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Send all manuscripts and related correspondence to the Editors. Information for "Seasonal Field Notes" should be sent to the Bird Reports Coordinator (see inside back cover). Art work and questions about the art should be sent to the Assistant Editor for art (see left column). Manuscripts that deal with Wisconsin birds, ornithological topics of interest to WSO members, and WSO activities are considered for publication. For detailed submission guidelines, see pages 131–132 of the Summer 2007 issue (Vol. 69, No. 2) or contact the Editors. As a general guide to style, use issues after Vol. 60, No. 1, 1998.

Cover Figure: An Eastern Bluebird on last year's mullein (Verbascum) *stalk beside blooming spiderwort* (Tradescantia) *was photographed by Dennis Connell.*

Farewell . . . but see you around!

As I write this, my stint as president is starting to wind down, with just one more regular board meeting, and then our Annual Meeting at the 2012 convention. My two years have passed quickly, and it has been a real pleasure and honor to lead our competent board and important organization.

Several changes have taken place during my tenure, but probably most important has been a start to the process of looking forward to the future. About a year and a half ago, a Strategic Planning committee was formed to undertake an in-depth study of our organization. Part of this was to involve looking back to determine what our strengths are, and then also to look forward in an attempt to make sure that we are doing the right things to keep our organization strong. Our new website has provided a great contribution to these ongoing efforts.

For the most part we have been blessed to have good attendance at most of our quarterly board meetings, but occasionally a board member is unable to attend due to travel distance or other reasons. To help allow directors to participate in a meeting that they might otherwise need to miss, we recently started the practice of using a remote communication system. Initially it was through the use of a conference phone—but a long-distance call costs money, so subsequently we started using Skype technology via computers at each end that are connected via the internet. We still find it beneficial and preferable for board members to attend meetings in person, but when necessary, a remote connection has proved to be a reasonably effective and low-cost substitute. We thank Jeff Baughman for providing the equipment and expertise to help make this happen.

I would also like to thank Carl Schwartz for his very effective assistance during his term as vice-president. His enthusiasm and competence have been of great help to me, and he has truly been a wonderful right-hand man. I know that I leave this organization in good hands as he steps in to take over the reins of leadership!

My term as president may be nearing an end, but I am committed to continuing my role on the WSO board as co-chair of the Field Trips committee. I will also continue to be a member of the Strategic Planning committee, as we work to keep our organization "up-to-speed" with the fast-paced changes taking place in our modern world. It is important that we strive to keep ourselves relevant as an organization.

I look forward to continuing to serve WSO into the future, and I hope to see and meet new participants on our field trips, at conventions, or other activities. Please join us whenever you can for these fun events—it's a great pleasure to get to know other nice folks from around the state who share your passion for birds and nature!

Best wishes, Thomas R Schultz President

Rough-legged Hawk at take-off as seen by Stephen Fisher

The Early Bird Gets Earlier: A Phenological Shift in Migration Timing of the American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) in the State of Wisconsin

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ABSTRACT

Climate change is driving a shift in the timing of spring events around the world, and this global phenomenon is manifesting itself on a smaller scale in the state of Wisconsin. We analyzed the timing of spring arrival of the American Robin (Turdus migratorius) *from 1990–2010, using data from an extensive citizen science database Project FeederWatch. We found a significant trend toward earlier arrival,*

including a ~13 day shift towards early spring arrival since 1990. Additionally, annual variation in statewide minimum winter temperature was significantly related to first arrival date. Volunteer citizen science programs such as Project FeederWatch and eBird have proven extraordinarily important, even indispensible, for the success of modern broad-scale avian ecological studies. Continued contribution by dedicated volunteers in Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest to Project FeederWatch and other citizen science programs is essential in helping scientists better analyze and understand changes in avian community and behavior throughout the region.

Introduction

Few species of birds in the United States are as recognizable or iconic as the American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*). The *en masse* arrival and familiar song of this species in spring evoke excitement for the impending return of many more songbirds, and for biologists signifies the annual onset of a critical seasonal transition. For both amateur bird enthusiasts and professional researchers, the American Robin is the classic harbinger of spring.

Phenology is the study of cyclic and seasonal natural phenomena, and in recent years it has become clear that springtime phenological events are changing. For example, tree leaf-out, first bloom of flowers, and the return of many migrant birds have all shown a trend towards earlier onset in the state of Wisconsin (Bradley et al. 1999, WICCI 2011) and at the global scale (Peñuelas and Filella 2001, Parmesan and Yohe 2003). These patterns of early emergence and arrival are one of the most widely cited lines of evidence that species are responding to a changing climate. This notion is not a new one; conjecture of phenological shifts and the early onset of spring have been made since the days of Aldo Leopold (Leopold and Jones 1947) and have been repeatedly questioned and rigorously studied up to the present day (Hughes 2000, Walther et al. 2002, Parmesan and Yohe 2003).

Not all migrating birds respond to a changing climate in the same way. Although we often think that all birds absent from the Midwest during the colder months are overwintering in tropical Central America, many of them are, in fact, right next door—geographically speaking—on their wintering grounds in the continental United States; these species are considered short-distance migrants. Scientists have hypothesized that these short-distance migrants should be more sensitive to tracking changing climatic conditions here in North America, as opposed to neotropical migrants whose migratory behavior is thought to be driven by more cyclic cues (e.g., photoperiod) (Møller et al. 2008). Studies have shown that many short-distance migrants in both North America and Europe have responded to a warming climate by advancing their spring arrival dates to their breeding grounds (Tryjanowski et al. 2002, Hüppop and Hüppop 2003, Swanson and Palmer 2009). However, for many of these studies, data were collected from a single geographic location such as a bird observatory, or a limited geographic area such as a county (Gordo et al. 2005, Murphy-Klassen et al. 2005, Tryjanowski et al. 2005). Fewer studies have investigated

spring migration trends at larger spatial scales, such as a state (Swanson and Palmer 2009), region, or continent (Rubolini et al. 2007). No formal studies in recent years have investigated spring bird migration timing in Wisconsin (but see Temple and Cary 1987), even though some of the warmest years on record have occurred since 1995 (IPCC 2007), suggesting that responses to the latest changes in climate may be particularly pronounced. A recent report (WICCI 2011) illustrated that significant warming has occurred across the state of Wisconsin since the 1950s, and that climate warming in the state of Wisconsin is consistent with the global trend. In addition, the majority of this warming has occurred in winter and spring months, suggesting short-distance migrants that overwinter in neighboring regions might adapt to these changing climatic conditions by arriving earlier in their spring migration.

Because it is a short-distance migrant, easily identifiable, widespread, and well-known, we chose to investigate the arrival dates of the American Robin in the years 1990–2010 across the state of Wisconsin and their relationship to statewide minimum winter temperatures, since warmer winters may disproportionally influence the onset of early spring migration (Swanson and Palmer 2009).

Materials and Methods

Arrival data—

We used data (1990–2010) from Project FeederWatch (PFW), a program directed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca, NY, to determine the springtime arrival of the American Robin in the state of Wisconsin (Fig. 1). The program is a volunteer-based (> 10,000 contributors) citizen science project that collects massive amounts of data on bird presence and abundance throughout the contiguous United States and Canada in the winter and early spring months each year. Observations range from the second weekend in November to the first weekend in April. For the purposes of this study, we used data from the PFW 1990 season to the PFW 2010 season. This 20-year wintering bird data set allowed us to investigate responses to recent and pronounced climate change.

Climate data—

We used temperature data collected from the Wisconsin State Climatology Office in Madison, WI, and calculated the average minimum monthly temperatures from each of the nine Wisconsin climate divisions for the months of December, January, and February for each PFW season. We pooled these months together to represent winter minimum temperature. We calculated an area-weighted mean using the geographic area of each unique climate division to obtain the statewide average minimum temperatures for each year. Stations from a given climate division where less than 90% of data were available were excluded from the analysis.

Analysis—

Data subsetting—

To avoid complications with limited sample size, we only used data from study dates when > 10 observers sub-

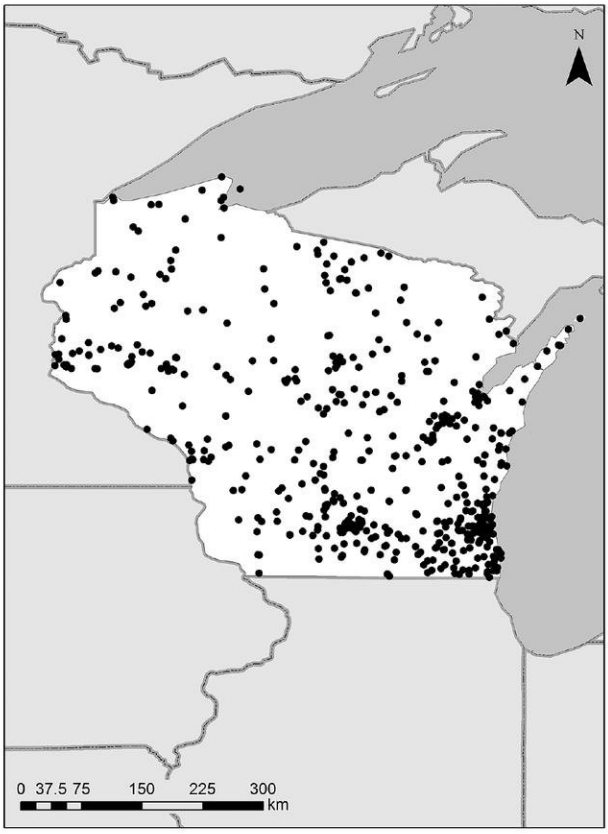

Figure 1. Dots representing Project FeederWatch participant locations in Wisconsin populate the above map of the state. Areas on the map with greatest participant density center themselves around cities and towns, since these data are often collected from volunteers' backyards.

mitted observation data. We used data from a time period beginning approximately at the end of February (> 100 days after the beginning of the FeederWatch season). This allowed us to calculate more accurately arrival dates within a reasonable time frame of typical spring migration.

Identifying arrival dates—

While the American Robin is known primarily as a springtime species, it does overwinter in low numbers throughout its range and in the state of Wisconsin. To overcome the issue of winter presence of this species and effectively capture the arrival date of the springtime migrating population, we identified the first date at which the proportion of sites reporting robins crossed a given threshold (0.20 or 0.50) (Fig. 2). We used the first threshold (0.20) to effectively determine the species' first arrival date (FAD), and the second threshold value (0.50) to determine the "mean" or "population" arrival date (MAD). Our use of both metrics allowed us to capture different aspects of species migration. FAD is traditionally the

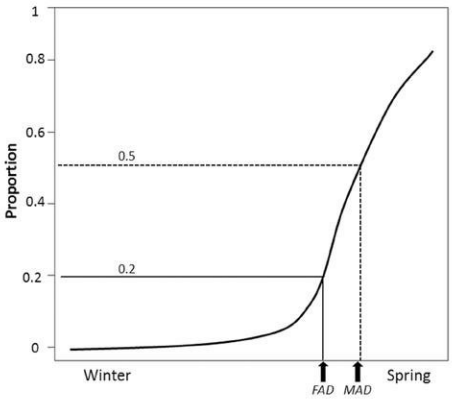

Figure 2. While the onset of arrival of migrating birds in the spring may occur in a short time period, there are individuals and groups within that migrating population that arrive earlier and later, constituting the above arrival curve. The 0.20 and 0.50 proportion thresholds intersect the curve and pinpoint exact corresponding dates that represent early arriving individuals (FAD) and later arriving individuals (MAD), respectively.

metric used in previous studies, but using MAD as an arrival metric has been shown to reduce the variability of first arrival dates, which can be sensitive to changes in migration cohort size (Tryjanowski et al. 2005, Miller-Rushing et al. 2008).

Regression analysis—

We used ordinary least-squares linear regression models to analyze the variation in arrival data as a function of year and winter temperature. We used regression analysis of FAD/MAD vs. year to obtain the 20-year trend in arrival date for the American Robin, and FAD/MAD vs. winter temperature to determine correlation of statewide average minimum winter temperature and spring arrival. Statistical significance was determined at the $\alpha < 0.05$ level.

Results

We found that the American Robin arrived on average ~13 days earlier in the spring over the period 1990-2010 in the state of Wisconsin (Table 1). The FAD index showed a slope of –0.56 ± 0.26 days/year with a corresponding arrival trend showing an advancement of 11.78 days over the 20-year study period (Fig. 3, Table 1). Over the same period, the MAD index (0.50 proportion threshold) showed a slope of –0.70 ± 0.26 days/year and a corresponding 14.76-day shift) towards earlier arrival (Fig. 3, Table 1). Both indices were significant ($p < 0.05$) (Table 1).

The relationship between statewide average minimum winter temperature and arrival date was significant using the FAD index ($p = 0.045$) (Fig. 4), showing an increase of nearly one and a half days (slope = –1.40) for each commensurate 1°C of state-wide winter warming (Fig. 4A, Table 2). No statistically significant relationship was

Table 1. Results of regression analysis of both FAD and MAD against year. The unit for slope is number of days per year shift in arrival date. *Statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Threshold	Slope	SE	p-value	20-year shift
FAD	–0.561	0.2579	0.04241*	11.781
MAD	–0.7027	0.2612	0.0155*	14.7567

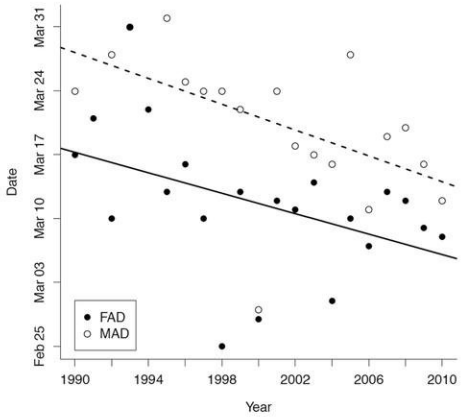

Figure 3. The long-term trends of FAD and MAD are represented by the regression lines drawn on the graph. Both regressions were significant, meaning that American Robins have advanced spring arrival in the state of Wisconsin for both early (FAD) and late (MAD) arriving individuals. Our results, along with similar large-scale studies across the globe, suggest that this trend toward earlier arrival will continue.

found between arrival date and winter temperature using the MAD index ($p > 0.05$) (Table 2, Fig. 5).

Discussion

Project FeederWatch has proven to be a useful and effective tool for broad-scale avian ecological studies related to wintering bird abundance and distribution (Wells et al. 1998, Lepage and Francis 2002, Zuckerberg et al. 2011), depredation (Dunn and Tessaglia 1994), and disease monitoring (Dhondt et al. 1998, 2005, Hartup et al. 1998). Here we use data contributed by Project FeederWatch volunteers to describe the change in migration timing of American Robins in the state of Wisconsin. Results show that there were significant changes in spring arrival date using both FAD and

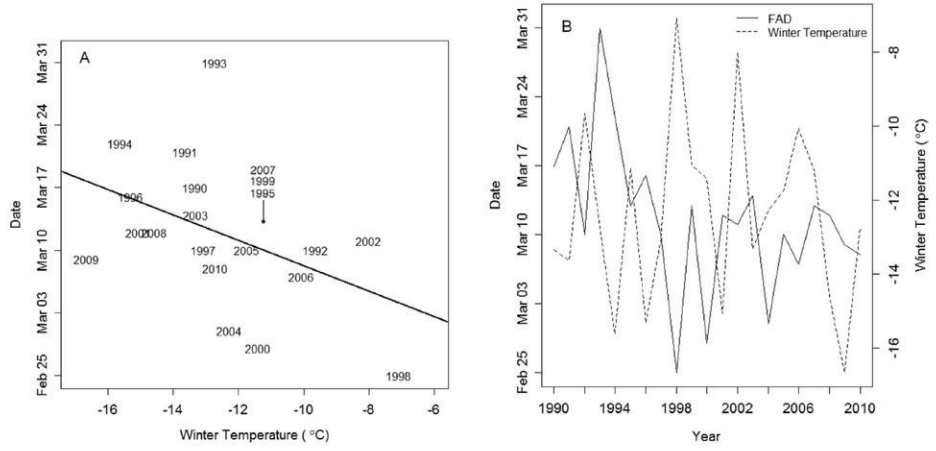

Figure 4. The slope of the regression line in (A) shows the relationship between arrival date and average minimum winter temperature. As the temperature increases (to the right on the x-axis), migrating individuals tend to arrive earlier in the spring. Data points are represented as individual years, which allows the visualization of temperature—not time—as a major driver in arrival date; for example, 1997 and 2010 have nearly identical corresponding arrival dates and temperature measurements, though they are separated by 13 years. The two lines in (B) highlight the inverse relationship between average minimum winter temperature and FAD; for the most part, as one metric increases, the other decreases. This inverse relationship was statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 2. Results of regression analysis of both FAD and MAD against annual minimum winter temperature. The unit for slope is shift in arrival date per 1°C. *Statistically significant at α = 0.05.

