

## **The passenger pigeon. Vol. 64, No. 3 Fall 2002**

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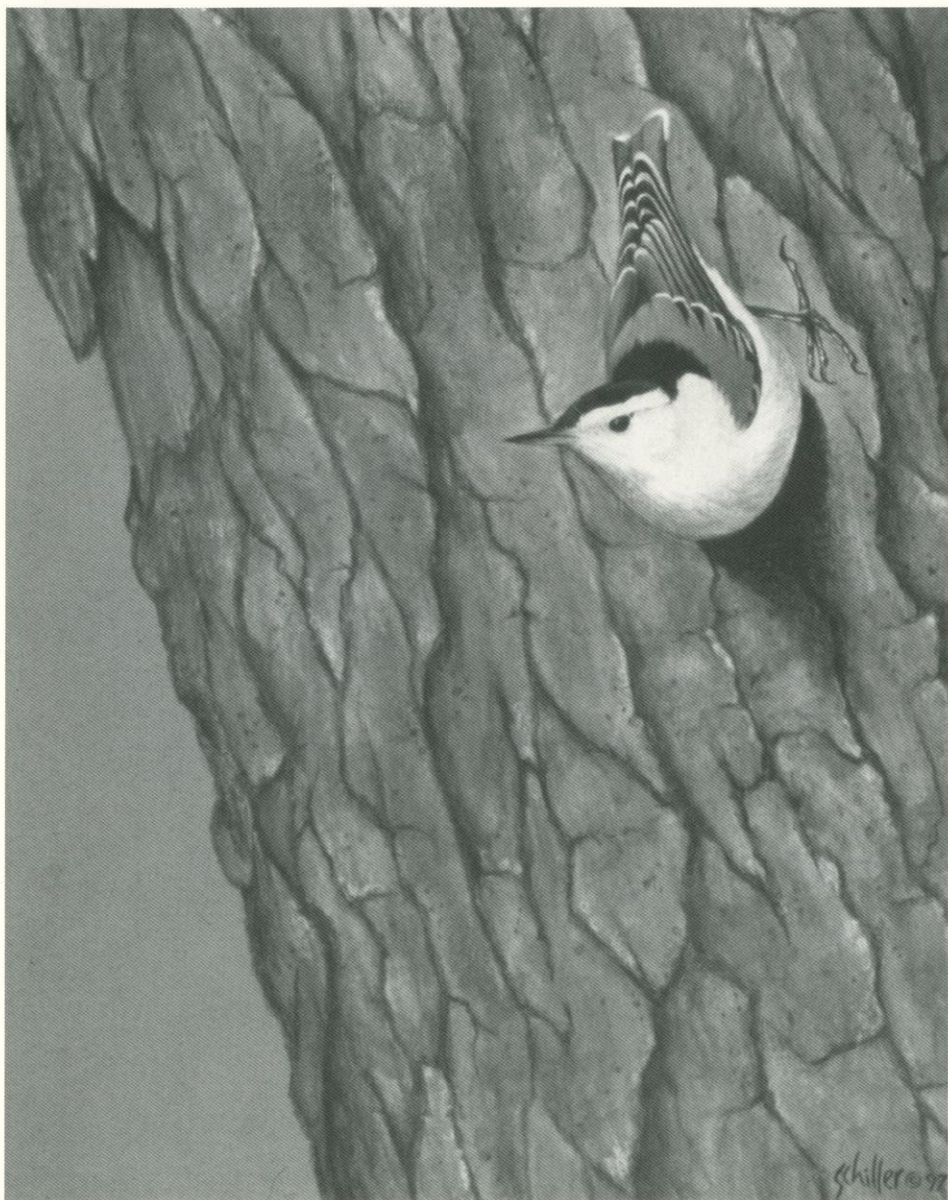


# THE PASSENGER PIGEON

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## **Alex Kailing—A Foundation Stone Missing**

Every organization has one or more individuals who are thought of as the glue that holds it together or the foundation that holds it up. Alex Kailing, who passed away on October 19, 2002, was such a person. He officially was Treasurer and Membership Chair for the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, but he wore many, many other hats as well. (Please read Noel Cutright's memorial for Alex in this issue for a much more detailed view of Alex and his life.)

I first met Alex about four years ago, and got to know him quite well about two years ago when I became President. The last time I saw him was in mid-September, when I drove to his house to pick up the WSO booth materials for the upcoming Prairies Jubilee exhibits at Goose Pond. We had a good, long talk about a whole variety of things that day, because he took almost an hour off from preparing to build (perhaps ironically?) a small foundation near the horse barn. It was just about a month before the October 19 WSO Board meeting, and one thing we discussed was what exactly to do about various agenda items that would be coming up then.

Recently, in early November, seven of us met at Alex's house to sort out and distribute to the proper persons the boxes and boxes of WSO materials that Maxine, his wife, had located. By the time we were finished, we had eight or nine piles of things that soon would be distributed to eight or nine *different* people. That is close to the number of hats that Alex wore for WSO.

It is hard for me to understand how someone who was nearly 70 could have the energy to do all those things. What an incredibly hard worker! Alex was an exceptional person, one whom we will never be able to replace completely, and one whom we will always remember fondly. The WSO foundation is not crumbling, but in the interim it cannot be as strong as it was.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Brooks". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Bill" and "Brooks" being capitalized and prominent.

*President*

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## **Farewell, Friend: Alex Kailing, 1933–2002**

If you have been a WSO member at any time in the last quarter century, Alex Kailing knew your name.

As Membership chair since 1978 and Treasurer since 1990, it was Alex who personally mailed out your renewal notices, cashed your membership checks, and, more often than not, received the brunt of any complaint you may have had. Until recently, he also addressed and mailed every single issue of this journal.

But simply listing the many tasks Alex performed for WSO falls short of capturing the actual role he played in our organization. For as long as most of us can remember, Alex's home on West Shore Drive in Hartland has served as the Society's "official" address. By the same token, his always active mind has been our institutional memory. Whatever it was, Alex was the guy who remembered when it happened, where it got put, and how we did it the last time. He recounted this information in a warm and slightly

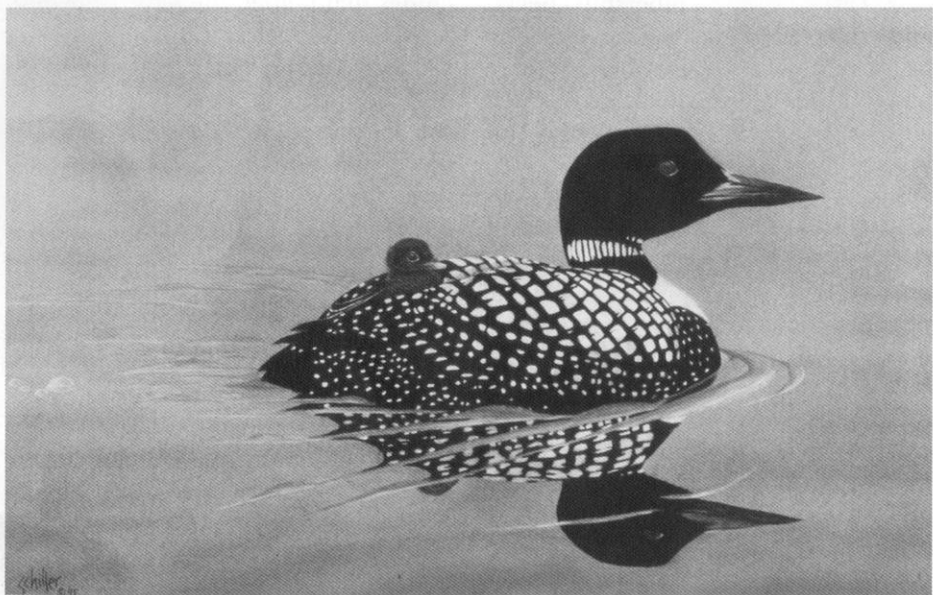
amused manner, usually accompanied by a solid opinion about how we should do it the next time.

In a positive sense, Alex was WSO's "wizard behind the curtain," quietly pulling the levers and working the machines that helped the day-to-day business of the Society run smoothly. As Bill Brooks and Noel Cutright detail elsewhere in this issue, it will take a small army of new volunteers to replace him (and thanks to those who have already stepped forward to help fill his shoes).

For me, Alex was an important sounding board and confidant on matters relating to *The Passenger Pigeon*, and I'll miss him dearly.

So let us all remember Alex's name, as he remembered ours, and send him thanks for the tremendous service he gave for the birds and birders of Wisconsin.

Tod Highsmith, Editor



Common Loon and Chick by Scott Schiller

# What Happened to the Spring Bird Migration in Wisconsin?

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*The author summarizes a remarkable 40-year data set of personal field observations during spring migration in southern Wisconsin. Although his counts of many neotropical migrant species declined greatly over the years, other bird groups—such as some waterfowl, Turkey Vultures, some raptors, and Sandhill Cranes—showed increases.*

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*by William L. Hilsenhoff*

In recent years, it has become obvious to me that the migrations through southern Wisconsin of various songbirds are not what they once were; I now encounter many fewer individual warblers, vireos, shorebirds, flycatchers, thrushes, sparrows, and other birds than I used to. I first documented spring warbler and vireo migrations in the Madison area from 1962 through 1973 (Hilsenhoff 1974), and the numbers I found then are far greater than anything I have experienced for several years—no longer can I find a dozen singing warblers in every tree in the Wingra Woods, as was often the case many years ago. Using daily records I have kept of migrants and uncommon permanent residents from January to early June since 1962, I decided to make a long-range comparison of the numbers of migrants of many different species then and now.

## METHODS

I compiled my 40 years of observations on the abundance of 246 migrant species found from January through May in southern Wisconsin for each year (1962–2001), and for 5-year and 10-year intervals.

Most observations were made from year to year in the same habitats. The University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum was the most frequently visited area, where in winter and early spring the Duck Pond, Ho-Nee-Um Pond, Wingra Woods, and Gallistel Woods were visited almost weekly, with more frequent visits made in late April and almost daily visits in May. After open water appeared, weekly visits were also made over the same route to 21 ponds and wetlands in northern Dane and southern Columbia Counties. Each trip took about two and a half hours and included Hwy. V Pond,



Goose Pond, Schoeneberg's Marsh, and ponds on Hwy. DM west of Hwy. I. These areas were visited less frequently in winter and early spring. Picnic Point on the U.W. Madison campus was often visited in late April and May and waterfowl were counted on Lake Mendota. Many waterfowl were also observed in open water on Lake Monona in winter, and on Lower Mud Lake and the Yahara River in March. One or two trips were often made in April to Fish Lake and Crystal Lake in northern Dane County.

American Robins, Red-winged Blackbirds, and Common Grackles were not counted, along with year-round residents without substantial migrations. Unfortunately, because of their perceived abundance, Northern Flickers, Horned Larks, Purple Martins, Song Sparrows, Swamp Sparrows, meadowlarks, and American Goldfinches were not counted in April and/or May in some years, as footnoted in the tables. Because of their initial abundance, counts of Song Sparrows, Brown-headed Cowbirds, and, unfortunately, meadowlarks, were included only through April. Lingering migrants in June were also included for species that nest farther north.

Although the time I spent observing birds was quite consistent throughout the years, it was severely affected in the last decade by out-of-state travel in February and March (227 and 164 days, respectively); I was away only 50 days in April and 50 days in May over the 40-year period. My absence in February and March obviously reduced counts of winter and early spring migrants during the last decade, although I was able to spend more time observing birds in January, April, and May since retirement in July 1994. I moved to a

new home northwest of Madison in December 1996, which affected species of birds seen in the yard and at feeders. Deterioration of my ability to hear certain species over the last several years also had some effect on numbers counted, but counts were based mostly on sight records.

Table 1 includes totals for 10-year intervals and the percent change from the first 10 years for the 190 species that had 40 or more total observations. The percent change was not included for species with no observations in the first decade. When a species was not counted in May or April in more than two years during a decade (see footnotes), a percent change was not recorded for that decade.

Table 2 includes 40-year totals, the number of years found, the most found in a single year and the year(s), early arrival and late departure dates for migrants that do not overwinter and/or nest, and records of January occurrence. Arrival and departure dates include records before 1962 and only the oldest record date. Records of winter and summer (nesting) presence are from Dane and Columbia Counties.

## RESULTS

Table 1 clearly indicates that my counts of most neotropical migrant species severely declined over at least the last 20 years. Similarly, I found that many species that winter in the southern U.S. also became much less numerous. While my observations show that 25% of the 190 most common species became more numerous, 57% (108) declined 50% or more, and 42% (80) declined more than 70%. A summary follows:

Table 1. Number of individuals of each migrant species counted in Dane and southern Columbia Counties, January–May\*, 1962–2001, by 10-year interval, with percent change from the original 1962–1971 decade. (The percent change is not given for species with no observations in the first decade. When a species was not counted in May or April in more than two years during a decade [see footnotes], a percent change was not calculated for that decade.)

Species	1962–71	1972–81	% change	1982–91	% change	1992–2001	% change
Common Loon	43	49	+14	58	+35	96	+123
Pied-billed Grebe	537	1,366	+154	499	–7	1,451	+170
Horned Grebe	84	40	–52	27	–68	120	+43
Red-necked Grebe	4	1		2	2		
Eared Grebe	7	0		0		4	
Double-crested Cormorant	25	1	–96	73	+192	114	+356
American Bittern	8	10		3		0	
Least Bittern	1	2		0		0	
Great Blue Heron	174	71	–59	239	+37	275	+58
Great Egret	29	12	–59	50	+72	27	–7
Snowy Egret	0	0		0		2	
Little Blue Heron	1	1		0		0	
Cattle Egret	0	1		2		3	
Green Heron	155	126	–19	87	–44	44	–72
Black-crowned Night-Heron	29	18	–38	12	–59	9	–69
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	0	1		0		0	
Turkey Vulture	16	42	+162	112	+600	123	+669
Greater White-fronted Goose	3	2	–33	1	–67	71	+2,267
Snow Goose	8	105	+1,212	141	+1,662	109	+1,262
Ross's Goose	0	0		1		2	
Canada Goose	57,417	60,925	+6	209,795	+265	138,112	+141
Tundra Swan	7,239	5,090	–30	6,108	–16	1,950	–73
Wood Duck	379	411	+8	545	+44	996	+163
Gadwall	543	4,392	+708	7,990	+1371	2,279	+320
American Wigeon	3,674	2,525	–31	1,340	–64	1,209	–67
American Black Duck	929	252	–73	790	–15	241	–74
Blue-winged Teal	3,743	3,376	–9	2,572	–31	4,397	+17
Northern Shoveler	2,088	3,155	+51	3,334	+60	7,297	+249
Northern Pintail	1,647	1,761	+6	222	–87	182	–89
Green-winged Teal	991	602	–39	471	–52	1,877	+89
Canvasback	4,684	4,768	+2	1,419	–70	1,854	–60
Redhead	2,922	2,842	–3	819	–72	1,013	–65
Ring-necked Duck	3,324	2,393	–28	3,828	+15	6,408	+93
Lesser Scaup	14,460	20,535	+42	17,036	+18	10,628	–27
Harlequin Duck	0	3		0		0	
Surf Scoter	0	0		1		0	
White-winged Scoter	1	0		0		0	
Long-tailed Duck	0	1		1		0	
Bufflehead	1,076	1,143	+6	1,351	+26	1,955	+82
Common Goldeneye	3,486	4,939	+42	5,092	+46	1,137	–67
Hooded Merganser	80	83	+4	164	+105	163	+104
Common Merganser	658	917	+39	4,490	+582	855	+30
Red-breasted Merganser	267	226	–15	725	+171	1,294	+385
Ruddy Duck	3,331	3,120	–6	1,948	–42	2,742	–18
Osprey	12	7	–42	7	–42	14	+17
Bald Eagle	48	68	+42	83	+73	138	+187
Northern Harrier	153	43	–71	72	–53	37	–76

(continued)

Table 1. (*continued*)

Species	1962- 71	1972- 81	% change	1982- 91	% change	1992- 2001	% change
Sharp-shinned Hawk	13	23	+77	24	+85	27	+108
Cooper's Hawk	24	10	-58	30	+25	89	+271
Northern Goshawk	2	10		4		1	
Red-shouldered Hawk	65	12	-82	11	-83	1	-98
Broad-winged Hawk	181	635	+251	118	-35	93	-49
Red-tailed Hawk	699	492	-30	688	-2	731	+5
Rough-legged Hawk	197	72	-63	69	-65	71	-64
American Kestrel	288	305	+6	944	+228	489	+70
Merlin	0	1		3		5	
Peregrine Falcon	1	1		0		1	
Virginia Rail	28	25	-11	2	-93	1	-96
Sora	158	199	+26	42	-73	12	-92
Common Moorhen	36	3	-92	10	-72	13	-64
American Coot	31,273	76,539	+145	39,033	+25	59,624	+91
Sandhill Crane	1	4	+300	146	+14,500	554	+55,300
Black-bellied Plover	629	99	-84	32	-95	15	-98
American Golden-Plover	679	637	-6	232	-66	18	-97
Semipalmated Plover	710	234	-67	240	-66	93	-87
Killdeer	1,114	1,104	-1	1,569	+41	894	-20
American Avocet	4	0		0		0	
Greater Yellowlegs	237	195	-18	171	-28	144	-39
Lesser Yellowlegs	883	933	+6	707	-20	1,071	+21
Solitary Sandpiper	49	48	-2	23	-53	26	-47
Willet	4	4		18		2	
Spotted Sandpiper	260	123	-54	81	-69	61	-77
Upland Sandpiper	19	6		3		0	
Whimbrel	0	0		1		0	
Hudsonian Godwit	26	44	+69	68	+162	4	-85
Marbled Godwit	0	1		14		6	
Ruddy Turnstone	338	7	-98	35	-90	1	-100
Red Knot	0	34		0		0	
Sanderling	38	1	-97	15	-61	0	-100
Semipalmated Sandpiper	2,952	1,343	-55	407	-86	311	-89
Least Sandpiper	552	521	-6	264	-52	1,208	+119
White-rumped Sandpiper	223	44	-80	18	-92	3	-99
Baird's Sandpiper	2	0		0		4	
Pectoral Sandpiper	2,677	3,567	+33	2,261	-15	751	-72
Dunlin	2,734	2,907	+6	3,018	+10	1,397	-49
Stilt Sandpiper	5	9		1		0	
Ruff	3	0		0		0	
Short-billed Dowitcher	306	107	-65	131	-57	215	-30
Long-billed Dowitcher	9	16		9		0	
dowitcher spp.			24		36		
Wilson's Snipe	143	172	+20	227	+59	222	+55
American Woodcock	69	25	-64	8	-88	6	-91
Wilson's Phalarope	76	75	-1	22	-71	11	-86
Red-necked Phalarope	77	4	-95	0	-100	3	-96
Laughing Gull	0	0		0		1	
Franklin's Gull	2	0		1		3	
Bonaparte's Gull	281	113	-60	187	-33	6,807	+2,322
Ring-billed Gull	2,273	718	-68	16,438	+623	23,581	+937
Herring Gull	1,762	2,275	+29	423	-76	1,459	-17

