57 and P; Charlotte Lukes, 3962 Hillside Rd., Egg Harbor, WI 54209; (920) 823-2478. **Three Lakes** (13); 6 miles E of Three Lakes; Bill Reardon, 2547 Hwy. 70 E, Eagle River, WI 54521; (715) 479-8055. **Trempealeau** (55); Jct. Hwy K and Fremont St., Trempealeau; Thomas Hunter, 11675 Jay St., P.O. Box 114, Trempealeau, WI 54661; (608) 534-6233. **Waukesha** (77); Jct. Hwy. D and Brookhill Rd.; Patrick Horn, 576W19840 Sunny Hill Dr., Muskego, WI 53150; (414) 679-1459. **Waupaca** (45); Jct. Hwy. 49 & Smokey Valley Rd.; Daryl Tessen, 3118 N. Oneida St., Appleton, WI 54911; (920) 735-9903. **Wausau** (22); Jct. Grand Ave. and Thomas St.; Walter Tamminen,

1224 N 4th Ave., Wausau, WI 54401; (715) 675-7669. **Wautoma** (47); Mount Morris; Delbert Greenman, N4344 Hwy. W, Redgranite, WI 54970; (920) 787-3036. **Willard** (25); 1 mile E and 1.5 miles S of Willard; Janice Luepke, B-894 Eau Pleine Rd., Spencer, WI 54479; (715) 659-3910. **Wisconsin Rapids** (43); Wisconsin Rapids Airport; LaVonne and Dave Middleton, 210 Shorewood Ter., Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494; (715) 423-3242. **Woodland Dunes NW** (81); Menchalville; **NE** (82); Mishicot; **SW** (83); 3 miles W of St. Nazianz on Hwy. C; and **SE** (84); 2 mi. S of Newtonburg; all only in Manitowoc Co., as drawn on a map; Bernard Brouchoud, Woodland Dunes Nature Center, P.O. Box 2108, Manitowoc, WI 54221-2108; (920) 793-4007.

## RESULTS OF THE COUNTS

Results are reported in Tables 2-9. Common species are reported in Tables 2-8, with counts in similar areas of the state grouped together in each table. The number of individuals of each species is compared in Table 8 with the average for the previous 10 years, corrected for participation (total party hours). Numbers of uncommon and rare species are reported in Table 9, with counts for each species listed in the same order as in Tables 2-8. Undocumented reports of species for which documentation was requested were not compiled. Other reports of species were not included because documentation was inadequate or indicated the identification was in error, but, in general, documentation this year was very good and very few observations were not included because they lacked documentation. A major prob-

Table 2. Number of each species in northern Wisconsin found on 20 or more counts.

Species	Herbster 1	Bayfield 2	Ashland 3	Gurney 4	Cable 5	Spooner 6	Clam Lake 7	Oxbo 8	Fifield 9	Manitowish Waters 10	Minoqua 11	Phelps 12	Three Lakes 13	Rhine- lander 14
Canada Goose	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Black Duck	0	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	x	0	0	0
Mallard	0	10	41	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	10	0	0	40
Common Goldeneye	7	31	36	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Bufflehead	0	5	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hooded Merganser	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0
Common Merganser	0	74	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Bald Eagle	4	4	6	1	5	3	3	4	4	9	1	17	2	5
Northern Harrier	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sharp-shinned Hawk	0	0	0	0	x	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cooper's Hawk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red-tailed Hawk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rough-legged Hawk	1	1	4	1	0	1	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
American Kestrel	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ring-necked Pheasant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ruffed Grouse	8	4	0	6	32	6	7	34	22	17	6	15	10	2
Wild Turkey	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Coot	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ring-billed Gull	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Herring Gull	261	494	115	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rock Dove	0	0	52	60	0	144	0	0	62	0	25	20	0	21
Mourning Dove	0	22	13	x	0	18	0	3	60	0	0	3	17	88
Eastern Screech-Owl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Great Horned Owl	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	x	0	0	0	0
Barred Owl	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Belted Kingfisher	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red-headed Woodpecker	x	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red-bellied Woodpecker	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Downy Woodpecker	22	11	9	9	25	16	9	25	22	18	4	29	42	35

Hairy Woodpecker	8	7	3	8	29	10	1	25	28	16	8	16	17	32
Northern Flicker	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pileated Woodpecker	1	1	0	1	3	2	1	2	4	4	3	1	5	7
Horned Lark	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blue Jay	131	153	36	52	92	123	46	81	90	84	39	52	41	52
American Crow	35	32	86	11	86	142	52	18	123	110	13	52	17	27
Common Raven	32	36	24	100	48	14	111	34	25	60	20	48	23	17
Black-capped Chickadee	319	226	153	111	188	330	342	150	477	401	215	392	223	348
Tufted Titmouse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red-breasted Nuthatch	22	9	4	1	24	16	11	16	25	45	20	21	25	39
White-breasted Nuthatch	4	8	9	5	18	34	8	26	28	31	8	23	21	54
Brown Creeper	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	5	1	0	1	4	2
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	0	0	0	18	0	44	0	13	1	0	0	0	0
American Robin	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cedar Waxwing	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Shrike	1	2	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
European Starling	5	167	236	16	11	73	0	7	78	0	8	17	15	0
Northern Cardinal	0	x	7	0	2	9	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	2
American Tree Sparrow	0	0	0	0	13	45	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0
Song Sparrow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White-throated Sparrow	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Dark-eyed Junco	x	10	9	0	0	37	0	2	6	0	0	1	0	13
Snow Bunting	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	37	0	0	0	0	0
Pine Grosbeak	48	62	49	41	96	60	62	122	122	58	2	161	55	44
Purple Finch	x	0	0	0	16	4	0	10	0	1	0	0	0	3
House Finch	0	x	10	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Common Redpoll	12	56	71	37	84	186	41	198	163	149	5	68	11	125
Pine Siskin	8	0	2	0	17	x	0	40	12	0	2	0	0	1
American Goldfinch	0	38	6	0	20	30	1	40	45	3	1	12	5	28
Evening Grosbeak	52	161	34	65	40	12	0	9	51	37	0	86	28	183
House Sparrow	75	8	44	0	0	52	0	0	8	0	0	4	0	0
<b>Total Species</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>

x = Found within 3 days of the count day but not on the day of the count.



Table 3. Number of each species in northwest and north-central Wisconsin found on 20 or more counts.

Species	Grantsburg 15	Luck 16	New Richmond 17	Hudson 18	Holcombe 19	Gilman 20	Merrill 21	Wausau 22	Chippewa Falls 23	Durand 24	Willard 25	Spencer 26	Black River Falls 27
Canada Goose	1826	41	890	6050	0	0	0	8	436	0	0	0	0
American Black Duck	0	0	0	18	0	0	0	12	24	0	0	0	0
Mallard	23	0	405	698	2	0	54	613	854	45	0	0	18
Common Goldeneye	0	20	12	145	1	0	0	3	12	2	0	0	0
Bufflehead	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hooded Merganser	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Common Merganser	0	0	0	152	0	1	0	8	1	8	0	0	0
Bald Eagle	13	4	4	33	42	2	x	1	42	8	1	0	2
Northern Harrier	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0
Cooper's Hawk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
Red-tailed Hawk	0	1	8	12	5	2	0	9	16	32	20	25	5
Rough-legged Hawk	8	0	0	0	1	11	0	1	2	4	12	0	3
American Kestrel	0	x	2	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	3	0
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	3	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	2
Ruffed Grouse	10	3	4	1	10	19	x	7	1	0	11	6	4
Wild Turkey	23	16	1	5	0	0	0	21	0	26	0	0	110
American Coot	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ring-billed Gull	0	0	2	64	0	0	0	3	0	45	0	0	0
Herring Gull	0	0	0	165	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rock Dove	42	37	206	165	172	348	39	366	271	377	468	535	59
Mourning Dove	1	13	1	6	4	13	15	186	15	1	43	49	32
Eastern Screech-Owl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Great Horned Owl	0	x	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	2
Barred Owl	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Belted Kingfisher	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
Red-headed Woodpecker	0	x	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	2	0	0
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	10	3	9	4	0	0	6	11	13	11	8	14
Downy Woodpecker	16	9	9	29	28	37	3	36	40	34	37	51	26

Hairy Woodpecker	5	4	6	6	7	28	2	20	11	8	22	12	15
Northern Flicker	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	0
Pileated Woodpecker	7	7	1	2	1	4	0	9	1	4	2	0	0
Horned Lark	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	3	0
Blue Jay	74	78	41	21	137	174	4	73	127	117	177	113	87
American Crow	143	176	123	269	246	179	32	370	475	415	502	267	101
Common Raven	17	3	0	0	7	32	0	2	0	0	14	0	1
Black-capped Chickadee	154	169	76	199	332	697	49	621	361	201	589	421	153
Tufted Titmouse	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	2	0	0	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	8	15	4	0	4	10	3	28	12	3	10	10	16
White-breasted Nuthatch	31	50	14	40	35	59	7	49	48	27	78	48	46
Brown Creeper	1	0	0	2	0	2	0	5	4	4	0	0	0
Golden-crowned Kinglet	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	6	0	4	1	0
American Robin	0	0	45	12	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0
Cedar Waxwing	0	2	30	41	0	0	0	7	1	0	0	0	0
Northern Shrike	2	1	1	3	5	8	0	3	6	3	3	3	0
European Starling	23	60	819	322	452	295	49	524	487	482	698	709	109
Northern Cardinal	0	41	20	29	12	6	1	74	48	24	24	20	31
American Tree Sparrow	7	90	41	103	42	208	1	95	83	106	175	36	46
Song Sparrow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
White-throated Sparrow	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
Dark-eyed Junco	19	36	55	157	40	14	0	102	274	389	251	176	214
Snow Bunting	0	0	0	0	50	300	0	9	0	0	250	100	0
Pine Grosbeak	4	x	0	0	94	173	7	28	0	0	0	57	0
Purple Finch	0	12	9	3	0	0	0	5	0	0	2	6	17
House Finch	0	45	32	67	5	0	0	98	33	12	10	24	0
Common Redpoll	34	33	25	100	601	1184	26	104	4	21	327	748	1
Pine Siskin	15	55	20	35	10	0	0	21	38	21	0	0	0
American Goldfinch	30	16	74	64	44	17	12	200	170	72	206	58	219
Evening Grosbeak	0	5	0	0	10	142	0	5	0	0	24	0	0
House Sparrow	19	159	115	113	475	515	35	510	505	541	1326	1122	43
<b>Total Species</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>

x = Found within 3 days of the count day but not on the day of the count.



Hairy Woodpecker	2	15	15	10	60	22	25	12	13	2	18	44	6
Northern Flicker	0	x	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	1	0
Pileated Woodpecker	0	1	4	3	9	3	6	4	9	0	0	3	1
Horned Lark	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	44	1	0	0
Blue Jay	14	54	143	51	69	36	96	45	100	13	110	124	26
American Crow	36	358	280	93	480	355	47	219	164	26	209	329	566
Common Raven	8	6	28	3	17	5	1	2	5	0	0	0	0
Black-capped Chickadee	39	149	394	173	349	153	114	180	189	51	299	309	281
Tufted Titmouse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red-breasted Nuthatch	0	3	2	7	44	9	21	13	19	1	13	45	0
White-breasted Nuthatch	5	11	17	21	52	17	51	28	47	7	50	94	7
Brown Creeper	0	5	3	3	4	2	1	6	4	0	5	6	0
Golden-crowned Kinglet	5	8	2	0	1	3	0	4	1	0	2	3	0
American Robin	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	1	6	0
Cedar Waxwing	0	130	20	0	x	0	0	125	15	0	23	20	16
Northern Shrike	0	5	2	0	7	4	0	4	2	0	5	3	2
European Starling	16	292	1051	177	1343	828	269	354	1024	460	928	2130	2350
Northern Cardinal	0	10	24	13	78	37	45	38	35	13	58	138	20
American Tree Sparrow	0	278	71	135	28	76	36	36	138	2	592	179	83
Song Sparrow	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	10	1
White-throated Sparrow	0	0	0	1	0	x	1	2	2	1	0	2	0
Dark-eyed Junco	0	40	142	41	294	214	92	190	228	46	374	365	73
Snow Bunting	0	400	0	0	x	178	2	x	3	152	0	0	0
Pine Grosbeak	8	365	308	18	5	29	2	19	5	0	1	0	8
Purple Finch	0	1	0	4	45	15	28	0	9	0	0	16	20
House Finch	0	17	0	110	139	35	62	138	122	12	228	569	61
Common Redpoll	0	191	266	128	136	588	3	21	529	355	85	45	22
Pine Siskin	0	0	0	0	197	0	21	102	128	2	11	5	0
American Goldfinch	0	132	222	106	298	52	175	152	147	15	142	305	225
Evening Grosbeak	13	0	7	0	0	0	0	32	0	0	0	0	0
House Sparrow	0	345	341	209	209	518	236	170	176	470	838	1607	388
<b>Total Species</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>52</b>

x = Found within 3 days of the count day but not on the day of the count.

Table 5. Number of each species in east-central Wisconsin found on 20 or more counts.

Species	Arpin 41	Stevens Point 42	Wisconsin Rapids 43	Norske 44	Waupaca 45	Fremont 46	Wautoma 47	Appleton 48	Oshkosh 49	Stockbridge 50	Fond du Lac 51	Montello 52	Green Lake 53
Canada Goose	0	1	12	6	677	585	47	3818	490	30	1261	1956	60000
American Black Duck	0	4	4	0	24	8	18	62	6	0	18	10	0
Mallard	0	759	331	0	263	304	160	2472	1745	0	317	551	80
Common Goldeneye	0	172	219	0	0	0	0	448	227	0	0	5	110
Bufflehead	0	0	x	0	0	0	0	5	14	0	0	0	4
Hooded Merganser	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	6	2	0	0	x	3
Common Merganser	0	0	0	0	0	1638	0	725	2897	0	0	0	160
Bald Eagle	x	12	2	1	1	26	5	7	8	0	0	5	2
Northern Harrier	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	1	0
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	1	0	0	2	2	1	3	2	0	0	1	1
Cooper's Hawk	2	x	3	0	1	1	0	13	4	2	2	1	1
Red-tailed Hawk	36	15	8	x	12	46	25	106	31	21	28	25	10
Rough-legged Hawk	5	5	10	13	10	28	14	5	1	0	1	13	1
American Kestrel	3	2	1	1	2	20	1	63	25	3	14	1	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	3	0	1	0	1
Ruffed Grouse	13	6	9	2	0	3	2	0	0	0	20	x	4
Wild Turkey	43	25	111	148	212	49	228	0	0	54	1	586	31
American Coot	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	7	0	0	4	x
Ring-billed Gull	0	0	30	2	0	0	9	3	22	7	21	5	11
Herring Gull	0	0	33	0	0	460	7	1186	437	82	12	7	154
Rock Dove	347	456	209	137	261	747	155	2332	751	446	524	380	93
Mourning Dove	56	137	43	6	79	220	192	2105	508	37	159	11	50
Eastern Screech-Owl	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	2	0	4	1	0
Great Horned Owl	4	x	2	1	6	2	2	11	2	2	37	8	3
Barred Owl	1	0	1	2	1	1	2	3	0	0	2	3	1
Belted Kingfisher	0	0	0	x	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	x	0
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	0
Red-bellied Woodpecker	4	6	3	4	9	26	27	23	10	8	5	17	8
Downy Woodpecker	19	55	18	23	40	107	87	145	71	49	30	40	21

Hairy Woodpecker	11	18	12	14	14	39	39	39	11	12	10	11	12
Northern Flicker	0	x	1	0	1	7	2	9	2	0	5	3	1
Pileated Woodpecker	1	1	3	8	8	2	4	0	0	1	0	1	2
Horned Lark	2	0	0	x	0	500	0	0	1	14	8	0	x
Blue Jay	71	92	79	75	68	151	266	102	62	49	55	198	69
American Crow	289	478	459	148	336	450	855	693	168	95	270	384	104
Common Raven	2	x	0	2	5	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	0
Black-capped Chickadee	102	507	252	281	229	472	387	255	148	83	173	169	83
Tufted Titmouse	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Red-breasted Nuthatch	4	24	11	2	10	15	48	43	21	0	7	15	8
White-breasted Nuthatch	15	55	25	15	57	106	120	96	29	26	35	56	28
Brown Creeper	0	2	1	0	2	14	5	18	16	2	3	5	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	0	0	0	2	0	1	3	2	8	0	1	2	1
American Robin	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	41	1	0	0	0	14
Cedar Waxwing	0	10	0	38	9	46	0	91	0	0	6	17	42
Northern Shrike	4	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	0	0	1	4	1
European Starling	287	687	2	120	1100	1265	211	2124	2475	637	534	247	175
Northern Cardinal	23	37	28	24	27	104	132	186	45	26	40	71	20
American Tree Sparrow	54	64	34	46	87	367	5	66	264	61	198	98	129
Song Sparrow	0	x	0	1	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	0
White-throated Sparrow	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	13	3	1	0	0	0
Dark-eyed Junco	73	471	122	169	348	892	857	541	321	83	106	971	163
Snow Bunting	12	0	12	x	0	90	0	1	0	250	110	0	0
Pine Grosbeak	0	1	1	53	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Purple Finch	5	8	x	2	0	3	36	6	0	15	3	14	16
House Finch	3	117	63	10	30	264	47	592	303	24	42	76	12
Common Redpoll	40	263	64	59	2	11	50	60	0	x	32	x	0
Pine Siskin	0	16	0	2	12	83	39	65	58	0	14	42	1
American Goldfinch	75	200	131	119	139	614	412	276	69	35	101	209	72
Evening Grosbeak	0	0	1	7	0	0	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
House Sparrow	206	253	108	122	162	2454	106	1504	2063	601	583	141	114
<b>Total Species</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>56</b>

x = Found within 3 days of the count day but not on the day of the count.