Threshold	Slope	SE	p-value
FAD	–1.4038	0.6549	0.0452*
MAD	0.02315	0.7647	0.9762

MAD (Fig. 3), and that FAD was significantly correlated to statewide average minimum winter temperature in Wisconsin (Fig. 4A). A recent study of European bird migration phenology reviewed trends in 672 estimates of FAD and 289 estimates of MED ("median arrival date": MED = MAD) across many species and found trends of early arrival for many species in both metrics (Rubolini et al. 2007). In the western hemisphere, arrival dates of American Robins were tracked for 26 years at a single site in the western United States (Rocky Mountain Biological Lab), spanning 1974–1999 (Inouye et al. 2000). Results of this study showed that in the subset of years 1981–1999 (19 years), first sighting of robins had advanced 14 days (slope = –0.78 days/year). Although this study was conducted at a location considerably west and south of the state of Wisconsin and included only data from a single banding station, results are similar to those obtained in our study (FAD = 11.78 days earlier, slope = –0.56 ± 0.26 days/year) (Table 1), suggesting that changes in spring migration of American Robins is a phenomenon that is being observed in multiple regions.

For studies conducted in the Midwest, the rate of change in spring arrival has not always been consistent. As an example, Bradley et al. (1999) investigated phenological changes across a 61-year data set for 55 unique springtime events in Wisconsin. They found a 9.6-day increase in FAD for *T. migratorius* from 1936–1998, but an average annual advancement of only –0.16 days/year; a considerably milder rate of change than our own

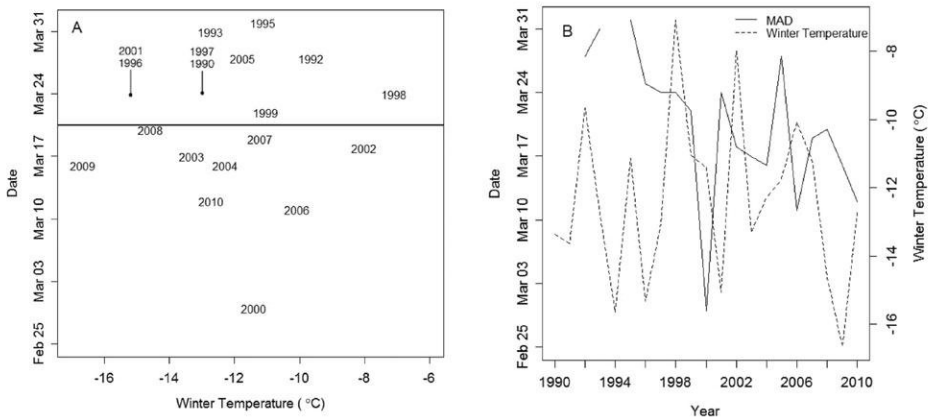

Figure 5. In contrast to Figure 4A, no statistically significant relationship was found between mean arrival date and average minimum winter temperature, as illustrated by the regression line in (A) with a slope of nearly zero. This is further represented in (B), where the clear inverse relationship seen in Figure 4B is nonexistent. There was no statistically significant relationship between mean arrival date and average minimum winter temperature at α = 0.05.

(–0.56 days/year) (Table 1). Another study at a research station located in Delta Marsh, Manitoba (~ 600 km NW of Wisconsin) showed *T. migratorius* advanced its MAD only 8.1 days over 56 years (1939 to 2001) (Murphy-Klassen et al. 2005), compared to our finding of 14.76-day shift in MAD in Wisconsin over just 20 years. The disparity in results between ours and these other long-term studies probably reflects the more pronounced rate of recent global climate change and the fact that of the 14 warmest years in recent history, 12 have occurred since 1995 (IPCC 2007), all of which our study includes. Thus, it appears that at certain areas in the Upper Midwest, spring arrival dates have been getting earlier since the late 1930s, and as our study suggests, have shown pronounced acceleration over the past two decades. In further support of this phenomenon at the global scale, Rubolini et al. (2007) found an "increasing earliness in MED trends in recent years" across Europe, and Lehikoinen et al. (2004) suggested that there has in fact been a strong advancement in arrival of several species of migratory birds since the 1960s, in light of time series dating back to the 1750s (Rubolini et. al 2007). Butler (2003) also showed that at two locations in the eastern United States, FAD of all 103 migrant birds examined in the study arrived significantly earlier in the period 1951–1993 than the period 1903–1950. It appears that like many species across the globe, the American Robin is responding to the acceleration of global climate change in the state of Wisconsin.

While tendencies toward earlier FAD and MAD were significant in our study, only FAD showed a significant relationship with statewide average minimum winter temperature in the regression analysis (FAD: $p = 0.045$, Fig. 4A; MAD: $p = 0.97$, Fig. 5A). Pulido and Berthold (2010) showed that the ability of birds to change their innate behavior or phenology can affect migration onset within subgroups of a migrating bird population, suggesting that early-arriving individuals (FAD) from our study may be of a particular genetic subgroup—distinct from later-arriving individuals (MAD)—that is being selected for a heightened sensitivity to respond to changing winter temperatures. It is also possible that statewide average minimum winter temperature is a metric lacking biological significance for later-arriving individuals (MAD); these individuals probably depart from wintering grounds that are further from, and more weakly correlated to, the Wisconsin temperatures that were used to approximate changes in temperature on wintering grounds. There are other climatic factors that influence departure from overwintering grounds and arrival time on breeding territory, and these have been suggested and tested in other studies (Hagan et al. 1991, Marra et al. 1998, Parmesan 2006); thus, it is likely that the significant trend toward earlier MAD could be explained by factors other than minimum winter temperatures such as overwintering habitat quality, precipitation, and migration speed, among others. Further research using long-term demographic data from field stations could provide more insight into the mechanisms and implications of changing spring phenology in birds.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

Using data from a broad-scale citizen science program, we have shown that the American Robin population in Wisconsin is arriving significantly earlier; more specifically, on average ~13 days earlier than it did in the year 1990. If a similar trend continues, we can predict that by the year 2030 the American Robin will arrive nearly a month earlier than it did 40 years before. While the American Robin is certainly being impacted by climate change, it is uncertain whether or not this impact will be a negative one; not all species show adverse responses to climate change. Specialist species or species that are highly endemic will experience the most negative impacts to climate change and may be led to local extirpation or total extinction throughout their range (Johnson 1998, Thuiller et al. 2005, Menéndez et al. 2006). On the other hand, invasive species (e.g., garlic mustard), pathogens (e.g., avian malaria), and other generalist species (e.g., white-tailed deer, Canada Goose) are more adaptable for competing for resources as climate continues to change. In fact, the American Robin population in North America has shown a 50–100% increase in abundance over the past 25 years with increases in the urban landscape (LaDeau et al. 2007). Thus, the early arrival by this species in light of climate change does not cast a shadow of fear or concern that soon this species will be gone all together like many others. The early arrival of *T. migratorius* in Wisconsin should, however, act as a "robin in the coal mine" for future impacts in the state of Wisconsin. There are numerous specialist and endemic species across various taxa in Wisconsin that may be sensitive to climate change including Hine's emerald dragonfly (*Somatochlora hineana*), the American marten (*Martes americana*), and the northern cricket frog (*Acris crepitans*) (WICCI 2011).

In conclusion, we demonstrated that the use of citizen science data has allowed a detailed elucidation of an important climate-driven ecological phenomenon in Wisconsin. There are many more species-of-interest whose trends should be analyzed, and further studies are in progress that will include more species and temperature data directly from overwintering grounds. These studies will be key in understanding avian phenological response to climate change in the state and the broader region. The recent boom in citizen science participation has allowed researchers to analyze datasets at unprecedented temporal and spatial scales (Dickinson et al. 2010), and the greatest need is for interested citizens to continue to seek out ways to contribute to the scientific community through citizen science opportunities. Project FeederWatch has proven to be an effective tool used in many studies published in peer-reviewed journals, but is under utilized by Wisconsin residents. With the addition of dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers to the Project FeederWatch program in Wisconsin, scientists would be better able to understand important phenomena and contribute meaningful reports to researchers and conservation practitioners.

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Gavin M. Jones recently received his B.S. degrees in both Zoology and Biological Aspects of Conservation from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and has been working in the Zuckerberg Lab as a WDNR & USFWS Research Intern since August 2011. He also serves as the Publications Editor for the Journal of Insect Science. Professional interests are broad and include avian ecology, conservation, genetics, species' responses to climate change at multiple scales, and the behavior, evolution, and phylogeography of small mammals—particularly of the American pika (Ochotona princeps).

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the Wisconsin DNR in Madison, WI. WBCI is actively developing and coordinating citizen science programs with partners to better understand and conserve resident and migratory bird populations in Wisconsin. To learn more about getting involved, see the Bird Monitoring link at (www.wisconsinbirds.org).

Caspian Tern with lunch as pictured by Tom Wright

The Autumn of 2011 at Cedar Grove

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The autumn of 2011 was the 62nd year of continuous operation of the Cedar Grove Ornithological Station. We arrived on 15 August and departed on 18 November. We watched for migrants from dawn to dusk for all but the last five of the 97 days, and counted or estimated their numbers. We attempted to trap all hawks. We also operated a 144m long line of 61mm (stretched mesh) mist nets with 72m of them extending to a height of 8m. These large mesh nets captured small birds only rarely. Probably more than 100 warblers escaped through the nets for every one captured. Beginning on 30 September, we left the mist nets up at night to capture owls.

Overall, 2011 was a strange year. Generally, we saw more hawks than we have for several years, but the trapping percentage was down (Table 1). More birds than average were seen in 9 of the 14 species in Table 1 where the average was greater than one in the past 10 years. The species making the greatest contribution was the Sharp-shinned Hawk where 1.3 times as many birds were seen than on the average. The species showing the greatest declines were the Broad-winged Hawk, where only 4 percent of the average were seen, and the Osprey with only 38 percent. The outstanding species observed were a Black Vulture on 17 October and a Swainson's Hawk

Table 1. Numbers of diurnal raptors observed and the percent trapped

	Observed			% trapped		
	2011	2010	Average 2001–2010	2011	2010	Average 2001–2010
Turkey Vulture	272	250	218.2	0	0	0
Black Vulture	1	0	0	0	0	0
Swallow-tailed Kite	0	0	0.1	0	0	0
Mississippi Kite	0	0	0.2	0	0	0
Northern Harrier	136	113	152.4	6.6	3.6	3.3
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2075	872	1630.2	7.5	20.4	18.2
Cooper's Hawk	192	169	183	22.9	35.3	32.6
Northern Goshawk	5	3	5.6	60	100	81.9
Red-shouldered Hawk	4	7	17.5	0	5	3.1
Broad-winged Hawk	31	36	788.9	0	0	1.8
Swainson's Hawk	2	0	0.2	50	0	0
Red-tailed Hawk	751	572	730.5	16.8	14.9	15.8
Rough-legged Hawk	20	5	27.1	0	0	0.02
Ferruginous Hawk	0	0	0.1	0	0	0
Golden Eagle	1	0	0.7	100	0	10
Bald Eagle	134	66	37.3	0	0	0.1
Osprey	52	137	59.3	0	0	0
Merlin	394	238	372.4	8.1	12	15.8
American Kestrel	59	19	58	1.7	8.3	4.9
Peregrine Falcon	86	52	61.3	9.3	18	19.1
Short-eared Owl	0	0	1	0	0	0
Unidentified	72	57	61.3	0	0	0
Total	**4286**	**2597**	**4402.6**	**10.6**	**14.2**	**12.7**
Total*	3930	2174	3336.4	11.6	16.8	16.1

*Less vultures, Broad-winged Hawk, and Osprey

seen and trapped on 14 October. Mueller et al. (2011) showed that 7 of 15 species in Table 1 decreased significantly in 1991–2010, two species increased significantly and 6 species showed no significant trend. The addition of another year does not change this.

We trapped 379 hawks, better than the 345 trapped in 2010 but well short of the average of 539 for the last 10 years. The greatest declines in percent trapped were in the Sharp-shinned Hawk, the Cooper's Hawk, and the Merlin (Table 1). The 75 owls trapped were fewer than the average of 91 for the last 10 years (Table 2). All species were caught in numbers about equal to the average except the Long-eared Owl, which was only about 32 per cent of the average.

The number of non-raptorial birds netted was about average (Table 3). Six of 20 species were above average, the greatest contributions to the increase were the Fox Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco (Table 3). Four species showed a decrease and 10 species showed little change. In 2002, we began recording the number of non-raptorial birds netted, and two of the 20 species have shown a decline since then: the Red-eyed Vireo ($p = 0.047$) and Blue Jay ($p = 0.041$), and one species increased ($p = 0.029$). We were quite excited when we netted a

Table 2. Numbers of owls netted

	2011	2010	Average 2001–2010
Long-eared Owl	4	6	12.6
Short-eared Owl	0	1	0.1
Great Horned Owl	1	1	0.8
Barred Owl	0	2	0.5
NorthernSaw-whet Owl	68	78	74.9
Eastern Screech Owl	2	2	2.3
Total	**75**	**89**	**90.7**

Great Tit on 12 October until we heard from Noel Cutright that they were introduced in Chicago a few years ago and they have bred in Milwaukee.

Overall, the numbers seen migrating over the station were seen at about the ten-year average (Table 4). Sixteen of the 20 species in Table 4 showed a decrease, and only two showed an increase over the years 2001–2011. Two species showed a significant decrease: the Double-crested Cormorant ($p < 0.001$) and the Purple Martin ($p = 0.001$).

It is difficult to ascertain whether or not any of these changes reflect what is happening in the population or differences in weather patterns affecting the concentration of migrants. The number of migrants seen at Cedar Grove is highly dependent on weather (Mueller and Berger 1961, 1967). Westerly winds drift southbound migrants to the shore of Lake Michigan, where they are concentrated because they avoid flying over water. Easterly winds drift the migrants away from the lakeshore.

The Muellers, Dan Berger, John Bowers, and Liza Olson (our intern) were present at the station on most days. Andrew Reinke, Rick Hill, the Kaspars, Carol Kroscher, and Tom Meyer were there on many days. Julie Gibson, Steve Holzman, and Diane

Table 3. Numbers of non-raptorial birds netted

Species	2011	2010	Average 2002–2010
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	8	3	8.6
Northern Flicker	9	8	23.1
Eastern Wood Pewee	4	1	3.8
Eastern Phoebe	15	12	15.1
Red-eyed Vireo	12	13	13.9
Blue Jay	13	10	17.1
Brown Creeper	15	8	25.5
Golden-crowned Kinglet	13	7	14.6
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	18	9	16.9
Swainson's Thrush	210	191	226.5
Gray-cheeked Thrush	21	27	31.5
Hermit Thrush	108	107	121.0
Palm Warbler	6	8	8.6
Yellow-rumped Warbler	39	21	41.3
American Redstart	9	5	7.4
White-throated Sparrow	63	31	53.1
Fox Sparrow	90	96	46.8
Dark-eyed Junco	182	88	136.1
Pine Siskin	5	2	12.3
American Goldfinch	39	33	29.1
Totals All Species	**1188**	**998**	**1131.1**

Table 4. Numbers of non-raptorial migrants observed

Species	2011	2010	Average 2001–2010
Double-crested Cormorant	421	256	1670.6
Great Blue Heron	13	20	19.8
Tundra Swan	56	130	220.2
Canada Goose	7150	5675	7445.2
Sandhill Crane	245	5	105.7
Common Nighthawk	1798	323	543.3
Chimney Swift	633	343	637.3
Red-headed Woodpecker	4	0	6.5
Northern Flicker	334	196	670.5
Blue Jay	1924	1517	1823
Purple Martin	2	12	16.2
Swallow sp.	1198	2330	2580.2
American Robin	3685	1959	2836.3
Cedar Waxwing	15384	13573	10533.2
Blackbirds sp.	3149	3000	2717.7
Small Finches	3092	45	1177
All non-raptorial migrants	**39525**	**33696**	**34862.3**

Ten Pas also helped with the operation.