(*continued*)



Table 1. (continued)

Species	1962- 71	1972- 81	% change	1982- 91	% change	1992- 2001	% change
Lesser Black-backed Gull	0	0		0		1	
Glaucous Gull	0	1		0		0	
Caspian Tern	0	0	0	21	++	47	++
Common Tern	240	12	-95	13	-95	16	-93
Forster's Tern	116	94	-19	63	-46	250	+116
Black Tern	2,689	712	-74	233	-91	367	-86
Black-billed Cuckoo	43	34	-21	10	-77	4	-91
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	25	12	-52	5	-80	1	-96
Snowy Owl	4	2		2		1	
Long-eared Owl	15	0		0		0	
Short-eared Owl	1	1		1		0	
Common Nighthawk	540	324	-40	120	-78	54	-90
Whip-poor-will	6	3		0		1	
Chimney Swift	15,296	11,082	-28	1,691	-89	958	-94
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	22	15	-32	28	+27	86	+290
Belted Kingfisher	249	255	+2	206	-17	116	-53
Red-headed Woodpecker	362	494	+36	285	-21	43	-88
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	130	166	+27	71	-45	78	-40
Northern Flicker <sup>b</sup>	1,595	1,029	-35	1,069	-33	423	-73
Olive-sided Flycatcher	18	14	-22	7	-61	3	-83
Eastern Wood-Pewee	245	176	-28	197	-20	83	-66
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	106	56	-47	53	-50	22	-79
Acadian Flycatcher	1	4		8		1	
Trail's Flycatcher <sup>c</sup>	126	23	-10		-68		-83
Alder Flycatcher		48		26		10	
Willow Flycatcher		42		14		11	
Least Flycatcher	345	288	-17	201	-42	44	-87
Eastern Phoebe	194	144	-26	142	-27	176	-9
Great Crested Flycatcher	503	423	-16	381	-24	294	-42
Eastern Kingbird	143	190	+33	140	-2	104	-27
Loggerhead Shrike	11	3		0		0	
Northern Shrike	12	5		9		2	
White-eyed Vireo	6	5	-17	29	+383	2	-67
Bell's Vireo	11	0		0		0	
Yellow-throated Vireo	91	140	+54	65	-29	67	-26
Blue-headed Vireo	65	99	+52	62	-5	75	+15
Warbling Vireo	451	455	+1	354	-22	233	-48
Philadelphia Vireo	59	53	-10	29	-51	13	-78
Red-eyed Vireo	744	823	+11	518	-30	351	-53
Horned Lark <sup>d</sup>	3,794	2,949		1,794	-53	2,194	-42
Purple Martin <sup>e</sup>	670	1,666		1,143	-31	31	-98
Tree Swallow	4,008	3,045	-24	5,947	+48	4,381	+9
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	753	741	-2	445	-41	639	-15
Bank Swallow	1,414	536	-62	549	-61	469	-67
Cliff Swallow	823	188	-77	230	-72	446	-46
Barn Swallow	2,505	3,418	+36	2,790	+11	2,899	+16
Red-breasted Nuthatch	39	57	+46	78	+100	124	+218
Brown Creeper	154	154	0	46	-70	41	-73
House Wren	464	726	+56	803	+73	556	+20
Winter Wren	30	46	+53	25	-17	15	-50
Sedge Wren	85	52	-39	14	-84	0	-100
Marsh Wren	109	92	-16	10	-91	10	-91

(continued)

Table 1. (*continued*)

Species	1962- 71	1972- 81	% change	1982- 91	% change	1992- 2001	% change
Golden-crowned Kinglet	750	531	-29	269	-64	99	-87
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1,447	1,606	+11	817	-44	578	-60
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	43	162	+277	187	+335	184	+328
Eastern Bluebird	149	55	-63	177	+19	274	+84
Townsend's Solitaire	0	0		1		0	
Veery	233	162	-30	93	-60	29	-88
Gray-cheeked Thrush	186	60	-68	71	-62	18	-90
Swainson's Thrush	429	198	-54	134	-69	49	-89
Hermit Thrush	122	128	+5	103	-16	90	-26
Wood Thrush	198	198	0	161	-19	42	-79
Varied Thrush	1	0		0		0	
Gray Catbird	1,808	1,318	-27	986	-45	485	-73
Brown Thrasher	880	581	-34	379	-57	83	-91
American Pipit	5	15		11		1	
Bohemian Waxwing	65	0	-100	0	-100	0	-100
Cedar Waxwing	3,403	7,887	+132	4,136	+22	1,981	-42
Blue-winged Warbler	106	27	-75	19	-82	31	-71
Golden-winged Warbler	252	163	-35	89	-65	49	-81
Tennessee Warbler	1,293	1,248	-3	746	-42	198	-85
Orange-crowned Warbler	131	152	+16	70	-47	20	-85
Nashville Warbler	799	852	+7	382	-52	162	-80
Northern Parula	136	204	+50	102	-25	35	-74
Yellow Warbler	1,118	1,067	-5	623	-44	378	-66
Chestnut-sided Warbler	859	698	-19	507	-41	311	-64
Magnolia Warbler	407	569	+40	376	-8	181	-56
Cape May Warbler	91	125	+37	35	-62	41	-55
Black-throated Blue Warbler	7	18	+157	4	-43	13	+85
Yellow-rumped Warbler	3,152	3,972	+26	2,468	-22	2,968	-6
Black-throated Green Warbler	484	556	+15	276	-43	157	-68
Blackburnian Warbler	359	364	+1	115	-68	79	-78
Yellow-throated Warbler	0	2		2		0	
Pine Warbler	9	13	+44	8	-11	12	+33
Palm Warbler	1,588	877	-45	573	-64	660	-58
Bay-breasted Warbler	275	374	+36	104	-62	46	-83
Blackpoll Warbler	777	663	-15	134	-83	68	-91
Cerulean Warbler	31	27	-13	2	-94	15	-52
Black-and-white Warbler	507	551	+9	242	-52	186	-63
American Redstart	1,191	1,167	-2	675	-43	392	-67
Prothonotary Warbler	7	22	+214	13	+86	7	0
Worm-eating Warbler	3	6		8		1	
Ovenbird	480	503	+5	340	-29	130	-73
Northern Waterthrush	387	549	+42	324	-16	96	-75
Louisiana Waterthrush	61	9	-85	39	-36	5	-92
Kentucky Warbler	3	5		1		4	
Connecticut Warbler	38	26	-32	23	-39	4	-89
Mourning Warbler	148	125	-16	83	-44	26	-82
Common Yellowthroat	792	766	-3	544	-31	307	-61
Hooded Warbler	14	5		9		7	
Wilson's Warbler	241	280	+16	211	-12	74	-69
Canada Warbler	147	221	+50	106	-28	50	-66
Yellow-breasted Chat	10	5		1		0	
Scarlet Tanager	214	184	-14	153	-29	72	-66

(*continued*)

Table 1. (*continued*)

Species	1962– 71	1972– 81	% change	1982– 91	% change	1992– 2001	% change
Eastern Towhee	489	179	–63	70	–86	47	–90
American Tree Sparrow	3,596	6,769	+88	1,892	–47	3,007	–16
Chipping Sparrow	951	745	–22	641	–33	907	–5
Clay-colored Sparrow	19	3		2		0	
Field Sparrow	434	156	–64	126	–71	122	–72
Vesper Sparrow	558	228	–59	148	–73	60	–89
Savannah Sparrow	416	247	–41	140	–66	97	–77
Grasshopper Sparrow	41	6	–85	0	–100	0	–100
Henslow's Sparrow	24	6		0		0	
Fox Sparrow	691	825	+19	462	–33	285	–59
Song Sparrow J–A <sup>f</sup>	1,167	865		1,254	+7	1,120	–4
Lincoln's Sparrow	60	44	–27	28	–53	8	–87
Swamp Sparrow <sup>g</sup>	1,015	1,028	+1	433	150		–85
White-throated Sparrow	5,049	3,550	–30	1,756	–65	1,323	–74
Harris's Sparrow	2	0		0		0	
White-crowned Sparrow	141	82	–42	107	–24	81	–43
Dark-eyed Junco	3,441	7,368	+114	6,740	+96	4,867	+41
Lapland Longspur	2,234	797	–64	533	–76	531	–76
Snow Bunting	318	230	–28	241	–24	156	–51
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	572	742	+30	524	–8	200	–65
Black-headed Grosbeak	1	0		0		0	
Indigo Bunting	372	252	–32	224	–40	91	–76
Dickcissel	191	15	–92	9	–95	0	–100
Bobolink	196	93	–53	29	–85	13	–93
Eastern Meadowlark J–A <sup>h</sup>	543	135		106	–80	16	–97
Western Meadowlark J–A <sup>h</sup>	631	31		97	–85	16	–97
meadowlark spp. J–A <sup>h</sup>	1,046	353		218	–79	52	–95
Yellow-headed Blackbird	226	86	–62	285	+26	230	+2
Rusty Blackbird	257	759	+195	586	+128	240	–7
Brewer's Blackbird	399	94	–76	105	–74	337	–16
Brown-headed Cowbird J–A	1,427	1,425	0	1,278	–10	1,457	+2
Orchard Oriole	1	1		0		0	
Baltimore Oriole	866	1,115	+29	833	–4	569	–34
Pine Grosbeak	35	89	+154	1	–97	0	–100
Purple Finch	769	706	–8	846	+10	73	–91
Red Crossbill	38	120	+216	138	+263	2	–95
White-winged Crossbill	5	40	+700	8	+60	0	–100
Common Redpoll	1,147	4,004	+249	661	–42	193	–83
Hoary Redpoll	0	1		0		0	
Pine Siskin	786	4,040	+414	1,939	+147	486	–38
American Goldfinch <sup>i</sup>	3,226	5,583	+73	1,599		3,073	–5
Evening Grosbeak	250	93	–63	1	–100	0	–100

<sup>a</sup> Includes lingering migrants in June.<sup>b</sup> Counted through April from 1970–1972.<sup>c</sup> Trail's Flycatcher split into Alder and Willow flycatchers in 1974.<sup>d</sup> Counted through April in 1970, 1974 and 1976; and through March in 1973 and 1975.<sup>e</sup> Counted through April from 1962–1969. Percent change from 1972–1981.<sup>f</sup> Counted through April 15 in 1972 and 1973.<sup>g</sup> Counted through April from 1985–1990.<sup>h</sup> Counted through March from 1970–1980, and 1987.<sup>i</sup> Counted through April from 1982–1990.

J–A Counted January through April.



Table 2. Forty-year total (1962–2001) of each migrant species counted in Dane and southern Columbia Counties from January–May<sup>a</sup>, number of years found, most counted in a single year(s), dates of earliest arrival and latest departure (since 1946), and presence in January.

Species	Total	Number	Most	Years	Arrive	Depart	January
Common Loon	246	40	15	1993	3/21/92	5/31/66	
Pied-billed Grebe	3,853	40	288	1976	3/9/74	Nests	Yes
Horned Grebe	271	34	50	1962	3/21/92	5/16/49	Yes
Red-necked Grebe	9	6	4	1962	3/5/52	Nests	
Eared Grebe	12	7	3	1962,	4/26/91	6/16/65	
				94			
Double-crested Cormorant	213	18	67	1996	4/3/00	Nests	
American Bittern	21	14	3	1968,	4/9/48	Nests	Yes
				75			
Least Bittern	3	3	1	1962,	5/7/60	Nests	
				73, 76			
Great Blue Heron	759	39	71	1978	3/12/77	Nests	Yes
Great Egret	118	25	19	1990	4/5/55	Nests	
Snowy Egret	2	1	2	2000	5/4/00		
Little Blue Heron	2	2	1	1964,	4/18/64	6/17/77	
				77			
Cattle Egret	6	4	2	1987,	4/25/94	5/30/78	
				94			
Green Heron	412	38	25	1967,	4/13/68	Nests	
				68			
Black-crowned Night-Heron	68	23	13	1974	4/7/58	Nests	
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	1	1	1	1979	5/5/79		
Turkey Vulture	293	38	27	1994	3/19/89	Nests	
Greater White-fronted Goose	77	6	27	1998	3/16/95	5/16/83	
Snow Goose	363	25	45	1989	2/29/76*	6/7/60	Yes
Ross's Goose	3	3	1	1990,	3/22/99	4/5/96	
				95, 99			
Canada Goose	466,429	40	33,114	1986	Winters	Nests	Yes
Tundra Swan	20,477	37	3,433	1962	3/15/91*	5/20/74	Yes
Wood Duck	2,331	40	192	1994	3/12/95*	Nests	Yes
Gadwall	15,204	40	1,772	1989	Winters	Nests	Yes
American Wigeon	8,748	40	874	1977	2/20/83*	Nests	Yes
American Black Duck	2,212	39	220	1967	Winters	Nests	Yes
Blue-winged Teal	14,088	40	898	1994	3/22/87*	Nests	Yes
Northern Shoveler	15,904	40	1,909	1995	Winters	Nests	Yes
Northern Pintail	3,812	39	987	1977	3/7/87*	Nests	Yes
Green-winged Teal	3,941	40	472	1995	3/7/92*	Nests	Yes
Canvasback	12,725	40	1,562	1973	2/29/76*	5/31/99	Yes
Redhead	7,596	40	914	1962	3/5/83*	Nests	
Ring-necked Duck	15,953	40	1,323	1995	3/5/83*	6/5/68	Yes
Lesser Scaup	72,659	40	5,053	1965	2/28/81*	6/5/68	Yes
Harlequin Duck	3	1	3	1981		2/21/81	Yes
Surf Scoter	1	1	1	1985		5/11/85	
White-winged Scoter	1	1	1	1966	1/1/66		Yes
Long-tailed Duck	2	2	1	1976,		3/26/86	Yes
				86			
Bufflehead	5,525	40	374	1993	3/5/83*	5/25/01	Yes
Common Goldeneye	14,654	40	1,563	1984	Winters	5/24/56	Yes
Hooded Merganser	490	38	63	1984	3/8/92	6/15/68	Yes
Common Merganser	6,920	40	1,739	1989	Winters	5/8/96	Yes

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Species	Total	Number	Most	Years	Arrive	Depart	January
Red-breasted Merganser	2,512	37	411	1995	3/14/90*	5/21/68	Yes
Ruddy Duck	11,141	40	891	1998	2/29/76*	Nests	Yes
Osprey	40	18	5	1965	4/8/01	5/20/97	
Bald Eagle	337	31	118	2001	Winters	Yes	
Northern Harrier	305	37	31	1962,	Winters	Nests	Yes
				64			
Sharp-shinned Hawk	87	36	9	1973	Winters	5/21/56	Yes
Cooper's Hawk	153	34	13	1996,	Winters	Nests	Yes
				97, 99			
Northern Goshawk	17	7	9	1973	Winters	5/1/73	Yes
Red-shouldered Hawk	89	21	13	1966	Winters	Nests	Yes
Broad-winged Hawk	1,027	39	517	1973	4/6/63	Nests	
Red-tailed Hawk	2,610	40	124	1962	Winters	Nests	Yes
Rough-legged Hawk	409	39	50	1971	Winters	5/12/70	Yes
American Kestrel	2,026	40	191	1983	Winters	Nests	Yes
Merlin	9	8	2	1990	Winters	5/11/74	Yes
Peregrine Falcon	3	3	1	1962,	Winters	Nests	Yes
				74, 96			
Virginia Rail	56	17	11	1973	4/13/56	Nests	Yes
Sora	411	32	89	1973	4/15/77	Nests	
Common Moorhen	62	20	9	1962	4/14/61	Nests	
American Coot	206,465	40	14,839	1976	Winters	Nests	Yes
Sandhill Crane	705	21	147	1995	3/4/99	Nests	
Black-bellied Plover	775	28	217	1963	4/30/78	6/7/65	
American Golden-Plover	1,566	26	437	1977	4/2/88	6/15/90	
Semipalmated Plover	1,277	37	258	1965	4/28/76	6/16/65	
Killdeer	4,681	40	219	1983	2/20/83	Nests	
American Avocet	4	1	4	1970	5/5/70	5/11/70	
Greater Yellowlegs	847	40	76	1967	3/27/88	5/22/95	
Lesser Yellowlegs	3,594	40	508	2000	3/31/99	6/15/68	
Solitary Sandpiper	146	32	20	1994	4/17/94	5/22/73	
Willet	28	9	15	1984	2/27/94	5/19/75	
Spotted Sandpiper	525	40	71	1964	4/20/92	Nests	
Upland Sandpiper	28	14	7	1965	4/8/55	Nests	
Whimbrel	1	1	1	1985	5/18/85	5/21/56	
Hudsonian Godwit	142	19	52	1982	5/5/72	6/3/59	
Marbled Godwit	21	4	12	1984	4/25/94	5/21/61	
Ruddy Turnstone	381	15	197	1962	5/14/74	5/31/66	
Red Knot	34	2	33	1974	5/5/76	5/29/61	
Sanderling	54	7	27	1968	5/1/70	6/2/64	
Semipalmated Sandpiper	5,013	38	759	1964	4/25/70	6/10/63	
Least Sandpiper	2,545	39	879	2000	4/20/90	6/2/64	
White-rumped Sandpiper	288	20	51	1968	5/6/78	6/22/71	
Baird's Sandpiper	6	2	4	1995	5/17/95	5/28/57	
Pectoral Sandpiper	9,256	39	1,348	1974	3/13/77	6/7/65	
Dunlin	10,056	39	896	1985	4/13/90	6/22/71	
Silt Sandpiper	15	6	3	1971,	5/3/58	5/28/56	
				74, 75			
Ruff	3	2	2	1962	5/3/64	5/21/62	
Short-billed Dowitcher	759	30	126	1994	5/3/96	5/31/65	