Table 6. Number of each species in southwest Wisconsin found on 20 or more counts.

Species	Nelson 54	Trempea- leau 55	LaCrosse 56	Kickapoo Valley 57	La Farge 58	Richland Center 59	Clyde 60	Bridge- port 61	Cass- ville 62	Platte- ville 63	Baraboo 64	Sauk City 65	Mount Horeb 66	Blanchard- ville 67
Canada Goose	106	749	322	1	0	16	0	432	0	0	2003	428	0	0
American Black Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	9	0	0
Mallard	16	699	530	28	5	7	20	236	27	35	489	303	0	0
Common Goldeneye	422	0	200	0	0	0	1	1	0	16	15	52	0	0
Bufflehead	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hooded Merganser	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Common Merganser	82	50	163	0	0	9	0	10	74	0	1	73	1	0
Bald Eagle	470	59	47	1	4	27	6	69	148	7	19	48	1	3
Northern Harrier	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Sharp-shinned Hawk	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0
Cooper's Hawk	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	4	2	1
Red-tailed Hawk	33	25	23	45	5	72	14	53	25	20	27	100	81	45
Rough-legged Hawk	0	2	0	7	0	13	4	8	1	1	9	14	4	3
American Kestrel	0	6	5	1	1	17	6	6	4	8	3	15	5	13
Ring-necked Pheasant	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	10	22
Ruffed Grouse	2	0	0	2	2	22	2	0	0	0	1	2	2	0
Wild Turkey	77	5	98	23	68	163	12	109	20	14	209	134	267	38
American Coot	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	11	0	0	0
Ring-billed Gull	10	0	81	0	0	1	0	0	58	21	0	17	0	0
Herring Gull	0	16	14	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	18	0	0
Rock Dove	247	286	364	360	48	597	65	384	162	24	384	627	254	226
Mourning Dove	0	79	246	2	1	111	1	74	20	18	32	325	77	65
Eastern Screech-Owl	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	7	3	0	4	2	1	3
Great Horned Owl	3	2	1	7	2	5	1	11	2	2	4	5	3	3
Barred Owl	0	3	4	4	0	0	0	3	0	2	0	2	0	5
Belted Kingfisher	2	1	1	7	0	1	6	3	3	0	2	2	0	5
Red-headed Woodpecker	0	5	0	2	0	6	10	6	26	3	1	0	13	13
Red-bellied Woodpecker	24	34	24	14	3	42	24	47	68	3	18	80	63	48
Downy Woodpecker	38	76	64	25	4	91	34	52	66	10	40	132	115	51

Hairy Woodpecker	17	29	10	6	2	25	3	21	17	4	7	34	31	13
Northern Flicker	1	1	1	0	0	4	3	0	5	1	3	7	2	0
Pileated Woodpecker	5	5	4	5	2	11	4	2	4	0	3	12	5	1
Horned Lark	4	1	0	15	0	2	3	26	0	0	5	108	231	16
Blue Jay	54	255	90	112	9	378	73	172	152	47	148	393	250	201
American Crow	596	420	216	376	593	671	140	603	238	137	541	1108	541	294
Common Raven	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black-capped Chickadee	188	202	297	143	9	533	144	254	105	20	273	522	343	266
Tufted Titmouse	0	3	4	1	0	8	0	21	29	8	5	17	30	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	6	35	0	2	10	9	5	2	0	8	27	7	16
White-breasted Nuthatch	52	100	100	52	4	125	37	80	63	9	47	124	89	114
Brown Creeper	1	9	20	1	0	4	7	5	5	0	0	7	0	4
Golden-crowned Kinglet	0	5	3	2	0	0	3	2	5	0	0	5	0	8
American Robin	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	76	2	0
Cedar Waxwing	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	224	0	0	17	5	0	0
Northern Shrike	2	1	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	3	1	3	0
European Starling	392	1169	2882	453	540	953	310	598	452	141	682	1369	513	912
Northern Cardinal	24	96	89	52	9	221	13	155	94	24	56	272	197	103
American Tree Sparrow	114	354	267	71	6	91	30	1624	178	124	79	281	583	383
Song Sparrow	0	1	0	0	0	6	2	18	27	0	0	7	16	24
White-throated Sparrow	0	0	3	0	0	2	1	26	0	0	0	18	21	4
Dark-eyed Junco	441	539	294	372	26	523	110	842	308	60	461	1121	1650	402
Snow Bunting	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	35	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pine Grosbeak	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Purple Finch	1	5	8	1	0	66	x	28	10	7	10	24	34	13
House Finch	11	108	23	10	0	113	30	31	158	20	167	242	76	26
Common Redpoll	0	65	0	204	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1
Pine Siskin	12	2	24	40	0	1	0	10	5	1	263	4	5	3
American Goldfinch	125	222	322	380	13	747	67	447	221	53	344	480	332	82
Evening Grosbeak	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
House Sparrow	637	454	379	305	87	1230	100	1097	710	80	477	791	460	1277
<b>Total Species</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>43</b>

x = Found within 3 days of the count day but not on the day of the count.

Table 7. Number of each species in south-central Wisconsin found on 20 or more counts.

Species	Poynette 68	Randolph 69	Horicon Marsh 70	Kettle Moraine 71	Columbus 72	Hartford 73	Ocono- mowoc 74	Madison 75	Fort Atkinson 76	Waukesha 77	Cooks- ville 78	Beloit 79	Lake Geneva 80
Canada Goose	5092	11853	109750	33	125	1440	2145	6264	12	3443	458	1715	1462
American Black Duck	8	0	5	0	5	3	3	31	0	4	3	0	0
Mallard	288	10	20	15	225	64	360	3391	173	303	160	1409	409
Common Goldeneye	47	8	0	0	0	37	42	320	0	3	0	453	85
Bufflehead	0	0	1	0	0	4	47	353	0	1	0	3	112
Hooded Merganser	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	16	0	0	0	0	4
Common Merganser	118	0	0	0	0	20	201	437	0	10	0	1	132
Bald Eagle	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Harrier	1	0	8	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	1	0
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	0	1	2	0	0	2	5	0	0	1	1	1
Cooper's Hawk	4	3	4	5	2	2	1	13	4	5	2	3	3
Red-tailed Hawk	53	33	22	42	13	27	46	107	13	46	8	24	25
Rough-legged Hawk	6	1	15	1	0	1	3	1	0	0	x	2	x
American Kestrel	15	19	13	5	8	6	7	14	3	6	5	2	10
Ring-necked Pheasant	43	0	1	7	3	1	4	13	1	3	4	7	0
Ruffed Grouse	6	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wild Turkey	74	0	0	23	11	100	14	46	11	17	0	17	29
American Coot	0	6	0	0	0	200	64	4135	0	0	0	0	4
Ring-billed Gull	42	13	189	0	3	40	509	876	3	68	0	11	113
Herring Gull	10	7	29	0	0	266	2	1537	1	0	0	3	104
Rock Dove	482	586	369	610	129	744	489	601	81	152	64	134	421
Mourning Dove	150	76	144	81	111	189	145	853	92	182	177	185	92
Eastern Screech-Owl	3	0	0	0	0	6	0	97	0	3	7	0	0
Great Horned Owl	7	3	6	4	1	1	10	35	1	16	1	4	4
Barred Owl	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Belted Kingfisher	0	0	0	1	0	1	4	6	0	4	1	3	1
Red-headed Woodpecker	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
Red-bellied Woodpecker	44	9	2	13	1	21	17	78	9	17	4	21	26
Downy Woodpecker	118	39	37	41	13	90	54	237	58	49	23	62	39

Hairy Woodpecker	36	7	15	8	5	13	13	78	8	11	4	10	14
Northern Flicker	13	0	0	0	0	10	0	2	0	4	x	7	1
Pileated Woodpecker	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horned Lark	10	18	76	21	56	107	3	0	56	18	96	138	44
Blue Jay	384	116	50	75	23	119	65	273	28	127	25	70	89
American Crow	705	140	168	174	156	758	331	1655	207	558	255	282	445
Common Raven	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black-capped Chickadee	695	92	77	265	40	481	167	1012	163	386	37	143	183
Tufted Titmouse	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	5	0
Red-breasted Nuthatch	48	2	5	39	2	16	15	124	30	53	4	5	35
White-breasted Nuthatch	126	36	23	48	6	81	26	235	39	56	21	29	50
Brown Creeper	22	10	0	5	1	1	0	71	1	1	1	6	4
Golden-crowned Kinglet	34	6	4	18	5	2	0	31	0	1	0	0	5
American Robin	25	0	0	0	0	7	9	107	2	77	x	1	4
Cedar Waxwing	40	0	0	16	0	188	60	86	3	85	0	0	88
Northern Shrike	1	1	5	2	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	0	0
European Starling	1192	1846	1107	849	539	670	410	2143	1251	362	463	558	1599
Northern Cardinal	149	27	22	45	10	163	86	501	57	131	48	125	100
American Tree Sparrow	204	542	457	260	297	363	69	1087	860	587	645	645	96
Song Sparrow	34	4	2	2	2	6	0	78	3	5	6	0	3
White-throated Sparrow	11	0	1	0	0	2	0	124	2	2	2	1	2
Dark-eyed Junco	1061	700	409	375	356	491	257	1851	680	428	390	1382	219
Snow Bunting	2	0	275	6	64	414	0	0	x	0	8	102	0
Pine Grosbeak	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Purple Finch	92	0	1	6	0	2	17	21	42	9	1	0	18
House Finch	441	15	28	26	3	149	125	793	69	62	32	148	312
Common Redpoll	254	0	0	0	0	x	0	11	1	0	0	0	0
Pine Siskin	278	2	0	7	0	50	2	147	3	9	0	1	75
American Goldfinch	485	48	106	74	44	273	115	688	136	111	121	123	240
Evening Grosbeak	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
House Sparrow	869	959	364	562	326	826	567	2118	341	309	140	867	809
<b>Total Species</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>58</b>

x = Found within 3 days of the count day but not on the day of the count.



Hairy Woodpecker	3	6	7	11	10	91	37	6	3	x	68	1,455	-5%
Northern Flicker	0	1	1	1	x	12	9	1	1	x	40	135	+7%
Pileated Woodpecker	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	222	+1%
Horned Lark	1	0	13	3	12	37	0	0	0	0	38	1,703	0%
Blue Jay	34	19	19	44	39	207	24	29	33	9	90	8,748	-14%
American Crow	184	185	182	240	185	1219	1040	171	193	165	90	28,065	+15%
Common Raven	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	36	758	+14%
Black-capped Chickadee	728	122	138	144	75	1147	555	230	126	44	90	24,067	+5%
Tufted Titmouse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	212	+17%
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3	11	2	3	7	53	29	15	11	6	85	1,432	+14%
White-breasted Nuthatch	21	30	29	39	21	238	97	18	9	6	90	4,159	-1%
Brown Creeper	2	2	2	1	0	22	6	0	2	2	65	372	+46%
Golden-crowned Kinglet	9	1	0	12	0	2	12	0	0	0	48	325	+40%
American Robin	0	0	0	0	0	35	131	9	6	2	30	643	-21%
Cedar Waxwing	33	1	65	0	10	139	327	125	110	x	41	2,337	+19%
Northern Shrike	0	3	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	54	151	-23%
European Starling	733	633	318	1329	298	2404	1103	108	1065	1300	88	60,394	+20%
Northern Cardinal	34	37	21	47	64	441	263	77	40	3	79	5,522	-11%
American Tree Sparrow	46	157	113	55	108	597	58	104	33	200	80	15,990	+5%
Song Sparrow	0	1	0	0	0	5	5	1	1	x	33	288	+6%
White-throated Sparrow	0	0	0	1	0	11	89	1	0	0	36	358	+270%
Dark-eyed Junco	105	209	97	220	317	1761	666	236	206	220	81	28,806	+39%
Snow Bunting	0	1	0	39	2	2	1	0	x	0	32	2,933	-65%
Pine Grosbeak	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	38	2,183	+263%
Purple Finch	0	0	0	0	6	87	3	0	0	0	55	846	-47%
House Finch	5	40	2	83	102	661	719	20	74	1	73	8,341	+127%
Common Redpoll	0	0	0	17	0	35	x	0	0	86	59	8,044	+275%
Pine Siskin	28	138	3	21	38	137	57	57	0	0	62	2,518	-42%
American Goldfinch	25	100	28	95	205	706	248	79	88	161	87	13,968	+5%
Evening Grosbeak	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	1,029	-77%
House Sparrow	187	313	282	363	213	1239	1228	156	324	400	81	41,439	-31%
<b>Total Species</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>52</b>			

x = Found within 3 days of the count day but not on the day of the count.



Table 9. Species found on 19 or fewer counts.

Species	Number of Counts	Number of Birds	Count and Number
Red-throated Loon	1	1	Woodland Dunes SE 1
Pacific Loon	1	1	Green Lake 1
Common Loon	8	12	Pensaukee 2, Brussels 1, (Kewaunee), Green Lake 1, Madison 2, Lake Geneva 1, Woodland Dunes NE 3, Riveredge 1, Milwaukee 1
Pied-billed Grebe	6	9	Sturgeon Bay 1, Waupaca 1, Fremont 1, Oshkosh 1, Madison 3, Plymouth 2
Horned Grebe	1	1	Madison 1
American White Pelican	1	1	Lake Geneva 1
Double-crested Cormorant	5	37	Sturgeon Bay 2, Green Bay 15, Appleton 10, Woodland Dunes SE 1, Kenosha 9
Great Blue Heron	18	27	Bayfield 1, Hudson 1, Spruce 2, Green Bay 2, Kewaunee 1, Appleton 2, Oshkosh 2, Nelson 1, Trempealeau 3, Baraboo 1, Sauk City 1, (Kettle Moraine), Oconomowoc 1, Madison 3, Woodland Dunes NE 1, Woodland Dunes SE 1, Riveredge 2, Milwaukee 1, Kenosha 1
Black-crowned Night-Heron	1	6	Milwaukee 6
Tundra Swan	12	798	Bayfield 14, Ashland 50, Pensaukee 24, Brussels 3, Fremont 5, Oshkosh 2, Fond du Lac 6, Trempealeau 45, LaCrosse 607, Madison 39, Waukesha 1, Lake Geneva 2
Trumpeter Swan	3	15	Hudson 11, Pensaukee 3, Madison 1
Mute Swan	8	55	Shawano 4, Montello 6, Hartford 2, Oconomowoc 1, Madison 7, Waukesha 27, Lake Geneva 7, Plymouth 1
Snow Goose	6	7	Sturgeon Bay 1, Appleton 1, Woodland Dunes SW 1, Plymouth 2, Riveredge 1, Kenosha 1
Wood Duck	16	24	Minoqua 1, Hudson 1, Sturgeon Bay 1, Wautoma 2, Appleton 4, Trempealeau 1, LaCrosse 1, Sauk City 2, Hartford 2, Oconomowoc 1, Madison 2, Fort Atkinson 1, Lake Geneva 1, Woodland Dunes SW 2, Riveredge 1, Milwaukee 1
Green-winged Teal	9	11	Bayfield 1, Pensaukee 2, (Caroline), Waupaca 1, Appleton 1, Oshkosh 1, Trempealeau 1, Waukesha 1, Beloit 1, Woodland Dunes SW 2
Northern Pintail	7	8	Ashland 1, Sturgeon Bay 1, Wisconsin Rapids 1, Appleton 2, Horicon Marsh 1, Madison 1, Milwaukee 1
Northern Shoveler	4	104	Appleton 2, Oshkosh 1, Madison 96, Milwaukee 5
Gadwall	8	373	Hudson 17, Appleton 12, Green Lake 2, Poynette 1, Oconomowoc 18, Madison 299, Waukesha 22, Milwaukee 4 (Sturgeon Bay), Appleton 1, LaCrosse 1, Madison 23, Lake Geneva 37
American Wigeon	4	62	Sturgeon Bay 4, (New Franken), (Appleton), Oshkosh 12, Green Lake 57, LaCrosse 750, Bridgeport 2, Poynette 3, Hartford 1, Madison 63, Lake Geneva 56, (Milwaukee), Racine 1
Canvasback	10	949	Sturgeon Bay 64, Brussels 25, Green Bay 1, Kewaunee 16, Green Lake 6, LaCrosse 5, Randolph 8, Madison 8, Woodland Dunes SE 36, Milwaukee 66, Kenosha 3
Redhead	11	238	