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, the Bill Cowart memorial, the Dutton Foundation, and numerous private donors provided financial support for the station. The Department of Natural Resources allowed use of the area and provided support for maintenance of the buildings

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The Cedar Grove Ornithological Station is a non-profit organization incorporated under Chapter 131 of the Wisconsin Statutes, and it relies heavily on public donations for continued operation. All personnel are unpaid volunteers. We thank all the WSO members who have contributed to the station.

50 Years Ago in *The Passenger Pigeon*

Bill Southern discusses the distribution of Blue-winged and Golden-winged Warblers in Wisconsin in the only paper in this issue. The study was initiated as a result of his field work during three summers at the Audubon Camp near Sarona, Washburn County. He concludes that the Blue-winged Warbler is no longer rare in the state nor is it restricted to the southern portion of the state. His conclusions for the Golden-winged Warbler are that the range is extensive and that the species is more common than previously believed. He notes that golden-wings are often found in upland hazel thickets, spruce-tamarack bogs, and brushy edges of deciduous woodlands; he also notes that blue-wings seem to prefer the wetter deciduous types of habitat. Southern's paper includes range maps (left side of Figures 1 and 2) for the two species, and these maps make for an interesting comparison with results from field work done in 1995–2000 for the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas project (right side of Figures 1 and 2).

Currently, there is considerable concern over significant declines in the golden-wing population, and it will be interesting to see the results for the 2nd Atlas project that is slated to start in 2015.

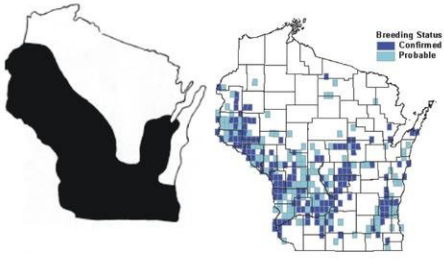

Figure 1. Distribution of the Blue-winged Warbler

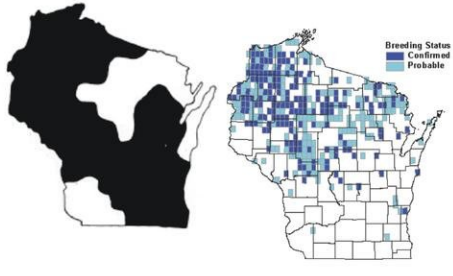

Figure 2. Distribution of the Golden-winged Warbler

Excerpt from Vol. 24(2), 1962 by WSO Historian Noel J. Cutright, 3352 Knollwood Road, West Bend, WI 53095. h. 262 .675. 2443, w. 262. 268. 3617, noel.cutright@we-energies.com.

Osprey version of "bringing home the bacon" by Dennis Connell

The First Report of Sutton's Warbler (Northern Parula × Yellow-throated Warbler) in Wisconsin

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ABSTRACT

We report the observation of an apparent Sutton's Warbler (Northern Parula; Setophaga americana) × *Yellow-throated Warbler*; Setophaga dominica) *in Brown County, Wisconsin. We detail the discovery of this bird by Jack Swelstad and further observations by Brian Pierce, describe and provide photos of the bird, and summarize the history and current knowledge of Sutton's Warbler. This appears to be the first documented observation of Sutton's Warbler in Wisconsin, and one of few recent observations anywhere of this hybrid combination.*

OBSERVATION

Late in the morning of 16 May 2011, Jack Swelstad walked down to Duck Creek, behind his property west of Green Bay in Brown County. Spring of 2011 was cold and late, and warblers were arriving to find trees still dormant, so they needed to be creative to find food. When Jack approached the creek, he found warblers foraging everywhere along the banks and low among the shrubs, many flycatching, presumably feeding on hatching aquatic insects. By about noon, Jack had seen 18 different species of warblers in one spot, so he

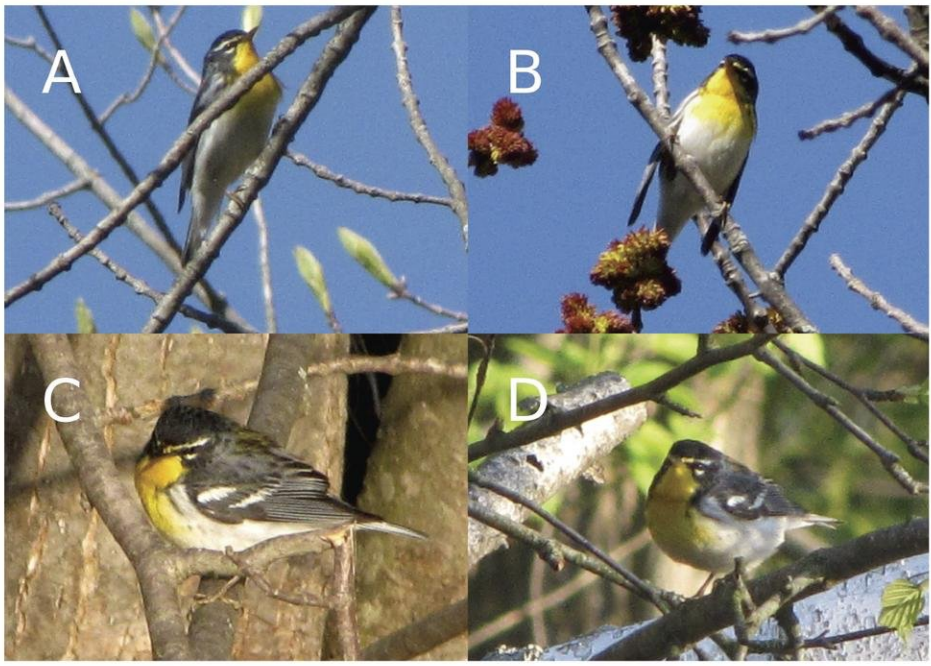

Fig. 1A–D. Four photos of an apparent Sutton's Warbler taken 16 May 2011 by Jack Swelstad in Brown County, Wisconsin.

invited fellow birder Brian Pierce to come by and enjoy the spectacle.

Just before Brian arrived, around 1:00 PM, Jack saw a striking male warbler that he immediately thought to be a male Yellow-throated Warbler (*Setophaga dominica*). Jack had seen Yellow-throated Warblers before while birding in Indiana, and was aware it would be a rare bird as far north as Green Bay. He managed to take a number of digital photos of the bird (Figs. 1–3). It had a brilliant yellow throat extending from the bill to mid-chest, and the rest of the lower chest and abdomen were white. The top of the head was dark with a bold white streak above the eye and a white crescent below the eye. The wings, most of the back, and the dorsal side of the tail were dark bluish-gray. Each wing had two bold white wing bars. As the bird moved around, Jack kept seeing a yellowish-green patch on the upper back (Figs. 1C, 2A, 2D, 3) reminiscent of a Northern Parula (*Setophaga americana*), and from some angles the throat appeared to have a hint of an orangish necklace on it (Figs. 1C, 1D, 2B, 2C). Bill color was not noted in the field, but photos suggest the upper mandible was dark, while the lower mandible was lighter, similar to a Northern Parula (Figs. 2C, 3). The warbler was feeding halfway up in quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) and paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*) trees—higher than most of the other warblers. It was foraging close to the trunk and on larger limbs, only occasionally flycatching.

Jack did not hear the bird sing, al-

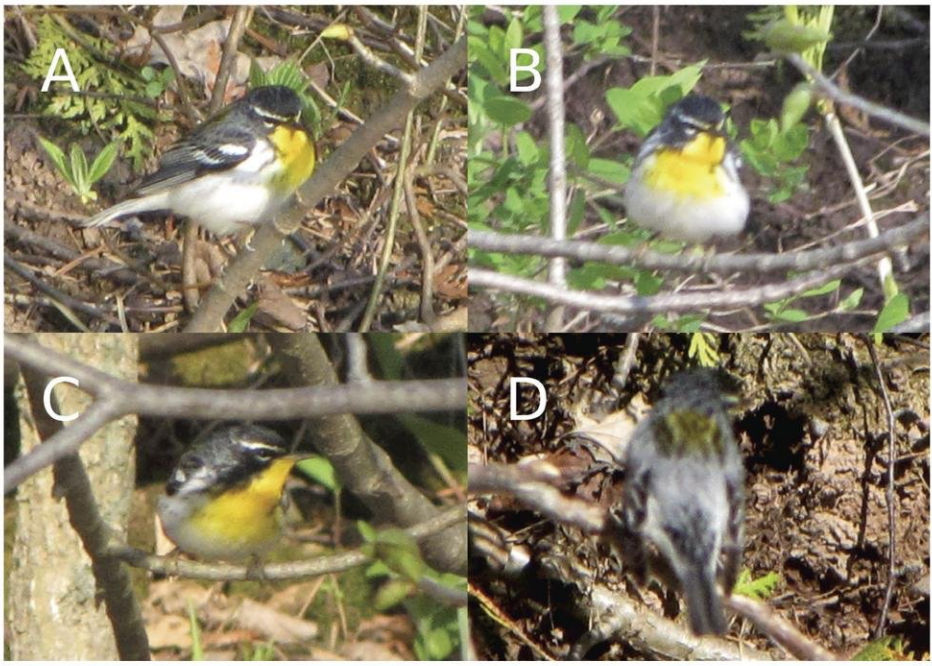

Fig. 2A–D. Four photos of an apparent Sutton's Warbler taken 16 May 2011 by Jack Swelstad in Brown County, Wisconsin. Note that the black sideburn in 2C is apparently the effect of a shadow. While out of focus, 2D clearly shows the extent of a yellowish-green patch on the upper back.

though high-pitched songs are difficult for him because he has high-frequency hearing loss. But Brian soon arrived and noted that the bird sounded 90–95% like the "Porky Pig" song of the Northern Parula (Type B song of Moldenhauer and Regelski 1996) but differed slightly in tonality and melody. This bird's song had a less-discernible nasal quality, and seemed lengthened towards the end. Right before the song dropped in

Fig. 3. Left, photo of a Yellow-throated Warbler, taken by Scott Franke. Center, photo of an apparent Sutton's Warbler taken 16 May 2011 by Jack Swelstad in Brown County, Wisconsin. Right, photo of a Northern Parula taken by Greg Lavaty. Sutton's Warbler features the white supercilium of Yellow-throated Warbler but lacks black streaking on sides or white post-auricular patches. Sutton's Warbler has slight orange wash on chest and definite greenish-yellow patch on upper back like Northern Parula. Bill shape more closely matches Northern Parula, and head and back color appear to be an intermediate blue-gray color.

pitch, it was more drawn out and a bit sweeter than a Northern Parula.

Brian also observed a Northern Parula interacting occasionally with the warbler. The parula was not chasing it, but would land nearby and cock its head side to side looking in its direction, then would fly to an adjacent (higher, lower, or lateral) branch and look some more, then fly off. This occurred several times over the course of approximately 10 minutes, with each interaction lasting less than a minute. The parula appeared curious, and it may have been reacting to the parula-like song. The warbler was present on and off throughout the day, but was gone the next morning.

When Jack compared his photos to pictures of a Yellow-throated Warbler (Fig. 3), he noted several discrepancies. The diagonal white patch in the post-auricular area was missing, only a hint remained on the breast of the black stripes that should show on the flanks, and the yellowish-green patch in the upper back should not have been present. When compared to a Northern Parula (Fig. 3), the yellowish-green patch, yellow-orange throat, and white wing bars fit but the bold white stripe above the eye did not. Grace's Warbler (*Setophaga graciae*), a bird that breeds in the Southwestern U.S., also appears similar but has black lateral breast stripes that were missing on this bird. Also, on Grace's Warbler, much of the supercilium is yellow as well as the lower partial eye-ring, in contrast to white on this bird. Grace's Warbler also does not have a yellowish-green patch on the back. Jack wasn't initially sure if these features could be explained by this being an immature or somewhat abnormally plumaged Yellow-throated Warbler.

Jack submitted his eBird report for the day and entered this bird as a Yellow-throated Warbler, a rare species that got flagged by the eBird filters. When Wisconsin eBird reviewer Nick Anich followed up on the sighting, Jack sent him the photos and mentioned the pale yellowish-green patch on the back and the difference in the face pattern. Nick also noticed the differences between this bird and a normal Yellow-throated Warbler, and started searching bird books and online for possible hybrid combinations.

Sutton's Warbler

To our surprise, we found photos online (Powdermill 2008) as well as illustrations in books (Griscom and Sprunt 1957: 84, Peterson and Peterson 2002: 260) that closely matched our warbler—Sutton's Warbler. Haller (1940) first described Sutton's Warbler as a new species (*Dendroica potomac*) based on a male and female found in 1939 in West Virginia, and named it after American ornithologist George Miksch Sutton (who was a Wisconsin Society for Ornithology member and delivered the banquet address at the 1948 convention, an interesting read: [Sutton 1948]). However, even in a postscript to Haller's original paper, Sutton (1940) himself presented the theory that the bird may be a hybrid between a Northern Parula and a Yellow-throated Warbler. Two years later, Sutton (1942) was still unsure whether the bird was a full species or a hybrid and called for more study. Most sightings of Sutton's Warbler were in West Virginia, particularly between 1939 and 1950, and the Brooks Bird Club in West Virginia

even had a group, the "Sutton's Seekers," that annually went in search of the bird (Devore 1975, Carlson 1981). Sutton's Warbler has also been reported in Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., Virginia, South Carolina, Texas, Alabama, and Florida (Abbott 1948, Carlson 1981, Dunn and Garrett 1997, Hengeveld et al. 2005, Powdermill 2008). Carlson (1981) lists 15 sightings between 1939 and 1980, 7 of those in West Virginia. Haller (1957) questions some of the sightings from the Atlantic coast states in fall, given that no fall photographs or specimens exist, and fall warblers can be harder to identify.

It is now commonly accepted that Sutton's Warber is a hybrid between Northern Parula and Yellow-throated Warbler, as it displays physical characteristics of both parents (Fig. 3; Dunn and Garrett 1997). Interestingly, until recently Sutton's Warbler was considered an intergeneric hybrid (*Parula* × *Dendroica*), but the recently revised phylogenetic relationships (Lovette et al. 2010) and resulting changes to nomenclature (Chesser et al. 2011) now place both parents in the genus *Setophaga*. Sutton (1940) noted that intergeneric hybrids were often sterile and prophetically wrote that if Sutton's Warbler proves to be a cross between a Northern Parula and Yellow-throated Warbler, "I for one should be inclined to let down the generic bars, and to lump the two groups as one." Although we know many birders who mourn the recent loss of the genera *Dendroica* and *Parula* in the new taxonomy, George Miksch Sutton would likely be pleased to see the new analysis confirming the lumping of these two species into *Setophaga* (for now at least!).

All Sutton's Warblers that have been heard vocalizing are reported to have songs resembling the buzzy trill of a Northern Parula but with subtle differences. Some are parula-like but with a strange ending, parula-like with an omitted or fancier final note, or parula-like but given twice in rapid succession (Haller 1957, Carlson 1981).

Carlson (1981) lists 5 features present on Sutton's Warbler: 1) greenish back-patch like Northern Parula, 2) white superciliary line, 3) the post-auricular patch that is white on Yellow-throated Warbler is absent or grayish on Sutton's Warbler, 4) black sideburns, but can vary in size and shape, and 5) the black stripes and spots on the side of Yellow-throated Warbler are very reduced on Sutton's Warbler. Our bird clearly shows the greenish patch on the upper back (Figs. 1C, 2A, 2D, 3), white superciliary line (most Figures) and gray post-auricular patch (most Figures). Our bird does not appear to show black sideburns, and this region does not seem to be darker than the rest of the head and back (the darker region on Fig. 2C appears to be the result of shadow). The Pennsylvania Sutton's, a female, does not show dark sideburns either (Powdermill 2008), so this may be a variable field mark. Alternatively, it is possible that our bird and the Pennsylvania bird are second generation Sutton's crossed again with one of the parents. Our bird lacks the black side striping like a Yellow-throated Warbler, traces of which can be seen as a dark spur coming down each side of the breast and several faint spots on the side of the breast. Carlson does not list orange or brown on the throat as a character, but Haller (1940) did

note in his original description that the male had the slightest hint of raw sienna on the throat and some of our photos illustrate the faint presence of a darker parula-like necklace (Figs. 1C, 1D, 2B, 2C). Given that our warbler shows features known to be associated with Sutton's Warbler, and no features inconsistent with this hybrid pairing, we believe this to be the first record for Wisconsin.