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Species	Total	Number	Most	Years	Arrive	Depart	January
Long-billed Dowitcher	34	9	11	1980	4/29/72	5/17/64	
dowitcher spp.	60	33					
Wilson's Snipe	664	37	84	2000	3/21/91	Nests	Yes
American Woodcock	108	27	12	1964,	3/13/76	Nests	
				66			
Wilson's Phalarope	184	27	25	1974	4/16/60	6/5/63	
Red-necked Phalarope	84	9	64	1968	5/15/63	5/31/68	
Laughing Gull	1	1	1	1996	5/22/96	5/28/60	
Franklin's Gull	6	5	2	2000	3/28/88	5/27/68	
Bonaparte's Gull	7,388	31	2,360	1997	3/28/76	5/22/68	
Ring-billed Gull	43,010	40	6,795	1986	2/21/71	Nests	Yes
Herring Gull	5,919	40	2,020	1976		Nests	Yes
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1	1	1	1997	5/10/97		
Glaucous Gull	2	3	1	1972,		5/16/72	Yes
				81, 00			
Caspian Tern	68	12	15	1995	4/12/89	5/24/96	
Common Tern	281	23	58	1962	4/22/60	6/3/73	
Forster's Tern	523	39	90	1995	4/14/84	Nests	
Black Tern	4,201	39	862	1965	4/22/66	Nests	
Black-billed Cuckoo	91	29	10	1962,	5/5/64	Nests	
				64			
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	43	16	7	1965	5/10/69	Nests	
Snowy Owl	9	6	3	1965	Winters	3/6/65	Yes
Long-eared Owl	19	5	8	1965	Winters	4/3/65	Yes
Short-eared Owl	3	3	1	1968,	Winters	4/2/51	Yes
				74, 87			
Common Nighthawk	1,038	36	130	1968	5/4/50	Nests	
Whip-poor-will	10	7	2	1962	4/22/62	Nests	
Chimney Swift	29,027	40	6,141	1974	4/18/67	Nests	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	151	32	22	2000	5/4/47	Nests	
Belted Kingfisher	826	40	50	1973	Winters	Nests	Yes
Red-headed Woodpecker	1,184	40	90	1970	Winters	Nests	Yes
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	445	38	30	1965	3/18/72	5/17/67	Yes
Northern Flicker <sup>b</sup>	4,216	40	206	1966	Winters	Nests	Yes
Olive-sided Flycatcher	42	19	5	1966,	5/7/92	6/1/68	
				67, 73			
Eastern Wood-Pewee	701	39	51	1969	5/3/68	Nests	
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	237	29	36	1967	5/9/56	6/3/68	
Acadian Flycatcher	14	7	4	1985, 90	5/12/81	Nests	
Trail's Flycatcher <sup>c</sup>	149	12/12	26	1964			
Alder Flycatcher	84	18/28	15	1979,83	5/9/79	6/3/67	
Willow Flycatcher	67	18/28	10	1979	5/9/79	Nests	
Least Flycatcher	878	38	63	1964	4/26/84	Nests	
Eastern Phoebe	656	40	39	1970	3/23/46	Nests	
Great Crested Flycatcher	1,601	40	73	1970	4/27/90	Nests	
Eastern Kingbird	577	40	55	1981	4/26/85	Nests	
Loggerhead Shrike	14	9	3	1962,	3/27/61	Nests	
				72			
Northern Shrike	28	20	4	1986	Winters	3/28/61	Yes
White-eyed Vireo	42	15	13	1983	4/26/84	6/1/83	

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Species	Total	Number	Most	Years	Arrive	Depart	January
Bell's Vireo	11	5	5	1962	5/16/59	Nests	
Yellow-throated Vireo	363	40	29	1979	4/29/70	Nests	
Blue-headed Vireo	301	38	24	1979	4/24/90	5/28/83	
Warbling Vireo	1,493	40	72	1976	4/26/86	Nests	
Philadelphia Vireo	154	32	15	1974	5/7/85	6/1/74	
Red-eyed Vireo	2,434	40	195	1973	4/30/01	Nests	
Horned Lark <sup>d</sup>	10,731	40	1,090	1972	Winters	Nests	Yes
Purple Martin <sup>e</sup>	3,518	36	271	1983	3/29/50	Nests	
Tree Swallow	17,381	40	2,225	1989	3/23/69	Nests	
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	2,578	40	267	1973	4/9/99	Nests	
Bank Swallow	2,968	40	383	1971	4/19/77	Nests	
Cliff Swallow	1,577	36	375	1970	4/17/84	Nests	
Barn Swallow	11,612	40	490	1978	4/2/00	Nests	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	298	32	60	1996	Winters	Nests	Yes
Brown Creeper	395	37	41	1973	Winters	5/7/56	Yes
House Wren	2,549	40	121	1984	4/20/48	Nests	
Winter Wren	116	33	10	1973	3/25/46	5/16/94	Yes
Sedge Wren	151	22	20	1962	4/30/48	Nests	
Marsh Wren	221	23	23	1977	4/30/47	Nests	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1,649	40	227	1970	Winters	5/12/96	Yes
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4,448	40	252	1967	3/26/77	5/27/67	Yes
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	576	38	52	1996	4/16/77	Nests	
Eastern Bluebird	655	37	65	1999	Winters	Nests	Yes
Townsend's Solitaire	1	1	1	1990	2/4/90		
Veery	517	38	43	1966	4/30/90	Nests	
Gray-cheeked Thrush	335	35	37	1967	4/26/85	5/28/73	
Swainson's Thrush	810	39	92	1967	4/26/86	5/30/73	
Hermit Thrush	443	40	34	1972	4/1/72	5/20/81	
Wood Thrush	599	40	37	1968	4/28/90	Nests	
Varied Thrush	1	1	1	1970	1/3/70	1/10/70	Yes
Gray Catbird	4,597	40	334	1964	4/9/83	Nests	
Brown Thrasher	1,923	40	119	1967	4/10/68	Nests	
American Pipit	32	7	10	1983	3/28/64	5/18/83	
Bohemian Waxwing	65	1	65	1962	2/11/62	2/15/69	
Cedar Waxwing	17,407	40	2,034	1981	Winters	Nests	Yes
Blue-winged Warbler	182	32	20	1965	4/26/85	Nests	
Golden-winged Warbler	552	37	37	1963	4/28/90	Nests	
Tennessee Warbler	3,485	40	279	1973	4/26/85	6/4/66	
Orange-crowned Warbler	373	38	51	1972	4/15/72	6/1/83	
Nashville Warbler	2,195	40	156	1972	4/20/85	6/1/83	
Northern Parula	477	36	31	1975	4/19/77	5/24/69	
Yellow Warbler	3,186	40	205	1964	4/24/90	Nests	
Chestnut-sided Warbler	2,375	40	158	1973	5/2/51	6/5/77	
Magnolia Warbler	1,533	40	128	1983	5/3/59	6/1/74	
Cape May Warbler	292	35	30	1972	4/23/85	5/25/68	
Black-throated Blue Warbler	42	18	9	1995	5/4/59	5/26/73	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	12,560	40	850	1969	4/2/82	5/27/96	Yes
Black-throated Green Warbler	1,473	40	87	1972	4/22/85	5/30/68	
Blackburnian Warbler	917	37	62	1973	4/30/70	6/1/68	
Yellow-throated Warbler	4	3	2	1983	4/26/74	5/10/75	

(continued)

Table 2. (*continued*)

Species	Total	Number	Most	Years	Arrive	Depart	January
Pine Warbler	42	22	5	1973	4/16/78	Nests	
Palm Warbler	3,698	40	695	1969	4/16/77	5/23/67	
Bay-breasted Warbler	799	38	75	1973	5/1/81	6/3/68	
Blackpoll Warbler	1,642	38	204	1973	5/1/70	6/3/65	
Cerulean Warbler	75	18	12	1980	4/30/64	Nests	
Black-and-white Warbler	1,486	39	104	1973	4/19/86	5/30/68	
American Redstart	3,424	40	202	1974	4/28/70	Nests	
Prothonotary Warbler	49	19	8	1984	4/24/85	Nests	
Worm-eating Warbler	18	11	4	1982	4/28/84	5/18/68	
Ovenbird	1,453	39	118	1973	4/28/74	Nests	
Northern Waterthrush	1,356	39	90	1973	4/18/64	5/29/73	Yes
Louisiana Waterthrush	114	24	14	1987	4/16/65	Nests	
Kentucky Warbler	13	9	3	1992	5/2/69	Nests	
Connecticut Warbler	91	25	16	1965	5/7/82	6/5/65	
Mourning Warbler	382	36	60	1973	5/8/93	Nests	
Common Yellowthroat	2,409	40	117	1973	4/26/85	Nests	
Hooded Warbler	35	18	6	1967	4/29/84	Nests	
Wilson's Warbler	806	38	78	1984	5/1/65	6/1/68	
Canada Warbler	524	36	67	1973	5/8/93	6/4/77	
Yellow-breasted Chat	16	6	9	1962	5/9/56	Nests	
Scarlet Tanager	623	40	45	1968	4/30/85	Nests	
Eastern Towhee	775	36	79	1967	3/23/55	Nests	Yes
American Tree Sparrow	15,264	40	2,089	1974	Winters	5/3/75	Yes
Chipping Sparrow	3,244	40	153	1999	4/5/86	Nests	
Clay-colored Sparrow	24	9	11	1965	5/1/67	5/12/57	
Field Sparrow	838	40	74	1965	3/19/66	Nests	Yes
Vesper Sparrow	994	39	78	1965	3/21/82	Nests	
Savannah Sparrow	900	40	54	1964	4/7/78	Nests	
Grasshopper Sparrow	47	13	11	1964	5/3/69	Nests	
Henslow's Sparrow	30	4	16	1971	4/24/48	Nests	
Fox Sparrow	2,263	40	247	1972	2/28/76	4/30/69	Yes
Song Sparrow J-A <sup>f</sup>	4,358	40	239	1990	Winters	Nests	Yes
Lincoln's Sparrow	140	26	26	1972	4/26/89	5/22/63	
Swamp Sparrow <sup>g</sup>	2,626	40	220	1973	Winters	Nests	Yes
White-throated Sparrow	11,678	40	1,062	1967	Winters	Nests	Yes
Harris's Sparrow	2	1	2	1963	5/9/63	5/19/57	
White-crowned Sparrow	411	36	54	1983	4/27/85	5/25/78	Yes
Dark-eyed Junco	22,416	40	1,112	1978	Winters	5/17/67	Yes
Lapland Longspur	3,995	29	520	1967	Winters	5/15/63	Yes
Snow Bunting	945	23	200	1991	Winters	4/30/85	Yes
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	2,038	40	131	1973	4/28/90	Nests	Yes
Black-headed Grosbeak	1	1	1	1970	1/3/70	Yes	
Indigo Bunting	939	40	72	1976	5/1/01	Nests	
Dickcissel	215	12	130	1964	5/15/64	Nests	
Bobolink	331	31	43	1962	4/30/88	Nests	
Eastern Meadowlark J-A <sup>h</sup>	800	22/28	158	1966	Winters	Nests	Yes
Western Meadowlark J-A <sup>h</sup>	775	21/28	157	1965	Winters	Nests	Yes
meadowlark spp. J-A <sup>h</sup>	1,679	28/28	326	1962			
Yellow-headed Blackbird	827	35	77	1966	4/9/88	Nests	
Rusty Blackbird	1,842	34	218	1984	2/15/83	5/5/72	Yes

*(continued)*

Table 2. (continued)

Species	Total	Number	Most	Years	Arrive	Depart	January
Brewer's Blackbird	935	25	150	1970	3/28/68	Nests	
Brown-headed Cowbird J-A	5,587	40	559	1970	Winters	Nests	Yes
Orchard Oriole	2	2	1	1971, 77	5/11/77	Nests	
Baltimore Oriole	3,383	40	155	1976	4/27/64	Nests	
Pine Grosbeak	125	5	78	1972	Winters	3/31/64	Yes
Purple Finch	2,394	36	218	1983	Winters	5/18/60	Yes
Red Crossbill	299	10	126	1985	Winters	6/3/73	Yes
White-winged Crossbill	53	5	25	1976	Winters	4/22/76	Yes
Common Redpoll	6,005	21	1,605	1972	Winters	4/15/82	Yes
Hoary Redpoll	1	1	1	1974	Winters	3/24/74	
Pine Siskin	7,261	32	1,657	1978	Winters	Nests	Yes
American Goldfinch <sup>i</sup>	13,481	40	1,636	1978	Winters	Nests	Yes
Evening Grosbeak	344	10	99	1962	Winters	5/20/81	Yes

<sup>a</sup> Includes lingering migrants in June.

<sup>b</sup> Counted through April from 1970–1972.

<sup>c</sup> Trail's Flycatcher split into Alder and Willow flycatchers in 1974.

<sup>d</sup> Counted through April in 1970, 1974, and 1976; and through March in 1973 and 1975.

<sup>e</sup> Counted through April from 1962–1969.

<sup>f</sup> Counted through April 15 in 1972 and 1973.

<sup>g</sup> Counted through April in 1985–1990.

<sup>h</sup> Counted through March from 1970–1980 and 1987.

<sup>i</sup> Counted through April from 1982–1990.

J-A Counted January through April.

\*Arrival date of 5 or more birds.

**Loons, grebes, and cormorants**—Numbers of Common Loons (+123%), Pied-billed Grebes (+170%), and Horned Grebes (+43%) increased. The 356% increase in Double-crested Cormorants after a decline in 1972–81 was especially dramatic.

**Wading birds**—While counts of Great Blue Herons increased 58%, Great Egret numbers remained stable. There was a steady and significant decline in numbers of Green Herons (–72%) and Black-crowned Night-Herons (–69%).

**Turkey Vulture**—Numbers increased dramatically (+669%).

**Geese and swans**—Numbers of geese increased greatly [Canada (+141%),

Snow (+1,262%), and Greater White-fronted (+2,267%)]. Tundra Swan numbers apparently declined (–73%) in the last decade, probably due to my frequent absence during their migration peak in late March.

**Ducks**—Numbers of the various species tended to fluctuate. Some species were much more abundant in recent years [Wood Duck (+163%), Gadwall (+320%), Northern Shoveler (+249%), Green-winged Teal (+89%), Ring-necked Duck (+93%), and Bufflehead (+82%)], while numbers of others drastically declined in the last 20 years [American Wigeon (–67%), American Black Duck (–74%), Northern Pintail (–89%), Canvasback (–60%), Redhead (–65%), and Common Goldeneye



(-67%)] . My absence during March in half of the last 10 years probably affected counts of Northern Pintails and Common Goldeneyes, which migrate early.

**Mergansers**—Hooded (+104%) and Red-breasted (+385%) Merganser numbers increased greatly in the last 20 years.

**Raptors**—Bald Eagles (+187%), Sharp-shinned Hawks (+108%), Cooper's Hawks (+271%), and American Kestrels (+70%) became more numerous, while numbers of Red-shouldered Hawks suffered a precipitous (-98%) decline. Numbers of Broad-winged (-49%) and Rough-legged (-64%) Hawks were also lower. Northern Harrier populations (-74%) fluctuated, probably with cyclical vole populations.

**Rails, coots, etc.**—Numbers of Virginia Rails (-96%) and Soras (-92%) declined sharply. American Coots (+91%) were more abundant, and the 55,300% increase in Sandhill Cranes was phenomenal. Common Moorhens in a marsh adjacent to Lake Winnebago, where I conducted research, probably accounted for most of the 36 individuals observed during the first decade. Numbers increased from 3 to 13 over the last two decades.

**Plovers**—Numbers of Black-bellied Plovers (-98%), American Golden-Plovers (-97%), and Semipalmated Plovers (-87%) suffered drastic reductions.

**Sandpipers**—Numbers of all species, except Least Sandpipers and Lesser Yellowlegs, declined. Declines in Spot-

ted Sandpipers (-77%); Hudsonian Godwits (-85%); Ruddy Turnstones (-100%); Sanderlings (-100%); and Semipalmated (-89%), White-rumped (-99%), and Pectoral (-72%) Sandpipers were tremendous. The 879 Least Sandpipers and 508 Lesser Yellowlegs found in 2000 were an aberration caused mostly by extensive mudflats at Goose Pond through May 15.

**Snipe and woodcock**—Wilson's Snipe became more abundant (+55%). Higher American Woodcock numbers in 1962-71 were mostly due to hearing them in the U. W. Arboretum while playing golf nearby in the evening, making the 91% decline appear greater than it actually was.

**Phalaropes**—Numbers of Wilson's (-86%) and Red-necked (-96%) Phalaropes declined drastically.

**Gulls**—Numbers of Ring-billed (+937%) and Bonaparte's (+2,322%) Gulls increased tremendously, with large flocks of Bonaparte's Gulls occurring north of Madison in recent years.

**Terns**—Most of the 240 Common Terns counted in 1962-71 were seen while working on Lake Winnebago; numbers increased from 12 to 16 in the last two decades. Caspian (0 to 47) and Forster's Terns (+116%) became much more numerous, while Black Tern numbers declined greatly (-86%).

**Cuckoos**—Numbers of Black-billed (-91%) and Yellow-billed (-96%) Cuckoos declined tremendously.

**Nighthawks and swifts**—Common Nighthawk numbers were down 90%. Chimney Swift numbers apparently dropped 94%, but the very high numbers observed during the first 20 years were due to a chimney on the U. W. campus that harbored 1,000+ birds and was capped in about 1981.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird**—Increased numbers (+290%) in the last decade were probably due to a feeder at our new home.

**Belted Kingfisher**—Numbers declined 53% in recent years.

**Woodpeckers**—The well-documented decline of the Red-headed Woodpecker in the last 20 years has been catastrophic, and my counts reflect this (−88%). Similarly, my observations of Northern Flickers suffered a 73% decline in the last decade, and those of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers declined 40%.

**Flycatchers**—All species, except the Eastern Phoebe, decreased in numbers. Numbers of Eastern Wood-Pee-wees (−66%), and Olive-sided (−83%), Yellow-bellied (−79%), Alder and Willow (−83%), Least (−87%), and Great Crested (−42%) Flycatchers all declined substantially.

**Vireos**—All vireos, except Blue-headed, declined in numbers during the last 20 years. Philadelphia (−78%), White-eyed (−67%), Red-eyed (−53%), and Warbling (−48%) Vireos suffered the sharpest declines. Bell's Vireos, which once commonly nested in the U. W. Arboretum, disappeared.

**Horned Larks**—Varying snow conditions caused significant yearly fluctuations in my counts.

**Swallows**—Numbers of most species were quite stable, except for the Purple Martin, which my data suggest suffered a 98% population collapse after the second decade. Bank Swallow numbers declined 67%, probably because a large nesting colony north of Madison was destroyed.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch**—While highly irregular in occurrence in southern Wisconsin, its numbers increased 218%.

**Brown Creeper**—There was a 73% decrease in numbers during the last 20 years.

**Wrens**—Numbers of Marsh (−91%) and Sedge (−100%) Wrens dropped greatly over the years. The absence of Sedge Wrens in the last 10 years was likely due to my inability to hear them and to construction in a marsh where I often found them. Winter Wrens (−50%) became difficult to find in the last decade.

**Kinglets and gnatcatchers**—Golden-crowned (−87%) and Ruby-crowned (−60%) Kinglets became much less numerous, while Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (+328%) became much more abundant.

**Thrushes**—The tremendous decline in numbers of most thrushes was disturbing. Once numerous, Veerys (−88%), Gray-cheeked (−90%), Swainson's (−89%), and Wood (−79%) Thrushes became very difficult to find. Numbers of Hermit

Thrushes, which overwinter farther north, were minimally affected. Eastern Bluebird populations (+84%) recovered from their 1972–1981 low.

**Catbirds and thrashers**—Gray Catbird numbers declined 73% and Brown Thrasher numbers declined 91% over the last three decades.

**Waxwings**—I last saw Bohemian Waxwings in my area in 1969. Cedar Waxwing numbers (–42%), while irregular, dropped greatly in the last two decades.

**Warblers**—Except for the Black-throated Blue Warbler (+85%), Yellow-rumped Warbler (–6%), Pine Warbler (+33%), and Prothonotary Warbler (0%), numbers of the 26 other most common warblers declined 52–92%, with an average decline of 72%. The greatest declines occurred during the last 20 years. My counts of rare warblers declined (Worm-eating, Hooded, and Yellow-breasted Chat) or remained stable (Yellow-throated and Kentucky).