Ring-necked Duck	14	111	Gurney 1, Grantsburg 1, Hudson 1, Sturgeon Bay 2, Brussels 5, Appleton 1, Oshkosh 4, Green Lake 2, LaCrosse 82, Hartford 2, Madison 3, Lake Geneva 4, Woodland Dunes SW 3
Greater Scaup	15	4390	Pensaukee 30, Sturgeon Bay 864, Brussels 3, Kewaunee 781, Appleton 1, Oshkosh 2, Green Lake 14, Madison 2, Lake Geneva 300, Woodland Dunes SE 604, Riveredge 4, Milwaukee 1275, Hales Corners 8, Racine 500, Kenosha 2
Lesser Scaup	18	428	Ashland 11, Cable 1, Green Bay 3, Stevens Point 1, (Wisconsin Rapids), Appleton 8, Oshkosh 26, Montello 1, Green Lake 2, Trempealeau 1, LaCrosse 40, Bridgeport 1, Baraboo 1, Randolph 4, Madison 91, Lake Geneva 142, Woodland Dunes SE 1, Riveredge 5, Milwaukee 89
Oldsquaw	8	2165	Sturgeon Bay 2117, (Brussels), Kewaunee 7, Wisconsin Rapids 1, Madison 12, Woodland Dunes SE 1, Riveredge 2, Milwaukee 17, Racine 8
Black Scoter	1	1	Milwaukee 1
White-winged Scoter	2	2	Gurney 1, Kenosha 1
Barrow's Goldeneye	2	2	Gurney 1, Milwaukee 1
Red-breasted Merganser	19	353	Ashland 21, Hudson 3, Pensaukee 1, Sturgeon Bay 13, Brussels 1, Kewaunee 73, Appleton 5, Oshkosh 5, Green Lake 2, Sauk City 3, Hartford 2, Madison 13, Woodland Dunes NE 2, Woodland Dunes SE 94, Riveredge 43, Milwaukee 49, Hales Corners 3, Racine 8, Kenosha 12
Ruddy Duck	17	473	Sturgeon Bay 5, Green Bay 1, Appleton 7, Oshkosh 8, Fond du Lac 1, Green Lake 18, Trempealeau 4, Randolph 8, Hartford 22, Oconomowoc 11, Madison 246, Waukesha 1, Beloit 7, Lake Geneva 83, Woodland Dunes SW 2, Woodland Dunes SE 4, (Riveredge), Milwaukee 46, Racine 1
Northern Goshawk	7	9	Luck 1, Gilman 3, Wausau 1, Spruce 1, Sturgeon Bay 1, New Franken 1, (Stevens Point), Oconomowoc 1
Red-shouldered Hawk	6	6	Durand 1, Shawano 1, (Montello), Trempealeau 1, Baraboo 1, Sauk City 1, Poynette 1
Golden Eagle	6	11	Durand 3, Willard 1, Nelson 3, Kickapoo Valley 1, LaFarge 1, Bridgeport 2
Merlin	3	3	Brussels 1, Poynette 1, Madison 1
Peregrine Falcon	3	4	Green Bay 1, Milwaukee 1, Hales Corners 2
Gyr Falcon	1	1	Appleton 1
Gray Partridge	2	12	New Franken 8, Bridgeport 4
Spruce Grouse	1	3	Phelps 3
Greater Prairie-Chicken	1	6	Spencer 6, (Wisconsin Rapids)
Sharp-tailed Grouse	1	11	Grantsburg 11
Northern Bobwhite	7	43	Wautoma 2, Montello 10, Richland Center 14, Platteville 12, Mount Horeb 1, Riveredge 3, Kenosha 1
King Rail	1	2	Poynette 2
Virginia Rail	3	6	Fond du Lac 1, Poynette 4, Madison 1
Sandhill Crane	1	1	Montello 1
Killdeer	3	3	LaCrosse 1, Bridgeport 1, Kenosha 1
Common Snipe	13	39	New Richmond 1, Hudson 2, Wautoma 1, Nelson 1, Trempealeau 9, Kickapoo Valley 1, Richland Center 9, Bridgeport 4, Sauk City 2, Poynette 4, Madison 2, Waukesha 2, Cooksville 1

(continued)

Table 9. (Continued)

Species	Number of Counts	Number of Birds	Count and Number
Bonaparte's Gull	1	60	Kenosha 60
Mew Gull	1	1	Milwaukee 1
Thayer's Gull	2	3	(Green Bay), Appleton 1, Milwaukee 2
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1	1	(Green Bay), Madison 1
Glaucous Gull	9	24	Ashland 1, Green Bay 2, Kewaunee 3, Appleton 1, Oshkosh 1, Sauk City 1, Woodland Dunes NE 13, Riveredge 1, Milwaukee 1
Great Black-backed Gull	3	11	(Sturgeon Bay), Kewaunee 1, Woodland Dunes NE 8, Milwaukee 2
Snowy Owl	4	5	Ashland 1, Seymour 1, Green Bay 2, Kewaunee 1, (Oshkosh)
Long-eared Owl	7	12	Fond du Lac 1, Bridgeport 2, Poynette 1, Oconomowoc 2, Madison 1, Waukesha 4, Riveredge 1
Short-eared Owl	6	10	Brussels 2, Appleton 2, Stockbridge 1, Poynette 1, Madison 3, Waukesha 1
Northern Saw-whet Owl	5	8	(Cable), Spruce 1, Pensaukee 3, Fremont 1, Bridgeport 2, Baraboo 1, (Riveredge)
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	6	7	New Franken 1, Wautoma 1, Clyde 1, Sauk City 1, Mount Horeb 1, Riveredge 2
Black-backed Woodpecker	2	3	Clam Lake 2, Fifield 1
Eastern Phoebe	1	2	Milwaukee 2
Gray Jay	7	96	Clam Lake 17, Oxbo 18, Fifield 7, Manitowish Waters 9, Phelps 13, Three Lakes 21, Rhinelander 11
Boreal Chickadee	4	13	Cable 1, Clam Lake 4, Minoqua 1, Three Lakes 7
Carolina Wren	1	2	Madison 2
Winter Wren	7	9	Bridgeport 1, Poynette 1, Horicon Marsh 1, Madison 1, Riveredge 1, Milwaukee 3, Hales Corners 1
Marsh Wren	2	2	Madison 1, Milwaukee 1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3	4	Norske 1, Richland Center 1, Milwaukee 2
Eastern Bluebird	9	42	Hudson 7, Fremont 3, Clyde 6, Sauk City 4, Poynette 4, Madison 1, Lake Geneva 3, Milwaukee 13, Racine 1
Swainson's Thrush	1	1	Milwaukee 1
Hermit Thrush	6	17	(Green Bay), (Appleton), Bridgeport 1, Poynette 1, Madison 7, Riveredge 2, Milwaukee 5, Hales Corners 1
Gray Catbird	1	1	Appleton 1
Brown Thrasher	2	2	Wautoma 1, Fort Atkinson 1
Bohemian Waxwing	11	496	Spooner 6, Minoqua 2, Rhinelander 60, Wausau 11, Spruce 332, (Sturgeon Bay), Brussels 1, Caroline 10, Shawano 54, Norske 18, Poynette 1, Kenosha 1

Orange-crowned Warbler	1	1	Montello 1	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	12	27	Hudson 1, Pensaukee 3, New Franken 1, Appleton 2, Sauk City 5, Poynette 1, Madison 3, Waukesha 2, Riveredge 1, Milwaukee 5, Hales Corners 2, Kenosha 1	
Northern Waterthrush	1	1	Madison 1	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	1	Green Bay 1	
Eastern Towhee	2	2	(Phelps), Clyde 1, Madison 1, (Riveredge)	
Chipping Sparrow	1	1	Montello 1	
Field Sparrow	5	10	Montello 1, Bridgeport 3, Sauk City 1, Blanchardville 2, Madison 3	
Fox Sparrow	4	5	Poynette 2, Madison 1, Fort Atkinson 1, Riveredge 1	
Lincoln's Sparrow	1	1	Bridgeport 1	
Swamp Sparrow	16	84	Kewaunee 2, Bridgeport 1, Cassville 10, Sauk City 2, Mount Horeb 3, Blanchardville 6, Poynette 29, Madison 16, Fort Atkinson 1, Waukesha 1, Woodland Dunes SW 1, Woodland Dunes SE 2, Milwaukee 2, Hales Corners 4, Racine 1, Kenosha 3	
White-crowned Sparrow	4	7	Bridgeport 4, Poynette 1, Madison 1, Woodland Dunes SE 1	
Lapland Longspur	10	1285	(Caroline), Seymour 620, Kewaunee 200, (Norske), Fremont 200, Stockbridge 30, Bridgeport 107, Blanchardville 12, Poynette 6, Horicon Marsh 25, Columbus 45, Hartford 40	
Red-winged Blackbird	14	383	New Richmond 1, (New Franken), Kewaunee 1, Oshkosh 2, Fond du Lac 1, LaCrosse 80, Cassville 1, Sauk City 37, Blanchardville 1, Poynette 9, Horicon Marsh 93, Madison 150, Waukesha 2, Woodland Dunes NE 1, Kenosha 4	
meadowlark spp.	2	10	Clyde 2, Fort Atkinson 8	
Eastern Meadowlark	1	1	Kewaunee 1	
Rusty Blackbird	2	2	Chippewa Falls 1, Hartford 1	
Brewer's Blackbird	1	1	Hudson 1	
Common Grackle	17	68	Oxbo 1, Fifield 18, Manitowish Waters 1, Durand 1, Pensaukee 1, Sturgeon Bay 2, Green Bay 2, Arpin 1, Trempealeau 1, (Cassville), Mount Horeb 17, Poynette 1, Horicon Marsh 12, Oconomowoc 1, Madison 3, (Cooksville), Lake Geneva 2, Milwaukee 2, Kenosha 2	
Brown-headed Cowbird	13	122	Luck 20, Green Bay 1, Fremont 1, Oshkosh 1, Fond du Lac 1, Trempealeau 11, Richland Center 6, Bridgeport 6, Horicon Marsh 51, Madison 18, Lake Geneva 1, (Riveredge), Milwaukee 1, Kenosha 4	
Baltimore Oriole	1	1	Appleton 1	
Hoary Redpoll	6	9	Ashland 1, Manitowish Waters 3, Peshigo 2, Seymour 1, Shiocton 1, Woodland Dunes SE 1	
Red Crossbill	4	6	Spooner 1, Fremont 1, Fond du Lac 2, Green Lake 2	
White-winged Crossbill	9	51	Fifield 9, Three Lakes 4, Peshigo 10, Shiocton 1, Appleton 1, Bridgeport 8, Poynette 15, Madison 1, Plymouth 2	

Parentheses indicate species was seen within 3 days of the count but not on the day of the count.

lem exists on some counts because observers are not familiar enough with birds to accurately identify them. Observers who cannot identify all the "common species" listed on the report form and most of the "uncommon species" without the aid of a book should not be participating in the count unless they are with a competent observer.

Most counts recorded more species than in the past few years, and many reported a record number. There were 28 counts reporting 50 or more species. The Madison count found the greatest number of species (95), followed by counts at Milwaukee (75), Poynette and Appleton (73), Riveredge (71), Bridgeport and Sauk City (63), and Green Bay and Oshkosh (60). Seven other counts had 55 to 59 species. Only two counts reported less than 20 species. A summary of general abundance within various groups of species follows.

**Loons, Grebes, Pelicans, and Cormorants**—Common Loons were seen in near record numbers, with 12 being reported on eight counts. A Pacific Loon on the Green Lake count was a first for Wisconsin Christmas counts, and a Red-throated Loon on the Woodland Dunes Southeast count was the first since 1976 and only the twelfth Christmas count report. The nine Pied-billed Grebes on six counts was the most since 1984; the only Horned Grebe was seen at Madison. A White Pelican was found at Lake Geneva for the second consecutive year; it represents only the third Christmas count record. A record 37 Double-crested Cormorants were found on five counts, more than double the previous record in 1995. Since 1989, the number of cormorants on

the Christmas count has steadily increased.

**Hérons**—The 27 Great Blue Herons on 18 counts is well above average, and the six Black-crowned Night-Hérons on the Milwaukee count are the first that have been seen since 1986.

**Swans and Geese**—With all the open water, it was a great year for swans and geese. The 798 Tundra Swans on 12 counts is the largest number seen since 1987; the 55 Mute Swans was about average. Trumpeter Swans, which have become a regular occurrence since their re-introduction, were found on three counts. Canada Geese were found everywhere there was water, with a record 472,944 being counted on 59 counts. The seven Snow geese that were reported is about average for the Christmas counts.

**Ducks and Mergansers**—Mallards, Northern Pintails, Northern Shovelers, Gadwalls, and Red-breasted Mergansers occurred in about normal numbers, and the number of Black Ducks continued to be well below the recent 10-year average, but all other species were found in record or well above average numbers. Record numbers were recorded for the American Wigeon (62), Canvasback (949), Redhead (238), Lesser Scaup (428), Common Goldeneye (15,354), Bufflehead (1,367), and Ruddy Duck (473). Some records were several times the previous record; the previous high for Redheads was 41 and for Ruddy Ducks was 119. The 111 Ring-necked Ducks was near the record 131 seen in 1974, Greater Scaup numbers were well above average with many appearing on larger inland lakes, and the number of Olds-

quaws was the largest since 1981. Numbers of both Hooded and Common Mergansers were also well above average. Highlights were the Barrow's Goldeneyes at Gurney and Milwaukee (fifth record) and a Black Scoter at Milwaukee (tenth record). White-winged Scoters were seen at Gurney and Kenosha.

**Hawks and Eagles**—Bald Eagles were seen on two-thirds of the counts, with a record 1,232 being sighted, eclipsing the old record of 567 in 1995. The 470 on the Nelson count is a phenomenal total. Golden Eagles also occurred in record numbers, with 11 found on six counts in western Wisconsin. The Cooper's Hawk is the only hawk that was unusually abundant, 139 being three times the average for the previous 10 years. Northern Harriers were unusually scarce, and Rough-legged Hawks and American Kestrels also were found in below-average numbers. Sharp-shinned, Red-tailed, and Red-shouldered hawks all occurred in about normal numbers. A Gyrfalcon on the Appleton count was a highlight, and Peregrine Falcons at Green Bay, Milwaukee, and Hales Corners (2) represent only the tenth Christmas count record for that species.

**Grouse, Pheasants, Quail, etc.**—Except for grouse, this group of birds is more difficult to find when there is no snow cover. This is reflected in well below normal numbers of Gray Partridges, Ring-necked Pheasants, and Northern Bobwhite. Prairie-Chickens (6) were found only on the Spencer count and Sharp-tailed Grouse only on the Grantsburg count. The number of Wild Turkeys was also down from the previous two years, perhaps because of

a lack of snow or because their population is no longer increasing. The three Spruce Grouse on the Phelps count were a highlight.

**Rails, Coots, Cranes, and Shorebirds**—American Coots were about three times more abundant than the previous 10-year average. Virginia Rails were found at Fond du Lac, Poynette, and Madison, and two King Rails (third record) were found at Poynette. A Sandhill Crane was seen on the Montello count, and Killdeer were found on counts at LaCrosse, Bridgeport, and Kenosha. The 39 Common Snipe on 13 counts is the highest total since 1989.