Acknowledgments

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Common Loon with her young by Dennis Connell

Henslow's Sparrow photographed by David Lund

Lessons From the Seasons: Summer 2011

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Dozens of documentations were received for our first Neotropic Cormorant, but I only chose to place one of them in the "*By the Wayside.*" My reason is that the bird was more than adequately documented, but this description had insights into an average birder's angst regarding rare bird sightings and a connection to this lesson. Tom Wood's lead-in to his description is the focus, because it covers important aspects of rare bird sightings and reporting. Average birders, in this context, the center of the bell curve between rank beginners and world-renowned experts, are the audience for the commentary. In other words, nearly every birder is covered, and as we all know misidentifications occur. New birders can take solace that in most cases the more expert a birder is, the more misidentifications he or she has had over the years.

Every birder reacts differently when confronted with a misidentification, or in Tom's case, not identifying the bird as a different species in the first place. Reactions run the gamut from introversion to an outright challenge of a birder's identification skills. Some birders publically question an alternative decision on their sighting. In addition, a big concern for many is not even making the identification in the first place, to which Tom's quote from Harold Holt is rather poignant.

A recent example comes to mind that may shine some light on the discussion, which follows this example. During a recent birding trip, far from Wisconsin, the participants were conducting a several day bird-a-thon to raise funds for bird conservation. Pledges were raised to sponsor a monetary amount per bird species seen. A responsibility to have accurate bird identification was a paramount to those pledging dollars. Only two of the participants saw a soaring raptor. One claimed it was a Roadside Hawk and the other a Plumbeous Kite. The color patterns are very similar on these species, therefore a potential for misidentification existed.

One of the participants utilized a method of basic bird identification, whereas the other used the method of carefully looking at the color patterns and then comparing to the field guide illustrations. Both species have prominent brown primaries and banded tails. The first participant went through the basic flying/soaring hawk identification method mentally asking the elimination questions:

1. Are the wings pointed or rounded? Separates eagles, accipiters and buteos from falcons and kites.
2. Is the tail long or short? Separates accipiters from eagles and buteos.
3. Is the bird large or small? Separates eagles from buteos, large falcons from kestrels, and goshawks from sharpies.

Then birder gets into color, plumage patterns, and gestalt to identify the species of whatever group the bird is placed in. The second participant bypassed the elimination basics and went directly to color, plumage patterns, and gestalt. If the second birder had used the basics, he would have noticed the obvious buteo profile as the bird soared, eliminating his misidentification as a kite. This example seeks not to blame one birder for making a mistake, but to point out a primary tenet of bird identification that these skills honed over time will result in many fewer mistakes.

Every birder, no matter with how many years of experience, should on occasion go back to the basics. Bird identification is a process of elimination. By going through the steps, the process of elimination unfolds and many fewer mistakes are made. Ask these questions for every bird seen a few times then review occasionally throughout your birding life. By doing so you should become much better at bird identification

- What is the size of the bird? Use familiar example for comparison—goose, crow, robin, sparrow, etc. Also, practice estimating distance—a goose ¼ mile away may appear robin size.
- What is the shape of the bird? Most field guides have silhouettes in the front sections. Learn these silhouettes.
- What are the field marks? The section below will give the reader pointers on what to look for when documenting a rare bird.
- What manners or habits does the bird exhibit? Look for flicking of the tail, bobbing of the head, etc.
- What are the flight silhouettes and flight pattern?
- What is the habitat?
- More advanced questions revolve around bird sounds, geographical location, seasonality, and rarity.

In the Winter 1995 edition of the Passenger Pigeon, then WSO Records Committee chair Jim Frank gave some pointers to birders reporting rare birds. Those comments (p. 236) are worth repeating here and every so often to keep us all cognizant of the how to be a better birder:

> "The description should include a *systematic* [italics mine] comment on as many aspects of the bird as you looked at; head, eye, eyeline, supercilium, crown, lores, throat, neck, back, wing covets, rump, wings, wing bars, tail, breast, flanks, belly, bill, legs, and feet, This should include relative size and shape of these parts of the body to similar species as well as coloration, even if the more familiar species is not present at the time of sighting. Remember the usefulness of terms like longer, more curved, darker than, browner than, and rounder than. A reminder should be made

to observers not to fall into the habit of using terminology 'the characteristic color of' or 'the characteristic pattern of.' You must state what the pattern of color is. Additional information such as flight patterns, foraging habits, or aggressiveness can be helpful in completing the description.

"Sometimes an observer will see something about a bird that is not mentioned in standard field guides or is inconsistent with what is depicted. There is a tendency to ignore or fail to supply those facts. There are two good reasons not to overlook this information. First, field guides cannot show all plumages of a species [as in the case of the aforementioned Roadside Hawk]; some species have a first year plumage before full maturity, or even several years as in the case of gulls. Birds may also be in transition plumages. Of surprise to some observers is that some field guides have occasional inaccuracies in their depictions and there are always refinements in our understanding of birds so information in them may become outdated. The bottom line is the inconsistency you saw is there for a reason. Report it, as it may be significant to the accuracy/consistency of the sighting. It may even shed new light on unknown characteristics."

When it comes to understanding the incredible diversity of life on this planet, we are all in various states of ignorance. Equivalent statements can be made regarding our collective ability to identify, let alone understand birds. The best birder in the world is not infallible and has made many misidentifications. It is safe to say that every birder who's strapped on binoculars has misidentified a bird. The crucial aspect is not the mistake, but what you do about it.

Reactions to challenges regarding a birder's identification of a bird can take on as many forms as there are people. I know some for whom this article will not change the way they bird, because they are happy and fully confident with the way they identify birds now. For the introspective birders who want to be better, I suggest that, a few times a year: go back to the basics.

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Male Bobolink with a snack was captured by David Lund

The Summer Season: 2011

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Summer weather was extremely variable—welcome to Wisconsin. Any long-term resident would rightly say, "So what's the news?" Some places were cooler than normal for most of June, especially the far northern portions of the state. In the southernmost tier of counties, June was above normal. Part of July had exceptional temperatures with an official heat wave warning running from 17–21 July. Every part of the state experienced above normal temperature nearly the entire month of July. Precipitation was as expected with thunderstorms quite variable. Some localized areas were deluged, whereas, other parts, like Madison, were below normal. La Crosse had 4.5 inches of rain on 18 June, which was dwarfed in comparison with the 10+ inches that dropped on Grant County 28 July.

The real story was several severe weather outbreaks. Seemingly a continuation of the severe weather in spring, several events were notable. On 21 June, one-hundred mile an hour winds hit portions of Waukesha and Washington counties, downing hundreds of trees. The last day of June saw 80 mph winds hit the Kenosha/Racine area. This storm was highly unusual, because it came from off the lake and travelled west. July 1st was a bad day for many in northwest Wisconsin with 130 mph winds hitting a broad area. Millions of dollars in property were lost and unfortunately human lives were also lost. From a bird perspective, over 200,000 acres of timber land mostly in Burnett and Douglas Counties were leveled. A few days later on 5 July another severe weather outbreak had tornadoes running though the Minong area. Finally, on both 23 and 24 July severe storms hit northeast Wisconsin with downbursts creating substantial havoc.

Observers recorded 264 species during the season, which is up from 259 reported in 2010. The account that follows gives information on nearly all of them. The only species not included are Rock Pigeon, European Starling, and House Sparrow. Continuing the tradition established in last year's summary, detail is given on nearly every species found in the state, including a report on European Goldfinch, which may be on the way to residency in Racine County. The following account provides information to the point of stating Mourning Dove, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, and American Robin were seen in all 72 counties.

Rarities

Observers had a difficult time finding rare birds this summer season, leading to a paucity of *"By The Wayside"* accounts. Most significant among the rare species, was Wisconsin's first Neotropic Cormorant, a cooperative bird that spent most of July at Horicon Marsh. Another Wisconsin first was a Tropical/Couch's Kingbird photographed at the tip of Rock Island, Door County. Among the other rarities highlights, six additional species are worthy of special note. The first was Wisconsin's first summer, and only the fourth record ever, of a cooperative Sage Thrasher. Wisconsin's eleventh White-winged Dove, unfortunately, was a sporadic visitor to a private feeder in Columbia County. Black Scoter's are not rare in Wisconsin, but a bird inland at Rock Lake in Jefferson County in July is truly a rare find. Another species falling into the same category as the Black Scoter, was a magnificent adult Parasitic Jaeger flying around Bayfield County in summer. Fifth, Kirtland's Warblers were documented fledging more than 9 to 17 young birds. And finally, the geriatric Chuck-will's-widow returned to the same location for the seventh consecutive year.

Although less rare, a number of additional species, some out of season, helped to make this a relatively interesting summer season: Spruce Grouse, Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Piping Plover, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope, Laughing, Little, Franklin's, Thayer's, Iceland, Glaucous, and Great Black-backed Gulls, Loggerhead Shrike, White-eyed Vireo, Boreal Chickadees in good numbers, Northern Mockingbird, and high numbers of Yellow-breasted Chats.

Other Features of the Season

A comparison with the past several summer seasonal reports is highlighted by the species that were not seen. For the first time in many years, Horicon Marsh did not have nesting Black-necked Stilts or summering ibises. Fortunately, the "Marsh's" reputation as a summer Mecca for lister throngs to assemble was upheld by a persistent diminutive southern cormorant. Another bird missing from the 2011 summer season was Long-eared Owl, which is not too startling due to it nocturnal nature and paucity of birders in its breeding habitat. Several species missing from the summer reports may pose a cause for concern.

Neither Yellow nor King Rails were reported this season. Both species seem to have taken an unanticipated turn for the worse. Yellow Rails are normally a drawing card for summer birders to Crex Meadows. Early June was a consistent period for observation along the easily travelled dike system. In addition, Nelson's Sparrow was not reported from Crex. Many reasons for the lack of reports are possible: lack of coverage, high fuel prices, actual decline in population, northward range shift due to climate, a tick on a year list in May, etc. King Rail numbers continue to baffle bird conservationists. Locations with a long histories of observation have over the past few summers become at first sporadic and now seemingly void of King Rails. Another species (Swainson's Thrush) is normally found in low, but regular numbers in northern Wiscon-

sin's older conifer forests. The summer of 2011 had nary a bird to be found. Is this species potentially shifting northward? The best information for understanding our breeding bird populations is to conduct intense surveys year after year.

County Coverage

The "Contributors and Cited Observers" section went against the trend for the past several years and seems to be stabilizing near 300 with 311 contributors this year. Observations were submitted for every county in the state. A great disparity in coverage does exist depending on three primary factors. First, the largest counties in population have proportionally a larger number of birders. Some counties with low numbers of birders have a person or two who are very active record keepers, such as the Weigels in La Crosse County and the Kavanaghs in Florence County. Finally, hotpsots seem to be visited with much regularly by birders with limited budgets. Bur-

nett County is a prime example with more than 2100 species record submissions. The low side of county numbers had single visits from birders. Pepin County had 18 species record submissions, Kewaunee had 26, and Menominee had 51. Clark, Iron, and Pierce Counties had low numbers of submissions. On the positive side, a few counties with low population and a relatively small cadre of birders had great coverage. For example, Crawford had 1800 submissions, Rusk—450, Sawyer—1200, Taylor—500, and Vernon—1600.

This summer's data have value and every birder submitting to ebird or through hard copies to WSO should know their efforts can be used to help bird conservation. The data come in different forms. The summer report sent out a call for BBS participants to put their BBS records into ebird. This past summer several birders did and the analysis of data became much more complete.

Until we have data, such as many European countries, which reveal the population of a species in the country within small statistical errors, we cannot do acceptable bird conservation. Please consider participating in one of the numerous breeding bird centered surveys. A complete list can be found on the WSO website. The paradigm stills holds that for the most part, people bird ten months of the year for fun and they bird in June and July for conservation. Everyone is encouraged to participate in single or group counts. Furthermore, if you are a landowner, it should be your moral obligation to know the breeding bird populations on your land.

Abbreviations used: m. obs. = multiple observers. [*Editors' Note: Until the WSO Records Committee has completed its new list of species requiring documenation, the asterisk (*) or double asterisks (**) will not appear in the sesasonal reports.*]

Reports
(1 June–31 July 2011)

Canada Goose—Reported from 67 counties.

Mute Swan—Seen in 12 counties, which is significantly up in both geographical coverage and numbers.

Trumpeter Swan—Reported from 18 counties with highest numbers from Burnett County 16 June (Prestby and Yoerger) with 30 birds. Willard recorded 13 birds on 2 June in Juneau County.

Wood Duck—Reported from 58 counties. An incredible 80 woodies were seen 16 July at Schoeneberg Marsh, Columbia County (Otto).

Gadwall—Found in more widespread locations than previous years. As usual birds nested at Horicon Marsh in Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties. Also, noted from Brown (Swelstad), Burnett (Haseleu), Dane (Herb and Prestby), Door (Schilke), Manitowoc (Sontag), and Sheboygan (DeBruines) Counties.

American Wigeon—Observed in six counties: Bayfield (Brady), Dodge (Epstein and Yoerger), Jefferson (Stutz), Manitowoc (Sontag), Outagamie (Malcolm), and Portage (Oksiuta).

American Black Duck—Observers reported this species from 8 counties; Ashland (m.obs.), Brown (Swelstad), Florence (Kavanaghs), Manitowoc (Sontag), Marathon (Belter and Gold), Milwaukee (O'Connor), Price (Krakowski), and Sheboygan (Frank).

Mallard—Reported from 63 counties.

Blue-winged Teal—Reported from 36 counties.

Northern Shoveler—A good summer with reports coming from 13 counties highlighted by 10 birds 22 July Dodge County (Stutz).

Northern Pintail—Summer season sightings improved from the paltry one bird in 2010.

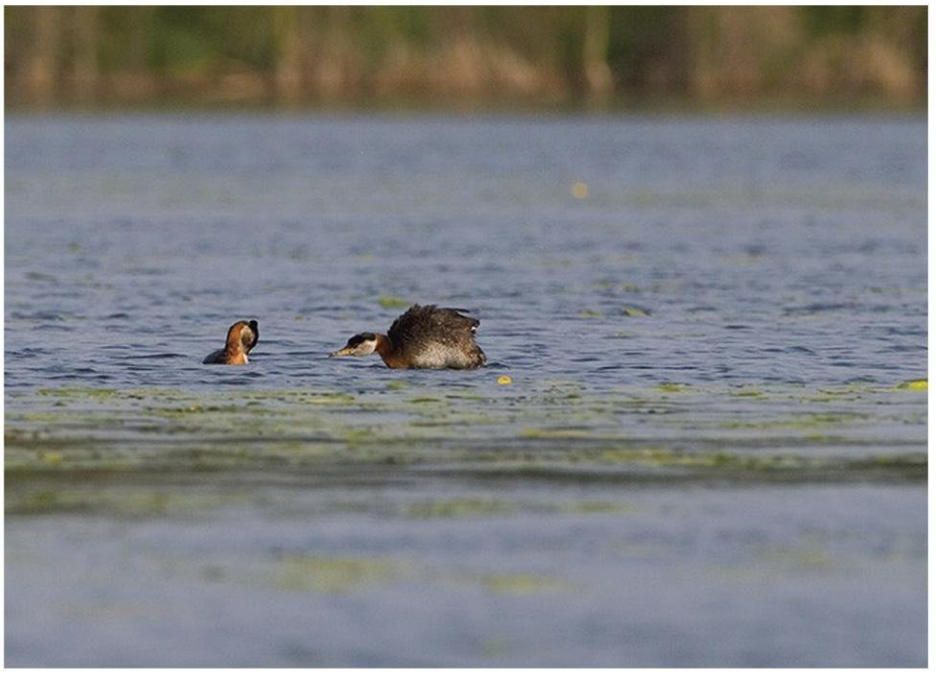

Figure 1. Pair of Red-necked Grebes on Beaver Dam Lake in Waukesha County was photographed together on 17 June 2011 by Ralph Curis.

The central part of the state hosted nearly all the birds with sightings in Dodge (Anderson), Door (Schilke), Juneau (Winesett), Marathon (Pendergast and Gold), and Portage (m. obs.) Counties.