**Scarlet Tanager**—I observed a 66% decline, mostly in the last decade.

**Towhees and sparrows**—Eastern Towhee numbers dropped 90% over the last 30 years. Numbers of overwintering American Tree Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos varied widely from year to year, but appeared stable overall. Except for Song Sparrows and Chipping Sparrows, numbers of all other nesting and migrant sparrows declined dramatically as follows: Field (–72%), Vesper (–89%), Savannah (–77%), Grasshopper (–100%), Fox (–59%), Lincoln's (–87%), Swamp (–85%),

White-throated (–74%), and White-crowned (–43%).

**Longspurs and buntings**—Lapland Longspurs (–76%) and Snow Buntings (–51%) occurred irregularly in winter. Numbers of both species declined significantly in the second decade, but minimally after that.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Indigo Bunting**—Numbers declined 65% and 76%, respectively, mostly in the last decade.

**Dickcissel and Bobolink**—These grassland species experienced drastic declines of 100% and 93%, respectively.

**Meadowlarks and blackbirds**—The once abundant Eastern and Western Meadowlarks became rare, declining 95%. Numbers of blackbirds appeared unchanged.

**Baltimore Oriole**—Numbers declined 34% in recent years.

**Grosbeaks, crossbills, and finches**—Numbers of overwintering species were irregular. Pine and Evening Grosbeaks were virtually absent during the last 20 years. Numbers of Common Redpolls (–83%) and Red (–95%) and White-winged (–100%) Crossbills were tremendously reduced. The once common Purple Finch (–91%) all but disappeared over the last 10 years, while the House Finch became abundant. Pine Siskins were less abundant (–38%) and American Goldfinch numbers remained unchanged.

## DISCUSSION

In summary, my data suggest that almost all neotropical migrants are in trouble, with drastically reduced populations. Most species that winter in the southern U.S. fared better; although the declines that I observed were usually smaller than those of neotropical migrants, they were very great in some species. Bright spots were many species of waterfowl, Turkey Vultures, some raptors, Sandhill Cranes, some gulls and terns, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and Eastern Bluebirds. Since bird habitats in southern Wisconsin have changed little, except for increased urbanization, I suspect the major cause for reduced numbers was destruction or alteration of winter habitats.

In Table 2, the 10 most abundant migrants in this study were Canada Goose (466,429), American Coot (206,465), Lesser Scaup (72,659), Ring-billed Gull (43,010), Chimney Swift (29,027), Dark-eyed Junco (22,416), Cedar Waxwing (17,407), Tree Swallow (17,381), and Ring-necked Duck (15,953). Among the 190 species with 40 or more observations, record numbers occurred for at least one species in all years except 1988 and 1992. Seventy

percent of record numbers for species occurred in the first 20 years, and 62% in the first 15 years. Twenty-five species had record numbers in 1973; other years having many species with record numbers were 1962 (13), 1967 (12), 1964 and 1965 (11), and 1972 (10). This supports the observation that populations declined significantly for most species.

Among the 190 common species, 148 had arrival records dating back to 1946. Record-early arrivals were most numerous in the 1982–1991 decade (34%), with 12 occurring in 1985 and 10 in 1990. Forty-seven percent of record arrival dates occurred in the last 20 years, when most species were much less numerous, with the remainder in the previous 36 years. This may indicate a climatic warming trend that enticed earlier migration.

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Pileated Woodpecker and Chickadee *by Roy Lukes*

# A Possible Nineteenth-Century Murre from Milwaukee

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*Through painstaking ornithological detective work and historical research, the author presents a strong case that a long-overlooked specimen at the University of Milwaukee is Wisconsin's first and only record of Thick-billed Murre.*

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*by John Idzikowski*

I have been curious for many years about a mounted specimen of an alcid in the collection of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Department of Biological Sciences. The bird was originally identified as a "Black Guillemot" (*Cephus grylle*), but was subsequently relabeled in the 1960s as a "Common Murre" (*Uria aalge*), probably because its thin bill seemed to fit the latter species (Figure 1). The label reads "supposedly taken in Milwaukee before 1900 by F. J. Zimmerman" (Figure 2). Confirming the bird's origin and identification is of interest, because no guillemots or murres are currently accepted for Wisconsin's official state checklist.

The UW-Milwaukee collection consists of an array of mostly mounted specimens, many of which came from the old teaching collection at the Downer State Teachers' College (later incorporated into UWM), which contained many pre-1900 specimens. At Downer, basic Wisconsin bird knowl-

edge was considered an integral part of a teacher's science education, and a primer to Milwaukee birds was published by the College. Other specimens in the Downer collection include mounts by Thure and Ludwig Kumlien, with original labels in their own hand. The Kumliens collected birds for museums and the eastern market in natural history specimens and documented southern Wisconsin bird life from their farm in Milton, mostly in the latter half of the nineteenth century. A single excellent mount of a male Passenger Pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*) is in the collection, as well. Some subsequent acquisitions include several nineteenth century parlor cases of mounted birds, a collection of mounted eagles, and specimens purchased from biological supply houses through the 1950s. As a result of migratory bird protection laws, donations from personal collections increased into the 1960s.

We know very little about F. J. Zimmerman, the collector of the mounted





Figure 1. The author believes this juvenile alcid, putatively collected in Milwaukee harbor in the late nineteenth century by F. J. Zimmerman, may be Wisconsin's first and only record of Thick-billed Murre. The wing chord from the specimen is 200 millimeters. The mount is in the collection of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Department of Biological Sciences. Photo by John Idzikowski.

alcid, other than that he contributed a number of bird and mammal specimens to this collection.

Sam Robbins learned of the alcid specimen while researching collections around the state for *Wisconsin Birdlife*, but decided not to include it in the book because the identification had no regional precedent and the original collector's label was missing. But, I felt there were two reasons that this bird probably was collected in Milwaukee—first, the specimen's base fits the style

of Zimmerman's other mounts, and, second, the curator's modification to the label matches the relabelling of other specimens from the same period that were apparently also used for teaching purposes. I also tentatively agreed with the corrected identification of Common Murre.

#### IDENTIFYING THE MYSTERY ALCID

I didn't seriously pursue documenting the origin of the bird until 1999.

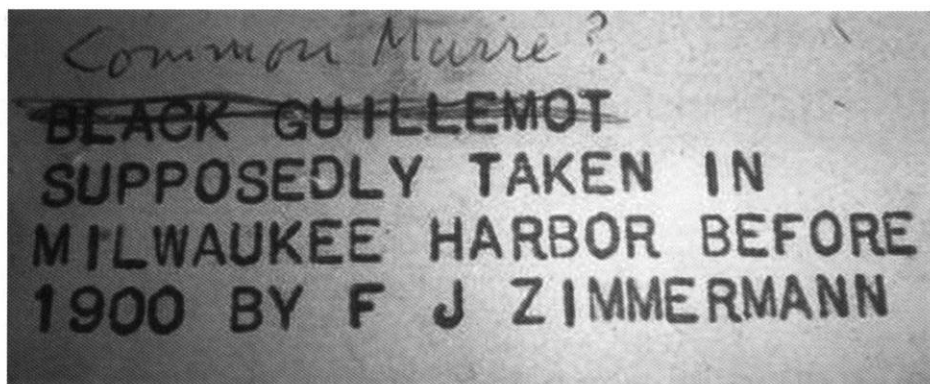


Figure 2. The specimen's current label, added in the early 1900s by the curator of the collection at the Downer State Teacher's College, replaces the original and now lost label from Zimmerman. Photo by John Idzikowski.

During that time, I would occasionally spend a few hours at the Milwaukee Public Library or the UW-Milwaukee Library trying to find some thread to substantiate this specimen for Wisconsin. One might suppose that Ludwig Kumlien and Ned Hollister, still active in southern Wisconsin around 1900, should have been aware of this bird, but this was before telephones and electricity. My original look at A. W. Schorger's 1951 update of Kumlien and Hollister's *The Birds of Wisconsin* revealed no mention of murre. Nor do Kumlien and Hollister mention Zimmerman among their acknowledged southern Wisconsin contacts in their original work (1903), but there were many small collectors in that pre-field guide era.

One cold winter night, I visited the old storage floors of the central Milwaukee Public Library, where after a long wait a disgruntled librarian handed me a nearly lost copy of the original 1903 volume of the *Bulletin of the Wisconsin Natural History Society*, in which *The Birds of Wisconsin* was originally published; it was virtually crum-

bling because of its acid paper and almost a century of city air exposure. A look at their original species list produced nothing of interest regarding my search, but then I arrived at their "Hypotheticals" page. Here, I immediately saw a species description that I had never seen in Schorger's revision, one that had been eliminated for the 1951 update:

**Cephus sp.? GUILLEMOT.**

We are confident that some species of guillemot occurs on Lake Superior in winter, and possibly also on northern Lake Michigan. There is no positive evidence of a specimen ever having been taken in Wisconsin waters, however. While on Lake Superior we made diligent inquiry among people who had reasons for knowing, and several spoke of a small white "duck," seen in winter. One man in particular was very positive in regard to a duck "big as a teal and speckled in rings all over" that frequented Whitefish Bay in winter. This inelegant description fits the winter plumage of either *C. grylle* or *C. mandtii* very well [both are now lumped together as Black Guillemot]. Dr. S. Kneeland, Jr., of Boston, makes mention, in his list (1) of the Birds

of Keweenaw Point, Lake Superior, of the reports of a nearly white merganser or "sawbill" in that vicinity in winter. He did not think it likely that it could be *Mergus albus* [presumably Smew, *Mergus bellus*], and as no specimens were procured he was inclined to think, "the bird was some white plumaged duck." We think it probable that these birds will prove to be some guillemot, in winter plumage. The occurrence of several other species of *Alcidae* on Lake Superior, as noted in some Michigan lists needs verification.

(1) Proc. Bos. Soc. Nat. Hist., 1856, p. 239.

While this paragraph provided no substantiation for my specimen, it was of interest because it revealed the opinion of Kumlien and Hollister about the possibility of undocumented alcids appearing in Wisconsin. It may also have served as a reference that influenced the original identification of the bird as a Black Guillemot. This paragraph—and a mention in A. C. Bent (1919) that both *C. grylle* and *C. mandtii* were occasionally reported on Lake Ontario in winter—kept me interested in the search. I thought that the main thread might be found by looking in the Kumlien papers at the Wisconsin State Historical Society in Madison for some letter or reference to F. J. Zimmerman and this specimen. But if there was such a reference and they knew about the specimen, why wouldn't Kumlien and Hollister have included it on the original 1903 list?

As the Internet developed, I spent more time searching ornithological web sites for other Midwestern states. I noticed that there were more than a handful of records of Thick-billed Murre (*Uria lomvia*, known in the early 1900s as Brunnich's Murre) from

around the Midwest, but I found no records of Common Murre anywhere in the region. Looking again to Bent (1919), I found this description of the winter range of Thick-billed Murres:

Winter Range—Occasionally common on the Great Lakes, straggling to northern Ohio (many taken 1896), Indiana (December, 1896), and central Iowa (two specimens). . . .

It was frustrating trying to place a Common Murre into this documented vagrancy of Thick-bills. I had felt originally that the small bill of the UW-Milwaukee specimen suggested that the bird was a Common Murre, but did not at that time realize that murre bills do not reach adult size for possibly a year or more (as in other alcids), even though diagnostic, species-specific bill characteristics are already present (Harrison 1983). In 1997, I printed out digital photographs of the specimen and showed them to interested ornithologists. No one then from Wisconsin questioned the identification as Common.

But a closer look at this specimen showed that the plumage pattern on the head did not seem right for Common Murre. With the growth of the Internet, quick communication and examination of photographic evidence by experts around the world was now possible. A few years later, I e-mailed a few Wisconsin ornithologists with broad identification experience; they all identified the bird as a first-year Thick-billed after careful examination and research. I then loaded the photos to a personal web site album and posted some measurement data to the Identification Frontiers listserv, which consists of a group of 870 field ornithologists from around the world. I

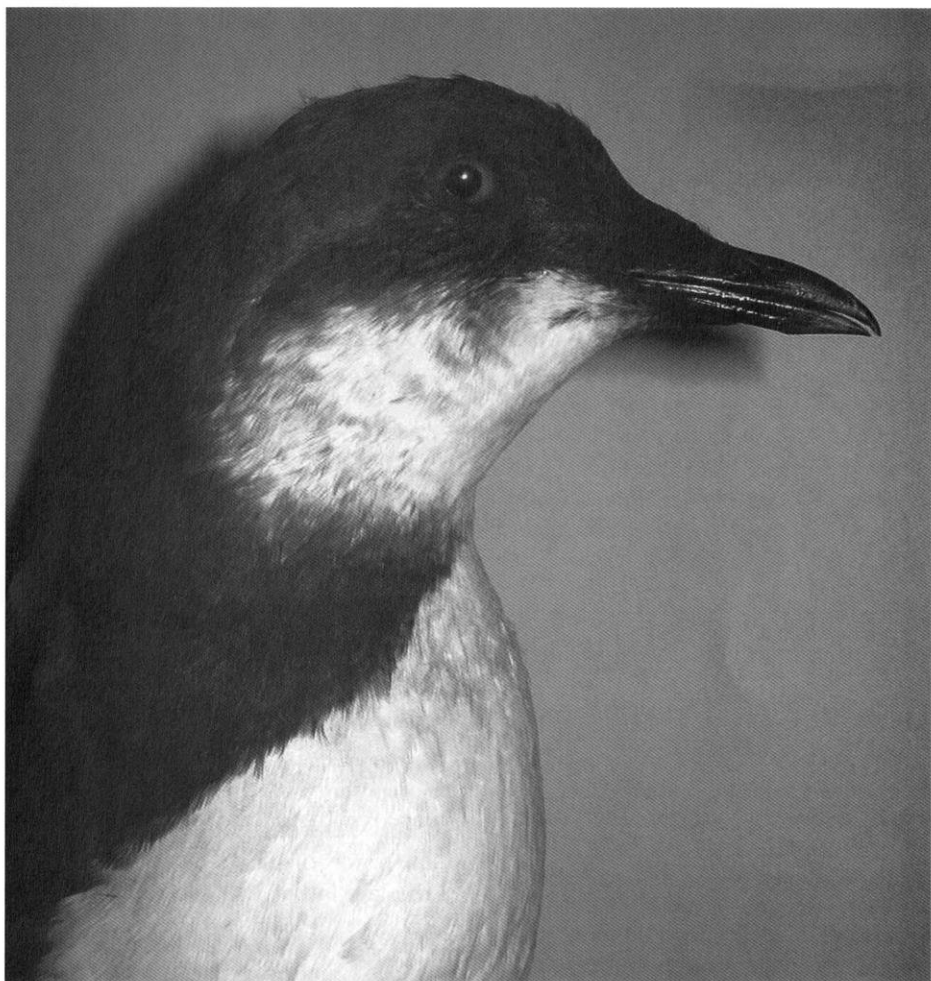


Figure 3. Close-up of the head of the alcid specimen. The very faint white line behind the eye initially suggested that the bird was a juvenile Common Murre, but more recent information on murre identification obtained by the author suggests that it is a juvenile Thick-billed. Note that the area behind the eye is essentially dark and that the bill is short and straight. A juvenile Common Murre should show much more extensive white behind the eye and the bill should be longer and slightly upturned. The iris on this specimen should be dark. Photo by John Idzikowski.

quickly received responses of Thick-billed Murre from seven respondents.

One Belgian expert, Gunter De Smet, spent hours examining specimens in Europe and doing literature searches. He initially felt that this specimen could have been an Atlantic form of Common Murre, but he agreed with

Thick-billed after examination of more detailed bill evidence. The head of this bird should show much more white behind the eye for a Common (Figure 3). And the bill on a Common Murre is longer and upturned slightly, whereas the Thick-billed has a decurved culmen (Figure 4).

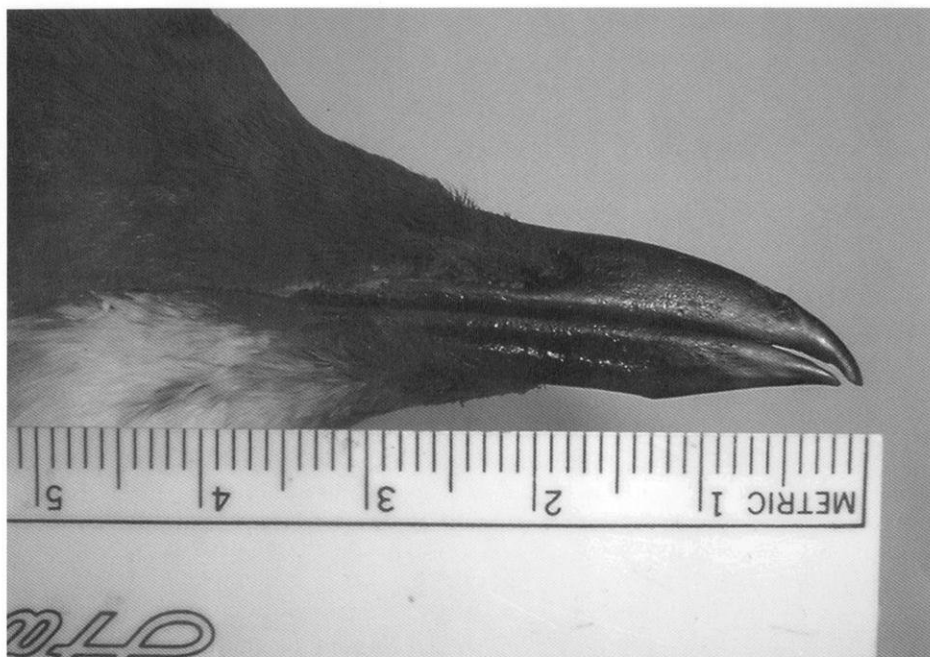


Figure 4. Measurement of the alcid's bill (in millimeters) supports the identification of Thick-billed Murre. A Common Murre would have a bill length greater than 41 millimeters. Photo by John Idzikowski.

Says DeSmet (pers. comm):

If these measurements are metric, the mounted murre cannot possibly be a Common Murre. The bill length is way too short for Common Murre, and is a very good indication of a first-year Thick-billed Murre. It is a lot shorter than all published measurements for adult Thick-billed Murre in Europe, and I have never personally seen a first-winter Common Murre in Europe with such a short bill measurement. It is difficult to find a first-winter Common Murre (*Uria aalge albionis/aalge*) in Belgium with a bill shorter than 41 millimeters.

#### **A MIDWESTERN "WRECK" OF THICK-BILLED MURRES**

As I spent more time searching Midwestern state records, I found

many references to the inland occurrence of Thick-billed Murres in the late fall of 1896. From Peterjohn (2001):

The famous flight of Thick-billed Murres followed an early December storm off New England in 1896. This storm scattered murres along the Atlantic Coast south to South Carolina and inland as far as Iowa.

Peterjohn goes on to detail 10 records along the Lake Erie shoreline in Ohio from this fallout, and concludes, "Given these numbers reported by only a few observers, the magnitude of this inland movement must have been substantial."