**Gulls**—With all the open water, it was a great year for gulls because many that normally move south remained longer than usual. While Herring Gulls appeared in about normal numbers, Ring-billed Gulls were distinctly more abundant this year, especially away from the Great Lakes. There were a record 24 Glaucous Gulls on nine counts, and a record 11 Great Black-backed Gulls on counts at Kewaunee, Woodland Dunes Northeast, and Milwaukee. Bonaparte's Gulls were seen only on the Kenosha count. New to Wisconsin Christmas counts were a Mew Gull at Milwaukee and a Lesser Black-backed Gull at Madison. The latter bird has appeared in Madison every spring and fall for the past few years; this year it finally remained to be counted. Thayer's Gulls (twelfth record) were found on the Appleton and Milwaukee counts. An Iceland Gull was seen in the Green Bay count area within three days of the count, but not on the day of the count.



**Doves**—Rock Doves occurred in average numbers, and Mourning Doves in somewhat below average numbers.

**Owls**—The five Snowy Owls were well below last year's record of 21. Numbers of Screech and Barred Owls were also below normal, but the 395 Great Horned Owls is the best total since 1987. Eight Northern Saw-whet Owls were found on five counts, which is a new record for that species. Long-eared and Short-eared Owls were found in about average numbers.

**Kingfisher**—In spite of all the open water, Belted Kingfishers occurred in slightly below normal numbers.

**Woodpeckers**—Most woodpeckers occurred in about normal numbers, except the Downy Woodpecker and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Downy Woodpeckers were found in record numbers, and the seven Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers is the lowest total since 1990. Black-backed Woodpeckers were seen on counts at Clam Lake and Field.

**Flycatchers and Larks**—The two Eastern Phoebes on the Milwaukee count represent only the fourth Christmas count record for that species. Numbers of Horned Larks were at the average for the previous 10 years in spite of a lack of snow to drive them to roadsides and manure spreads.

**Jays, Crows, and Ravens**—The number of Blue Jays was below average, while the number of Gray Jays was about average. American Crows and Common Ravens were distinctly more abundant than usual, with Common

Ravens occurring much farther south than in most years.

**Chickadees, Titmice, Nuthatches, and Creepers**—Black-capped Chickadees and White-breasted Nuthatches appeared in about normal numbers, while numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches and Tufted Titmice were somewhat above normal. The latter species has definitely recovered from the low populations found in the 1980s. Brown Creepers were unusually abundant, with a record 372 having been found on 65 counts.

**Kinglets and Wrens**—The 325 Golden-crowned Kinglets is the highest total since 1982, and Ruby-crowned Kinglets were found on counts at Norske, Richland Center, and Milwaukee. There were nine Winter Wrens on seven counts, which is above average. Marsh Wrens were found at Madison and Milwaukee (twelfth record), and two Carolina Wrens at Madison were the only ones found this year.

**Thrushes, Thrashers, etc.**—Although numbers of American Robins were below normal, it was generally a good year for thrushes. There were 45 Eastern Bluebirds on nine counts, the highest total since a record 65 were found in 1989. The 17 Hermit Thrushes on six counts is a new record. A Swainson's Thrush at Milwaukee is only the second Christmas count record. Other highlights were a Gray Catbird at Appleton, and Brown Thrashers at Wautoma and Fort Atkinson.

**Waxwings, Shrikes, and Starlings**—After being almost absent last year, there was a reasonably good invasion of Bohemian Waxwings into northern Wis-

consin; Cedar Waxwings also occurred in above-average numbers. The number of Northern Shrikes was down from previous years, while European Starlings experienced a 20% increase.

**Warblers**—A Northern Waterthrush at Madison is the first record for a Wisconsin Christmas count. It was found in the same area where one stayed all winter in 1983. Another highlight was an Orange-crowned Warbler at Montello, the second record for Wisconsin Christmas counts. The number of Yellow-rumped Warblers, 27 on 12 counts, is a new Christmas count record.

**Cardinals, Grosbeaks, and Towhees**—The number of Northern Cardinals was somewhat below normal, perhaps because of a lack of snow to force them to feeders. Highlights were a Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Green Bay (ninth record) and Eastern Towhees on counts at Clyde and Madison.

**Sparrows, etc.**—It was an excellent year for most sparrows and related species. Although the number of Fox Sparrows was somewhat below normal and numbers of American Tree Sparrows, Song Sparrows, and White-crowned Sparrows were about normal, other sparrows were generally more abundant. The 350 White-throated Sparrows is a new record, eclipsing the old record of 198 in 1995. The 28,806 Dark-eyed Juncos is also a new record and the 84 Swamp Sparrows is within one of the 1976 record. The number of Lapland Longspurs was also way above average, but the number of Snow Buntings was 65% below the previous 10-year average. Ten Field Sparrows on five counts was the most since 1991. Highlights included a Lincoln's

Sparrow at Bridgeport (eighth record) and a Chipping Sparrow at Montello (twelfth record).

**Blackbirds, Meadowlarks, and Orioles**—For the fifth consecutive year, counts of blackbirds were extremely low. The number of Common Grackles (68) was very low, as it was the previous two years. These are the only years since 1965 when less than 100 were seen. The number of Red-winged Blackbirds was again way below normal, the two Rusty Blackbirds made the lowest total in at least 30 years, and the only Brewer's Blackbird was photographed at Hudson. The number of meadowlarks was slightly below average. Only Brown-headed Cowbirds occurred in average numbers. A Baltimore Oriole at Appleton, the eighth Christmas count record, was the only highlight.

**Finches**—It was a great year for Pine Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls. The 2,183 Pine Grosbeaks was the best invasion since 1989, and the 8,044 Common Redpolls is the largest number since 1977. Both occurred mostly in northern and central counties. Nine Hoary Redpolls were seen on six counts, which is a new record for that species. American Goldfinches occurred in about normal numbers, but numbers of Pine Siskins were 42% below average and numbers of Evening Grosbeaks were 77% below average. Crossbills were also difficult to find, with 51 White-winged Crossbills on nine counts and only six Red Crossbills on four counts. The number of Purple Finches was also 47% below the previous 10-year average, while House Finches occurred in record numbers (8,341 on 73 counts). I strongly suspect

that several observers are still confusing House Finches with Purple Finches, and that the number of Purple Finches reported is higher than it should be. Female Purple Finches have a distinct white line behind the eye and a dark ear patch, which female House Finches lack. Male Purple Finches are more raspberry colored than red, and lack the bold, dark streaks on the sides and belly that are so noticeable in House Finches.

**House Sparrow**—Numbers were 31% below the previous 10-year average, which has been the trend for the last three years. I believe this is because House Finches out-compete House Sparrows in suburban areas, and most House Sparrows are now found in farm yards and inner city areas.

### SUMMARY

The 1997 Christmas bird count will be remembered because of the large number of rarities and the record number of species that were found. It was an outstanding count because of favorable weather before and during the count period and because of in-

creased participation and organization on many counts.

There is no charge for publication of counts in *The Passenger Pigeon*, only for those also published by the National Audubon Society. Submission of counts to National Audubon (on their report form), as well as to the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (on our latest report form, please!), is encouraged. Individuals participating in counts should submit reports and documentation to the count compiler for compilation and forwarding to Daryl Tessen. Documentation should be written at the time of observation or shortly thereafter. If you wish to participate in a count in 1998, please contact the compiler in your area. If you plan to initiate a new count in an area not presently covered (Figure 1), please write to me to avoid conflicts and overlapping of other areas, and to obtain a report form. New counts should emphasize field observation and not rely on feeder observers; a minimum of 8 hours of field observation is required.

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## The Summer Season: 1997

*by Thomas K. Soulen*

The few observers who commented on this summer's weather generally agreed that June was more pleasant than July. More people than in most years commented about the lateness of the migration, likely a consequence of the cool weather in late May and early June. Korducki reported that one could easily find 15 species of warblers in Milwaukee through the 5th, and "the 7th was a great day for Red-eyed Vireos and *Empidonax* flycatchers." He also said that Milwaukee did not reach 80 degrees until June 19, only five days short of the record. Hot weather did not arrive in the state generally until about the last third of June. Cool weather returned for part of the first half of July; lowland frost was reported on two nights in different central/northern locations. Much of the rest of July was quite hot and often humid. A number of people said mosquitoes seemed especially abundant.

Rainfall seemed more variable across the state this year than usual. June was generally drier than July, although a few locations reported heavy rains during the last half of June: over 9 inches in 9 hours in northern Mil-

waukee Co. June 22, and big rains in Jefferson Co. on June 15 and 21. July was generally wetter, with almost daily rains in some locations (including over 9 inches for the month in Jefferson Co.). In contrast, some northeastern counties recorded a total July rainfall of barely 1.5 inches. The very few comments on the impact of rainfall amounts on birding suggested that waterbird nesting was successful and that some potential shorebird habitat was just too wet.

Wisconsin observers recorded a total of 267 species during the season, close to the high of 269 of the past 16 years. The account that follows gives details on 164 of them. An additional 71 that are not mentioned were common and widespread enough to be reported from more than 25 counties. The remaining 32 species, generally noted in 10–25 counties, are listed here along with the number of counties in which each was recorded: Pied-billed Grebe (22), Double-crested Cormorant (23), Great Egret (12), Lesser Scaup (11), Hooded Merganser (19), Bald Eagle (22), Ring-necked Pheasant (18), Ruffed Grouse (19), Wild Turkey (22),

Virginia Rail (18), Sora (19), American Coot (18), Upland Sandpiper (15), Common Snipe (21), American Woodcock (20), Herring Gull (17), Forster's Tern (11), Black Tern (20), Great Horned Owl (23), Barred Owl (22), Whip-poor-will (16), Red-headed Woodpecker (20), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (24), Pileated Woodpecker (24), Horned Lark (23), Marsh Wren (25), Hermit Thrush (19), Golden-winged Warbler (18), Yellow-rumped Warbler (16), Western Meadowlark (13), Brewer's Blackbird (25) and Evening Grosbeak (11).

The season provided an addition to Wisconsin's summer list: the Anhinga. A pair spent much of the first half of July at Thunder Lake, Oneida Co., but unfortunately found hiding places often enough to frustrate some of the observers who looked for them. Another species, the Western Tanager, was found for only the second time in summer in Wisconsin, in Washington Co. Last year's appearance of a Kirtland's Warbler in a Vilas Co. Atlas block encouraged observers to search that general area again this year, and over half a dozen people were able to locate two singing males (although seeing them was not nearly so easy!). Last year's Vilas Co. report, coupled with recent higher than usual numbers of this species in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, prompted the Fish and Wildlife Service to undertake a search of some of the suitable habitat in Marinette Co. A report from Janet Smith of the Green Bay office provided an account of Joel Trick's successfully finding no less than three singing males in that location.

The Manitowoc-Sheboygan area gull list for the season had a strong "winter" flavor to it, with Glaucous, Great Black-backed, Lesser Black-backed and

Iceland Gulls all being seen there multiple times. In contrast, two "summer" gulls were hard to find: Little Gull reports were restricted to June 5-6, and no Franklin's Gulls were noted here or anywhere else. An Arctic Tern put in a one-day appearance at Sheboygan and was seen well and photographed, and a jaeger was seen in Superior in early June.

Other rarities during the summer—some because they were out of season—included Western (two locations) and Eared Grebes; Snowy Egret; Little Blue and Tricolored Herons; Snow Goose; Oldsquaw; Spruce Grouse; Yellow and King Rails; American Avocet; Willet; Hudsonian Godwit; Western Sandpiper; Snowy Owl; Black-backed Woodpecker; Carolina Wren; Northern Mockingbird; White-eyed Vireo; Philadelphia Vireo (in early July); Prairie (three locations), Yellow-throated and Worm-eating Warblers; and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow.

Some observers continue to note changes in abundance from year to year, via either written comments or the codes on the single county forms. The only species considered to be more common this year than last by at least three observers were Turkey Vulture (although a few thought it less common), American Crow and House Finch. As is usually the case, the list of less common species is much longer: Pied-billed Grebe, Green Heron, American Black Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Osprey, Cooper's Hawk, Ruffed Grouse, Sora, Spotted Sandpiper, Black Tern, Barred Owl, Common Nighthawk (no less than 10 people thought this species less common!), Red-headed Woodpecker, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Purple Martin, Bank and Cliff

Swallow, Sedge and Marsh Wren, Eastern Bluebird (although a few thought it more common), Brown Thrasher, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Mourning Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Dickcissel, Vesper Sparrow and Eastern Meadowlark.

Reports came from 75 contributors this year, only three less than last year's all-time high for the summer season. Several observers covering Atlas blocks again provided wonderfully comprehensive information from their corners of the state. Few of the remaining contributors roamed very far in their birding. As a result, there were 15 counties that went without any kind of coverage: Adams, Calumet, Crawford, Eau Claire, Iron, Juneau, Lafayette, Monroe, Pierce, Polk, Racine, Richland, Rusk, St. Croix and Wood.

## REPORTS

(1 JUNE 1997–31 JULY 1997)

**Common Loon.**—One was present in Manitowoc Co. June 6 (Tessen). Subsequent reports came from 19 additional counties, among which Brown (Regan), Dunn (Gamache) and Jackson (Otto) were the southernmost.

**Red-necked Grebe.**—Up to 8 birds were seen by a number of observers at Lake Maria, Green Lake Co. Ziebell found 45 birds and 12 nests on June 22 at Rush Lake, Winnebago Co. Additional reports came from Burnett (Nance, Robbins) and Columbia (Robbins) Counties.

**Eared Grebe.**—One bird was seen June 20 in Dane Co. (Ashman, Hansen), and up to 4 birds were present July 7–12 on Lake Maria, Green Lake Co. (Belter, Schultz).

**Western Grebe.**—Noted on Lake Maria, Green Lake Co., June 26 (Tessen) through July 9 (Bill Foster, Robbins). Tessen reported that the bird was harassing one of the Red-necked Grebes there. Observed also at Rush Lake, Winnebago Co., June 22–July 14 (Ziebell, who also found a nest with 2 eggs).

**American White Pelican.**—Some of the people looking for the Anhingas at Thunder Lake, Oneida Co., July 5–8 found up to 2 individuals of this species there (Gustafson, Robbins, Spahn). Tessen reported over 100 in Brown Co., as well as 70 at Horicon Marsh, Dodge Co., July 19. One hundred young were banded from 104 nests in Brown Co. (Tom Erdman fide the Smiths). Leshner observed 200 in Trempealeau Co. July 12, as well as birds in La Crosse and Lafayette Counties. The Smiths noted up to 28 in Oconto Co. June 11–25, and a lone bird was in Milwaukee Co. June 22 (Korducki).

**Anhinga.**—Quite amazing were the 2 birds seen in July at Thunder Lake, Oneida Co. Spahn located them July 5, and both he and Tessen saw the birds on the 6th. Further observations were July 11 (Hewitt, Fountain) and 18 (Gustafson). All these reports, documenting Wisconsin's first summer record, were accepted by the Records Committee. See "By the Wayside."

**American Bittern.**—As often happens, most of the 16 counties in which this species was noted were in the northern half of the state.

**Least Bittern.**—Found in these 8 counties: Columbia, Douglas, Green Lake, Marquette, Oconto, Price, Waukesha and Winnebago.

**Snowy Egret.**—A number of observers saw one in Milwaukee Co.; found first (June 12) and last (July 6) by Korducki. Noted also in Brown Co. June 4 (Tessen), June 12 (T. Wood) and July 24 (Regan, 2 birds) and in Winnebago Co. June 11 (Tessen).

**Little Blue Heron.**—Domagalski reported an adult in Washington Co. June 13.

**Tricolored Heron.**—One was seen well June 15 in Horicon Marsh (Pearson, Dehnart). Accepted by the Records Committee. See "By the Wayside."

**Cattle Egret.**—Ziebell found 14 nests in Winnebago Co. June 29. Reported also from Brown and Dodge (Tessen) and Oconto (the Smiths) Counties.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron.**—Noted in fewer counties than in some summers: Door, Manitowoc, Marathon, Milwaukee, Oconto, Oneida, Washington and Winnebago.



**Trumpeter Swan.**—Gradually this species is being found in more locations, some years after the beginning of Minnesota and Wisconsin reintroduction programs. New counties this summer were Ashland (C. Wood) and Oconto (the Smiths). Birds in Jackson (Otto) and Oneida (the Fishers) Counties were repeats of 1996 locations, and observers continued to find birds in Burnett and Marathon Counties, sites of previous reintroductions.

**Mute Swan.**—Observed in Horicon Marsh and in Ashland, Bayfield, Dane, Door, Milwaukee, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha Counties.