Green-winged Teal—The number of reporting counties (14) and individuals were up significantly over 2010. The largest concentration was 35 birds seen 5 July in Marathon County (Belter).

Canvasback—These 4 counties provided the season's only observations: Burnett (Smith), Dodge (Schwarz), Sheboygan (Tessen), and Winnebago (Ziebell).

Redhead—At least 336 birds were recorded 20 June at Rush Lake, Winnebago County (Ziebell). Total observations were up from 2010 being reported from an additional 13 counties.

Ring-necked Duck—At least 41 birds were recorded 8 June in Burnett County (Smith). Additional observations were from 17 counties.

Greater Scaup—Many observers found several birds throughout the season in Manitowoc and Sheboygan Counties. One additional bird was located 23 June in Douglas County (Betchkal).

Lesser Scaup—Four June records with the latest being 6 individuals seen 27 June in Bayfield County (Brady). Additional sightings came from Door (Cobb and Schilke), Manitowoc (m. obs.), and Winnebago (Ziebell) Counties.

Surf Scoter—Sontag had one bird 4 June along the Manitowoc Lakefront.

White-winged Scoter—Domagalski found a very late migrant 25 June at Fischer Creek, Manitowoc County.

Black Scoter—Domagalski found a very late migrant 25 June at Fischer Creek, Manitowoc County, which is late but somewhat expected. A more normal late migrant was seen 3 June in Door County (Schilke). A bird found on Rock Lake in Jefferson County was more bizarre. Discovered 7 July by Stutz the bird remained

through 19 July (Etter Hale) and provided many birders with an exceptionally rare summer viewing opportunity.

Bufflehead—Summer birds were found in four counties: Burnett (Krakowski), Dane (Thiessen), Door (Cobb), and Manitowoc (Sontag).

Common Goldeneye—Six counties held birds this summer: Bayfield (Anich), Door (Cobb), Manitowoc (m. obs.), Oneida (Richmond), Ozaukee (N. Cutright), and Sawyer (Gordon).

Hooded Merganser—Reported from 32 counties. Sontag found 34 birds on two consecutive days, 13–14 July, Manitowoc County.

Common Merganser—Reported from 12 counties. Evanson found 26 birds 4 June in Sawyer County.

Red-breasted Merganser—Sightings came from seven counties: Bayfield (Anich), Dane (Lindemer), Door with 56 birds 3 June (Schilke), Manitowoc (m. obs.), Milwaukee (m. obs.), Ozaukee (m. obs.), and Sawyer (Gordon).

Ruddy Duck—A normal season with observations in 12 counties including more than 160 seen in Winnebago County on 20 June (Ziebell).

Northern Bobwhite—The six reporting counties were one more than in 2010 and well below the long-term average. Significant though, five of the counties were different than the previous year. Reported from Dane (Fissel), Dodge (Romano), Kenosha (Willard), Rock (Yoerger, same location as 2010), Sauk (McDonald), and Waupaca (Tessen) Counties. Birders need to be cautious of Northern Bobwhite sightings, because they are preferred birds for release to train hunting dogs.

Gray Partridge—Only report was 8 June in Manitowoc County (J. Holschbach).

Ring-necked Pheasant—Reported from 21 counties, which is down from previous summers.

Ruffed Grouse—Birds were reported in 26 counties compared to 28 counties in 2010.

Spruce Grouse—Mid-summer sightings were well above normal with reports coming from Ashland (Anich), Douglas (LaValleys), Forest (Paulios and Prestby), Oneida (Prestby), Sawyer (Paula and Nick Anich), and Vilas (Anich) Counties.

Sharp-tailed Grouse—The reports were similar to last year with three counties holding birds: Burnett (Haseleu), Douglas (LaValleys), and Price (Kavanaghs).

Greater Prairie-Chicken—Reported: 1 June in Portage (Pendergast), 14 June Marathon (Belter), and 31 July Adams (Helland) Counties.

Wild Turkey—Reported from 60 counties.

Common Loon—Exceptional were southern sightings at Governor Dodge State Park, Iowa County, 12 July (Pfautsch) and 10 June–26 July, Jefferson County (Etter Hale and Stutz). None of the remaining 31 reporting counties were considered unusual.

Pied-billed Grebe—Reported from 32 counties.

Horned Grebe—A late migrant was seen 1 June in Lincoln County (Nemec).

Red-necked Grebe—Ziebell counted only 2 birds on 20 June in Winnebago County. Other reports came from these counties: Burnett (m. obs.), Columbia (m. obs.). As in 2010, a bird summered on Beaver Dam Lake in Waukesha County (Fig. 1), well south of the normal southern limits in the state (m. obs.). A presumed late migrant was seen 3 June in Milwaukee (m. obs.).

Eared Grebe—Cameron and P. Campbell found a bird 6–8 June at Dummer's Pond, Dunn County.

Neotropic Cormorant—Many birders considered this species the highlight of the summer season. The first record for this species stayed a long time and permitted many to add it to their state list (Figures 2–7). First seen on 3 June [Horicon Marsh, Dodge County], the bird stuck around until 29 July. *See* "By the Wayside" for an illustrative description of the sighting.

Double-crested Cormorant—This species was seen in 35 counties.

American White Pelican—The number of reporting counties rose again to 30 this season with many high numbers. Exceptional were 350 birds at McMillan Marsh Wildlife Area, Marathon County on 17 July (Belter and Gold).

American Bittern—Reported from 20 counties, which is a significant drop in the number of reporting counties.

Least Bittern—Noted in 16 counties this season; a report from 26 June at Powell Marsh in Vilas County (Hahn and Prestby) was by far the farthest north. Ziebell had 28 birds 20 June at Rush Lake in Winnebago County.

Great Blue Heron—Reported from 61 counties.

Great Egret—Reported from 27 counties as last year. The highest numbers were 125 birds seen in Waushara County (Evanson) and an estimated 400 seen at Horicon Marsh in Fond du Lac County (Yoerger).

Cattle Egret—Found in three counties: 1 June Fond du Lac (Tessen), 25 June Winnebago (Oksiuta and Ziebell), and 23 July Oconto (Schilke and Trick). (Fig. 8)

Green Heron—Reported from 53 counties.

Black-crowned Night-Heron—At least 35 birds were noted in Dodge County on 1 June (Paulios). Observed in 12 counties in all.

Turkey Vulture—Reported from 66 counties.

Osprey—Good news from the expanding range front with a bird seen in Rock County (Yoerger). In sum, Ospreys were reported from 37 counties.

Bald Eagle—Reported from 54 counties.

Northern Harrier—Reported from 30 counties, which is down significantly from the 38 counties in 2010.

Sharp-shinned Hawk—A bird 23 June–5 July in Crawford County (Sandstrom) was from a rarely reported part of the state. More traditional northern counties reports came from 17 counties.

Cooper's Hawk—Reported from 49 counties.

Northern Goshawk—Noted from only 2 counties; 1–20 June at Bear Bottoms in Florence County (Kavanaghs) and 17 June from the Erickson Creek State Natural Area in Douglas County (Schaefer and Szymzak).

Red-shouldered Hawk—Reports were nearly the same as in 2010 with sightings from 24 counties.

Broad-winged Hawk—Reported from 30 counties.

Red-tailed Hawk—Reported from 60 counties.

Rough-legged Hawk—Late-lingering Rough-legs are not that unusual, but a bird documented 18 June at the Buena Vista Grasslands in Portage County (Schaufenbuel and Skutek) really pushed the limits.

American Kestrel—Reported from 51 counties.

Merlin—Observed in the same 13 counties as last year.

Peregrine Falcon—Reported from 15 counties, which is up significantly from the 10 counties last year.

Virginia Rail—Reported from 28 counties, which is up significantly from the 16 counties in 2010.

Sora—Reported from 25 counties.

Common Gallinule—This year no moorhens were found in the state, but gallinule numbers skyrocketed with birds found in 11 counties. Thirteen individuals were seen 31 July at Schoeneberg Marsh in Columbia County (Otto).

American Coot—Numbers were up for this species. Reports came in from 19 counties highlighted by an estimated 1100 birds 20 June at Rush Lake in Winnebago County (Ziebell).

Sandhill Crane—Reported from 64 counties.

Whooping Crane—Summer observations away from the release area in Juneau County were confirmed in Adams, Dunn, Marathon and Portage Counties.

Black-bellied Plover—Two late departure dates noted: 19 June Sheboygan (Bontly and Sommer) and 23 June Douglas (Betchkal). Columbia and Portage counties also held birds in early June. The first fall migrant was found 31 July Outagamie (Swelstad).

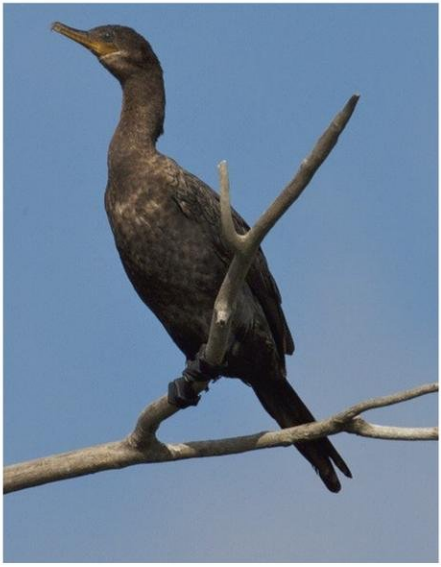

Figure 2. Neotropic Cormorant on its "usual" observation tree in Horicon Marsh, Dodge County, on 13 July 2011 by Jack Bartholmai.

Figure 4. Another pose by the Neotropic Cormorant on 3 July 2011 by Eric Howe, Horicon Marsh, Dodge County.

Figure 3. Neotropic Cormorant pictured by Eric Howe on 3 July 2011 at Horicon Marsh in Dodge County.

Figure 5. Jack Bartholmai captured the Neotropic Cormorant in flight at Horicon Marsh, Dodge County, on 13 July 2011. Note the feather wear seen in this photo.

Figure 6. Neotropic Cormorant in flight, 13 July 2011, Horicon Marsh, Dodge County, by Jack Bartholmai.

Figure 7. Neotropic Cormorant flying, 13 July 2011, Horicon Marsh, Dodge County, by Jack Bartholmai.

Semipalmated Plover—Lingering spring birds were noted in five counties with the latest being 7 June in Adams (Schaufenbuel) and Vilas (Brady and Lind). The first fall migrants were seen 5 July in Dodge County (Schwarz).

Piping Plover—Sumner Matteson reports that within Lake Superior breeding habitat 6 pairs fledged 9 young.

Killdeer—Reported from 57 counties.

Black-necked Stilt—Compared to recent summer seasonal reports, this species was not the buzz on hotlines. The only sighting was of 2 birds 1–19 June at Horicon Marsh Dodge County (Fissel and Paulios).

Spotted Sandpiper—Reported from 39 counties.

Solitary Sandpiper—Reported from 19 counties.

Greater Yellowlegs—Fifteen county reports were received indicating a rebound over the poor 2010 season. The first fall migrant was seen 1 July Marathon County (Pendergast).

Willet—The single report this season came from the Mead Wildlife Area, Marathon County, 10 July (David).

Lesser Yellowlegs—The last spring migrant was recorded 5 June in Sheboygan County (Frank) and the first fall migrant was seen 28 June in Marathon County (Belter).

Upland Sandpiper—Reported from 12 counties nearly statewide in distribution; however, the numbers keep trending down every year.

Whimbrel—The only report came 2 June with 13 birds in Manitowoc County (Domagalski).

Marbled Godwit—A late spring departure 2–5 June in Bayfield County (Anich & Brady).

Ruddy Turnstone—The Lake Michigan shore held birds: Sheboygan County 2 June (DeBruines) and 3 June (Schilke), Manitowoc County 7 June (Sontag).

Sanderling—Six birds seen 2 June in Sheboygan County (DeBruines) and six [the same birds?] 3 June in Kewaunee County (Schilke). The first fall migrant was seen 31 July in Adams County (Helland).

Semipalmated Sandpiper—This species experienced a dramatic late migration this year with 11 counties holding birds in early June. The latest spring departure was 17 June when Domagalski found 18 individuals at Collins Marsh in Manitowoc County. Another indicator of the magnitude of the late migration was 40 birds seen 8 June at Nine Springs in Dane County (Lindemer and Schwarz). The earliest fall migrant was 7 July in Manitowoc County (Tessen), then a surprising 30 birds were seen 8 July in Marathon County (Gold).

Least Sandpiper—The last spring migrant was 2 June in Dodge County (Prestby). The earliest fall migrant was 3 July in Walworth County (Yoerger).

White-rumped Sandpiper—An outstanding 55 birds were counted 2 June, Dodge County (Prestby). The latest departing bird was 20 June, Ashland County (Oksiuta).

Baird's Sandpiper—The latest departing bird was 5 June ,Bayfield County (Nick and Paula Anich). The first fall migrant was seen 21 July, Sauk County (A. Holschbach).

Pectoral Sandpiper—A better summer than 2010 with movements reported from 15 counties. The latest spring report was 5 June, Dodge County (Bontly). The first fall migrant was recorded 8 July in Portage County (Schaufenbuel).

Dunlin—The last spring reports: 14 June in Marinette (J. Campbell), and 22 June in Dane (Schwarz) Counties.

Stilt Sandpiper—Reported from Burnett (Meyer), Columbia (Romano), Dane (m. obs.), Dodge (Tessen), Manitowoc (m. obs.), Marathon (m. obs.), Outagamie (Tessen), and Waukesha (m. obs.) Counties. The earliest fall arrival was 5 July, Marathon County (Belter).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper—An early migrant was seen 31 July, Racine County (Hahn).

Short-billed Dowitcher—The first bird of the fall season appeared 4 July in Dodge County (Frank and Keyel). In addition, birds were observed in Dane (Schwarz), Manitowoc (m. obs.), Marathon (m. obs.), Outagamie (m. obs.), and Portage (David) Counties.

Long-billed Dowitcher—Only seen 6 July in Dodge County (Thiessen).

Wilson's Snipe—Reported from 28 counties.

American Woodcock—Reported from 25 counties, which is well above normal for the summer season, but the same as 2010.

Wilson's Phalarope—Reported from 11 counties with a bird at Lost Creek Wetlands, Portage County from 10 June–31 July potentially breeding.

Red-necked Phalarope—An early fall migrant was found 25 July, Waukesha County (Veltman).

Bonaparte's Gull—Present throughout the season in Door, Manitowoc, and Sheboygan Counties. Short stays were reported from Bayfield, Brown, Kewaunee, Marathon, Marinette, and Ozaukee Counties.

Little Gull—Sheboygan County harbored this species. Several sightings reported at the same location. The bird was first observed on 7 July (Tessen) and last seen 25 July (Kavanaghs).

Laughing Gull—This rare, but regular visitor seems to be increasing, as exemplified by four reporting counties this summer—Kewaunee (Tessen), Manitowoc (Gustafson), Milwaukee (Petherick), and Sheboygan (m. obs.).

Franklin's Gull—A single bird stayed in Sheboygan County 7–25 July—first seen by Tessen and last seen by the Kavanaghs. Another seen 11 June in Manitowoc County (Sontag) was a one-day wonder.

Ring-billed Gull—Reported from 42 counties. Fissel and Otto estimated 8,000 birds 23 July in Sheboygan County.

Herring Gull—Reported from 17 counties. W. Mueller estimated 2,000 birds 2 June in Manitowoc County.

Lesser Black-backed Gull—First reported by Sontag with a sighting 2 June in Manitowoc County. Nearly the entire month of July saw up to 4 birds in Sheboygan County, which were enjoyed by dozens of birders.

Glaucous Gull—A northern gull not wanting to go north lingered until 11 June in Kewaunee County (Tessen).

Thayer's Gull—Another northern gull species not wanting to go north lingered until 11 June also in Kewaunee County (Tessen).

Iceland Gull—Even a third northern gull species not wanting to go north lingered until 11 June in Kewaunee County (Tessen).

Great Black-backed Gull—Two reports: 2–9 June in Manitowoc County (Sontag) and up to 8 birds though the entire summer season in Sheboygan County.

Caspian Tern—Present through most or all of the entire season in 16 counties with 50 individuals reported 11 June in Kewaunee County (Tessen).

Black Tern—Reported from 22 counties with an estimated 96 individuals 20 June at Rush Lake in Fond du Lac County (Ziebell).