And, recently, from a personal communication with John Pogacnik, who paraphrased the literature from Ohio:



It's probably more than a coincidence that the date of the [UW-Milwaukee] specimen ("before 1900") may coincide with one of the largest Thick-billed Murre flights ever recorded on the Great Lakes. Hundreds of birds were reported from the eastern Great Lakes. In Ohio, the first birds showed up at Fairport Harbor (Lake County) on December 18 [1896]. By the end of the month, murres had been recorded from the following counties, all of which adjoin Lake Erie: Lorain, 4 birds; Erie, 3 birds; Lake, 2 birds; and Ashtabula, 1 bird. Birds were also recorded in Michigan and several were shot at Presque Isle, Pennsylvania.

And this, from *The Birds of Michigan* (McPeck 1994):

Sight records from the 1896 and 1907 invasions indicate that literally "hundreds" of Thick-billed Murres arrived in the eastern Great Lakes, with scores of specimens taken in surrounding states. All of the birds collected were emaciated and had empty stomachs, pointing to an inability for these vagrants to find appropriate feeding conditions on the Great Lakes.

Fleming (1907) actually encountered many of these birds and tried to rehabilitate them by forced feeding, but they would not keep the food in their stomachs and they all died.

A survey of 15 states and two Canadian provinces yielded 22 accepted Thick-billed Murre reports; of these, 15 are from December of 1896 (Robert Domagalski, pers. comm.). A records review document from the Maryland-District of Columbia Records Committee lists a total of 18 Thick-billed Murre records that they have reviewed up until the present; of these, five specimens now reside in the collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History and *all* are from the pe-

riod of December 14–28, 1896. The westernmost extent of this flight—or "wreck," as it is called in the alcid literature—was two specimens from Iowa dated December 16, 1896, and January 1897 (Black 1992). There are no such references to these wrecks or any vagrancy into the Great Lakes for Common Murre, a species that is seemingly confined to the Atlantic Ocean.

As Fleming (1907) states:

Of the Common Murre I have been unable to find a single record; and even the old records, previous to the period we are dealing with, from the New England Coast, I am informed, refer really to *Uria lomvia* [Thick-billed Murre].

There are numerous historical references to the year 1896 as being an unusually bad one for storms; 1896 is now considered a major past El Niño year with a notable weather-related failure of the wheat crop in India. It may also have been one of the worst years for tornadoes in the recorded weather history of North America. There were at least 40 killer tornadoes, including the only one ever to cause more than 100 deaths in two separate cities. On November 5, 1896, one of the heaviest of the Great Lakes "heavy gales" for the 1800s was recorded. After that gale, snow and high winds hit the Northern Plains and the Upper Mississippi Valley with a Thanksgiving Day blizzard across North Dakota. The storm was followed by a severe cold wave in the Upper Midwest. The temperature at Pokegama Dam, Michigan, plunged to 45 degrees below zero.

But the single event of interest to us may be the "violent northeast gale and snow" on December 14–16, 1896, which brought over 5 inches of snow to Boston (and who knows how much



rain) as the temperature hovered in the low 30s on violent winds, probably around a major low pressure system to the north. This storm flow might coincide with the normal yearly population high of adult and young-of-the-year murre wintering at sea.

Fleming's 1907 analysis of these wrecks from 1890 through 1905 suggests that weather may have been responsible for these events. Bent (1919) summarizes as follows in his Thick-billed Murre account:

The erratic wanderings of this species in winter have furnished material for a large number of interesting records, along the Atlantic coast, and strangely enough well into the interior, chiefly in the vicinity of the Great Lakes as far west as Michigan and Indiana. Rather than attempt to give these records or even outline the unusual migration, I would refer the reader to an excellent paper read by Mr. J. H. Fleming, of Toronto, at the International Ornithological Congress in 1905. The conclusion to be drawn from a study of these wanderings, for a period of 15 years from 1890 to 1905, over a wide inland area far remote from the normal haunts of this maritime species, is that its winter feeding grounds in the southern portions of Hudson Bay became so thoroughly blocked with drift ice, and frozen over, that the birds were forced to migrate in search of food and many of them perished in a fruitless effort to find it.

From 1890 to 1905, it can be seen that these wrecks did not occur every year, but seemed to follow a two- or three-year clumped pattern; 1896 may have coincided with very severe weather and a high population of juveniles. The vast majority of the birds comprising the wreck were juveniles in most of these recorded events, suggesting a very high population of young for

those years, or perhaps the wrecks occurred along with the later movement to wintering grounds by juveniles. Such wrecks were documented until 1953 (Gaston 1988), but not in the number seen before 1910, perhaps signifying a decrease in the murre population. The extreme cold before December 1, 1896, mentioned above, could have iced over Hudson Bay where the wintering population was significant. One can also see that a huge low pressure system over the northeastern states, such as occurred December 14–16, could cause a fallout on the western Great Lakes in the strong counterclockwise flow on the backside of the low as these birds were migrating or wandering in search of food.

Gaston (1988) has carefully reviewed these wrecks in light of recent knowledge gained from research on Thick-billed Murres. He concludes that the wrecks of this species were caused by a decline in their food supply, as no other species is involved in these wrecks as would be expected should weather alone be responsible. Large numbers of immature birds are normally found in the St. Lawrence River and nearby Atlantic at the time that these inland invasions occurred. A main component of their diet is capelin (*Mallotus villosus*), a fish which is known to exhibit population fluctuations. As birds wandered west into the Great Lakes searching for food before the St. Lawrence froze, a strong gale with a northeast flow as recorded in 1896 could have pushed these birds west during their wanderings.

The mapped fallout of the winter of 1896–97 (Figure 5), lacking the two records from Iowa, can easily be seen to have included southern Wisconsin, with nine specimens collected within



kee, as other mounts from the same collector had similar bases and a single curator labeled the bird in a specific style along with many others from the same period for teaching purposes. The doubt expressed by the label's re-writer, probably a biology instructor, of the original provenance is to be expected, as there was no precedent for this bird in Wisconsin at that time. What references were available in that pre-field guide era to aid a generalist in biology to identify a juvenile murre? There was no known or notable ornithologist associated with this college at that time, and the existing primer used there to teach about birds consists of a booklet that highlights fewer than 100 conspicuous species that one could see on a May bird walk.

It is interesting to note the original identification of the UWM mount as Black Guillemot. Two vagrant records of that species were known from Canada before 1900—from 1892 and 1895 (Fleming 1907)—and there were probably many records of Brunnich's (Thick-billed) Murre in the literature available at that time. But, as one can easily see in our modern field guides, this bird has nowhere near as much white as a basic-plumaged Black Guillemot should have. So, why did Kumlien and Hollister hold out for Black Guillemot based on the report of a "white duck" (which could have been a description of a Long-tailed Duck) when they must have known by 1903 of the occurrence of Thick-billed Murres in the western Great Lakes? Perhaps, at least, they knew that a basic-plumaged Black Guillemot does show a greater amount of white than a Thick-billed Murre. This illustrates the limited resources available in those times for proper identification.

I feel there is sufficient evidence to accept this bird as Wisconsin's first and only specimen of Thick-billed Murre. Iowa's two records have been accepted on past accounts, although the specimens are missing. There is precedent in the Wisconsin record for species accepted with less evidence than this. The misidentification of the original specimen and the subsequent alteration of its label may have kept this bird away from the attention of the Midwest natural history community (as it did in the 1980s for Sam Robbins), which was probably well aware of the 1896 "flight." As well, the then-developing Milwaukee Public Museum would not necessarily have had any contact with the numerous collector/taxidermists of that era, nor would have Kumlien and Hollister, residing some 60 miles away.

Based upon this evidence, I hope that this bird can be added to the historical record and to the State list; it would have been approximately species number 327 to be substantiated for Wisconsin if Kumlien and Hollister had recognized it before their 1903 publication (Idzikowski 1989). I urge everyone to be watchful for other such "lost" specimens of this species and others that may be present in small or obscure collections or mislabeled in museum drawers.

[Editor's Note: At press time, it was learned that the WSO Records Committee has accepted the Milwaukee Thick-billed Murre for the official Wisconsin state checklist, based on the information in this article.]

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## WISCONSIN'S NATURAL COMMUNITIES

*How to Recognize Them, Where to Find Them*



RANDY HOFFMAN



## Wisconsin's Natural Communities

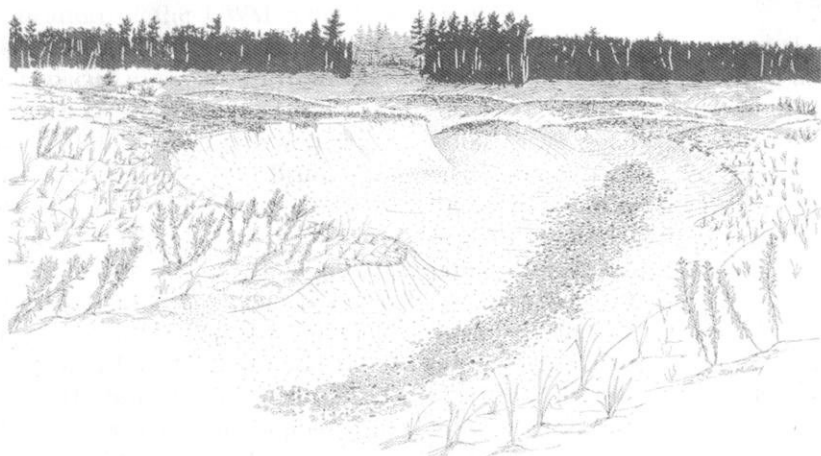
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**Randy Hoffman** is a natural areas management specialist with the Bureau of Endangered Resources, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. A past president of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, he was the first person in Wisconsin to record sightings of more than 300 species of birds in one calendar year. He lives in Waunakee.



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# The Ultimate Big Day: Wisconsin Challenges the Birding Mystique of the Coasts

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*Through an impressive combination of birding skill and strategy, the authors shattered their previous Wisconsin Big Day record by recording 230 species in the state on 19 May 2002. This represents the fifth highest Big Day total for anywhere in North America.*

---

*By Randy Hoffman and Al Shea*

We embarked on a quest more than 25 years ago to experience a "perfect" birding Big Day. By definition, a Big Day is a 24-hour period, in one calendar day, in which the participants try to record as many bird species as possible. To achieve this goal, a fortuitous alignment of events must occur. A combination of delayed spring migration caused by prolonged cool weather, a massive migration on the day of the count, excellent shorebird habitat, and fantastic listening conditions (most of the species are identified by sound) came together on May 19, 2002. On that day, we recorded 230 species of birds on a 400-mile route through south-central Wisconsin. As far as we know, this total ties the fifth highest ever recorded for a Big Day in North America. Only Texas and California birders have checked off more species in one calendar day using a car

as the mode of transportation (more species were recorded by birders using planes, boats, and helicopters).

The weather was cool (43° F) when we started at midnight (00:00 hours). After getting our typical response from an Eastern Screech-Owl at 00:01 hours, we drove to Mud Lake Wildlife Area in Columbia County. This public land has a combination of cattail to deep marsh, wooded uplands, and brushy thickets. The site is usually very good for rails. While scouting the night before, we had to play a tape to get any response out of the quiet wetlands. This evening, however, the birds were extremely vocal. King and Virginia Rails, Sora, Swamp Sparrow, Marsh Wren, and American Black Duck were all calling as we stepped out of the truck. Surprisingly, one Virginia Rail incessantly gave its *kicker* call the entire time we were at the marsh. A few Gray-cheeked



Thrushes uttered their call notes as they migrated overhead. We picked out the soft *kwok* of a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron and also heard Barred Owl and American Bittern.

The next extended stop was another State Wildlife Area: Grand River Marsh. An area of upland grass and lowland marsh, Grand River annually harbors numerous grassland birds, especially the state-threatened Henslow's Sparrow and a tremendous variety of marsh species, such as the uncommon, but predictable, Least Bittern. A stop along County Highway B produced a dozen or so Henslow's Sparrows filling the night air with their *tslick* song, if you want to call it a song. These secretive birds have a propensity for night vocalization. Another stop at the edge of the marsh produced Least Bittern, along with many other marsh species. The manager of Grand River does a wonderful job of managing for grassland birds. Fencerows have been removed, native grasses are replacing the European bromes, and rotational burning provides a variety of grassland structure. From newly burned green patches that attract Bobolink to old thatch areas attractive to Henslow's Sparrow, the burn management provides optimum habitat for the full range of grassland species.

We then proceeded to Comstock Bog in eastern Marquette County, a State Natural Area preserved for its unusual plant community. The bog is actually a hybrid of calcareous marl flats, wiregrass sedge meadow, tamarack swamp, and cattail marsh. Management to preserve plants normally found much farther north has also, unexpectedly, provided the habitat requirements for meadow birds normally found much farther north. Breeding

bird surveys in the early 1990s documented Yellow Rail and Le Conte's Sparrow as nesting species at the site. Both of these birds reach their absolute southern range limit at Comstock Bog.

Our arrival around 02:30 usually coincides with peak activity, which was the case this evening. Several Yellow Rails were giving their *tic, tic-tic, tic, tic* call. Le Conte's Sparrows sang their whisper trill from deep in the bog. Overhead migrants chipped as they flew north with a slight one- to two-MPH south wind helping their progress. Most unexpected was a Yellow-breasted Chat, another active night songster, singing from the west side of the bog. To the west of Comstock, we had Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owls calling from pine-dominated forests. The 45 minutes we annually spend at Comstock has never failed to produce excellent birds.

Our next stop was the Buena Vista Grasslands in Portage County, another State Wildlife Area. The management of this area is focused on providing habitat for the Greater Prairie-Chicken. However, the extensive grasslands also provide habitat for nearly every grassland bird species in Wisconsin. We always time our arrival to coincide with the last flurry of the night birds and the inception of the morning chorus of the day birds. Both of these happenings occur between 04:00 and 04:45, well before the 05:25 sunrise.

Upon our arrival, we picked up several Short-eared Owls foraging over the vast open areas, along with numerous Wilson's Snipe and American Woodcock. The faintest amount of light in the northeast sky inspires the grassland birds to greet the approaching new day. Both meadowlark species, several spar-

row species (Clay-colored, Savannah, Song, Grasshopper), Brewer's Blackbird, Upland Sandpiper, and Greater Prairie-Chicken awoke to add their voices to the identification roll. A most unexpected event occurred just before we left the grasslands. Dozens, maybe up to 100 thrushes called as they descended on the grassland after a night of migrating. Calls of forest-dwelling Veery, Gray-cheeked, and Swainson's Thrushes enveloped us as we stood on the open grassland. The light one- to two-MPH wind had shifted to the north, providing the right conditions for a massive fallout in central Wisconsin.

The next portion of our route took us through farms, fields, and city in the predawn hour to reach lakes and wetlands west of Nekoosa at sunrise. This slow drive always picks up the easiest and most common birds, such as American Robin, House Finch, Chipping Sparrow, American Crow, Northern Cardinal, and Blue Jay.

As we reached the Cranmoor bogs in Wood County, we realized the magnitude of the migration fallout. At a little nondescript woods, we heard a few warbler chips. Stopping to see the makers of those chips, a veritable hoard of warblers came to the edge of the woodlot. Cape May Warblers were at eye-level several feet away. Bay-breasted and Blackpoll Warblers were numerous. A Connecticut Warbler sang from the opposite side of the road. Canada Warbler, Ovenbird, Blue-headed Vireo, Eastern Towhee, and others emerged from the center of the woods. After 15 minutes, we had recorded 17 species of warblers plus other common migrants.

Continuing on to the agricultural cranberry bogs, we encountered the typical noise of the area. The dawn temperatures had bottomed out at

31° F, and every diesel pump for miles was roaring to keep water pumped on the cranberry plants. Hearing is always difficult, but most of the target birds are easily seen. We picked up Herring and Ring-billed Gulls, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, and Trumpeter Swan. On the west side of the agricultural area, we picked up the increasingly rare Purple Martin.

Next we proceeded to a silver maple-red oak floodplain forest along Hemlock Creek (Wood County). This spot provides very good habitat for the species preferring this natural community. Normally, we encounter rather continuous traffic noise at this site, but this year the bridge was under construction and the road was closed. We drove to the construction site and had our best birding conditions ever. We easily picked up such target birds as Prothonotary Warbler, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Brown Creeper, and Red-shouldered Hawk. The bottoms had additional migrants and we added a few more warbler, vireo, and flycatcher species to our list.

Our next birding target took us through the Sandhill and Wood County Wildlife Areas (Wood County). The combination of shallow marshes, sedge meadows, open grasslands, and clones of aspen dominates the eastern portion of the site. The western edge becomes very boggy, with abundant tamarack and black spruce forest, and gives the area an aura of northern Canada. Red-necked Grebes were again at the same nesting marsh as they have been for more than 10 years. Open area birds, such as Northern Harrier, Sharp-tailed Grouse, and Bobolink, were easily found. One of the few disappointments of the day occurred when we spent a full five minutes peer-

ing at a Bald Eagle nest where the birds had been very active just one week before. They had either moved on or were hunkered down in the freezing morning air. Regardless of the reason, we missed them for the day.

At the west end of the site is an area we call "boreal corner." This boreal woodland resembles the north in more than the vegetation. Nearly every year we pick up Yellow-rumped Warbler, Hermit Thrush, White-throated Sparrow, and Nashville Warbler. In addition, this year we recorded Harris's Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and Golden-crowned Kinglet. The topper to this morning's stop was a calling Sharpshinned Hawk.

Our route now turned south through additional bog, white pine forest, alder thickets, and wetlands. The land is divided nearly equally between private and public ownership. Several parcels, including most of "boreal corner," are privately owned, and management could easily change this excellent bird habitat to highly disturbed agricultural fields nearly devoid of any bird species.

The trip south produced nesting Common Loon, a Belted Kingfisher (frequently a nemesis species for us), and Alder Flycatcher. We stopped near a Northern Goshawk territory and listened for a while, but with no success. A single call from a CD player, however, elicited a response and we had the hard accipiters listed. This portion of the route ended in Mather at 09:00, when we conducted our first status count for the day. We had recorded 164 species, including 27 species of warblers.

Heading east through the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge in Juneau

County usually adds several species to our list. But, after reviewing the possible species we could add, we spent precious little time birding there because we would spend a lot of time looking at the same species we had already recorded. Our next major goals were Orchard Oriole, Lark Sparrow, and Osprey. These species are usually found in or just east of Necedah. We picked up a female Orchard Oriole at a feeder in Sprague. We found the singing Lark Sparrow and Osprey nest in their traditional spots.

During the 45-minute drive to the Baraboo Hills (Sauk County), we reached the 12:00 hour and our next status check. As we approached Devil's Lake State Park from the east, we stood at 171 species for the day. The next two or more hours would be spent at several protected areas racking up a laundry list of rare and not-so-rare southern Wisconsin birds. The Baraboo Hills are a real beacon for forest dwelling birds. Large tracts of closed canopy forest of varying age classes and interior gaps provide the habitat requirement for many sensitive nesters.