**Snow Goose.**—Noted again in Winnebago Co. (Tessen, June 11), where it has been reported in 5 of the past 6 summers. Also present in Brown Co. June 4 (Tessen).

**Canada Goose.**—Sizable migrating flocks were observed in Manitowoc Co. June 4 (Sontag, 185 birds) and June 6 (Tessen, 320 birds).

**Green-winged Teal.**—Observers found these in Ashland, Barron, Dane, Douglas, Florence, Jackson, Manitowoc, Oconto, Oneida, Vilas, Washington and Winnebago Counties.

**American Black Duck.**—Present in Ashland/Bayfield, Door, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Oneida, Vilas, Washington and Winnebago Counties.

**Northern Pintail.**—The only report came from Washington Co. June 30 through July 5 (Domagalski).

**Northern Shoveler.**—This species was recorded in 8 counties: Barron, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Door, Manitowoc, Milwaukee and Oconto.

**Gadwall.**—Noted in Ashland, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Oconto and Winnebago Counties.

**American Wigeon.**—Present in Ashland, Burnett, Dane, Dodge, Douglas, Milwaukee, Oneida and Winnebago Counties.

**Canvasback.**—The season's only report came from Bayfield Co. June 8 (Robbins).

**Redhead.**—Observers found these in Bayfield, Dodge, Dunn, Manitowoc, Milwaukee and Winnebago Counties.

**Ring-necked Duck.**—This species was noted in 8 counties: Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Columbia, Dane, Douglas, Oneida and Winnebago.

**Greater Scaup.**—Present throughout the season in Milwaukee Co. (Korducki). Single males were noted also in Burnett Co. June 3 (Nance) and in Door Co. July 20 (the Lukes).

**Oldsquaw.**—Up to 2 birds were present much of the season in Door Co. (Leshner, Regan).

**Common Goldeneye.**—Recorded in Burnett Co. June 7 (Robbins), Manitowoc Co. as late as June 19 (Tessen), and Door Co. throughout the season (the Lukes).

**Bufflehead.**—Noted in Milwaukee Co. June 6 (Bontly), Bayfield Co. June 8 (Robbins), and Manitowoc Co. through July 9 (Sontag).

**Common Merganser.**—Present in these 6 counties: Bayfield, Douglas, Florence, Forest, Oneida and Vilas.

**Red-breasted Merganser.**—Tessen observed 25 in Manitowoc Co. June 19. Also reported from Bayfield (Nance) and Door (the Lukes, Stover) Counties.

**Ruddy Duck.**—Ziebell counted 178 in Winnebago Co. June 22. Also noted in Bayfield, Burnett, Columbia, Dane, Dunn, Green Lake and Manitowoc Counties.

**Osprey.**—Noted in Crawford Co. (Leshner), June 10 in Iowa Co. (Ashman), and July 18 in Milwaukee Co. (Gustafson). Nested in Winnebago Co. (Tessen, Ziebell). Reported from 20 counties in all.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk.**—Observed again in Walworth Co. (Parsons). Noted also in Iowa Co. June 27 (Tessen), Washington Co. July 20 (Domagalski), and in 15 more northern counties.

**Northern Goshawk.**—Very unusual was a report from Sheboygan Co. July 6 (Domagalski).

Other observations came from Bayfield (C. Wood), Door (the Lukes, Stover), Oconto (Peterson, 3 birds; Tessen) and Vilas (Baughman) Counties.

**Red-shouldered Hawk.**—Nested in Price Co. (Warren). Also noted in Bayfield (C. Wood), Door (the Lukes), Douglas (Frank, Robbins), Menominee (Tessen) and 8 more southern counties.

**Broad-winged Hawk.**—Of the 21 counties from which this species was reported this summer, only Waukesha (Bontly) was in the southern half of the state.

**Merlin.**—Observed in Ashland, Bayfield, Door, Douglas, Oneida and Vilas Counties.

**Peregrine Falcon.**—Illustrating the success of reintroduction programs, reports came from no less than 8 counties this year: Brown, Buffalo, Dodge, Douglas, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Ozaukee and Winnebago.

**Gray Partridge.**—This species is usually reported from relatively few locations in summer, but this is the first year in many when it has been recorded in only a single county (Door, the Lukes).

**Spruce Grouse.**—Observers found these in Forest (T. Wood), Oneida (the Fishers) and Vilas (Baughman, Spahn, Tessen) Counties.

**Greater Prairie-Chicken.**—Reported from Clark Co. (Decker), in addition to its more usual Portage Co. location (Berner).

**Sharp-tailed Grouse.**—Noted in Bayfield (C. Wood), Douglas (the LaValleys) and Florence (Strelka) Counties.

**Northern Bobwhite.**—Among the 11 counties in which this species was noted, Barron (Hinz), Clark (Decker) and Dunn (Gamache) were the most northern.

**Yellow Rail.**—This season's only observations were in Marquette Co. (Hewitt, Peterson).

**King Rail.**—Robbins' report from Columbia Co. July 14 was the only one of the season.

**Common Moorhen.**—Noted in these 6 counties: Columbia, Dane, Oconto, Washington, Waukesha and Winnebago.

**Black-bellied Plover.**—Lingered in Manitowoc Co. until June 6 (Sontag, Tessen).

**Semipalmated Plover.**—The latest obvious spring migrant was observed in Dane Co. June 11 (Hansen). Reported in Milwaukee Co. July 14 (Korducki) and in several other areas within the next 2 weeks. Was a bird in Jefferson Co. June 29 (Korducki) a late spring or an early fall migrant?

**American Avocet.**—A full breeding plumage bird was in Clark Co. July 13 (Ken Luepke fide Decker). A single bird was also present in Dane Co. July 21 (Ashman, Hansen).

**Greater Yellowlegs.**—The only June reports came from Horicon Marsh June 5 (Nance) and Ozaukee Co. June 15 (Frank). Had returned to Dodge Co. by July 13 (Schultz) and to 5 additional counties within the following week.

**Lesser Yellowlegs.**—Noted in Dane (Hansen) and Milwaukee (Korducki) Counties July 3 and in several additional locations within the following week.

**Solitary Sandpiper.**—Had returned to Outagamie Co. by July 4 (Tessen) and to Dane (Ashman) and Douglas (the LaValleys) Counties by July 7.

**Willet.**—Two birds were in Milwaukee Co. July 24 (Gustafson).

**Hudsonian Godwit.**—Very unusual was a bird in Columbia Co. June 1 (Bucar).

**Ruddy Turnstone.**—Birds had left most locations before mid-June, but Sontag noted this species in Manitowoc Co. through July 9.

**Red Knot.**—Two birds lingered in Manitowoc Co. until June 6 (Sontag, Tessen).

**Sanderling.**—The only report was of 20 birds in Douglas Co. June 3 (Nance).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper.**—Stragglers were still in Dane Co. June 20 (Ashman, Hansen). The earliest returning birds were noted July 4 in Outagamie Co. (Tessen) and July 5 in Milwaukee Co. (Korducki), with no further reports until mid-month.

**Western Sandpiper.**—The season's only report came from Manitowoc Co. June 6 (Tessen).

**Least Sandpiper.**—The only June observation was in Manitowoc Co. June 6 (Tessen). Birds appeared in Milwaukee (Gustafson) and Outagamie (Tessen) Counties July 4 and in several other areas within the following week.

**White-rumped Sandpiper.**—Present in Manitowoc Co. June 6 (Tessen, 4 birds), Oconto Co. June 11 (the Smiths), and Dane Co. through June 13 (Ashman, Hansen) and from July 14 on (Robbins).

**Baird's Sandpiper.**—Noted in Dane Co. through June 2 (Burcar) and in Oconto Co. June 11 (the Smiths).

**Pectoral Sandpiper.**—Observed through June 11 in Dane Co. (Hansen). Birds had returned to Outagamie Co. by July 4 (Tessen) and to Dane Co. by July 7 (Burcar), with other reports not coming until about 2 weeks later.

**Dunlin.**—Observers reported this species in 5 counties in June, latest on the 11th (Oconto, the Smiths). The only other record came from Waukesha Co. July 23 (Strelka).

**Stilt Sandpiper.**—Migrants were observed as follows: Dane Co. July 15 (Hansen), Dodge Co. July 19 (Tessen) and Milwaukee Co. July 27 (Domagalski).

**Dowitcher sp.**—Only one observer provided any documentation with respect to identification of dowitcher species this summer. Please indicate, even if only briefly, the basis for your identifications in future seasons.

**Short-billed Dowitcher.**—One bird was reported from Manitowoc Co. June 7 (Sontag). The earliest fall migrant noted was in Milwaukee Co. July 6 (Korducki), with birds reported in a number of additional locations before the end of the month.

**Long-billed Dowitcher.**—A single bird was reported from Dodge Co. July 19 (Tessen).

**Wilson's Phalarope.**—Fewer reports this summer than usual, from Dane Co. through June 3 (Ashman, Hansen), Oconto Co. June 12 (Regan, 3 birds) and Dodge Co. July 19 (Tessen).

**Jaeger sp.**—Jim Williams saw a probable Parasitic Jaeger in Douglas Co. June 2. Accepted as Jaeger sp. by the Records Committee. See "By the Wayside."

**Laughing Gull.**—There were 2 reports of adult birds this summer: Manitowoc Co. June 13 (Sontag) and Milwaukee Co. July 4 (T. Wood).

**Franklin's Gull.**—For the first time in at least 16 years, there were no summer reports of this species.

**Little Gull.**—Noted on only two dates, June 5 (Sontag) and June 6 (Tessen), both in Manitowoc Co. This is the smallest number of birds seen in a number of seasons.

**Bonaparte's Gull.**—Observed in Columbia Co. July 8 (Burcar), Green Lake Co. June 24–July 13 (Schultz) and Waukesha Co. July 29 (Strelka). The other 6 counties from which reports were received bordered either Lake Michigan or Lake Superior.

**Ring-billed Gull.**—Nesting in Dane Co. may represent a first in that location for this species. Found in 30 counties in all.

**Iceland Gull.**—Appeared in Manitowoc Co. for the third time in the 1990s. Noted there June 19 (Tessen) and July 11–17 (Sontag). See "By the Wayside."

**Lesser Black-backed Gull.**—Reported from Manitowoc and Sheboygan Counties June 18–July 6. Accounts by Peterson and Domagalski were accepted by the Records Committee. See "By the Wayside." Wisconsin observers have found this species only once before in summer.

**Glaucous Gull.**—Noted in Manitowoc Co. June 19 (Tessen) and July 14 (Sontag).

**Great Black-backed Gull.**—Since the first reported nesting of this species in Wisconsin in

1994, summer observations have increased. Recorded this year in Door and Kewaunee (Regan), Manitowoc (Peterson, Sontag, Tessen) and Sheboygan (the Brassers, Domagalski) Counties.

**Caspian Tern.**—Present through June 3 and after June 27 in Dane Co. and on July 27 in Columbia Co. (Ashman). Noted throughout the season in Winnebago Co. (Ziebell) and in 8 additional counties bordering Lake Michigan or Lake Superior.

**Common Tern.**—Two birds were present in Winnebago Co. through the season (Ziebell). Somewhat unusual “inland,” this species was noted in Dodge Co. July 12 (Robbins). The remaining reports came from 7 counties along Lake Michigan or Lake Superior.

**Arctic Tern.**—A bird was seen well and photographed in Sheboygan Co. June 8 (Hughes, O’Brien, David Mandell, Andy Sigler), providing the first Wisconsin summer record since 1988. Accepted by the Records Committee. See “By the Wayside.”

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo.**—Several observers commented on the lateness of cuckoo migration this year. Diehl thought that the location of a bird in Milwaukee Co. June 13 suggested it was definitely a migrant. As usual, there were many more reports from southern counties. Among the 22 counties from which this species was reported, the most northern were Barron, Douglas, Price and Washburn.

**Eastern Screech-Owl.**—Noted only in Milwaukee Co. (Bontly, Korducki). Fewest reports in years.

**Snowy Owl.**—One bird was seen in Ashland Co. July 2 and 10 (Verch, Figure 1), and a second in Douglas Co. was taken for rehabilitation to The Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota (Jane Goggin, Raptor Center staff, fide Svingen). There have been summer reports of this species in 11 of the past 24 years.

**Long-eared Owl.**—One was observed in Oconto Co. June 30 (Tessen).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl.**—The season’s only observation was in Bayfield Co. July 9 (C. Wood).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker.**—Barron, Chipewewa, Door, Marathon and Oconto were the most northern of the 21 counties reporting this species this summer.

**Black-backed Woodpecker.**—This elusive species was found in Ashland (C. Wood), Bayfield (C. Wood), Forest (T. Wood) and Vilas (Baughman, Spahn, Tessen) Counties.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher.**—Lingered in Milwaukee Co. until June 7 (Bontly); noted in Brown Co. the same day (Regan). Also recorded in Bayfield, Door, Douglas, Forest, Iron, Oneida and Vilas Counties.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.**—Present in several southern counties in early June; latest were 6 in Milwaukee Co. June 6 (Korducki) and a bird in Manitowoc Co. June 11 (Sontag). Birds were present again in Dewey Marsh, Portage Co. (Berner), but the remaining reports came from 8 more northern counties.

**Acadian Flycatcher.**—A bird singing in Marinette Co. June 12 was unusual (the Smiths). Other reports came from Dunn (Gamache), Portage and Marathon (Berner), Waupaca (Soulen) and 11 more southern counties.

**Alder Flycatcher.**—Migration may have been even later than usual for this species this year. Korducki counted 15 in Milwaukee Co. June 7, and a number of observers in southern counties reported single dates near mid-June. As usual, though, a few birds were present throughout the season in the southern few tiers of counties. Noted in 40 counties in all.

**Willow Flycatcher.**—This species, observed in 28 counties this season, rarely invades northern counties. This year it was reported from Douglas (Johnson), Marathon (Belter) and Oconto (the Smiths) Counties.

**Gray Jay.**—This year’s observations came from Ashland, Bayfield, Forest, Oneida and Vilas Counties.

**Common Raven.**—Among the 19 reporting counties, the most southern was Jackson (Otto), as is frequently the case.



Figure 1. Snowy Owl, Ashland, Wisconsin (2–10 July 1997). Photo by Dick Verch.

**Boreal Chickadee.**—Noted in Forest (Boldt, Spahn), Oneida (the Fishers, Tessen) and Vilas (Boldt, Reardon, Spahn) Counties.

**Tufted Titmouse.**—Found in fewer counties than usual: Columbia, Dane, Dunn, Grant, Iowa and Sauk.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch.**—A reasonably good year for this species, with observations in 30 counties. As usual, a few of these were southern: Dane, Iowa, Milwaukee and Waukesha. Fledged young in Washington Co. (Domagalski). A bird in La Crosse Co. July 27 was probably a migrant (Leshner).

**Brown Creeper.**—Nested in Washington Co. (Domagalski). Reported from 15 additional counties, all more northern.

**Carolina Wren.**—The only report this season was of a bird heard in Washington Co. June 27 (Diehl).

**Winter Wren.**—Nested in Washington Co.; reported to be one of the most prominent residents in one bog there (Boldt, Domagalski). Ex-

cept for the usual reports from Sauk Co., remaining observations of this species were in 17 more northern counties.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet.**—Present again in Dewey Marsh, Portage Co. (Berner). Noted also in Bayfield, Door, Douglas, Forest, Oneida and Vilas Counties.

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet.**—Recorded this year in these counties: Bayfield (C. Wood, at least 5 pairs), Florence, Forest, Oneida and Vilas.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.**—Noted again in Marathon Co. (Belter). Also reported in an Atlas block in Barron Co. (Hinz) and in Burnett (Nance), Door (the Lukes) and Oconto (the Smiths) Counties. The remaining 19 reporting counties were more southern.

**Eastern Bluebird.**—It may be because less birders were traveling to multiple counties this season, but the 37 counties total in which this species was recorded is somewhat lower than the average for recent years.

**Swainson's Thrush.**—Stragglers were noted in several locations in early June, latest in Milwaukee Co. June 7 (Korducki). The earliest fall migrants appeared July 29 in Brown (Regan) and Portage (Berner) Counties. Other reports came from Ashland Co. June 13 (C. Wood), Lincoln Co. June 23 (Uttech), Oneida Co. June 24–26 (the Fishers, Uttech) and Bayfield Co. July 10–16 (C. Wood).

**Northern Mockingbird.**—Reported from Door County June 15 (the Lukes) and Outagamie Co. July 13 (Cochran).

**Loggerhead Shrike.**—Nested again in Shawano Co., fledging several young (Peterson, Tessen). There were no other reports.