Common Tern—Reported from Ashland/Bayfield (m. obs.), Dodge (Batterman), Door (m. obs.), Douglas (m. obs.), Manitowoc (Gustafson), Marinette (Morgan), and Sheboygan (m. obs.) Counties.

Forster's Tern—Present through the season in 14 counties. High counts were 50 individuals 20 June at Rush Lake, Winnebago County (Ziebell).

Parasitic Jaeger—Rarely reported outside September and October, this bird surprised Brady on 20 June in Bayfield County. *See* "By the Wayside" for details of this rare summer encounter.

Eurasian Collared-Dove—Observed in Dane (Wiedenhoff), Dodge (Romano), Grant (Schwarz), Iowa (Schwarz), and throughout the season in Manitowoc (Domagalski) Counties.

White-winged Dove—Wisconsin's eleventh record (Fig. 9) made an appearance sporadically 4–12 June at a feeder in Columbia County (Wuelfel). See "By The Wayside" for details of this sighting.

Mourning Dove—Reported from all 72 counties.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo—Reported from 35 counties.

Black-billed Cuckoo—Reported from 44 counties.

Figure 8. Michael Huebschen watched this Cattle Egret catch and eat a frog in the marsh along the north side of Highway 49, Fond du Lac County, on 25 July 2011.

Figure 9. White-winged Dove that visited a feeder in Columbia County for a few days was photographed by Jack Bartholmai on 4 June 2011.

Figure 10. This is the Tropical/Couch's Kingbird that was seen on Washington Island on 5 June 2011, Door County.

Figure 11. Back view of the Tropical/Couch's Kingbird seen on Washington Island, Door County. *See* the Records Committee Report for details about why a back view is helpful to identifying the bird.

Eastern Screech-Owl—Reports decreased to four counties. The farthest north was Portage County (Pendergast). Also, heard in Iowa (A. Holschbach and Pugh), Richland (Duerksen), and Vernon (Roth-Reynolds) Counties.

Great Horned Owl—Reported from 28 counties.

Barred Owl—Reported from 41 counties, which is up significantly from 2010.

Short-eared Owl—The only report this season was 12 June at the Buena Vista Grasslands in Portage County (Trick).

Northern Saw-whet Owl—June observations came from Forest (Anich) and Marinette (Kavanaghs) Counties.

Common Nighthawk—This year's 24 reporting counties is above average and is most likely due to increased effort documenting nocturnal birds. Twelve individuals reported 14 June in Vilas County (Baughman) could be all nesters.

Chuck-will's-widow—For the seventh consecutive year a Chuck-will's-widow has spent part of the summer near the correctional facility in Jackson County. Reports spanned the period from 1 June (Schwarz) until 16 June (Trick).

Eastern Whip-poor-will—Reported from 22 counties with high numbers being 22 birds 14 June along a route in Vilas County (Baughman) and 24 birds on 12 June near Pigeon Creek in Jackson County (Otto).

Chimney Swift—Reported from 62 counties.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird—Reported from 64 counties.

Belted Kingfisher—Reported from 56 counties.

Red-headed Woodpecker—Reported from 37 counties.

Red-bellied Woodpecker—Reported from 56 counties.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker—Reported from 45 counties.

Downy Woodpecker—Reported from 63 counties.

Hairy Woodpecker—Reported from 64 counties.

Black-backed Woodpecker—Birds were found 12 June next to Military Road in Oneida County (Prestby) and 23 June near MacArthur Pine Road in Forest County (Anich and Prestby).

Northern Flicker—Reported from 68 counties.

Pileated Woodpecker—Reported from 53 counties.

Olive-sided Flycatcher—Migrants were reported 3 June in Ozaukee County (Jaeger) and 5 June in Manitowoc County (Tricks). Mid to late June breeding season records came from more traditional northern counties: Ashland, Door, Douglas, Florence, Forest, Oneida, Sawyer, and Vilas. Most intriguing was a 3 June sighting a Mikana Swamp in Barron County (Cameron) that may be a new breeding location.

Eastern Wood-Pewee—Reported from 67 counties. Seventeen birds were reported 27 June from Justin Trails in Monroe County (Evanson and Justin).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher—Four southern counties reported birds early June with the latest being a 6 June bird in Milwaukee County (Huf). Only 9 northern counties had probable breeding activity. Ten birds were recorded along Military Road in Oneida County 22 June (Anich and Prestby).

Acadian Flycatcher—Reported in 17 counties north to Dunn (P. Campbell) and Manitowoc (Domagalski).

Alder Flycatcher—As usual, most of the 46 reporting counties were northern, although 12 birds were sighted 4 June in the Kettle Moraine State Forest—Southern Unit (Gustafson).

Willow Flycatcher—Reported from 42 counties with no reports from the far north.

As usual the best places to observe were in the south; intriguing though were reports 3 June in Burnett County (Willard) and 22–27 July in Marinette County (J. Campbell and Morgan).

Least Flycatcher—Reported from 55 counties.

Eastern Phoebe—Reported from 67 counties.

Great Crested Flycatcher—Reported from 70 counties, which is a ten-county increase over 2010.

Tropical/Couch's Kingbird—The first record for the state was seen and photographed by tour group led by Sandy Peterson (Figures 10 and 11). The bird was viewed 5 June from the lighthouse on Rock Island, Door County, where it entertained the group for 30 minutes.

Western Kingbird—Found next to Hulls Crossing Road in Sheboygan County on 13 July (R. Mueller).

Eastern Kingbird—Reported from 68 counties.

Loggerhead Shrike—The spring season bird reported from Taylor County remained through 7 June (Risch). The increased rarity of this species should prompt birders to detail accurately any observation and report the sighting to the WDNR Bureau of Endangered Resources.

White-eyed Vireo—Three reports were received, which is the same as 2010: the first from Green County 4–16 June (Yoerger & Heikkinen), the second bird was found in Green Lake County 3 June–24 July (Prestby and Schultz), and the third was at Riveredge Nature Center, Ozaukee County 25 June (S. Cutright).

Bell's Vireo—Fewer numbers than in past summers with reports from: 1 June in Dane County (Schneider and Schwarz), 15 June–6 July at the Dunnville Wildlife Area in Dunn County (Betchkal), three locations in Iowa County 3 June–30 July (m. obs.), and 14 June, Jefferson County (Stutz).

Yellow-throated Vireo—Among the 58 reporting counties, the most northern ones were Douglas and Bayfield. The counties without reports had the fewest observers.

Blue-headed Vireo—Reported from 27 counties. Southern range limits outlined by Waukesha, Adams, Sauk, Vernon, and Pierce Counties.

Warbling Vireo—Reported from 59 counties, which is down from 2010 and most likely due to poor coverage in several counties.

Red-eyed Vireo—Reported from every county except Pierce.

Gray Jay—Reported from these five counties: Ashland (m. obs.), Bayfield (Anich and Prestby), Forest (Anich), Oneida (m. obs.), and Vilas (Peczynski).

Blue Jay—Reported from every county.

American Crow—Reported from all 72 counties.

Common Raven—Reported from 34 counties and as far south as Adams (Boone and Fitzgerald) and Monroe (Epstein and Stutz) Counties.

Horned Lark—Reported from 38 counties, which is up from 2010.

Purple Martin—Reports were down significantly from 2010 with only 29 counties claiming birds. The best observation was 63 birds tallied at the Lulu Lake boat house, Walworth County on 11 July (Howe).

Tree Swallow—Reported from 69 counties; Menominee, Pepin, and Pierce were the only non-reporting counties.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow—Reported from 51 counties.

Bank Swallow—Reported from 48 counties.

Cliff Swallow—Reported from 57 counties.

Barn Swallow—Reported from 68 counties.

Black-capped Chickadee—Reported from all 72 counties.

Boreal Chickadee—There were 4 county reports this season: Ashland (Anich and Prestby), Forest (Anich and Prestby), Oneida (m. obs.), and Sawyer (Anich).

Tufted Titmouse—Reported from 27 counties that continue to document the expansion of this species with the farthest north being St. Croix (Klubertanz) and Chippewa/EauClaire (m. obs.) Counties.

Figures 12. and 13. Sage Thrasher found in Washburn, Bayfield County on 1 June 2011 was photographed by Dick Verch.

Red-breasted Nuthatch—Reported from 44 counties.

White-breasted Nuthatch—Reported from 66 counties.

Brown Creeper—Reported from 13 counties with a spectacular 9 birds sighted at Collins Marsh in Manitowoc County on 9 June (Henry and Knickelbine).

Carolina Wren—Reported from seven counties: Dane (m. obs.), Green Lake (Kerwin), Iowa (Roenneburg), Jefferson (Bridge), Pierce (Durso), Rock (Yoerger), and Walworth (Howe).

House Wren—Reported from 67 counties.

Winter Wren—Nineteen counties held birds this summer with an eye opening 12 birds sighted 14 July in the Brule River State Forest, Douglas County (Stutz). Another impressive total was 10 birds heard by observers on a canoe trip on the North Fork of the Flambeau River, Sawyer County on 4 June (Evanson).

Sedge Wren—Haseleu found 84 in Burnett County 2 June. In addition, 25 birds were tallied at Powell Marsh in Vilas County 12 June (Krakowski). Reported from 44 counties in all.

Marsh Wren—Ziebell found 1023 at Rush Lake in Winnebago County 20 June. Reported from 36 counties in all.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher—Gordon found an individual 22 July in Sawyer County, which represents the farthest north sighting. In addition, reports came from 45 counties.

Golden-crowned Kinglet—Noted in 11 counties within normal range. A significant find was an individual 4 June in Green Lake County (Schultz).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet—Reported from three counties: 9–23 June Ashland (Anich), throughout the season Douglas (LaValleys), and 1–23 June Vilas (Anich and Wilson).

Eastern Bluebird—We tend to miss the various bluebird nest box groups information that lets us track with any confidence how well this species is doing. The number of reporting counties varies for multiple reasons. This year's number (68) is significant because it is the same as 2010 and may indicate a large stable population.

Veery—Reported from 48 counties.

Swainson's Thrush—Two early fall migrants were reported from southern Wisconsin 31 July in Milwaukee County (Bontly & Zehner) and the same date in Waukesha County (m. obs.). A late spring sighting was 7 June in Marinette County (J. Campbell). Breeding reports were not received, which is much different than 2010.

Hermit Thrush—Reported from 29 counties south to Adams (m. obs.) and Juneau (Paulios).

Wood Thrush—Reported from 52 counties.

American Robin—Reported from 72 counties.

Gray Catbird—Reported from 62 counties.

Northern Mockingbird—Found at three locations: 1 June Milwaukee County (Boyle), 2 June at a different location in Milwaukee County (Bontly), and 11 June in Kenosha County (Setzer).

Sage Thrasher—Wisconsin's fourth record and the first for the summer season was discovered by Bratley at Thompson's West End Park in Washburn, Bayfield County, 1 June and was observed for nearly two hours by Oksiuta and Verch (Figures 12 and 13). *See* "By The Wayside" for details of this sighting.

Brown Thrasher—Reported from 56 counties.

Cedar Waxwing—Reported from 67 counties.

Ovenbird—Reported from 62 counties.

Louisiana Waterthrush—Reports came from four counties: Buffalo (Romano), Grant (Ellis and West), Pierce (Durso), and Sauk County (m. obs.).

Northern Waterthrush—Thirteen counties with reports this season are about average. A report 7 June in Milwaukee County (Bontly) is either out of range or a late migrant.

Golden-winged Warbler—Of the 21 reporting counties, Sauk (Grover and Liss) and Juneau (Paulios) were the most southern. No

reports from anywhere in the northern unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest, where they formerly bred in abundance.

Blue-winged Warbler—Of the 32 reporting counties, Burnett (Willard) and Shawano (Ewing) were the most northern.

Black-and-white Warbler—Reported from 36 counties overall. A bird at the Schlitz Audubon Center 6–16 June Milwaukee County (Bontly and Zehner) was the most southern.

Prothonotary Warbler—Observed in these 10 counties: Buffalo (Romano), Dane (m. obs.), Dodge (m. obs.), Grant (m. obs.), La Crosse (Epstein), Outagamie (Paulios), Polk (m. obs.), Rock (Klubertanz and Paulios), Sauk (m. obs.), and St. Croix (Maerecklein).

Tennessee Warbler—The first fall migrants were in Florence County 11 July (Kavanaghs), Vilas County 15 July (Baughman), and 29 July in Portage County (Schaufenbuel). A bird seen 25 June–3 July in Bayfield County covered the non-migratory part of the summer and may have bred.

Nashville Warbler—Reported from 32 counties with 11 reports in central Adams County (Boone and Fitzgerald).

Connecticut Warbler—A very poor season with only a few reports: Bayfield (Brady), Douglas (Tricks), and Florence (K. Kavanagh) Counties.

Mourning Warbler—Reported from 39 counties overall.

Kentucky Warbler—A higher than normal number of reports was received for the summer season: Many observers reported several birds at Wyalusing State Park in Grant County. In addition, these counties held birds in June: Dane (m. obs.), Iowa (Romano), Walworth (m. obs.), and Waukesha (m. obs.).

Common Yellowthroat—Reported from 69 counties.

Hooded Warbler—Reported from 11 counties with the Kettle Moraine State Forest [four units] providing nearly all the sightings. Out of range was a bird sighted 27 June in Monroe County (Evanson and Justin).

American Redstart—Reported from 65 counties.

Kirtland's Warbler—For the 2011 breeding season, 20 males and 11 females were at the Adams County location. Marinette County had 2 males (Swelstad). Bayfield County had one male (LaValley), Douglas County had one male (Johnson), and a female was observed in Vilas County with no indication of breeding (Wile). An estimated 9 to 17 young were produced from the nests in Adams County (*fide* Trick).

Cape May Warbler—The only observations were from Douglas (Stutz), Florence (K. Kavanagh), and Forest (Prestby) Counties, and three locations in Sawyer County (m. obs.).

Cerulean Warbler—Reports came from 12 counties, including a new location in Calumet (Mueller).

Northern Parula—Reported from 13 counties, with most being the more obviously northern. The Southern Kettle Moraine area, however, held significant numbers.

Magnolia Warbler—This season's records came from 13 counties with 12 coming from traditional nesting counties. Perplexing was an 18 June sighting in Racine County (Kennedy). This bird appeared to be lost in transition from south to north or maybe the bird was a poor flier.

Blackburnian Warbler—Reported in 23 counties with 5 June sighting in Walworth (Howe) potentially a breeding bird, while a 4 June bird in Milwaukee (Hager) was more likely a late migrant.

Yellow Warbler—Reported from 68 counties.

Chestnut-sided Warbler—Reported from 38 counties.

Black-throated Blue Warbler—Reported from these 5 counties: Florence (Kavanaghs), Forest (Peczynski and Prestby), Shawano (Ewing), and Vilas (m. obs.), with the final sighting most likely a late migrant 4 June, Milwaukee (Wilson).

Palm Warbler—Reported from Asland (m. obs.), Douglas (LaValleys), Forest (m. obs.), Lincoln (Uttech and Duchek), Marathon (Belter), Oneida (Anich and Prestby), Price (Krakowski), Sawyer (m. obs.), and Vilas (m. obs.).

Pine Warbler—Present through the season in 39 counties with the highest total individuals being 13 on 20 June Eau Claire County (Betchkal).

Yellow-rumped Warbler—Reported from 23 central and northern counties with the farthest south 9 June in Juneau County (Paulios).

Yellow-throated Warbler—Reported 2–4 June at Wyalusing State Park in Grant (Ellis and Duerksen) County.

Prairie Warbler—A cooperative male found in the same location for the exact same time period as 2010, 1 June Waukesha County. It remained through 16 July and was reported by at least 18 birders.

Black-throated Green Warbler—Most reports came from 25 central and northern counties.

Canada Warbler—Noted in 17 counties, which is up significantly from 2010.

Wilson's Warbler—Several birds were found 1 June in Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Waukesha Counties and 2 June in Manitowoc County (Schilke and Sontag), indicating a relatively substantial movement.

Yellow-breasted Chat—*Present from 4 June (Yoerger) through 4 July (Paulios) at the Brooklyn Wildlife Area in Dane County. Birds were also report from an outstanding seven additional counties: Buffalo (Romano and Ma. O'Connor), Dunn (Polk), Eau Claire (Betchkal), Kenosha (Howe), Pierce (Durso), Racine (Kennedy), and Sauk (A. Holschbach).*

Eastern Towhee—Reported from 59 counties. Yoerger and Prestby counted 40 birds 16 June on the Namekagon Barrens, Burnett County.