Near Parfrey's Glen, we found Cedar Waxwing (another nemesis species) and, coincidentally, for the first time in a decade, we recorded both kingfisher and waxwing on the same day. A Cerulean Warbler, Tufted Titmouse, and Willow Flycatcher were added east of Devil's Lake. In the park, Louisiana Waterthrush sang from a swollen creek, a Winter Wren bubbled its song from the talus, and an Olive-sided Flycatcher foraged within inches of the lake as the daytime high hit 55° F. A quick run down Burma Road added Black-throated Blue Warbler and Acadian Flycatcher and literally hundreds of migrants dripping off the trees. This

event was all the more surprising because not a single bird was found at the same spot the day before at the same time of day.

Our next stop was Baxter's Hollow, a Nature Conservancy property lying just west of Devil's Lake. Baxter's Hollow is usually very good for southern warblers, and May 19 was no exception. We had Worm-eating Warbler near the first bridge, Hooded Warbler just upstream, and both Yellow-throated Warbler and Summer Tanager singing near the upper white pines. As we left Baxter's Hollow, we had listed 34 species of warblers for the day, missing only Kentucky and Prairie.

We now pushed onward towards the shorebird and waterfowl portion of day. The first stop boded well for shorebird observation. A small mudflat near Fish Lake in Dane County had several Semipalmated Sandpipers and three Western Sandpipers. The closeness of the birds allowed for excellent views of the finer identification points of the Western Sandpipers. All three birds had distinctively longer and more drooping bills than Semipalmated Sandpiper. One bird, especially, was nearing high breeding plumage, with gorgeous browns on the crown, back, and ear patch. The black legs eliminated any confusion with Least Sandpiper, and the identification was further confirmed when we heard much different and less rattling calls than the other shorebirds were giving. Another mudflat added more shorebirds, including a Ruddy Turnstone. The six Franklin's Gulls that had been present in this area for the previous three days were nowhere to be found.

As we left the Fish Lake area, the time was 15:00 hours and we stood at exactly 200 species for the day. A quick

scan of the birds still available indicated we would need a significant shorebird migration and several lingering duck species to reach an ultimate level. Terrestrial birds were down to Cooper's Hawk, Lapland Longspur, Water Pipit, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and White-crowned Sparrow. We did not consider Bald Eagle, Northern Bobwhite, and Gray Partridge as options anymore. A stop at the Schumacher Road mudflats added Water Pipit and Greater Yellowlegs. A stop at Schoeneberg Marsh added Black Tern. A stop on the east side of the same Mud Lake visited earlier in the day yielded Lapland Longspur south of King Road and Yellow-billed Cuckoo near an infestation of tent caterpillars. Green-winged Teal, Ruddy Duck, Lesser Scaup, and American Coot were added from the ponds in northern Dane County. A Solitary Sandpiper was found at a wetland restoration site near Pardeeville. Lake Maria produced both Red-breasted and Common Mergansers, plus a Forster's Tern. The shoreline was also hopping with migrants, but we did not spend any time chasing warbler chips.

We now headed toward Horicon Marsh in Dodge County. The time was 18:00 hours and we stood at 213 species for the day. We knew there were several sure bets there—American White Pelican, Great Egret, and Black-crowned Night-Heron. The day before, during scouting, the marsh held numerous shorebird species and many lingering duck species. We entered the refuge with a sense of anticipation, but also a queasiness, because we felt we were on the verge of something monumental.

Time was not a factor—we had plenty of daylight to slowly scan the full

length of Highway 49 for birds. We almost immediately picked up the three sure bets. The northwest portion of the wetland had many shorebirds. We picked out a Red Knot and added a Gadwall. Farther east, we added a lone drake Canvasback, but missed the Pintail and Greater Scaup seen the day before. Upon reaching the huge mudflats, we immediately found a Bonaparte's Gull, both Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits, and a Common Tern. Near the northeast side, several Cattle Egrets were seen in the flooded bushes. On the southern end of the mudflats, we found huge flocks of dowitchers that we had already seen but had never encountered before in such large numbers.

We then found a small group of Red-necked Phalaropes and, as we were enjoying them, a much different shorebird stood out. Appearing to be similar in size to a Lesser Yellowlegs, this bird was very brown in comparison—a darkish brown with a lighter brown on the cheek. The sides were lightly flecked with dark brown over a base of lighter browns. The bill was black, shorter and thicker than any yellowlegs bill. The legs were yellowish orange. The bird foraged in a slow, deliberate manner much unlike a yellowlegs. We determined this bird to be a Ruff—our one very rare bird for the day.

The drier flats held dozens of Black-bellied Plovers and at least 100 Semipalmated Plovers. From the same drier flats, we heard the distinctive whistles of several American Golden-Plovers coming from the center of the vast area. We picked out a pair of American Widgeons before heading back to Highway 49.

Standing at 228, we nearly conceded that we were done for the day at 20:00

hours. A scan of the checklist did not leave many options. We decided to finish the day near the mudflat, just in case a Peregrine Falcon would fly by. As we returned to the western edge of the mudflat, we picked out a pair of Northern Pintails. Buoyed by this sighting, we scanned the deep water north of the road and picked out a lone drake Greater Scaup. Both of the birds we had found scouting the previous day were still there. We now conceded there was nothing else we could get for the day and concluded at 20:20.

230 SPECIES! We now entered uncharted territory. We had similar feelings the first time we broke the 200 barrier, but this was different. After any other Big Day, we always recap the day in our minds, mostly with a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment, but every time “what if” questions linger in the back of our minds. We looked at each other and seemed to sense a quest fulfilled. This day had generated no “what if” questions, no questions about missed species. We presumably could have found Bald Eagle (probably on the nest, but unviewable from our angle), Cooper's Hawk (usually the easiest accipiter to find), and White-crowned Sparrow. Other possibilities were Peregrine Falcon (seen several times before and after our Big Day at Horicon), Bufflehead (seen the day before at a pond in Columbia County), and Franklin's Gull (six were seen on each of the three days prior to the Big Day at Fish Lake). We did not ask those questions nor even ponder the “what if we had found those species” questions.

We had reached a lifetime goal. Probably the best statement is “Wisconsin is a great place to be a birder.” We have combinations of southern,

northern, eastern, and western species all coming together in this state. We also have a tremendous commitment by our citizens to identify and protect areas important to birds. We also have a commitment by those managing our public trusts to consider birds in their management schemes.

We ended the day with 8 heron species, 18 duck species, 8 hawk species, 28 shorebird species, 6 owl species, 7 woodpecker species, 11 flycatcher species, 7 thrush species, 34 warbler species, and 15 sparrow species. Significant were the lingering ducks, the great fallout of migrants, and the realization that "if you supply shorebird habitat, they will come." The Horicon

Marsh staff has to be acknowledged for their management of the wetlands. Tens of thousands of shorebirds of at least 30 species utilized their mudflats this spring.

Our 230 species simply affirmed that the diversity of bird life in Wisconsin, the commitment of our citizens to birds, and the enlightened management of our public lands for all birds rivals any location in North America.

Randy Hoffman

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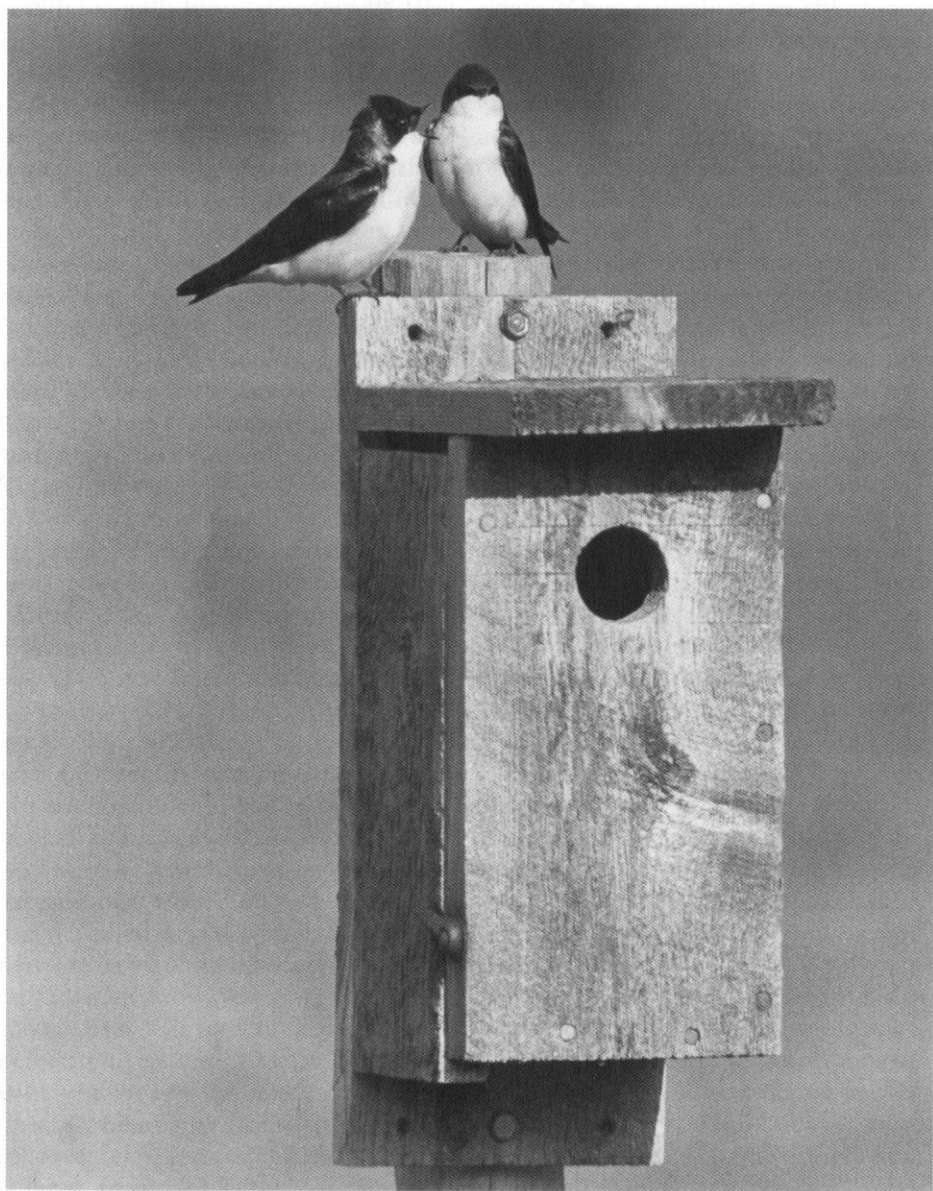
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Tree Swallows *by Roy Lukes*

# The Winter Season: 2001–2002

by *Kenneth I. Lange*

Okay, I've been talking about winter for 20 years now in this journal, but how exactly is winter defined? The following is a summary of the season by Dave Thurlow in a recent book on weather (*Soul of the sky. Exploring the human side of weather*. Mount Washington Observatory, North Conway, New Hampshire, 149 pages):

Ecologists define a winter climate as one that includes three months of average temperature below 30 degrees Fahrenheit, and two months of snow-covered ground. A line across the country separating areas with and without these criteria runs roughly on a sweeping arc from Philadelphia to Denver to Seattle. To the north of this line, true winter; to the south, fake winter. Coincidentally, or maybe not, this line also marks the southernmost end of the range of spruce trees.

Thurlow must be referring just to white spruce, because other spruces extend much farther south in the mountains. He also adds these comments on storms:

There is a climate boundary along this line as well. It marks the average southern terminus of what meteorologists call

Arctic air masses, huge pools of heavy cold air that spill out of central Canada . . . undercutting the warm southern air at precise, clashing . . . zones known as fronts . . . it is the confrontation of air masses of conflicting density and moisture content that produces the atmospheric dissonance we call storms.

One arctic species, Ross's Gull, was added to the Wisconsin state list during the winter of 2001–2002. Perhaps it appeared because of a pattern of storms that has been called the "Siberian Express." As Randy Hoffman explained in the *Badger Birder* for February 2002, an intense and large high pressure system, with a corresponding low pressure system, developed over Siberia at the end of September and again at the end of October. The resulting airflow moved through the arctic, eventually stalling in Wisconsin and Illinois when it encountered the jet stream.

But the weather pattern began shifting in November, so that cold air was confined mainly to Canada. The three-month period, November through January, turned out to be the warmest in the United States since the National Weather Service began keeping re-

cords. Wisconsin's January actually was the warmest ever in the state, or, at least, since this information was first compiled in 1894. February also was mild, except for the latter part of the month. "This was the winter that almost wasn't," as Daryl Tessen expressed it, and Alta Goff in Barron County commented, "This was the kind of winter we like, warm temperatures and no big snowstorms." For the Eagle River area in Vilas County, Jim Baughman reported a total of only 12 nights that were zero or below zero, with the coldest temperature approximately 10 below on 2 February. In Door County, as noted by Charlotte Lukes, the coldest night was 4 degrees above zero in late December.

The period began with mild temperatures and no snow cover, except for northwestern Wisconsin, which had varying amounts of snow on the ground. The unseasonal temperatures peaked on 5 December, with record highs in the 60s accompanied by thunderstorms and rainbows in such places as Milwaukee, Green Bay, and Madison. Bob Domagalski begins his section of the Milwaukee Christmas Bird Count at Currie Park Golf Course:

The typical start has been so cold that I would be unable to focus my binocs because they were frozen. Most years I needed to contend with families snow sledding down the slopes of the park. This year the park was booked with golfers! I never did a count before in which it was necessary to keep away from flying golf balls. Doing a Christmas Bird Count in Wisconsin, while people dressed in sweaters are putting on the greens, seems out of place.

Actually, every day from late October through 22 December was above normal in temperature. Winter finally ar-

rived three weeks into December on the 23rd with a cold northwest wind and snow, so that all of Wisconsin had a white Christmas after all. Colder weather continued into late December, but the snow cover remained minimal.

In January, the larger bodies of water finally froze, or nearly so. It was only the fifth January freeze-up date on record for Devil's Lake in Sauk County, and Lake Mendota in Madison, according to Phil Ashman, never did freeze completely. Lake Geneva was open all winter; Patricia Parsons reported that this probably had happened before, "but not since 1968."

At the beginning of January, most of the state, with the notable exception of the Lake Superior area, had only 1–2 inches of snow on the ground, and this disappeared from a thaw in the second week. In Madison, all the outdoor skating rinks were closed until further notice; at the same time, at least one person removed his shirt while cross-country skiing (I'm not sure where he found enough snow to ski!), and a number of people were playing basketball outdoors or golfing. For the remainder of January, temperatures were variable, with snow.

The mild weather extended into February, but then, on the 20th and 21st, winter returned with a wet snowfall of several inches to over a foot. The heaviest snowfall was in northern Wisconsin, so the Birkebeiner ski race didn't have to be cancelled. Winter then continued intermittently to the end of the month.

The period included Wisconsin's first Red-necked Grebe in February, the fourth report of American White Pelican, an unusual number of Double-crested Cormorants, the second

Least Bittern, a record number of Great Blue Herons on the Christmas Bird Counts, and the state's third and fourth Great Egrets and a record late date for this species.

Greater White-fronted Goose was notable for a first January record and especially high numbers in February, while both a new late date and arrival date were set for Ross's Goose. All three scoters occurred throughout the period in Lake Michigan.

Raptors were notable for high numbers of Northern Harriers and Merlins. American Kestrels lingered longer and in higher numbers than usual in northern counties, while Red-tailed Hawks were found farther north than usual.

A December record for Sanderling was interesting, and there was another record for Purple Sandpiper after 2 January, Wisconsin's third. A record arrival date was set for American Woodcock.

Waterfowl lingered in high numbers with the open water, and gulls, likewise. The period saw Wisconsin's first Black-headed Gull since December 1984, and the Ross's Gull.

Exotics continue to make news. Eurasian Collared-Doves were reported in three counties, while both the Vermilion Flycatcher and the Great Tit lingered into December.

American Pipit is rare in winter; there was a total of three reports from two counties in February. Contributors reported a total of four species of warblers, including Wisconsin's second Palm Warbler and the first Ovenbird since the winter of 1992-93. A Summer Tanager was Wisconsin's third record.

Also noteworthy were the large flocks of Rusty Blackbirds, Brewer's Blackbirds, and Brown-headed Cowbirds in early winter. Bob Domagalski

discusses these flocks in the Christmas Bird Count summary; also see the species accounts for this seasonal summary.

After the Christmas Bird Counts, Pine Grosbeak was reported in six northern counties; Purple Finch and Pine Siskin were relatively uncommon; Red Crossbill was noted in three counties and White-winged Crossbill in seven counties; Common Redpoll was numerous in places; and Evening Grosbeak was reported for just two counties.

Late fall migration was reported for these species: Snow Goose, Canada Goose, various ducks, Sandhill Crane, Ring-billed Gull, and Herring Gull.

Spring migration was noted for these species: Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture(?), Greater White-fronted Goose, Snow Goose, Ross's Goose, Canada Goose, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, American Coot(?), Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, American Woodcock, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, Horned Lark, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, American Pipit, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Rusty Blackbird(?), Common Grackle, and Brown-headed Cowbird.

There were also these signs of spring. On Goose Island in La Crosse County, as reported by Fred Leshner, two Bald Eagles were on a nest on 13 February. The LaValleys in Douglas County heard a Great Horned Owl on 4 February, while in Dane County on

10 January Dave Fallow reported one already on a nest. On 15 February in Marathon County, a Northern Saw-whet Owl was calling on territory, as noted by Dan Belter. A Northern Cardinal was singing on 8 January in Marquette County (Daryl Christensen), and a House Finch was singing on the same date in Winnebago County (Rob Zimmer).

A total of 101 people contributed reports or photos covering 53 of Wisconsin's 72 counties. The counties with the most coverage (five or more contributors per county) were Bayfield, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Douglas, Jefferson, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Portage, Racine, Rock, Sauk, Sheboygan, Walworth, Waukesha, and Winnebago. A total of 15 counties was covered by only one contributor per county: Ashland, Barron, Buffalo, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Green Lake, Iowa, Marquette, Menominee, Monroe, Price, Richland, St. Croix, and Washington. These 19 counties were not covered: Polk, Pierce, Pepin, Trempealeau, Vernon, and Crawford along the state's western boundary; Iron, Sawyer, Rusk, Chippewa, Taylor, Oneida, Lincoln, Florence, and Marinette in northern Wisconsin; Juneau and Adams in central Wisconsin; and Lafayette and Green in extreme southern Wisconsin.

The following statewide species were not included in the species accounts: Ruffed Grouse, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, American Crow, and Black-capped Chickadee.

These abbreviations are included with the species accounts: BOP—beginning of period, EOP—end of period, TTP—throughout the period,

CBC—Christmas Bird Count(s), and m. obs.—many observers.

## REPORTS

(1 DECEMBER 2001–  
28 FEBRUARY 2002)

**Red-throated Loon.**—A young bird and an adult in Kenosha County 10 December (Jacyna), two on the Sheboygan CBC, and one still in Sheboygan County 7 January (Tessen).