**White-eyed Vireo.**—Birds at the Schlitz Audubon Center in Milwaukee Co. and Governor Dodge State Park in Iowa Co. were heard and sometimes seen by a number of observers. Also reported from Dane Co. June 12 (Hansen), Green Co. June 7 (Ashman) and Ozaukee Co. June 18 (Uttech).

**Bell's Vireo.**—Noted in Dunn (Gamache), Grant (Belter, Peterson, Tessen), Iowa (Peterson, Robbins, Tessen, T. Wood), La Crosse (Leshner) and Sauk (Ashman) Counties.

**Blue-headed Vireo.**—Present June 1 in Grant Co. (Robbins) and June 2 in Washington Co. (Domagalski). The remaining 11 reporting counties were within normal summer range.

**Yellow-throated Vireo.**—Atlas blocks in Bayfield Co. yielded this species on 9 occasions (C. Wood), and birds were noted in nearly all of the northernmost 2 tiers of counties in the state. Recorded in 35 counties in all.

**Philadelphia Vireo.**—Still present in Milwaukee Co. June 3 (Gustafson, Korducki). Frank saw one well in Bayfield Co. July 10; see "By the Wayside." Noted in Atlas blocks in Bayfield Co. on 3 occasions (C. Wood); birds were observed defending a territory and carrying nesting material.

**Blue-winged Warbler.**—Among the 19 reporting counties, the most northern were Barron (Hinz), Marathon (Belter, Berner) and Oconto (the Smiths).

**Blue-winged/Golden-winged hybrid.**—A Lawrence's Warbler was in Green Lake Co. July 1 (Schultz).

**Tennessee Warbler.**—Noted in 6 southern counties in early June, latest in Dane Co. June 7 (Burcar). Still in Douglas Co. June 10 (Johnson). Birds in Florence Co. June 18 (Burcar) and Bayfield Co. July 7 (Frank) could have been summer residents. Fall migrants appeared in Washington Co. July 19 and Dodge Co. July 26 (Domagalski).

**Nashville Warbler.**—The latest straggler noted was in Trempealeau Co. June 7 (Robbins). Fledged young in Green Lake Co. (Schultz). Reported from 25 counties overall.

**Northern Parula.**—Still in Manitowoc Co. June 2 (Sontag), Milwaukee Co. June 4 (Korducki) and Burnett Co. June 8 (Robbins). Reported from 9 counties within range.

**Magnolia Warbler.**—More than the usual number of June reports in southern counties (6), the latest in Jefferson June 12 (Hale) and Milwaukee June 14 (Korducki). Noted in 8 northern counties.

**Cape May Warbler.**—Still in Milwaukee Co. June 7 (Korducki). Noted in Douglas Co. through June 21 (Johnson) and in Vilas Co. through June 8 (Baughman) and on July 7 (Spahn).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler.**—One was still in Marathon Co. June 3 (Belter). Reported later in the season from Ashland, Bayfield, Door, Forest, Menominee, Oneida and Vilas Counties.

**Black-throated Green Warbler.**—There were 7 reports from southern counties in June, the latest in Washington Co. June 20 (Domagalski). This species has occasionally summered in southern locations, but little is known about how frequently this occurs. A bird in Walworth Co. July 3–7 was unusual (Parsons). Reported from 14 counties within range.

**Blackburnian Warbler.**—The latest straggler was noted in Milwaukee Co. June 5 (Korducki). Recorded in 12 northern counties.

**Yellow-throated Warbler.**—Four observers (Belter, Peterson, Tessen, T. Wood) found this species in June at what seems to have become



a regular summer location for it in Wyalusing State Park, Grant Co.

**Pine Warbler.**—The only southern location reported was Waukesha Co. (Bontly), where this species is regular in the tall pines of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. Noted in 20 counties overall.

**Kirtland's Warbler.**—After last year's discovery of a bird in a Vilas Co. Atlas block, a number of observers covered the general area again this year. Up to 2 singing males were found in the area by at least 8 observers. Portions of several of the accounts submitted that were accepted by the Records Committee are in "By the Wayside." In another location, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biologist John Trick searched some likely habitat in Marinette Co. and discovered 3 singing males. Some excellent photographs were obtained in both locations (Figure 2).

**Prairie Warbler.**—Ashman found a singing male in Green Co. June 9. A single bird was in Portage Co. between June 27 and July 5 (Berner). A bird was at the Schlitz Audubon Center, Milwaukee Co. through much of June (Bontly, Korducki, Tessen).

**Palm Warbler.**—Considerably more reports this season than usual. A bird in Milwaukee Co. June 3 provided the only June report from a southern county in many years (Bontly). A bird in the Lukes' bird bath in Door Co. on June 23 was very unusual. Present again in the Dewey Marsh, Portage Co. (Berner). Noted also in Ashland, Douglas, Oneida and Vilas Counties. Spahn reported that a number of Vilas Co. birds were in upland habitat, rather than the largely open bogs we normally expect them to occupy.

**Bay-breasted Warbler.**—Lingered until June 5 in Milwaukee Co. (Korducki) and June 6 in Manitowoc Co. (Tessen). A female in Vilas Co. July 20 might have been a migrant (Baughman).



Figure 2. Kirtland's Warbler, Marinette County, Wisconsin (22 June 1997). Photo by Matthew Barber.

**Blackpoll Warbler.**—More June reports than in many years. Noted in Dane (Ashman), Milwaukee (Korducki) and Washington (Domagalski) Counties June 1–5. A singing male seen well in Brown Co. June 16 was very unusual (Regan).

**Cerulean Warbler.**—Single birds in Douglas Co. June 10 (Johnson) and Oconto Co. June 13 (the Smiths) were unusual. Also noted in 9 southern counties.

**Black-and-white Warbler.**—Still in Milwaukee Co. June 7 (Korducki). As is often the case, there were reports after early June from a few southern locations, but most of the 26 reporting counties were in the central and northern part of the state.

**Prothonotary Warbler.**—Reported in Buffalo, Dodge, Grant, Green Lake and Iowa Counties.

**Worm-eating Warbler.**—Reports, presumably of birds heard singing, came from Grant (Robbins, Tessen), Sauk (Peterson, Robbins, Tessen) and Waukesha (John Bielefeldt, 3 birds, fide Boldt) Counties.

**Northern Waterthrush.**—Still present in Milwaukee Co. June 5 (Bontly) and Sauk Co. June 12 (Burcar). Nested in Washington Co. (Boldt, Noel Cutright fide Domagalski). Also noted in Dodge (Frank) and 15 central and northern counties.

**Louisiana Waterthrush.**—Reported as nesting in Washington Co., amazingly within sight of a breeding Northern Waterthrush (Noel Cutright fide Domagalski). Also noted in Iowa (Robbins, Tessen), Sauk (several observers) and Portage (Berner) Counties.

**Kentucky Warbler.**—Noted in these counties: Dane (Ashman), Grant (Belter, Robbins, Tessen), Green (Ashman) and Sauk (Burcar).

**Connecticut Warbler.**—Still in Milwaukee Co. June 7 (Korducki). Also reported from Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Forest, Oneida and Vilas Counties.

**Mourning Warbler.**—Atlas work should help us document the degree of nesting suggested by fairly frequent summer observations of

this species in southern Wisconsin. As an example, Domagalski observes that breeding has been confirmed in 11 of 13 Atlas blocks in the Washington Co. area and further states that in these areas, this species is the fourth most common nesting warbler. Noted in 31 counties in all, most of them central and northern.

**Hooded Warbler.**—Present in Milwaukee Co. June 3 (Gustafson). Observers found this species in these additional counties this summer: Grant, Iowa, Sauk, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha.

**Wilson's Warbler.**—Many more reports than usual confirm a late migration for this species this year. Noted in no less than 8 counties in June, latest in Milwaukee June 9 (Bontly).

**Canada Warbler.**—Very late migrants (presumably) were in Dane Co. June 14 (Ashman), Vernon Co. June 15 (Leshner) and Milwaukee Co. June 20 (Korducki). Nested in Washington Co. (Noel Cutright fide Domagalski). Two birds were present through the season in a ravine bordering Lake Michigan in Ozaukee Co. (Boldt). Also noted in Waukesha Co. through the season (Strelka). The remaining 14 reporting counties were more northern.

**Yellow-breasted Chat.**—Nested in Green Co. (Ashman). Noted also in Dane (Ashman, Peterson), Iowa (Tessen), Kenosha (T. Wood), Milwaukee (Bontly) and Waushara (Schultz) Counties.

**Western Tanager.**—A bird that appeared in Washington Co. June 10 (the Roos family) constitutes only the second Wisconsin summer record. It was seen well and photographed. Korducki's search for it 2 days later found only the remains of a dead bird, but enough of it was left to reinforce the identification. Accepted by the Records Committee. See "By the Wayside."

**Northern Cardinal.**—Northernmost among the 30 reporting counties was Bayfield (Frank). Noted also in Barron (Hinz), Oconto (the Smiths) and Taylor (Rickert) Counties.

**Dickcissel.**—Numbers of reporting counties (13) and of individuals were quite low this year, and birds did not appear in some areas until after mid-June or even into July. The only reporting counties above the southernmost few tiers were

Barron (Hinz), Dunn (Gamache) and Outagamie (Tessen).

**Clay-colored Sparrow.**—Noted in 30 counties scattered around most sections of the state. Boldt confirmed nesting in 2 locations in Ozaukee Co; he speculates that this species occurs commonly along the Lake Michigan shore.

**Field Sparrow.**—Noted in Barron, Bayfield, Door, Douglas, Forest, Oconto, Vilas and Washburn Counties, as well as in 25 more southern ones.

**Lark Sparrow.**—Nested in Iowa Co.; 4 were seen there July 8 (Ashman). Reported also in Dunn (Gamache) and Sauk (Burcar, Robbins, Tessen) Counties.

**Grasshopper Sparrow.**—Noted in Barron (Hinz), Oconto (Tessen) and Vilas (Spahn) Counties, as well as in 13 more southern ones.

**Henslow's Sparrow.**—Reported from Kewaunee (Regan), Marathon (Belter, Robbins) and Shawano (Peterson) Counties. Also noted in 10 more southern counties.

**Le Conte's Sparrow.**—Observers found this species in these 7 counties: Ashland (C. Wood, 8 pairs), Barron (Hinz), Burnett (Nance, Robbins), Douglas (Johnson, the LaValleys), Marathon (Belter, Robbins), Oneida (a number of observers) and Price (Warren).

**Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow.**—The only report came from Burnett Co. June 3 (Nance).

**Lincoln's Sparrow.**—Still present in Waukesha Co. June 1 (Strelka) and in Milwaukee Co. June 6 (Bontly). Present again this year in Dewey Marsh, Portage Co. (Berner). Noted also in Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Forest, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida and Vilas Counties.

**White-throated Sparrow.**—Still in Milwaukee Co. June 2 (Gustafson) and Dane Co. June 7 (Burcar). Nested in Washington Co. (Domagalski). The other 15 reports came from central and northern counties.

**White-crowned Sparrow.**—A bird in Columbia Co. June 1 was very late (Burcar).

**Dark-eyed Junco.**—Noted, sometimes in good numbers, in Bayfield, Forest, Oneida and Vilas Counties.

**Yellow-headed Blackbird.**—Ziebell counted 840 in Winnebago Co. June 22. Reported from 18 counties in all.

**Orchard Oriole.**—Nested in Ozaukee Co. (Frank, Uttech). Noted also in these counties: Brown (Regan), Columbia and Dane (Robbins), Iowa (Belter, Burcar, Peterson, Robbins, Tessen), Milwaukee (Korducki, Zehner), Sauk (Tessen), and Trempealeau and Vernon (Leshner).

**Purple Finch.**—Observed in 20 counties, the most southern being Outagamie (June 24, Tessen).

**House Finch.**—Reported from 38 counties in all, representing most parts of the state.

**Red Crossbill.**—One was in Portage Co. July 9 (Berner). Noted also in Barron, Bayfield, Douglas, Florence, Oneida and Vilas Counties.

**White-winged Crossbill.**—Present in Oneida Co. June 14 (T. Wood) and in Vilas Co. at various times in June and July (Baughman, Spahn).

**Pine Siskin.**—Relatively few reports, from these counties: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Douglas, Forest, Oneida, Shawano and Vilas.

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## 50 Years Ago in *The Passenger Pigeon*

With the field work past the half way point for the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas, we should remember those in the past who contributed mightily to our knowledge of bird nests and eggs. Probably Wisconsin's premier nest finder of all time, Carl Richter, presented a paper entitled "Breeding Birds of Oconto County" at the annual convention in 1947 in Green Bay. His address is presented in this issue.

Richter discusses March nesters, Great Horned Owl and Canada (Gray) Jay, and those nesting in April, including woodcock, (prairie) Horned Lark, Bald Eagle, Barred Owl, the crossbills, and several hawks. Richter continues recounting nesting phenology of species breeding through the summer. He concludes with the late nesters, both species of cuckoos, Indigo Bunting, and American Goldfinch.

Included in the article are pictures of Richter with a Yellow Rail nest taken on May 27, 1929. In another picture, the nest and eggs of Bonaparte's Gull at the mouth of the Oconto River are shown on the rotted end of a wooden piling located four feet above the water's surface.

The article concludes with a challenge to Wisconsin birders. "And, now, as an added bit of stimulation for the host of bird students present, we have a species of which no mention is made in literature on Wisconsin birds, nesting with us. Not only has this bird been found (personally) to nest in Oconto County, but in two adjoining counties as well. What is it? Well, it is something for you ornithologists to 'ferret out' on your own; and perhaps in doing so, other discoveries may be made."

I don't know what species Richter was talking about. (Excerpts from Volume 10(1), 1948)



"Both Sides Covered," (American Kestrel), by David Kuecherer

## “By the Wayside”

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*Observations are reported documenting sightings of Anhinga, Tricolored Heron, Jaeger sp., Iceland Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Arctic Tern, Philadelphia Vireo, Kirtland's Warbler and Western Tanager.*

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### ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*)

**6 July 1997, Thunder Lake, Oneida County**—Arriving at Thunder Lake Marsh before 6:30, a Le Conte's Sparrow was heard singing as I drove to the north boat landing of Thunder Lake. It was cloudy with a little drizzle ending. After an unproductive 20+ minutes scanning the lake (only pelicans and several duck species, Osprey and Bald Eagles could be located) the sun came out. On a last scan of the lake two dark birds were discovered sunning themselves on a snag along the west shore. The longer, fan-shaped tail; black body color; whitish (silvery) wing patches; long neck with a long pointed, yellowish bill could be seen. After watching the pair of Anhingas for several minutes I started calling people on the car phone. The Spahns arrived and we discovered the birds had flown to the boulder (where the pelicans rested) far out in the lake. At this time the buffy neck and breast of the female could be seen. When we left, the birds were still sitting on the boulder.—*Daryl Tessen, Appleton.*

**18 July 1997, Thunder Lake, Oneida County**—On this, my second trip to Thunder Lake, I began to scope from the south boat landing and almost immediately saw a dark bird in flight. Unfortunately, it was a cormorant, but provided a good comparison for the next birds. A dark bird was seen on the large rock, where others had seen the Anhingas. Just after adjusting my scope to 60×, another dark bird was seen gliding past like the one on the rock. I only watched the gliding bird a few seconds before it disappeared along the shore. During that time, I was able to see the bird was very dark, cormorant-sized, but with a long neck, long tail, and sharp pointed bill. I didn't have time to check for all the traits (such as light back feathers), but the view was from the side anyways. The brief view emphasized in my mind the profile and long wings (like a cross) with the neck straight out and little indication where the head was (head almost as slim as neck).

Meanwhile, the bird on the rock was fairly active, partially due to a nearby canoeist. The bird was blackish, cormorant-sized, but with a very slim neck



which was quite long, a narrow head (not much thicker than the neck), and a long, sharply pointed bill. Both head and bill shape reminded me more of a heron. The long, fan-shaped tail was seen several times as the bird moved around. Several times the wings were partially opened and pale feathers could be seen on the upper wings and sides of the back. (Exact colors were hard to determine because even though the sun was mostly behind me, it was very bright, reflecting off the bird.)

After about 10 minutes, the bird flew from the rock, behind the island, then back towards me, eventually disappearing in a bay to the southeast. In flight, which was fairly rapid with some glides interspersed, the long neck outstretched, small head and long straight pointed bill, and longer wider tail were easily noted.—*Dennis Gustafson, New Berlin.*

**11 July 1997, Thunder Lake, Oneida County**—We stopped at the south boat landing and both looked with binoculars, checking the large rock west of us. We both immediately recognized that the two birds on the right side of the rock were different than the two on the left side. The birds were all facing SSW.