Chipping Sparrow—Reported from 71 counties with no reports coming from Pepin County.

Clay-colored Sparrow—Reported from 51 counties. Stutz found 25 birds on 14 July in the Ross Road Barrens in Douglas County. Schaufenbuel found 22 birds in the Buena Vista Grasslands, Portage County on 7 June.

Field Sparrow—Among the 55 counties from which these were reported, the highest number of individuals was 37 on 6 June at Lulu Lake in Walworth County (Howe).

Vesper Sparrow—Reported from 44 counties.

Lark Sparrow—Fissel and Schwarz found 8 individuals on 12 June at the Spring Green Preserve in Sauk County. This species was also seen in Burnett (m. obs.), Columbia (Doverspike), Dane (Johnson and Paulios), Dunn (several locations and observers), Eau Claire (Betchkal and W. Mueller), Grant (Ellis), Iowa (A. Holschbach), and La Crosse (Jackson) Counties.

Savannah Sparrow—Reported from 62 counties.

Grasshopper Sparrow—Among the 31 reporting counties, the highest number of individuals was 20 from the Buena Vista Grasslands in Portage County 20 June (Pendergast).

Henslow's Sparrow—Noted in 20 mostly southern counties. The numbers of individuals reported was substantially below previous years, in all likelihood due to turning CRP fields into corn fields. The highest number was 6 birds, compared to 24 in 2010.

Le Conte's Sparrow—Reported from: Douglas (LaValleys), Oneida (Kavanaghs and Gustafson), Vilas (m. obs.), Washburn (Vanderzee), and Wood (Fitzgerald) Counties.

Song Sparrow—Reported from 70 counties.

Lincoln's Sparrow—Reported from these northern counties: Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Forest, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Sawyer, Taylor, and Vilas. A new location was found during a survey 11 June at Dewey Marsh in Portage County (Schaufenbuel).

Swamp Sparrow—Reported from 63 counties.

White-throated Sparrow—Reported from 28 counties, including a 23 June–27 July sighting at a private residence in Racine County (Kennedy).

Dark-eyed Junco—Noted in these northern counties: Bayfield, Door, Douglas, Oneida, Sawyer, and Vilas. Out-of-place birds were seen 4 June in Sauk (Fissel), and 26 June in Adams (Helland) Counties.

Scarlet Tanager—Reported from 55 counties.

Northern Cardinal—Reported from 64 counties.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak—Reported from 66 counties.

Indigo Bunting—Reported from 69 counties.

Dickcissel—Birders found this species with relative ease by observing it in 48 counties as far north as Ashland and Bayfield. Most places reported a few individuals with the exception being 35 birds tallied 7 June at the Avon Bottoms in Rock County (Paulios).

Bobolink—Reported from 60 counties.

Red-winged Blackbird—Reported from 71 counties, being missed only in Pepin County.

Eastern Meadowlark—This year the number of counties in which birders found this species (60) was over four times as many as counties reporting Westerns.

Western Meadowlark—Observers found this species in 12 counties this year, which is down from 2010 and continues the long-term downward trend. Two hotspots were reported. First and foremost is Buena Vista Grasslands in Portage County (m. obs.). A new location was discovered this in summer near Benoit in Bayfield County (Anich). All the other sightings were 1 or 2 birds.

Yellow-headed Blackbird—Noted in 24 counties. The highest number of individuals reported was 286 at Rush Lake Winnebago County 20 June (Ziebell).

Brewer's Blackbird—Noted in 32 counties. The highest numbers of individuals reported was 65 near Mt. Horeb in Dane County (Winesett) and 40 at Bluegill Bay County Park in Marathon County 13 July (Nordstrom).

Common Grackle—Reported from 69 counties.

Brown-headed Cowbird—Reported from 68 counties.

Orchard Oriole—Noted in 33 counties this season, up slightly over 2010.

Baltimore Oriole—Reported from 68 counties.

Purple Finch—Observed in 19 mostly northern counties with the most consistent numbers coming from far northeast Wisconsin. An out-of-range individual was seen 25 June, Ozaukee (Bontly and Zehner) County.

House Finch—Reported from 55 counties.

Red Crossbill—Reported from two locations: 2-4 June in Douglas County (LaValleys and Willard) and 2-11 June in Vilas County (Anich and Prestby).

Pine Siskin—Reports from 13 counties, continuing the low summer season numbers of the past few years.

American Goldfinch—Reported from 69 counties.

Evening Grosbeak—Reports from 5 counties: Ashland (Anich), Florence and Forest (m. obs.), Marinette (Swelstad), and Oneida (m. obs.).

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Schmoker, Daniel Schneider, Joan Schrinner, Carl Schroeder, Thomas Schultz, Jim Schwarz, Laurie Shawver, Adam Sinkula, Stan Skutek, Jerry Smith, Joan Sommer, Charles Sontag, Robin Squier, Alex Stark, James Staudacher, Sharon Stiteler, Elizabeth Stone, Jean Strelka, David Stultz, Aaron Stutz, Zachary Sutton, Jack Swelstad, Andrea Szymczak, Daryl Tessen, Steve Thiessen, Joel Trick, Patti Trick, Ken Uslabar, Tom Uttech, Donald Van Duyse, Gary Vanderzee, Tim Vargo, Jim Veltman, Dick Verch, Elaine Vokoun, C. Warneke, Jennifer Wenzel, Chris West, Jane Whitney, Gary Wiegel, Darwin Wile, David Willard, Linda Williams, Todd Wilson, Ben Winesett, Marlyn Winter, Max Witynski, Eric Wood, Tom Wood, Jerome Wuelfel, Sharon Wuelfel, Quentin Yoerger, Norma Zehner, Jonathan Zellmer, Tom Ziebell, Vince Zimmerman, and Will Zimmerman.

Northern Shoveler photographed by Bob Larson

Ruddy Duck Observations in the Cedarburg Bog, Ozaukee County

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On 16 June 2011, during a Spring migration bird survey by kayak, I observed seven (two adults; five ducklings) Ruddy Ducks (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) swimming at 8:05 a. m. between islands in Mud Lake, part of the Cedarburg Bog complex in the town of Saukville, Ozaukee County. The adult female led the ducklings, and the adult male followed at a distance of about 30 yards. It is presumed that these ducklings were the result of nesting probably on Mud Lake itself or possibly nearby within the Cedarburg Bog complex, a designated State Natural Area. The only other Ruddy Duck sighting during the 2011 Spring surveys occurred on 20 May 2011, when a flock of 13 Ruddy Ducks (8 males, 5 females) was recorded flying low over Mud Lake after presumably being flushed from the water by the census taker.

Ozaukee County is not included within the summer range of the Ruddy Duck by Robbins who considered it as uncommon summer resident in the state (S. D. Robbins, Jr. 1991. *Wisconsin Birdlife*). The closest probable or confirmed record for breeding Ruddy Duck during the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas project conducted from 1995-2000 was Horicon Marsh in Dodge County and Big Muskego Lake in Waukesha County (Cutright, N. J., B. R. Harriman, R. W. Howe. 2006. *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Wisconsin*). The earliest fledgling date recorded during the Atlas was June 14. During the Atlas, Ruddy Duck was confirmed breeding in 11 quads and was recorded as a probable breeder in 11 others.

Marsh Wren announcing its presence for Tom Wright

"By the Wayside"—Summer 2011

These reports of rare species include Neotropic Cormorant, Parasitic Jaeger, White-winged Dove, and Sage Thrasher.

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*)

3 July 2011, Horicon Marsh, Bachuber impoundment, Dodge County—I was completing my hike around the impoundment and had passed two cormorants. I remember one appeared smaller than the other, but mentally dismissed it as an effect of perspective. Soon I encountered John Dixon, Jennifer Wenzel, and Eric Howe. John said "Nice bird for a Sunday afternoon, isn't it?" I was perplexed and he informed me that I had just walked by a Neotropic Cormorant that had been found by Peter Fissel earlier in the day. This is the difference between a great birder and a mediocre one. I certainly am in the latter category and should know better, because the late Harold Holt once told me, "You need to check every bird."

I did not let my embarrassment deter me and I rushed to the car to retrieve my 20–60×, 80mm spotting scope and with the others observed the smaller cormorant for about five minutes before it flew into the marsh. Due to the size, and because this bird was all brown, therefore being a juvenile, but unlike Double-Crested Cormorants which have pale breasts, this bird having a dark brown breast, I felt the others had made a correct ID, but I needed more to be sure. I walked around the 2.5 mile trail once again, but as I neared the cormorants, runners on the path caused them to fly. Two eventually returned to the tree, and from the opposite side of the impoundment (approximately ½ mile away) size and shape differences were actually more evident! The Neotropic was about two-thirds the size of its Double-crested neighbor and had a thinner but proportionally much longer tail. I hurried around back to the tree and positioned my scope for the best angle of light from the still high but descending sun.

At 60× I filled the field of view and noted the following details: The bill was mostly brown with a yellow fringe and the lores were dark brown, not orange as on the Double-crested. The bare parts on the face terminated at a sharp point behind and below the eye, a dramatic difference from the rounded termination of a Double-crested Cormorant.

Behind this point was a white spot which formed part of a thin white border around the bare parts. During the first observation I did not see this bor-

der, but the sun angle had improved for the 5:45 pm observation, and the border, though thin, was visible through the scope. The bird frequently gave a croaking sound, and did not like it when a Great Blue Heron landed in the tree. It flew after we had observed it for about a half hour, but returned as we were leaving. The eye and legs appeared dark. My previous experience with this species was not helpful as it was many years ago that I last saw one in Texas, and at that time I concentrated mainly on the adults.—*Tom Wood, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin.* [See pages 168 and 169 for photos.]

Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*)

20 June 2011, flying over my backyard in Washburn, in Bayfield County—I was out in my yard with my family when I saw a gull-sized dark bird flying broadside from left to right just above tree-top level. With only the naked eye, I was thinking it was either a gull or a raptor but my brain wasn't able to label it quickly. Then I raised my binocs and was stunned to see an obvious adult-like jaeger with mostly even dark brownish-black upper part, dark underwing, white belly, distinct dusky brown band across the upper breast, whitish throat extending to nape, and a dark crown/cap. The bill was gull-like but a bit smaller and all dark. Its structure was intermediate between gull and falcon (e.g. pointed wings) and size was apparently similar to Ring-billed Gull, but there were no birds present for direct comparison. Importantly, I got good views of the tail and the central rectrices extending about 2 inches beyond the rest of the tail and sharply pointed. I did not see any barring on the underside of the body or wings but I cannot guarantee it was an adult and not a sub-adult. Overall, the observation was brief at only a minute or so but the bird was low, close, and in perfect morning sunlight. I did not see every detail I would have liked but the field marks I observed point toward adult Parasitic, the most expected jaeger species at this location and time of year.—*Ryan Brady, Washburn, Wisconsin.*

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*)

4–12 June 2011 at a feeder in the backyard, Columbia County—This dove did not have any black spots on wings, but rather white all along the edge of the wing when sitting on the ground. The eyes were red instead of black. When [it was] sitting on a power line, along with white on front of wings, the undertail was white. It had a small dark cheek patch and dark bill which seemed longer than that of a Mourning Dove. While perched on a powerline, the bird called several times and that was much different than a Mourning Dove. It sounded somewhat like a Barred Owl. I did not hear a wing sound when it flew from place to place, like a Mourning Dove.—*Jerome Wuefel, Cambria, Wisconsin.* [See page 172.]

Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*)

1 June 2011 at Thompson's West End Park in Bayfield County—First appearance was a long, slender, upright

standing bird, about as long as an American Robin, but not as bulky. The bird had a black, slightly down-curved bill. The eye had a yellow iris with a dark pupil. The auricular patch was dark, surrounded with a lighter stripe which ran from the chin toward the back of the face and around and above the eye. The top and back of the head was a pale brownish-gray, as were the back, wings, and tail. The buffy breast was streaked with fine black (dark) broken lines from the chin to the lower breast. The underbelly was white and unstreaked. The legs were dark. No wingbars were noticed on this bird.—*Tim Oksiuta, Ashland, Wisconsin.* [See page 176 for photos.]

Ruddy Duck in camouflage—or maybe its nesting material—by Michael Huebschen

Red-winged Blackbird with courtship on his mind was observed by Michael Huebschen

WSO Records Committee Report: Summer 2011

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The WSO Records Committee reviewed 20 records of 7 species for the Summer 2011 season, accepting 17 of them (85%). Most notable were two first state records, Neotropic Cormorant and Tropical/Couch's Kingbird, which bring the state list to 434 species. Other highlights included Sage Thrasher (4th state record and first since 1988), White-winged Dove, and Western Kingbird. The committee also reviewed three old records from previous seasons, accepting two of them. All observers who submitted documentations were notified of the committee's decisions by e-mail.

Accepted Records

White-winged Scoter—

#2011-047 Manitowoc Co., 25 June 2011, B. Domagalski.

This unusually late record represented an adult female seen in the company of a female Black Scoter (#2011-046 below). The White-winged was larger bodied with bigger bill and steep "angular" forehead. It sported two horizontally-oriented and pale oval spots on the face, one above the bill and the other behind the eye. No white wing patches were observed (which is not unusual on resting birds of this species) but Surf Scoter was eliminated by the horizontal, not round or vertical, shape of the anterior white spot on the face.

Black Scoter—

#2011-046 Manitowoc Co., 25 June 2011, B. Domagalski.

#2011-055 Jefferson Co., 7 July 2011, A. Stutz.

The unusually late Manitowoc Co. record represented an adult female seen in the company of a female White-winged Scoter (#2011-047 above). It was smaller than the White-winged with a smaller, all-dark bill, and rounded forehead. The body and crown were dark while the face featured a large pale-colored cheek patch. The tail was held up at a slight angle.

The adult male in Jefferson Co. was described as a petite scoter with black body plumage, orange knob on bill, and stiff tail. It was seen by multiple observers over multiple days.

Neotropic Cormorant—

#2011-043 Dodge Co., 3–23 July 2011, P. Fissel (photo), E. Howe (photos), J. Dixon, T. Wood, D. Gustafson, J. Edlhuber (photos), J. Bartholmai (photos), C. West (photos), C. Bridge (photo).

This cooperative and overdue first state record was well seen and photographed by many observers over several weeks, often in direct company with Double-crested Cormorants. A brownish first-year bird, the Neotropic had a smaller body, head, and bill but longer tail than Double-cresteds simultaneously seen in the same tree. The base/rear of the bill was pointed and bordered by a thin white line. The lores were dark, not the orange seen in Double-crested. In flight, observers noted the tail extended behind the wings as far as the head projected in front of the wings.

White-winged Dove—

#2011-045 Columbia Co., 4–12 June 2011, J. & S. Woeffel (photos), J. Bartholmai (photos).

This dove visited feeders for over a week, often in company of Mourning Doves. The observers' descriptions and photos indicate a large dove with blue orbital ring surrounding a reddish iris, black auricular mark, square tail, and distinct white stripe along lower edge of folded wing. Compared to Mourning Dove, this bird also lacked black spots on the upperwings, had slightly longer bill, and featured a distinctly square tail that was dark at base and light at tip.

Tropical/Couch's Kingbird (not accepted as Western Kingbird)—

#2011-044 Door Co., 5 June 2011, S. Peterson, C. Naeseth, M. Walsh (photos).

On 5 June 2011, a yellowish *Tyrannus* kingbird was seen by upwards of 25 people, and photographed by many, as it sallied for insects beside the Pottawatomi Lighthouse on Rock Island during the Door Islands Bird Festival. Initially reported to the Wisbirdn listserve and submitted to WSO as a Western Kingbird on the basis of a "yellow belly and white in the tail," one set of accompanying photos by M. Walsh suggest an alternative identification and the Records Committee has voted to accept this individual as the state's first Tropical/Couch's Kingbird. Tropical and Couch's are reliably distinguished only by voice and the vocalizations described in the submitted documentation do not allow identification to the species level. Unfortunately, the initial documentation included few details and subsequent requests for additional documentations and photos from some of the many other observers were unsuccessful. Hence the committee's decision was based almost entirely on three images presented by M. Walsh.