**Common Loon.**—Freriks reported a conservative total of 71 on Big Green Lake in Green Lake County 3 December. This species was found on 15 CBCs, with a total of 50, including 30 on the Madison Count. Later records: 1 January, Dane County (Burcar); 10 January, 2, Kenosha County (Hoffmann); and 13 January, Ozaukee County (Bontly).

**Pied-billed Grebe.**—Found on 7 CBCs, with a total of 15, including 6 on the Sturgeon Bay Count. Later records: TTP, or possibly so, in Portage, Winnebago, Ozaukee, Kenosha, and Walworth Counties (m. obs.).

**Horned Grebe.**—Found on a record 5 CBCs, a total of 9 birds. One later report: one on 5 January in Ozaukee County (Gustafson).

**Red-necked Grebe.**—December records for these counties: Ozaukee on the 5th, Sheboygan on the 8th, and Dane from the 21st through the 26th (m. obs.). Wisconsin's first February record was a bird in Lake Michigan near Ozaukee County's Virmond Park on the 24th (documented by Wood).

**Western Grebe.**—December records for these counties: Ozaukee on the 5th, Milwaukee from the 4th through the 12th, and Racine on the 14th (m. obs.).

**American White Pelican.**—Two on the Trempealeau CBC 15 December for Wisconsin's 4th winter record.

**Double-crested Cormorant.**—Found on a record 11 CBCs, with a total of 52, including 17 on the Green Bay Count. Later reports: Brown County, TTP, maximum 10 on 13 February (Van Duyse); Winnebago County, TTP, maximum 18 on 17 February (m. obs.); Milwaukee County, TTP, maximum 8 on 3 February (m. obs.); and

Kenosha County, through 10 January, maximum 17 (Hoffmann).

**Least Bittern.**—One on the Chippewa Falls CBC 22 December was a record late date and only the second winter report.

**Great Blue Heron.**—A record total of 70 on 33 CBCs. Later reports: TTP, or possibly so, in Dane, Jefferson, Iowa, Walworth, and Kenosha Counties (m. obs.). One in Rock County 15 February (Klubertanz) was a likely migrant.

**Great Egret.**—One through 8 December at Horicon Marsh in Dodge County (Freriks). Also one (the same bird?) at Sinissippi Lake in Dodge County on the Hustisford CBC 18 December, a record late date.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron.**—At least one TTP in Brown County, with 4 on 4 December and 2 on 26 January (Van Duyse, Tessen).

**Turkey Vulture.**—At least one TTP in Sauk County (Lange) and Kenosha County (Hoffmann), and a migrant(?) 23 February in Jefferson County (Walton).

**Greater White-fronted Goose.**—Tessen saw one in Dodge County 8 December. The Christensens noted 1–4 with a large flock of Canada Geese in Rock County 10–11 January for Wisconsin's first January record. February records for Columbia, Dane, Sauk, and Jefferson Counties (m. obs.), the earliest being 2 in Columbia County on 18 February (Schwalbes). Tessen found a flock of 225+, the largest he's ever seen of this species, on 28 February in Columbia County.

**Snow Goose.**—Fall migrants through 18 December, with scattered reports for January and February (overwintering?); spring migrants by 23 February, for example in Washington County (m. obs.).

**Ross's Goose.**—One to two birds in these counties: Dodge, 8 December; Outagamie, 14 December; Dane, 15–18 December; and Winnebago, 9 January. All these are record late dates. Walton noted this species in Jefferson County 28 February, a record arrival date.

**Canada Goose.**—TTP in some 25 counties, mainly along Lake Michigan but also in northwestern Wisconsin (m. obs.). In some counties, such as Marathon, most were gone by the end of December. Maximum numbers of wintering

birds as follows for the counties indicated: St. Croix, 2,500+ on 12 January (Persico); Dane, 3,500 on 3 January (Hilsenhoff); Jefferson, 200+ (Hale); Dodge, thousands on 8 January (Tessen); Walworth, 8,000 on 16 January (Parsons); and Ozaukee, 2,800 on 20 January (Frank). Migrants by mid-February; for example, Marathon County (Belter).

**Mute Swan.**—On 18 CBCs, with a total of 112, including 39 on the Waukesha Count. After the CBCs, reports for 17 counties, including Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, St. Croix, Shawano, Door, Winnebago, Columbia, Dane, and along Lake Michigan and southeastern Wisconsin.

**Trumpeter Swan.**—After December, these reports: St. Croix County, TTP on the St. Croix River, maximum 104 on 12 January, a big increase from last winter when the maximum number was 54 (Persico); Marathon County, one with a green neck band (40E) below dams and at the Weston Power Plant TTP (Belter); Portage County, TTP, maximum 5, none banded (Berner); Shawano County, 6 and 20 January, 7–8 (Peterson); and Grant County, 6 on 8 January.

**Tundra Swan.**—Fall migrants through 12 January, when a total of 5 was noted in Portage County; spring migrants 23 February–EOP. One TTP in Dane County; TTP(?) in Walworth County, maximum 5; and an 8 February record for Sheboygan County (m. obs.).

**Wood Duck.**—A total of 32 on 15 CBCs. Later reports: TTP, maximum 3, Ozaukee County; TTP in Milwaukee County; and one TTP(?) in Racine County. Single birds in January in La Crosse, Winnebago, and Brown Counties. Migration in Dane County 26 February (m. obs.).

**Gadwall.**—TTP in these counties: St. Croix, Winnebago (maximum 20), Dane (maximum 682 on 9 February), Milwaukee (maximum 22 on 24 January), Kenosha(?), and Walworth (maximum 122 on 18 February). Migrants 23 February–EOP in Winnebago, Sauk, Columbia, Jefferson, Racine, and Kenosha Counties (m. obs.).

**American Wigeon.**—On 11 CBCs, with a total of 169, including 91 on the Horicon Marsh Count. TTP in Dane County (maximum 15 on 10 December) and Milwaukee County (maximum 3); January records for Racine and Walworth Counties. Migrants 25–26 February in Columbia, Sauk, and Kenosha Counties (m. obs.).

**American Black Duck.**—Reports from 15 counties scattered throughout the state (m.



obs.), but not in the northernmost two to three tiers of counties (except for Door County) or the southwestern quarter of the state. The maximum number reported was 46 on 21 February in Milwaukee County.

**Mallard.**—TTP in the counties along Lake Michigan and in southeastern and south-central Wisconsin, north to Outagamie, Waupaca, Marathon, and Barron Counties. Sontag reported a maximum number of 338 on 30 December in Manitowoc County. Migrants in Sauk County by 24 February (m. obs.).

**Blue-winged Teal.**—No reports after the CBCs.

**Northern Shoveler.**—On 13 CBCs, with a total of 764, including 326 on the Madison Count; the maximum number in Dane County after the Madison Count was 640 on 3 January. TTP in Dane County and (maximum 9 on 4 January) Winnebago County. Migrants in Jefferson, Columbia, and Brown Counties 13–27 February (m. obs.).

**Northern Pintail.**—On 12 CBCs, with a total of 213, including 127 on the La Crosse Count. Later records: St. Croix County, 5 January–EOP, 2; and Kenosha County, 1–13 January. Migrants or likely migrants found 9 February in Dane County and 20–24 February in Sauk, Columbia, and Jefferson Counties (m. obs.).

**Green-winged Teal.**—On 13 CBCs, with a total of 97, including 28 on the Horicon Marsh Count. Later records are all in February: Columbia County, 4 on the 28th; Dane County, the 6th through the 23rd; Rock County, 2 on the 18th; and Kenosha County, 2 on 2 and 21 February (m. obs.).

**Canvasback.**—On 17 CBCs, with a total of 2,325, including 2,160 on the La Crosse Count. Later records: TTP in these counties: Dane (maximum after December, 6 on 10 February); Winnebago; Ozaukee (maximum 5 on 3 February); Milwaukee (maximum 5 on 3 February); Kenosha; and Walworth (maximum 40 on 21 January). Migration in Winnebago County 25 February (m. obs.).

**Redhead.**—On 18 CBCs, with a total of 592, including 150 on the New Franken Count. TTP, or possibly so, in these counties: Dane; Winnebago (maximum 5 on 12 January); Sheboygan; Ozaukee; Milwaukee (maximum 20 on 10 January); Kenosha and Walworth (maximum 150 on 27 February must have included migrants). Also

migrants in Dane County 22–26 February, and possibly Sheboygan County 22 February (m. obs.).

**Ring-necked Duck.**—On 18 CBCs, with a total of 340, including 121 on the Waterloo Count. TTP, or possibly so, in these counties: Dane, Winnebago, Ozaukee, Milwaukee, Kenosha, and Walworth. Migrants on 23 February in Sauk County and (a total of 280) Walworth County (m. obs.).

**Greater Scaup.**—TTP in Lake Michigan from Kenosha County north to Door County. Also in Winnebago County 20–28 February, and Dane County 6 and 28 January (m. obs.). Tessen noted thousands in Milwaukee County 21 January.

**Lesser Scaup.**—TTP, or possibly so, in these counties: Brown, Manitowoc, Ozaukee, Milwaukee, Kenosha, Walworth, Winnebago, and Dane. Maximum numbers usually less than 30, with 150 on 27 February in Walworth County (m. obs.).

**Harlequin Duck.**—Reports for 4 counties along Lake Michigan: Sheboygan, 3 female/immature and a male, BOP to at least 17 February; Ozaukee, an adult male 8 December–23 February; Milwaukee, TTP, maximum 4 female/immature; and Racine, 3 female/immature and a first-year male on 28–29 January (m. obs.). Also one on the La Crosse CBC 15 December (documented by Leshner).

**Surf Scoter.**—TTP in Ozaukee County, maximum 15 on 7 January and 10 February (m. obs.). Also records for Sheboygan County (3 on 19 January; Tessen) and Milwaukee County (1 on 5 January; Gustafson, Tessen).

**White-winged Scoter.**—TTP in Ozaukee County, maximum 10 on 21 February (Frank). Also Sheboygan County on 8 December and Milwaukee County 2 December–5 January (m. obs.). Inland records: Winnebago County, 15 December–24 February, maximum 6 on 15 December (Ziebell), and Jefferson County, 8–16 December, maximum 3 (Hale, Walton).

**Black Scoter.**—TTP in Ozaukee County (maximum 5 on 19 January) and Milwaukee County. Also reports for these additional Lake Michigan counties: Manitowoc, 17 December, 1; Sheboygan, through 19 January, 1; and Racine, 24 January, 2. Inland records: Dane County, 2–15 December, and Walworth County, 2 on 23 January (m. obs.).

**Long-tailed Duck.**—TTP, or likely so, from Kenosha County north to Door County in Lake Michigan; Tessen estimated a total of 200 on 2 January and 500 on 28 January in Kewaunee County. Inland reports for these counties: Sauk, 2 on Devil's Lake 1 December; Dane, 1–23 January; Walworth, 5 January, 1, and 9 February, 2; and Winnebago, 14 December–22 February, maximum 4 (m. obs.).

**Bufflehead.**—TTP in Lake Michigan from Kenosha County north to Door County. Also TTP in these counties: Waupaca; Winnebago (maximum 70 from 11–14 December); Dane(?); and Walworth(?) (maximum 160 on 4 January). Migrants 22 February–EOP in Dane, Racine, and Kenosha Counties (m. obs.).

**Common Goldeneye.**—TTP in these localities: St. Croix County; the Wisconsin River from at least Dane and Sauk Counties north to Marathon County; Winnebago County (maximum 1,800 on 4 January); and Lake Michigan from Kenosha County north to Door County. Also TTP(?) in Walworth County (maximum 176 on 9 February). A total of 150 on 19 January in Rock County, and a total of 22 on 1 February in Grant County (m. obs.).

**Barrow's Goldeneye.**—Found for the eighth consecutive winter in Lake Michigan near Ozaukee County's Virmond Park (Uttech, Tessen). Also in Milwaukee County by Doctor's Park, 21 and 26 January, 1–2 males (m. obs., documented by Gustafson, Wood).

**Hooded Merganser.**—TTP in these counties: Portage (maximum 1); Waupaca; Ozaukee (maximum 5); Milwaukee (maximum 12 on 23 December); Kenosha; Walworth (maximum 20 on 9 January); and Dane (maximum 46 on 6 January and 50 on 2 February). February records for Racine, Iowa, Wood, and Marathon Counties must include migrants (m. obs.).

**Common Merganser.**—TTP in these localities: St. Croix County, maximum 85 on 2 February; the Wisconsin River from at least Dane and Sauk Counties north to Marathon County (maximum 515 on 9 February in Dane County); Winnebago County, maximum 1,500 on 1 January; Brown County, maximum 500 on 13 February; Lake Michigan between Door and Kenosha Counties; and Walworth County, maximum 740 on 4 January. Migrants in February, definitely by the end of the month, in Jefferson County (m. obs.).

**Red-breasted Merganser.**—TTP in Lake Michigan from Kenosha County north to Door County, and in Winnebago County. Migration in Racine County by EOP(?).

**Ruddy Duck.**—On 14 CBCs, with a total of 127, including 77 on the Horicon Marsh Count. TTP, or likely so, in all the counties bordering Lake Michigan from Kenosha County north to Manitowoc County; the maximum in any one county usually 1–7, with a high count of 15 on 5 January in Ozaukee County. Also TTP in Winnebago County and Dane County. Migrants in Winnebago County 25 February–EOP (m. obs.).

**Osprey.**—Tessen saw one in Milwaukee County 9 December.

**Bald Eagle.**—TTP in some 8 northern counties, including Douglas and Vilas Counties; also TTP in eastern and southern counties, and La Crosse County. High counts in St. Croix, Brown, and Grant Counties were all in February (m. obs.).

**Northern Harrier.**—An unusually high number of records. Reported as lingering into January in some 10 counties, north to Jackson, Marathon, Shawano, and Door Counties. TTP in these counties: Langlade(?), Outagamie (maximum 10, date?), Ozaukee, Kenosha, and Dodge. Migrants in February, mainly the 16th through the 25th, northward to Portage and Winnebago Counties. One in Columbia County 4 February, an early migrant(?).

**Sharp-shinned Hawk.**—After the CBCs, reports for 15 counties, north to Marathon, Langlade, and Door Counties. No reports for the westernmost 3–4 tiers of counties or the northernmost 2 tiers of counties (m. obs.). These reports may include migrants.

**Cooper's Hawk.**—After the CBCs, reports for 21 counties, north to La Crosse, Marathon, Langlade, and Door Counties (m. obs.). These reports may include migrants.

**Northern Goshawk.**—Excluding the CBCs, records for 9 counties: Vilas, Langlade, Menominee, Shawano, Door, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, Winnebago, and Kenosha (m. obs.).

**Red-shouldered Hawk.**—After the CBCs, these reports: St. Croix County, 13 January–EOP, 2; Outagamie County, 1 January; and Columbia County, 4 January and 28 February, 1 (m. obs.).

**Red-tailed Hawk.**—Northward to these counties: Douglas, TTP; Marathon, TTP; Forest, 8 December, 1; Langlade, 1 December and 28 February; and Door, TTP (m. obs.).

**Rough-legged Hawk.**—TTP in Douglas and Door Counties, and through 24 February in St. Croix County. In Marathon County, the high count was 4 on 24 February; also, a maximum of 4 in Portage County this winter (m. obs.).

**Golden Eagle.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these counties: Douglas, 25 February (LaValleys); Buffalo, 2 adults on 12 January (Polk); Clark, an immature on 2 January (Polk); Jackson, one on 20 January (Stutz) and two on 30 January (Tessen); Wood, one on 16 January (Tessen) and two on 20 January (Stutz); Portage, one on 26 December (Tessen); Sauk, one on 11 January (Holschbach); and Richland, an adult on 25 January (Duerksen).

**American Kestrel.**—Northward to these counties: Barron, TTP; Marathon, TTP, higher numbers than usual (Belter); Langlade, TTP; and Door, through 10 January (m. obs.).

**Merlin.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these 10 counties: Ashland, Portage, Shawano, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Kenosha, Walworth, Dodge, Dane, and Sauk (m. obs.).

**Gyr Falcon.**—Apparently at least 2 birds in Douglas County; an immature 5 January (documented by Svingen) and a gray-phase adult 4 February (documented by Putz, Johnson). Also, a gray-phase juvenile in Portage County's Buena Vista Grasslands 4 December–30 January (m. obs., documented by Hall, Hale, Harriman, Uttech, Peterson), and a white-phase bird in Devil's Lake State Park in Sauk County 20 January (documented by Franz).

**Peregrine Falcon.**—Reports from Douglas, Brown, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, Ozaukee, Milwaukee, and Racine Counties (m. obs.).

**Gray Partridge.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for Dane, Brown, and Kenosha Counties. The high count for Brown County was 9 on 31 January (Van Duyse), and for Kenosha County was 20 on 18 December (Hoffmann). For the first time, Tessen did not find this species in Outagamie County.

**Ring-necked Pheasant.**—Northward to these counties: Barron, TTP (Goff); Portage, 20 January (Tessen); and Door, TTP (Lukes).

**Spruce Grouse.**—Baughman saw 2 roosting at a height of about 20 feet in separate jack pines in Vilas County 14 January.

**Sharp-tailed Grouse.**—After the CBCs, only one report of 2 birds in Jackson County 20 January (Tessen).

**Greater Prairie-Chicken.**—After the CBCs, these reports: Marathon County, 14 on 9 January (Belter), and Portage County, TTP, maximum 150 on 20 January (m. obs.).

**Wild Turkey.**—Noted in 25 counties, north to Barron, Marathon, Langlade, and Door Counties (m. obs.).

**Northern Bobwhite.**—Excluding the CBCs, these reports: Kenosha County, maximum 16 on 2 February (Hoffmann), and Washburn County, TTP, 3 birds that escaped from a local game farm (Haseleu).

**Virginia Rail.**—Two on the Poynette CBC (Columbia County) on 29 December (Shea).

**American Coot.**—TTP in these counties: St. Croix (maximum 3); Sheboygan; Ozaukee (maximum 103 on 7 February); Milwaukee; Racine; Kenosha; Walworth (maximum 1,400 on 9 February); and Dane (maximum 900 on 26 December, with 550 on 1 January). January records (4 or fewer) for Sauk, Winnebago, and Kenosha Counties. Migrants(?) in Winnebago County EOP (m. obs.).

**Sandhill Crane.**—On 13 CBCs, with a total of 512, including 221 on the Hustisford Count and 125 on the Horicon Marsh Count. Latest date for Dodge County was 23 December. Spring migrants 15 February–EOP, the earliest date for Kenosha County. By EOP, birds were reported also for Racine, Walworth, Jefferson, Dane, Iowa, Columbia, Dodge, Winnebago, and Sheboygan Counties (m. obs.).

**Killdeer.**—TTP in Kenosha County, maximum 5 on 8 February (Hoffmann). Spring migrants on 19 February in Dane County and on 24 February in Kenosha County (m. obs.).

**Sanderling.**—One on 8 December in Sheboygan County (Tessen), the first December record since 1982, and only four days short of the record late date in 1964 (S. D. Robbins, Jr., 1991, *Wisconsin Birdlife*, p. 272).