We quickly set up the scope and could see the two birds on the left were cormorants. The two on the right had longer, thinner necks. The bills were straight, longer and thinner than the cormorant bills. The bills were noticeably lighter in color than the orange of the two on the left. The bird on the far right had a light colored neck. The light coloring ended abruptly at the breast. This bird stood up and turned slightly (further SW), partially extending its wings. From this view the tail was

quite visible. It was significantly longer than the tail of the birds on the left. The fact that the boulder was a light tan color made the dark shapes and proportions easier to see.

This fortunate sighting provided an excellent opportunity to compare and contrast the two species.—*Janet Avis Hewitt and John W. Fountain, Iola.*

**5 July 1997, Thunder Lake, Oneida County**—Having just set up the scope on a Bald Eagle right of the boat launch for a family of nonbirders, I picked up a pair of birds on a log along shore (jutting out over the water) about 300 yards left and swung the scope to them to show them quickly an "immature and adult cormorant." Then I went on to scope the ducks and found the pelicans as noted on accompanying report.

Suddenly it hit that those "cormorants" weren't right for shape and the color and cutoff of the "immature." Looking very carefully and zooming to up to  $45\times$  (too little light to gain much at  $60\times$ ), we studied the two birds. Both were perched basically breast to us with slight view of the left side, none of back. Immediately, both were shaped wrong for cormorant, too skinny and long, thin-necked. Both had longish, thin, sharply pointed yellow-orange bills.

The one bird at the time we called adult or subadult was basically all black to our view, except the bill and some naked facial area, plus it had a couple of white streaks along the front side of the lower neck and breast. Now after consulting my guides I would call this an adult male with white, breeding season neck plumes.

The second bird was similar in size and shape, but the head, neck and

breast we could see was light, near white on the throat to buffy brown on the neck and breast, cutting off very sharply, then the rest of the visible under parts black. This was the first basic, wrong-color pattern which said, "whoa, not cormorant." Observing further, the tails of the birds, black below to our view, appeared long and rounded, too long for cormorant.

Again, I earlier thought the second bird an immature (probably, clinging to the cormorant idea). Now I consider it an adult female Anhinga.—Robert G. Spahn, Webster, New York.

### TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*)

**15 June 1997, Horicon Marsh**—First noticed small heron while using binoculars. Looked to be about 2 ft. long. Heron stretched neck and we could clearly see white along front of neck and breast. Set up scope and then could see bill was blue-gray with black tip. Back was cinnamon colored. Legs were bluish-gray. Wings were slate-blue as was the rest of neck and head. Could not see eye color.—Sandra Pearson, Pewaukee; Marion Dehnart, Horicon.

### JAEGER SP. (*Stercorarius* sp.)

**2 June 1997, Superior County**—On 2 June 1997, following a morning of birding on the Minnesota side of the Duluth-Superior harbor, I drove to the end of Wisconsin Point. I reached the channel at approximately 1 P.M. The day was bright, the lake in full sun, the wind moderate. Bird activity was at a minimum except for an occasional Ring-billed Gull patrolling the shore. A large concentration of gulls, possibly thousands, was loafing upshore, beneath the cliff that bounds the Supe-

rior landfill area. As I scanned the lake from the end of the point, a large bird came in from open water and began pursuit of a gull.

A short series of airborne parries ensued. From the behavior of the bird and configuration of the tail, with a finger of longer feather protruding from the tail proper, I believed I was watching a jaeger. The bird in question was slightly smaller than the gull involved, and more sleekly built. It was a powerful flyer. I watched the initial approach with 8×42 Bausch and Lomb binoculars. I had a spotting scope standing beside me, a Swarovski AT80 with 20-power lens. I switched to the scope once I realized what I was watching.

The subject bird gave me clean looks coming and going and in side profile at a distance of 300 to 400 feet with the sun behind me. It was a pale-form jaeger, dark on top, light to white on the bottom, the light color interrupted abruptly by a dark band which girdled the lower portion of the bird's breast. This breast band began at a point approximately below the leading edge of the wing. The head was darkly capped. The dark portions of the bird were evenly colored; there was no indication of banding or mottling one might see in juveniles of any of the three jaeger species.

After about 30 to 45 seconds, the subject bird abandoned pursuit of the gull and began flying parallel with the beach toward the landfill cliff. I lost sight of it. I drove to the gull loafing area beneath the cliff and spent another long hour trying unsuccessfully to relocate the bird.

I determined the bird to be an adult Parasitic Jaeger. I have seen these birds many times on three trips to Alaska as well as on several pelagic birding trips

off the coast of California.—*Jim Williams, Webster.*

### ICELAND GULL (*Larus glaucooides*)

#### 11–17 July 1997, Manitowoc County—

The Iceland Gull was . . . a first year bird that was obviously larger than Ring-billed Gulls it was standing with but smaller than the Herring Gulls found in the area. The bird was found on four separate noon-hour walks into Silver Creek Park and always standing on the shore at the mouth of Silver Creek. The bird was buffy colored and mottled. Toward the end of the observation time the primaries on the right side were almost all missing. The head was critically examined revealing a dark bill, light only at its base and a dark iris. The "smallish" head was rounded in its appearance, more similar to the Ring-billed Gulls in general shape. The lores were dark, accenting the eye area. The primaries when present were light as were the tail feathers, but without distinct barring. Interestingly, the undertail/belly appeared barred. The uppertail coverts were mottled. The rest of the feathering was mottled with light tan, and gave a "patchy" appearance where new feathering was beginning to emerge. The feet were dark grayish-pink. The bird, along with the Ring-billed Gulls, was easily approached and would permit bathing children in the area to engage in activity, retreating only when they got too close.—*Charles Sontag, Manitowoc.*

### LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus fuscus*)

6 July 1997, Sheboygan County—A single bird, intermediate in size between

a Herring Gull and a Ring-billed Gull. Much smaller than an adult Great Black-backed Gull, which was also in the area. Head and underparts were pure white. The mantle was slate gray, not the black of the Great Black-backed, with a tinge of brown in the wings. Wing tips extended beyond the tail feathers and were black in color and, thus, much darker than the slate gray mantle. Legs were bright yellow. The yellow bill was a much more bright yellow than the faded yellow of the Herring and Ring-billed. A bright reddish spot at distal end of lower mandible.—*Robert C. Domagalski, Menominee Falls.*

#### 18 June 1997, Two Rivers, Manitowoc County—

I was heading north along the Lake Michigan shoreline, just south of the Lighthouse Inn in Two Rivers, when I saw a dark-backed gull standing along the beach with about 50 other gulls. This gull had a coal-black back, the same color as a Great Black-backed Gull, which I at first thought this bird was. This bird was about the same height as the nearby Herring Gulls and did not tower above them, as Great Black-backed Gulls do. The bill was yellow with a red spot near the end of the lower mandible. The size and shape of the bill was nearly identical to those of the nearby Herring Gulls. The head, neck, and breast were white-colored. The tail was also white. The bird was just below the top of the sand line when it started walking closer to me. When the legs came into view, they were yellow. When the gulls flew shortly after that the yellow legs and feet could clearly be seen. Shortly after this, the bird disappeared behind the Lighthouse Inn and could not be relocated.—*Mark Peterson, Caroline.*

**ARCTIC TERN (*Sterna paradisaea*)**

**8 June 1997, Sheboygan County**—A medium-sized adult *Sterna* tern in alternate plumage. The upper wing was unmarked gray, slightly paler on the primaries. All secondaries were narrowly tipped white, producing a thin trailing edge to the wing. The tail was strikingly and disproportionately long, at least twice as long as the distance from the tip of the bill to the nape. The tips of the longest rectrices appeared to wave or move independently of the rest of the tail. Additionally, the fork was very deep. The belly, breast and throat were medium gray, contrasting noticeably with the paler underwings. A white slash was present between the black cap and gray underparts. From below most primaries were tipped black, producing a narrow, sharply defined dark trailing edge to the outer part of the wing which tapered to a fine point towards the inner primaries. Also from below the primaries appeared to glow bright white when backlit. The bill color could not be ascertained due to the brightness of the afternoon sun, but it did appear uniform and not bi-colored. We never saw the bird standing or resting. The flight was graceful and agile as the bird moved back and forth over the water. It dove twice while we watched, the first time successfully catching a small fish.—*Robert D. Hughes, Chicago, IL.*

**8 June 1997, Sheboygan Harbor, Sheboygan County**—The overall impression given by the tern was of a long-tailed *Sterna* with a buoyant flight. The tail was noticeably longer than that of a Common Tern. It appeared to be about the same length from the base of the wing to the tip of the tail as from

the base to the tip of the wing. The Common Terns showed somewhat shorter tails than this, while some adult Forster's were similar. The wings looked slightly slimmer than did the Common Terns' wings. The head and bill did not project as far forward of the wings as did the heads of the two other species. This was due both to a slightly shorter neck, and to a slightly shorter bill, though the latter difference was minimal. The flight was distinctly more buoyant than in Common Terns. The Arctic Tern bounded up and down more as it flapped than did the Common Terns, and did more dips down toward the water than did the Commons.

The Arctic Tern was full adult and had a clean black cap that was sharply demarcated from the white face and neck. The bill was similar in length to the head, or was slightly shorter. The bill appeared to be fairly uniform in color, though with a slight darkening at the very tip. It appeared completely dark in some lights, though when the bird turned completely sideways to us or faced directly towards us, it could be seen to be entirely dark red, without the extensive black tip shown by Common and Forster's Terns. The red color was distinctly darker and less orange than in a Common Tern.

The back and wings were whitish to pearly gray with a distinctly frosty appearance. The outer wingtips were especially frosty and were somewhat whiter than the inner wings. The very tip of the outer primaries was slightly darker gray, but this was a very restricted mark. There was no visible wedge of gray in the inner primaries. From below, the wings showed a sharp black trailing edge to the primaries that was both thin and of even thick-

ness from the tip of the wing to the innermost primaries. The primaries were very translucent when viewed from below, showing pale wing window bordered by the black trailing edge and the wing linings, and interrupted by a thin streak at each point where the feathers overlapped.

The tail was a bit longer than in a Common Tern, as noted above, and was deeply forked. It was distinctly whiter than in a Common Tern, and there did not appear to be any grayish color to the inner rectrices. I could not see a black border to the outer tail feathers, though Bob Hughes said he could see a very thin border. The photographs do show this border, at least on the inner half of the outer feathers.

The underparts, from the vent to the chin, were a smoky grayish color. This was darker than the back, but was not obviously darker than the underparts color of a Common Tern. The whitish face contrasted clearly with the grayish invading the throat and chin, and the tail also contrasted very clearly with this gray color.

The tern never landed while we were watching it, so we could not see the leg color or length.—*John O'Brien, Chicago, IL.*

#### **PHILADELPHIA VIREO** (*Vireo philadelphicus*)

**10 July 1997, Bayfield County**—I wish I could claim some auditory skill or something to explain why I found this bird. I stopped, I think, because I heard a Yellow-throated Vireo singing as I drove down the road. In any case, I was watching a Yellow-throated Vireo up in a 40 ft. Quaking Aspen and was able to see it grab a caterpillar and fly off with it. I then noted the Red-eyed

Vireo singing in the same tree. It too flew away, but my eye caught the movement of yet another bird up there. Fortunately this aspen was sparsely-leaved and separate from the surrounding canopy. Thus the vision was incredibly fortuitous as I put my binoculars on yet another vireo, with no wing bars, but a yellowish wash to the upper breast. The partial dark eye line was shorter than that of a Red-eyed. Though there was a faded white "eyebrow," there was no black line separating the "eyebrow" from the green-brown cap. The back was similarly green-brown. The yellow wash of the upper breast was almost inapparent as it faded up on the throat and belly—but these areas still didn't look white like they are on a Red-eyed. The bill was dark and heavier than a warbler beak. The foraging pace was the patient, plodding pace of vireo, not the incessant flitting, hopping of a warbler (a warbler may make 4–5 movements for every one of a vireo). The bird moved along maintaining a good visualization angle for me as I waited excitedly for it to find food. My good fortune finally ran out as it disappeared into a denser clump of leaves (at least at the angle I viewed it) and was undetectable for a minute or more. It burst out of this vegetation and flew SSW up to some birches and maples on a hill above this swale—perhaps 75 yards away. I could *not* get enough of a look at the bird as it flew away from me to see if it was carrying food. It did not reappear in the ensuing 45 minutes.—*James C. Frank, Mequon.*

#### **KIRTLAND'S WARBLER** (*Dendroica kirtlandii*)

**22 June 1997, 6 July 1997, Vilas County**—I arrived at the jack pine stand

in northern Vilas county around 6:00 A.M. I drove the sand road into the stand. Nashvilles, Palms, Yellow-rumpeds could be heard plus Clay-colored Sparrows, Hermit Thrushes and juncos. Nearing the open area I heard the first bird calling to the west—quite a distance west. Stopped the car as I was “cursing” a Clay-colored that was masking the song when a second bird sang right next to me. Exiting the car the second bird was discovered feeding and singing in a jack pine right next to me. The back was blue/gray with black stripes. The breast was yellow with the black streaks along the sides. There was a blackish mask with a partial eye-ring. Occasionally it would jerk its tail. The bird fed and watched me for a few minutes, disappeared and shortly thereafter reappeared for another few minutes. It then flew across the road and sang incessantly as it marked its territory on the east side. I stayed for about an hour listening to the two birds and also enjoying the other local birds . . . On July 6 heard the bird briefly to the east around 9:20.—*Daryl Tessen, Appleton.*

**19 June 1997, Vilas County**—I heard birds singing first. Upon further investigation I observed (up to 3 feet) one of the singing males. Bird had yellow throat and breast with some black streaking on sides. Back was grayish-brown. Did observe some white around eye. Also bird did jerk tail occasionally. Bird’s call was loud and distinct. Bird I observed was very tame. It spent most of its time lower in trees, but singing almost constantly.—*Bill Reardon, Eagle River.*

**25 and 26 July 1997, Vilas County**—Upon stepping out of my car the eve-

ning of 6/25, I could hear a Kirtland’s calling from 50–75 yds. to the northeast in the middle of a 15 ft. jack pine plantation. Paired chup-chup, chup-chup (rising), chup-wheedle-eee (rising from the second paired notes). It was a rather loud song for such a small bird. The song was repeatedly heard as the bird moved inconspicuously in the jack pines. With no success the first 20 minutes, I found an opening in the jack pines, moved into a vantage point there and waited for the ever-moving bird to present itself. The frustration continued as I was 15–20 feet from the bird—but only pines were in my vision. After singing awhile it suddenly was heard 20–30 yds. away again. I never saw it move from the spot. It finally did fly into view and land in a jack pine allowing me a brief view, limited to the body, but not the head or tail. In this view, a yellow breast, gray back and wings, and bold black streaks on the flanks were evident. It again moved on, giving no further look that evening. Its overall size was similar to the Chipping Sparrow nearby, smaller than the White-throated Sparrow and much larger than a Nashville Warbler also seen nearby.

The next morning, two birds were heard singing; the second bird didn’t have a fifth chup sound, just the first two pairs of “chups” and the wheedle-eee, rising in scale as the other bird. Another 30 minutes of frustration followed, trying to get a look at the second bird. It too remained very vocal, very actively moving around, but staying too low in the pines to be even glimpsed. It finally came close enough to allow a good look. The gray head was accented by black lores and a black “whisker.” The dark eye had a white eye-ring—broken at 3 and 9 o’clock by



black. The gray back had black feathers with gray edges, creating a scalloped effect. I can't say the wing bars, as the field guides suggest, were very apparent. The tail and rump were also gray. The yellow breast extended up to the chin and to the belly, turning white on the undertail coverts. The black flank streaks were restricted to the side of the breast, flanks, with a trace of black marks on the side of the chin. The legs were dark. Having given me a decent look, the bird, as if to say the "game" was over, climbed into the top of the jack pine and sang several times in full sun—in full view.—*James C. Frank, Mequon.*

**20 June 1997, Vilas County**—The adult male Kirtland's Warblers were heard singing their distinctive, loud, clear song in this location. Both observed in dense jack pine about 5–10 ft. tall. Blue-gray head, nape and back; incomplete white eye-ring with blackish loreal area and edge of throat (whisker line). Yellowish throat, breast

and belly with dark streaking on flanks; whitish buff undertail coverts; light but not strongly prominent wing bars. Frequent tail pumping behavior.—*James E. Baughman, Eagle River.*

**WESTERN TANAGER**  
(*Piranga ludoviciana*)

**12 June 1997, Colgate, Washington County**—When I arrived at the Roos residence I learned that the Western Tanager that had spent the two previous days in their yard had met an untimely end. The bird had attempted to roost in a rocky crevice but had been killed and consumed by a predator. The ground was littered with lemon-yellow breast feathers, a few red-orange feathers and black tail feathers. The wings were nearly intact. The black wings showed the diagnostic yellow shoulder patch and yellowish-white wing bar. I learned that the bird was able to fly but had spent the two previous two days on or near the ground.—*Mark Korducki, Milwaukee.*

# WSO Records Committee Report—Summer 1997

by *Jim Frank*

Twenty-one documentations of nine different species were reviewed by the WSO Records Committee for the summer 1997 season. Twenty reports were accepted for an acceptance rate of 95%. An additional report from the summer of 1996 was also reviewed and accepted. Observers were notified of committee decisions by postcard in the case of accepted reports and by personal letter in the case of reports not accepted.