These photos show the bill to be much too large and heavy for a Western Kingbird, which is short-billed relative to most other Tyrannus species. In a dorsal view, the bird's tail is clearly the same gray-brown color as the rump and wings and does not show white outer tail feathers. In Western Kingbird, the tail is distinctly black from above, markedly contrasting the wings and back, and typically shows bold outer white tail feathers. Westerns also show a square tail, while

this bird shows a distinctly notched tail as in Tropical and Couch's Kingbirds. The back also appears to be olive-green in contrast with a grayish head, which again favors Tropical/Couch's. From below, the key field mark is the yellow-olive color extending from the belly far up onto the breast. Westerns show a grayish-white breast with yellow restricted to the belly. Finally, the limited amount of white on the outer undertail visible in one of the photos is an artifact of lighting (backlit feather not overlapped by other feathers) and the "white in the tail" indicated by the observers may be explained by Tropical/Couch's sometimes showing a limited amount of white in the outer tail. The white outer tail of a Western Kingbird would be much more extensive and obvious than in this bird.

While Tropical is a more regular vagrant than Couch's, the committee felt that an exact identification was not possible based on the evidence at hand. One observer described the call as "a sharp but musical *whit* sometimes over and over", which may suggest Tropical as this species tends to have a more staccato series of quick "whit" notes while Couch's usually gives a single drawn out "weer" note. Other points *possibly* favoring Tropical are: (1) longer bill than Couch's, (2) straighter culmen, (3) more deeply notched tail, and (4) crisp white edges to the secondaries and tertials. However, these features are difficult to assess, subject to overlap, and thus not completely reliable. Therefore, the committee has accepted this record as Wisconsin's first Tropical/Couch's Kingbird but welcomes additional information that may allow for more specific identification in the future.

Western Kingbird—

#2011-053 Sheboygan Co., 12–13 July 2011, R. Mueller.

Similar to size of Eastern Kingbird, this bird had an obvious yellow belly, pale throat, brown-green back, and, noted in flight, black tail with very obvious white outer tail feathers. Tail pattern and bill size eliminated other kingbird species. The bird was seen flycatching over prairie grasses for several hours over two days.

Sage Thrasher—

#2011-048 Bayfield Co., 1 June 2011, D. Bratley, D. Verch (photos), T. Oksiuta (photos).

This bird was seen and photographed by several observers over just a few hours as it fed on insects along a small boardwalk jutting into Chequamegon Bay, Lake Superior. It was a relatively small but slender thrasher with relatively short tail and straight bill. The upperparts were brownish-gray with two faint white wing bars. The underparts were buffy-white with obvious dark streaking from the throat down the breast and flanks. The eye was yellow and the bill and legs dark.

Records Not Accepted

Snow Goose—

#2011-049 Waukesha Co., 24 June 2011.

The observer described a group of 15 birds flying in close, v-shaped formation. They were goose-shaped with white bodies, secondaries, and tails but black primaries. While an intriguing report, such a large group of Snow Geese on such a late date is exceptional and requires accordingly exceptional documentation. Without

photos, the committee had concerns that domestic geese or even gulls were not eliminated from consideration. The lack of any optics in making the identification also left doubt as to whether field marks were adequately observed, especially given the observer had seen Snow Geese only once previously in his/her lifetime.

Neotropic Cormorant—

#2011-043 Dodge Co., 5 & 23 July 2011.

Although the identification may have been correct, the description was limited to a smaller cormorant with a longer tail. The observer failed to mention the pointed rear border of the facial skin and the associated dusky-white border, both key field marks in separating Neotropic from Double-crested Cormorant. As such, the documentation did not clinch the identification beyond doubt. It is policy of the Records Committee that each documentation be able to stand on its own, regardless of the documentations of accompanying observers.

Old Record Accepted

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher—

#2010-050 Racine Co., 23 November 2006, J. DeBoer (photo).

This was an old record of a record-late individual photographed at close range. The photo reveals a small, slender songbird that is bright blue-gray overall with relatively long black bill and distinct white eye ring. It had a long, nearly-black tail with white outer tail feathers and lacked any wing bars. The observer noted a cat-like "pweee" call.

Snow Bunting—

#2010-052 Juneau Co., 26 May 2011, M. Beck.

Felt to be a male in breeding plumage, this late individual had black-and-white plumage throughout and foraged in areas of gravel, low brush, and unmowed grass, staying low to the ground during flight. It had a white head, nape, breast, belly, and rump but black bill, legs, eye, back, and tail. Outer tail feathers were white and the black wings had white wing patches. The head was rounded in shape as in, for example, Eastern Bluebird.

Old Record Not Accepted

Blue-winged Warbler—

#2010-051 Chippewa Co., 18 April 2011.

This early individual was seen at a platform feeder with sunflower seeds, although the observer felt it was eating insects or larvae and not the seeds. It was seen too briefly to get a photo or video. Not expecting documentation would be required, the observer did not take any notes and, though confident of his/her identification, was unable to provide any specific field marks after the fact. S/he noted it was not a Pine Warbler because of the "size, yellow color, and lack of streaking," and also ruled out Yellow Warbler based on the "bright yellow color and darker wings." S/he thought the bird had a black eye line and white wing bars but in retrospect was not sure. Unfortunately, without additional information, the committee was unable to confirm the identification and accept the record as described.

John Bielefeldt
5 April 1945–21 October 2011

John Bielefeldt passed peacefully at the age of 66 on Friday, 21 October 2011 with his beloved wife and field partner Terri Beth Peters at his side. His last hours occurred just outside the Kettle Moraine State Forest-South Unit, an area where John grew up, spent most of his life, and in particular where he conducted numerous avian field studies in addition to wildlife and vegetation studies. His keen observation skills also rendered him a valuable participant in Christmas Bird Counts and in Breeding Bird Surveys in and around the Kettle, an area that was a natural treasure to John.

John was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and he worked several positions during his life. His longest employment stints were as a free-lance editor of master's and doctoral theses for a professor at The Ohio State University, and his last slot, from which he retired, was as Racine County Naturalist. In the latter position he provided interpretative nature walks and presentations to the public, and he too gave important counsel on wildlife habitat to the county and more broadly to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. John made many contributions to the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, including organizing the WSO convention in Waukesha in 1976, serving as Winter Field-notes Compiler during 1975 thru 1979, and as Chair of the Records Committee from 1982 to 1985. He also spent much of his time poring over, and at times analyzing Wisconsin Society for Ornithology observation records (e.g., Bielefeldt and Rosenfield 2003), self-imparting an incredible, encyclopedic memory of Wisconsin ornithology, including its practitioners, and of course the birds and their habitats. His valuable service to the WSO resulted in his being honored in 1988 with the WSO Silver Passenger Pigeon Award.

John researched many different species of Wisconsin birds, including several multi-year studies on the state-threatened Acadian Flycatcher and Hooded Warbler in the Kettle (Bielefeldt and Rosenfield 1997, 2001), along with bird surveys of southeast Wisconsin bogs with Mike Mossman of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. He was the senior author or co-author of four species accounts on raptors and songbirds in the Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Wisconsin (Cutright et al. 2006). His last senior-authored paper documented the apparent first breeding record of the state-endangered Red-necked Grebe in southeastern Wisconsin (Bielefeldt 2011). But without question his most long-term contribution regarding Wisconsin avifauna was with the Cooper's Hawk. It began in 1981 when I, then a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, asked if he'd collaborate on determining the nesting density of this raptor. His field-

John Bielefeldt with friends.

work centered on searching a quadrat of the Kettle Moraine State Forest-South Unit. (I was able to pay him, though not even close to what he and his work were worth!). Our overall aim was focused on the statewide status of the Cooper's Hawk. Little did he, or I, know then that this work would take us on an incredibly rich journey of field adventure and ecological discovery. John's contributions led to documentation of a healthy population of Cooper's Hawks, a finding which eventually led to the removal of this raptor from the State's list of Threatened Species (e.g., Bielefeldt et al. 1998). Although significant, that is only a fraction of his work on Cooper's Hawks in an ongoing study that he co-led for 32 consecutive years. He and I investigated taped call survey methods, habitat and fitness studies, food habits, survival rates, dispersal, sexual selection, migratory movements using stable isotope analyses, urban nesting biology, genetic population structure, and lifetime reproduction of breeding adults. John's efforts resulted in his authoring over 40 papers on Cooper's Hawks in international journals, book chapters, *The Passenger Pigeon,* and monographs (including two versions of a Birds of North America species account on this raptor). This study is now focused on the comparative ecology of Wisconsin birds vs. Cooper's Hawk populations across half a continent involving collaboration with numerous scientists, several of whom were UWSP undergraduate students that John earlier mentored in the field.

John was a remarkable person, a natural historian, and editor par ex-

cellence. He possessed true brilliance of mind, but these things were perhaps overshadowed by his personal character—a presence of calm, selflessness, sensitivity, and unparalleled love for birds and the places they are found. I felt undeservedly lucky to have spent an extraordinary number of hours over decades with him trapping Cooper's Hawks, talking science, designing research, writing and "thinking" papers and technical presentations, and battling honorably with legions of editors and referees. I cannot remember any disagreements we had but for one: John steadfastly believed that the Rolling Stones were the greater rock group compared to the Beatles, for which I forgave him. I admit that this account does not, indeed cannot, articulate with mere words how much I admired John Bielefeldt.

In looking over the many hand-written messages (John did little via electronic gadgetry) from him about life and possible future studies of Wisconsin birds, I share the following passages so that the reader gets a bit of the "color" of John Bielefeldt (I transcribe almost exactly):

> "As I think I've said before, there's room for a highly senior thesis/independent study person—especially one who's interested in a grad program on migrant stopover ecology—to compile published and unpublished banding records from Wisconsin. Ideally this would include data from Mueller & Berger on passerines, other unpublished banders, and WSO archives (35,000 birds by the late E. Peartree)! I'm pretty sure we could get co-op and 'push' from Bettie Harriman—hence WSO—because she seems to be pope of the Society right now. Maybe some WSO grant money too. I only hear from Eric Epstein about once/yr but when I do he's still cantankerous and amusing. Any little piece of continuity is good for us old folks who turned 65 today." Signed and dated 4/5/10 by John Bielefeldt.

Perhaps some aspiring young Wisconsin ornithologist may want to take up John's urging.

Here perhaps is my favorite note from John (he sent it to cheer me up after a difficult time in my life, and note his silliness):

> "One of the several bad things about getting old is coming to realize that the *&^%# human condition has probably not improved very much since Lucy. We can watch inspirational messages by Montel or Michael J. Fox on Oprah, or recite the serenity prayer that the AA folks use, but I like instead the prayer's short version—hey, it's only rock 'n roll, so *&^% it. At least I do know that being old is not so bad as it might be. And regarding the Cooper's Hawk study, Fred and Fran Hamerstrom are indeed sitting in 4 o'clock one-martini heaven with Roger Peterson and Leslie Brown, both reported devotees—heck, let's have six—being proud of our work." Signed and dated 10/18/09 by John Bielefeldt.

I suggest that Wisconsin is forever enriched with that which John gave to the appreciation and study of its birds and those who have studied, and those who yet will study, these flying

creatures that he so loved. He's with me as I begin this spring the 33rd year of research on Wisconsin's Cooper's Hawks.

Contributions to his memory can be sent to: Kettle Moraine Natural History Association, S65 W38010 County Road ZZ, Eagle, WI 53119.

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Robert N. Rosenfield
Stevens Point, Wisconsin

Red-tailed Hawk by Stephen Fisher

About the Artists

Dennis Connell from Nekoosa, Wisconsin, is an avid nature photographer. For the past 13 years he's been photographing wildlife and nature. Dennis enjoys digitally capturing wildlife doing what it is they do in their daily lives: feeding, nesting, courting, caring for the young, hunting, or whatever it is they need to do to preserve their species. His goal is to produce sharp clear images of the subject for himself and others to enjoy. You can see more images at: www.freewebs.com/dcimages

Stephen Fisher is a serious amateur photographer, enjoying both landscape and wildlife photography. He is a retired high school English teacher who worked as an environmental/wildlife educator and Education Director for the Raptor Education Group, Inc. (REGI) for seven years following his retirement from teaching in Wausau. He is now a volunteer at REGI, rescuing and/or transporting sick and injured birds. He and his wife, Evelyn, have always enjoyed and respected the natural world, and he has a special appreciation for birds, particularly raptors. He also enjoys traveling, reading, hiking, snowshoeing, observing wildlife, spending time at his cabin in northern Vilas county, walking his dogs in the wonderful Wisconsin outdoors, and lifelong learning.

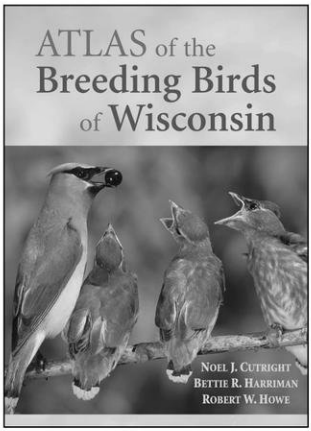
Michael J. Huebschen, age 63, has been an amateur wildlife photographer for about 45 years. He is retired from UW-Oshkosh and lives in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, with his wife Cynthia. They enjoy travel, wildlife observations, hiking, canoeing, and fishing.

Bob Larson, who lives in Kaukauna, is an advanced amateur photographer who concentrates his photography in the Fox Valley area. All nature centers and Haunts areas are fair game. Outagamie, Winnebago, Calumet, Brown, and Waushara Counties get the most attention. He switched to digital just before it became affordable and has been learning ever since.

Dave Lund is an amateur photographer who lives near Eau Claire. Following his retirement as a Mathematics Professor at UW-Eau Claire in 2000, he and his wife Judy now include birding and photography as part of all of their travels. Although many of his pictures are taken in Wisconsin, wintering in the southern US has provided many additional opportunities birding photography experiences. He has recently begun making presentations on birds and birding.

Tom Wright is an amateur photographer who resides in Wales, Wisconsin, with his wife and two sons. When not focused on his family and work in IT/Engineering, much of his free time is spent outdoors photographing nature, especially wildflowers and birds.

Savannah Sparrow by David Lund



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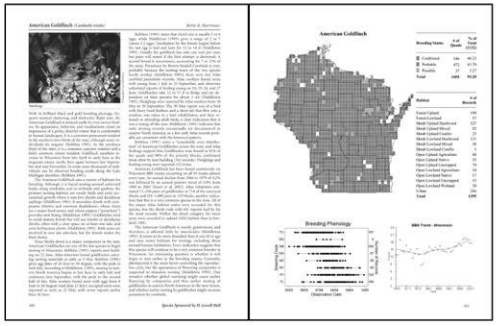

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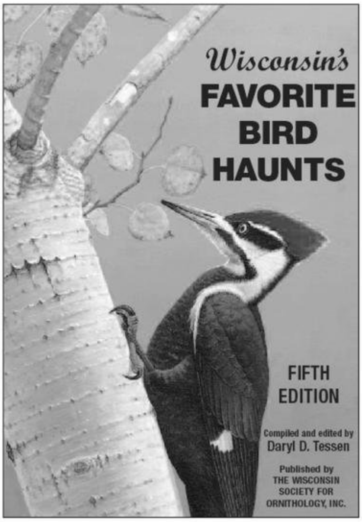

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The Arlington Prairie area north of Madison offers a variety of birding experiences throughout the year. During any time of year, it is one of the best areas in the state to find open country and field birds. Birds such as Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, Vesper Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting are all common anywhere in the area during the appropriate season. However, there is no doubt that this area is best known for the abundant ponds, flooded fields, and marshes that attract numerous ducks, geese, and shorebirds. This is one of the best areas in the state to view thousands of ducks and geese (including Greater White-fronted, Snow, Ross's, and Cackling) in March and April and hundreds of shorebirds (sometimes more than 30 species) in late April through early June. The area is very dependent on precipitation; there is abundant habitat for these birds after snowy winters or wet springs but little habitat after dry winters or during dry springs. During years with normal precipitation, the areas listed below typically provide habitat for waterfowl into late May or early June and longer during wet years.

AREA A – Goose Pond

Goose Pond should be the focus for birding the area in spring and fall. Once the ice begins to retreat in late March, this prairie pothole attracts an excellent number of ducks and geese including good numbers of Greater White-fronted, Snow, and Cackling Geese and usually a few Ross's Geese. Late fall is also a great time to check Goose Pond for these species plus large groups

552

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