Additional information on recent Glaucous-winged Gull records in Wisconsin is also presented.

## ACCEPTED

### *Anhinga*—

#97-062 *Oneida Co.*, 5 July 1997, Spahn; 6 July 1997, Tessen; 11 July 1997, Hewitt, Fountain; 18 July 1997, Gustafson.

Two dark, cormorant-like birds were seen in flight and resting on rocks. The distinguishing characteristics included a longer, thinner neck than a cormorant, a head not much different than the neck in width (instead of thicker

than the neck); a narrow, pointed, yellowish bill (instead of a blunter, hooked beak); a longer fan-shaped tail than a cormorant; and whitish plumage on the back and shoulders. One of the birds had a lighter brown throat, neck, and upper breast compared to the black throat and breast of the other, suggesting them to be pair.

Coupled with two reports from spring 1997, observers should continue to watch *carefully* among the numerous cormorants for a rare Anhinga. Also be cautioned that cormorants do soar, a trait too often attributed only to Anhingas. Detailed looks at the head, neck, tail, and back are required to distinguish the two species.

### *Tricolored Heron*—

#97-063 *Dodge Co.*, 15 June 1997, Pearson, Dehnert.

The identification was based on the bird being a small heron (perhaps 2 feet tall), the body being dark blue-gray, the lower back showing a cinnamon color, but most importantly a contrasting white lower breast. White was also apparent on the “front” of the neck. The bill was blue-gray, with a

darker tip. The legs were also blue-gray. This is the second consecutive summer record from Dodge Co.

***Laughing Gull—***

#97-072 *Manitowoc Co.*, 13 June 1997, Sontag.

#97-065 *Milwaukee Co.*, 4 July 1997, T. Wood.

In direct comparison to Ring-billed Gulls, this bird was noted to be slightly smaller. The mantle was darker gray than any of the other gull species and the head had a dark hood, but it was not completely molted in. It had a dark gray mantle, with black wing tips, but no white spots. The long, dark bill was drooped at the tip. The rump and the tail were white. The characteristic “laughing” call was also noted, being the initial reason the observer noted the bird to be present.

The Milwaukee Co. bird had a more complete black hood, the bill described as dark red, with a drooped tip, and a broken white eye-ring in addition to the previously described field marks.

***Lesser Black-backed Gull—***

#97-066 *Manitowoc Co.*, 18 June 1997, Peterson.

#97-067 *Sheboygan Co.*, 6 July 1997, Domagalski.

Similar in size to nearby Herring Gulls, the Manitowoc Co. bird stood out because of the coal-gray mantle. The legs and feet were yellow, the bill yellow with a red gonydeal spot. The mantle of the Sheboygan Co. bird was described as slate-gray, not black as the wingtips were. The second bird was felt to be intermediate in size between adjacent Herring and Ring-billed Gulls, also exhibiting the yellow color of the feet, legs, and bill.

***Arctic Tern—***

#97-068 *Sheboygan Co.*, 8 June 1997, Hughes, O'Brien (photos).

This report was supported by several close-up photographs of the bird in flight. The gray neck and breast contrasted with the white area on the cheek and the black cap (though Common Terns can appear to have this contrast as well). The bill was felt to be uniformly red, but this was not felt to be a certainty by the observers, one of them seeing a slightly darkened tip, markedly less dark-tipped than the Common Terns though. Of significance was the extremely long, deeply-forked tail, the outer rectrices exhibiting a narrow, darker gray outer edge (instead of a heavy, dark outer edge of a Common Tern). The trailing edge of the primaries was narrow and black (again contrasting to a heavier, black trailing edge in both Common and Forster's Terns). Finally, the translucent area of the backlit underwing covered most of the underwing surface (instead of being restricted to a small area of the outer secondaries and inner primaries as in Common Terns or exhibiting almost no translucence as in Forster's Terns).

***Philadelphia Vireo—***

#97-069 *Bayfield Co.*, 10 July 1997, Frank.

Reported was a drab vireo, gray-white on the underparts, green-gray on the back and crown. The black eye line was shorter than that of a Red-eyed Vireo and this bird lacked the black line between the light eyebrow and the green-gray cap that a Red-eyed would exhibit. There was a decided yellow wash to the upper breast that dissipated toward the lower breast and throat. Vocalization was not noted on

this day. On a subsequent day, singing may have been detected, but visual contact did not coincide with this. Breeding activity could not be confirmed. There have been no previous summer records of Philadelphia Vireos in Wisconsin. As many as five have been reported, but documentation has not yet been submitted from Breeding Bird Atlas work in Bayfield Co. and Burnett Co. in 1997.

**Kirtland's Warbler—**

#97-070 Vilas Co., 19 June 1997, Rear-  
don; 20 June 1997, Baugh-  
man; 22 June 1997, Tessen;  
25, 26 June 1997, Frank; 26  
June 1997, Fisher, Fisher.

#96-080 Vilas Co., 1 July 1996 Baugh-  
man.

Two male birds were present at this location, one being banded on 3 July. A larger than average warbler was described wagging its tail high in the jack pines. It had a bright yellow chin, throat, and upper belly, but a white lower belly and undertail coverts. Gray streaks were apparent only on the sides of the breast and the blue gray upperparts had darker streaking along the back. A split, white eye-ring contrasting with an all dark face was also noted. The gray wings had very thin, indistinct white wing bars. The song was a rather loud, rising series of four low-pitched "chups" followed by a higher pitched "chup-wheedle-eee." Some observers likened the overall quality to a Northern Waterthrush song, but the song ascended the scale rather than descended the scale.

(Another report of this species from Marinette Co. also occurred, but documentation has not been submitted yet.)

**Western Tanager—**

#97-052 Pierce Co., 17 May 1997, Hewitt.

#97-071 Washington Co., 10 June 1997, Roos (photos); 12 June 1997, Korducki (dead specimen).

Adult male birds were reported from feeder situations. A basically yellow bird with black wings, back, and tail was described. A yellow shoulder patch and yellow wing bar were also noted. The red face was very striking. The bill was grayish with the heavier build of a tanager, without the length or sharp point of an oriole's beak.

**NOT ACCEPTED**

**Parasitic Jaeger—**

#97-064 Douglas Co., 2 June 1997.

Described was "pale-form jaeger," dark dorsally, white ventrally with a dark lower breast band. There was no indication of mottling to the brown coloration of the back or breast band. The cap was dark brown. "A finger of longer feathers" protruded from the tail. The jaeger was smaller and sleeker than the gull it chased, but it isn't clearly indicated that it was a Ring-billed Gull used for size comparison. The length and shape of the central rectrices were not described beyond the fact that they were longer than the tail proper. The limited (less than a minute) observation time and distance (100 to 150 yards) did not permit evaluation of whether the dark cap paled toward the bill (as in a Parasitic) or was evenly dark (as in a Pomarine). Though a Parasitic Jaeger is more commonly seen in Wisconsin, and more probable from the description, the species identification isn't a certainty from this report. This individual is accepted as "Jaeger species."

Kenn Kaufman's book *Advanced Birding* was a significant reference for the committee in this instance.

#### ADDENDUM

The photographs of the two recent Glaucous-winged Gull records from Ozaukee Co. in January of 1996 and from Manitowoc Co. in March of 1997 have been examined by 3 members of the state of Washington Records Committee. Their determination was that the adult bird from Ozaukee Co. was a "classic adult Glaucous-winged Gull with no evidence of intergradation or hybridization." Since they feel that this species in the lower 48 states exhibits evidence of intergradation throughout its range, "our bird" is probably of Canadian or Alaskan origin.

The first-year bird from Manitowoc Co. is identified as a first-year Glaucous-winged Gull, though only one of

the three felt it to be within the normal range of variation for this species, the others feeling it was a bit paler than usual, especially the head. The other two observers could not suggest any other hybrid combination that it would fit better, however.

The WSO Records Committee would like to thank Bill Tweit, Dennis Paulson, and Steve Mlodinow for their analysis of these photos. It is very much appreciated.

WSO and the Records Committee would like to thank Robbye Johnson for 5 years of dedicated service. Her thoughtful deliberations on the intricacies of field identification will be missed on the committee. Joining the 1998 committee of Randy Hoffman, Jeff Baughman, Janine Polk, and Jim Frank will be Dennis Gustafson.

Jim Frank  
WSO Records Committee, Chair

## John T. Emlen, Jr. 1908–1997



Yes, even the wood thrushes sang. They added their voices to those of appreciative family members and friends at John Emlen's memorial service following John's death on November 9, 1997.

Germantown, Pennsylvania was home base from his birth in 1908 until his college years at Haverford College (B.S., 1931) and Cornell University (Ph.D., 1934). He was birding by age 12, attending meetings of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club at 14, publishing notes in *The Auk* by 19, and accompanying Witmer Stone and Stuart Danforth on expeditions to the Caribbean when he was 20.

Shortly after John's marriage to Virginia Merritt in 1934, home base shifted to Madison, Wisconsin. This brought him into contact with Aldo Leopold while working with the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey. The Madison stay was interrupted by a teaching opportunity at the University of California at Davis, and by a wartime project of rat control with the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health in Baltimore, Maryland.

With Madison as home base from 1946 on, he taught zoology to hundreds of UW-Madison students in introductory and advanced classes, and trained over 60 students in Masters' and Doctoral programs. Many of these students learned bird banding techniques both on campus and at the Cedar Grove Ornithological Station at Cedar Grove. He wrote articles for *The Passenger Pigeon* dealing with Cliff Swallows, Ring-billed Gulls, and Dickcissels. Of particular interest to John were the problems of obtaining accurate measurements of bird populations. He



worked at developing workable standards before the Breeding Bird Survey began in 1966, and remained a keen student of this throughout retirement years.

He maintained an active interest in the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, serving as president in 1955–56. In 1967, WSO awarded him the Golden Passenger Pigeon Award. The citation read, in part: “Our recipient has shown himself to be a warm human being with a mischievous sense of humor, and with a critical mind that is a delight to young and old alike . . . His complete dedication to the facts of science has long been balanced by a remarkably calm and generous personality.”

Other awards have come his way. He served as vice-president of the American Ornithologists’ Union (AOU), president of the Wilson Ornithological Society, and chairman of the Animal Behavior Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In 1973 he received the Elliot Coues Award from the AOU.

Radiating from home base in Madison, motivated by research, supervision of students and love for travel, the Emlens traveled in all directions. Health problems from 1965 on threatened to curtail this, but John continued to work and teach part time until retirement in 1974. Even periods of recuperation became opportunities for further travel and research.

All this is beautifully recounted in his memoirs, privately published in 1996, entitled *Adventure is Where You Find It: Recollections of a Twentieth Century Naturalist*. His concluding words were: “I can look back over a rich and rewarding life in which I have visited all of the world’s continents and many of its islands. How lucky can a guy get?”

The Emlen tradition lives on in wife Jinny, sons John, Steve and Woody, and the students who benefit from the Emlen Scholarship Fund established by UW-Madison.

*Samuel D. Robbins, Madison, WI.*

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND ARTISTS

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**James S. Anderson** has directed the operation of Mosquito Hill Nature Center in New London for nearly two and one half decades. Birds and habitat preservation play essential roles in his environmental teachings. When away from his 430-acre office and "The Hill," Jim enjoys birding, hiking, nature photography, canoeing and other outdoor endeavors.

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**Jim Frank** has been one of WSO's most active contributors to Seasonal Field-Notes. He now assists WSO by compiling and summarizing the annual May Day Counts, Big Day Counts and Migration Day Counts and is the Records Committee Chair. He is a veterinarian in Milwaukee with an interest in avian medicine.

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**William L. Hilsenhoff** is a recently retired Professor in the UW-Madison's Department of Entomology. He has been summarizing Wisconsin's Christmas Bird Counts each year since 1966. He has received WSO's Silver Passenger Pigeon Award for these contributions.

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**David Kuecherer** recently retired after 34 years as a high school art teacher

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and began to paint birds. Encouraged as a child to respect and enjoy nature by his father, he now combines his artistic talent with a love of birdwatching. His work has been exhibited in the traveling "Birds in Art" show, and he looks forward to continuing his newfound pursuit at his home in Neenah.

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**Sumner W. Matteson** is an avian ecologist working in the non-game program of the Bureau of Endangered Resources of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. He is a regular contributor to *The Passenger Pigeon*.

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**Samuel D. Robbins** is one of Wisconsin's most active ornithologists. He has served WSO in many capacities, including President and Editor, and he has received WSO's Silver Passenger Pigeon Award. He is author of the book *Wisconsin Birdlife*.

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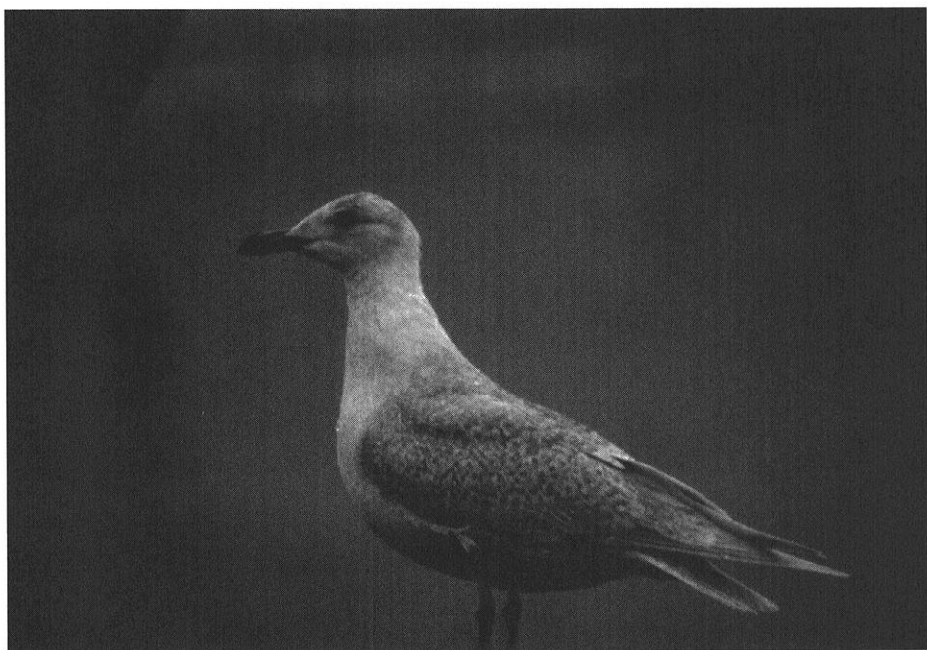
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**Thomas K. Soulen** is one of WSO's hard working Field-Note Compilers and a frequent contributor to WSO activities. An expatriate Wisconsinite, now a Professor in the University of Minnesota's Botany Department, Tom has remained active in Wisconsin ornithology.

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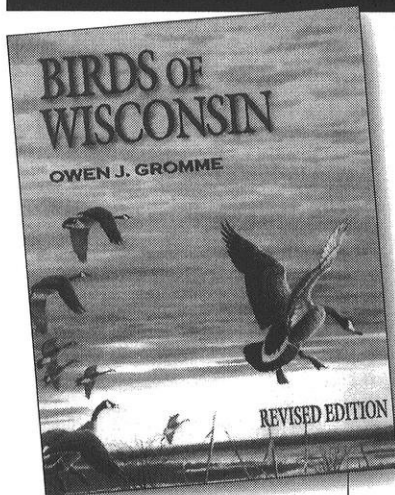


Sabine's Gull, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin (14 October 1996). *Photo by Tom Schultz*



Glaucous-winged Gull, Two Rivers, Wisconsin (9 March 1997). *Photo by Tom Uttech*

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