**Purple Sandpiper.**—One in Racine County 1–2 February (documented by Pugh, photographed by Howe), Wisconsin's third winter record after 2 January.

**Wilson's Snipe.**—Excluding the CBCs, these reports: Waupaca County, 1 January (Hewitt); Dane County, 3 January (Burcar); and Iowa County, 1 February (Burcar).

**American Woodcock.**—A recently killed bird 17 February in Racine County (documented by Fare). Apparently a record arrival date, the earliest previously reported date being 19 February.

**Little Gull.**—One in Milwaukee County 20–21 December (documented by Gustafson, Frank).

**Black-headed Gull.**—A basic-plumaged adult in Milwaukee County from 2–20 December was Wisconsin's first winter record since 21 December 1984 (m. obs., documented by Stutz, Walton, Domagalski, Mueller, Belter, Bontly, Gustafson, Wood, Tessen).

**Bonaparte's Gull.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these counties: Bayfield, 8 December; Marathon, 1 December, 1; Dane, 1 December, 8; Winnebago, through 15 December, 2; Sheboygan, 1 December, 5; Ozaukee, 1 December, 30; Milwaukee, maximum 300 on 2 and 23 December; and Kenosha, through 1 January (m. obs.).

**Ross's Gull.**—Wisconsin's first record, one in the Ashland area of Ashland and Bayfield Counties, 6–8 December (m. obs., documented by Verch, Mahan, Hewitt, Belter, Tessen, Domagalski, Gustafson, Bontly).

**Mew Gull.**—One in Milwaukee County 20 December (m. obs., documented by Gustafson).

**Ring-billed Gull.**—TTP in Lake Michigan from Kenosha County north to Brown County (through 27 January in Manitowoc County); also TTP in Winnebago County, Washington and Waukesha Counties, and Sauk and Dane Counties. Through 22 December at the latest in northern counties; for example, Door, Langlade, and Vilas, with a 27 January report for Douglas County. Migrants by approximately mid-February along Lake Michigan; for example, 400 on 24 February in Manitowoc County (m. obs.).

**Herring Gull.**—TTP in Lake Michigan from Kenosha County north to Door County.

Also TTP in Winnebago County; Washington and Waukesha Counties; Walworth County (maximum 850 on 17 January); Dane (maximum 200 on 11 January) and Sauk Counties; and St. Croix County. Noted through 18 December in Marathon County and 22 December in Portage County, with a 27 January report for Douglas County. Migrants by 14 February along Lake Michigan (m. obs.).

**Thayer's Gull.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for 1–4 birds, usually 1–2, in these counties: Douglas, Grant, Outagamie and Winnebago, Waukesha, Racine, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Manitowoc, and Kewaunee. The dates range from BOP–26 February (m. obs.).

**Iceland Gull.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for 1–2 birds in these counties: Douglas, Outagamie and Winnebago, Waukesha, Racine, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Manitowoc. The dates range from 11 December–22 February (m. obs.).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull.**—Again this winter, a lone bird in Dane County 20 December–24 February. Also reports of 1–2 birds in these counties: La Crosse, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, Racine, and Walworth. The dates range from 29 December–26 February (m. obs.).

**Glaucous Gull.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these counties: Douglas (maximum 11); Outagamie and Winnebago; Waukesha; Racine; Milwaukee; Ozaukee; Sheboygan (maximum 4); Manitowoc (maximum 15 on 26 February); and Kewaunee. The dates span the period.

**Great Black-backed Gull.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these counties: Douglas, Outagamie and Brown, Waukesha, Racine, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Kewaunee, and Door. From 1–3 birds, with the exception of Manitowoc County, where a maximum of 30 was noted on 26 February. The dates span the period (m. obs.).

**Rock Dove.**—Northward to the following counties, where TTP: Douglas, Vilas, and Door (m. obs.).

**Mourning Dove.**—Northward to the following counties, where TTP: Douglas, Vilas and Door (m. obs.).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove.**—Reports for 3 counties: Ozaukee, TTP at Holy Cross (documented by Wood, Frank, Tessen, Gustafson, Bontly); Grant, 3 in Tennyson and 1 in Patch

Grove on 9 January (documented by H. Peterson, Hewitt); and Oconto, 2 at White Potato Lake, 10 January (Peterson, documented by the Smiths).

**Eastern Screech-Owl.**—TTP, or likely so, in Dane, Shawano, Waupaca, Winnebago, Waukesha, Walworth, Kenosha, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, and Door Counties (m. obs.).

**Snowy Owl.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for 11 counties: Douglas, 3 TTP (Johnson); Langlade, 3 December, “rare” (Schimmels); Door; Kewaunee; Manitowoc; Sheboygan; Ozaukee; Milwaukee; Kenosha; Jefferson, at least one from 7 December into January (Hale); and Winnebago, 15 December–28 February, 1. The dates for counties bordering Lake Michigan span the period.

**Great Gray Owl.**—One in Shawano County 15–21 December (m. obs., documented by Brodthagen).

**Long-eared Owl.**—Excluding the CBCs, these reports: Dane County, two at Picnic Point on Lake Mendota in Madison, 23 January–12 February (Ashman); Kenosha County, 14 January and 2 February (Hoffmann); and Ozaukee County, TTP (Uttech).

**Short-eared Owl.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for 7 counties: Portage, 19–20 January; Dane, 28 December; Winnebago, 14 December into February, 1–6; Manitowoc and Sheboygan, January records; and Ozaukee and Kenosha, TTP, 1–3 (m. obs.).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl.**—On 9 CBCs, a total of 13. Later reports for these counties: Washburn, 3 February (Haseleu); Marathon (Belter); Dodge, 18 December–1 February (Gustafson); Walworth, 23 February (Parsons); and Ozaukee, 17–18 January (Uttech).

**Belted Kingfisher.**—After the CBCs, reports for 11 counties, north to St. Croix, Portage, Shawano, and Waupaca Counties. TTP, or likely so, in all counties (m. obs.).

**Red-headed Woodpecker.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these counties: Portage, TTP, maximum 2; Columbia, 20 January; Walworth, TTP; and Ozaukee, 19 January (m. obs.).

**Red-bellied Woodpecker.**—Northernmost reports from these counties: Burnett (TTP); Langlade (8 December, 2); and Door (TTP). Bel-

ter found a maximum of 7 on 23 February in Marathon County.

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.**—No reports after the CBCs.

**Black-backed Woodpecker.**—No reports after the CBCs.

**Northern Flicker.**—After the CBCs, single birds reported in 9 counties: Iowa, Columbia, Dane, Jefferson, Washington, Walworth, Kenosha, Ozaukee, and Outagamie (m. obs.).

**Eastern Phoebe.**—One in Ozaukee County, 1 December (Cutright).

**Vermilion Flycatcher.**—The adult male in Jefferson County, first seen 10 November, was last seen 2 December; it was photographed by Rozelle (Figure 1).

**Northern Shrike.**—After the CBCs, reports for 16 counties scattered throughout Wisconsin, but not in the southwestern quarter (m. obs.).

**Gray Jay.**—Including the CBCs, reports for these counties: Bayfield, Ashland, Price, Taylor, Vilas, Oneida, and Forest (m. obs.).

**Blue Jay.**—Belter reported local movements of groups of 10 or more by mid-February in Marathon County.

**Common Raven.**—Southernmost reports for Jackson, Wood, Portage, and Outagamie Counties (m. obs.), with one in Devil's Lake State Park in Sauk County 22 January (Walton).

**Horned Lark.**—Peaking in numbers generally from 10 February–EOP, north to Marathon and Brown Counties (m. obs.).

**Great Tit.**—The bird that appeared in the fall at a feeder in Waterford, near Tichigan Lake in Racine County, was last seen by the residents, Bush and Micki Boerschinger, on 31 December.

**Boreal Chickadee.**—Including the CBCs, reports for these counties: Price, Vilas, Oneida, Forest, and (15 December on the Stevens Point CBC) Portage County (m. obs.).

**Tufted Titmouse.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these counties: Barron, through 12 December (Goff); La Crosse; Monroe; Richland; Grant; Iowa; Sauk; Dane; Columbia; Rock; and





Figure 1. A male Vermilion Flycatcher (Wisconsin's first accepted record), first reported on 10 November 2002 just north of Whitewater in Jefferson County, lingered until 2 December. Photo by Brenda Rozelle.

Walworth (m. obs.). Found in southeastern Wisconsin for the third successive winter.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch.**—Scattered throughout the state, except for the far northwest, central, and southwestern sections in relatively low numbers (m. obs.).

**White-breasted Nuthatch.**—Northward to the following counties, where TTP: Douglas, Vilas, Forest, and Door (m. obs.).

**Brown Creeper.**—Exclusive of the CBCs, northernmost reports for St. Croix County, 12 January–EOP (Persico); Vilas County, through 4 February (Baughman); Langlade County, 17–28 February, “early” (Schimmels); and Door, TTP (Lukes).

**Carolina Wren.**—Excluding the CBCs, these reports: Waupaca County, one TTP at a feeder for the fourth consecutive winter, sheltering in “rolled up cotton mattress padding stuffed like a cone, under the eave of open back porch

roof” (Hewitt); Jefferson County, one at a feeder through 17 February, here since March 2001 (Hale); and Rock County, one at a feeder in Janesville, 19 January (Evanson).

**Winter Wren.**—A total of 4 on 4 CBCs.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet.**—After the CBCs, reports for these counties: Vilas, through 4 February (Baughman); Marathon and Portage; Winnebago and Manitowoc; Milwaukee and Kenosha; and Jefferson and Dane. Numbers varied from 1–3 (m. obs.).

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet.**—One on the Madison CBC.

**Eastern Bluebird.**—On 16 CBCs, with a total of 116, including 16 on the Sauk City CBC. TTP in these counties: St. Croix, a group of 8 (Persico); Dane(?); Door, maximum 7 on 6 February (Lukes); and Kenosha, maximum 5 on 22 January (Hoffmann). January records for Sauk, Columbia, and Sheboygan Counties, and one in



Grant County, 1 February (m. obs.). Migrants by EOP in Dane County (Burcar).

**Townsend's Solitaire.**—These reports: Devil's Lake State Park in Sauk County, TTP, maximum 5 (Holschbach); Fond du Lac County, one on the Kettle Moraine CBC, 22 December (documented by Michael); and Eagle Springs Lake in Waukesha County, one frequenting juniper bushes in a private yard 29 January (Schulenberg).

**Hermit Thrush.**—A total of 6 on 6 CBCs, including Madison, but only one record after the counts (one TTP in Dane County, Ashman).

**American Robin.**—Numerous and widespread. Reports for 23 counties, north to St. Croix County, where TTP, maximum 120 on 12 January; Marathon County, a few TTP; and Brown County, TTP, maximum 6. Tessen found large flocks (up to approximately 300) in both Columbia and Outagamie Counties. Migrants 27–28 February in several counties, including Marathon County (m. obs.).

**Varied Thrush.**—Found in Bayfield County, 3 January (Verch); Vilas County, 29 January (Baughman); and Kewaunee County, 28–30 January, a male (Tessen, Peterson).

**Gray Catbird.**—One in Dane County 2 December (Heikkinen), and one at a feeder in Winnebago County 31 January (Harriman).

**Brown Thrasher.**—On two CBCs, also these records: Waupaca County, one TTP at a feeder (Hewitt); and Fond du Lac County, 29 December.

**European Starling.**—Northward to these counties, where TTP: Douglas, Vilas, and Door (m. obs.).

**American Pipit.**—February records for Dane County (the 17th, 1, Ashman, and the 28th, 2, Burcar), and Ozaukee County (the 21st, 1, Frank). Rare in winter!

**Bohemian Waxwing.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these counties: Vilas, 7 December–4 January, maximum 50 on 7 December (Baughman), and 5 February, 12 (Neddo); Shawano, 20 January, 100+ (Peterson); Marathon, low numbers through the first half of January (Belter); Portage, 22 January–27 February, maximum 33 on 27 February (Hall); and Columbia County, one on 8 January (Tessen).

**Cedar Waxwing.**—After the CBCs, northernmost reports for these counties: Dunn and Eau Claire, high numbers; Marathon, low numbers through the first half of January; Brown, maximum 50 on 25 February; and Kewaunee, 40 on 2 January and 30 on 28 January. Maximum numbers in southern counties usually in the third week of February (m. obs.).

**Yellow-rumped Warbler.**—On 9 CBCs, with a total of 53, including 25 on the Madison Count. Later reports: Milwaukee County, through 22 February, maximum 2 (Bontly, Gustafson); Waukesha County, a first-year male at a feeder eating suet crumbs (Aunes); and Kenosha County, a flock TTP in a red cedar thicket, with at least 4 or 5 surviving until at least 25 February, also in another red cedar thicket approximately 2.5 miles away on 11 January (Jacyna).

**Palm Warbler.**—One in Rock County 15 December, on the Beloit CBC, Wisconsin's second winter record; the first (not in Robbins, *Wisconsin Birdlife*) was found at Plymouth during the Christmas Count period in 1974 but not on the count day (*Passenger Pigeon*, 1975, Vol. 37, No. 1, p. 3).

**Ovenbird.**—One in Waukesha County 22 December, on the Oconomowoc CBC (documented by Gutschow).

**Common Yellowthroat.**—One each on the Brussels (Door County) and Milwaukee CBCs.

**Summer Tanager.**—One at a feeder in Appleton, Outagamie County, 27 December–5 January (documented by Gustafson); third winter record.

**Spotted Towhee.**—One in Dane County 15–16 December (documented by the Schwalbes, and Heikkinen and Unson); first winter record since the winter of 1995–96.

**Eastern Towhee.**—One on the Green Lake CBC 29 December (documented by Schutlz), and one in Kenosha County 22 January (Hoffmann).

**American Tree Sparrow.**—The LaValleys in Douglas County reported that a "lack of snow cover until the end of February allowed a tree sparrow to overwinter." Also TTP in Barron and Door Counties; "sparse" in Langlade County (Schimmels).

**Field Sparrow.**—A total of 5 on 2 CBCs: Bridgeport 4, and Poynette 1.

**Savannah Sparrow.**—Single birds on the Hartford and Milwaukee CBCs.

**Fox Sparrow.**—A total of 17 on 10 CBCs, including Madison. Later reports: Dane County, one TTP (Ashman); and Kenosha County, TTP(?) (Fitzgerald).

**Song Sparrow.**—After the CBCs, reports for 14 counties. TTP in these counties: Sauk, Dane, Waukesha, Milwaukee, and Kenosha; 1–3 birds. Migrants by at least 23 February (9 February?) in several southeastern and eastern counties (m. obs.).

**Lincoln's Sparrow.**—One in Calumet County on the Stockbridge CBC, 15 December (documented by Whitmore). Burcar found one in a flock of approximately 50 American Tree Sparrows in Dane County, 23 February.

**Swamp Sparrow.**—After the CBCs, 1–3 birds in each of these counties: Grant, Sauk, Dane, Rock, Waukesha, and Kenosha. TTP in at least one county (Dane); two in Rock County, 15 February, migrants(?) (m. obs.).

**White-throated Sparrow.**—From 1–7 (usually 1–3) TTP, or likely so, in each of these counties: Dane, Waukesha, Walworth, Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Ozaukee. Also January records for La Crosse, Grant, Rock, Jefferson, Winnebago, and Outagamie Counties (m. obs.).

**White-crowned Sparrow.**—On 5 CBCs, with a total of 25, including 17 on the Bridgeport CBC; no later records.

**Dark-eyed Junco.**—Northward to these counties, where TTP: Barron, Marathon, Oconto, and Door (m. obs.).

**Lapland Longspur.**—After the CBCs, reports for 10 counties: Waupaca, Brown, Winnebago, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Ozaukee, Waukesha, Walworth, and Kenosha. The largest flock reported (450 on 2 January) was in Walworth County (Parsons). Tessen found a flock of 80 on 2 February in Dodge County and a flock of 50 on 28 February in Columbia County, otherwise the numbers reported were no more than 20 (m. obs.).

**Snow Bunting.**—After the CBCs, reports for 22 counties scattered throughout the state,

except for the far northwest. The largest flocks (100–300) were in Oconto County (2 December); Marathon County (late January); Outagamie County (4 February); Kenosha County (18 January); Jefferson County (13 January); and Grant County (1 February). Generally gone from southern Wisconsin by the EOP.

**Northern Cardinal.**—Northward to these counties: Douglas (4 and 9 February), Marathon (TTP), and Oconto and Door (TTP).

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak.**—One in Portage County, 10–12 December (Hall, documented by Young); Wisconsin's 12th winter record.

**Red-winged Blackbird.**—TTP, or probably so, in these counties: Walworth, Dane, Winnebago, and Door; maximum 12. January records for Jefferson, Dodge, and La Crosse Counties. Migrants by at least 13 February in southeastern Wisconsin; 22 February in Dane County; and 24 February in Iowa, Sauk, and Oconto Counties. Also flocks of 60–80 by EOP in Racine and Walworth Counties (m. obs.).

**Eastern Meadowlark.**—After the CBCs, these reports: Marathon County, 1 January–26 February, maximum 40+ on 1 January (Belter); Door County, 25 January–EOP (Lukes); and Ozaukee County, 25 February (Uttech).

**Western Meadowlark.**—After the CBCs, one in Iowa County, 1 February (Burcar).

**Yellow-headed Blackbird.**—A female still at Vernon Marsh in Waukesha County, 3 December (Gustafson), and two on the Horicon Marsh CBC in Dodge County, 15 December.

**Rusty Blackbird.**—Domagalski documented a flock of at least 1,700 (perhaps as many as 2,500) in the Waterloo Wildlife Area, Dodge County, 14 December on the Columbus CBC; this is approximately the total number recorded for this species on all previous CBCs combined! By 22 January, much reduced in numbers (Gustafson). Also a total of 4,000 on the Hustisford CBC! Evasion reported a total of 20 on 19 January in Rock County. Migrants(?) on 27 January in Dane County, and a flock of 24 on 1 February in Iowa County (m. obs.).

**Brewer's Blackbird.**—A total of 1,275 on the Hustisford CBC, and (documented by Domagalski) from 300–400 on the Dodge/Jefferson County line on 23 December. Later reports: 6 on

8 January and 1 on 2 February in Dodge County (Tessen), and 2 in Vernon Marsh in Waukesha County on 5 January (Wood).

**Common Grackle.**—January reports for Kenosha, Dodge, La Crosse, Shawano, and Vilas Counties of generally single birds; TTP(?) in some of these counties. Spring migrants 13 February–EOP (single birds) in Racine, Walworth, Jefferson, and Winnebago Counties; a 27 January report for Dane County may also have been a migrant (m. obs.).

**Brown-headed Cowbird.**—Domagalski on 23 December on the Dodge/Jefferson County line found a flock of approximately 4,000, the highest number of wintering cowbirds ever reported for Wisconsin. This flock was much reduced in numbers by 22 January (Gustafson), and by 2 February, the latest date, when Tessen found 2 birds. January reports for Jefferson, Manitowoc, Brown, and Marathon Counties. Spring migrants 23 February–EOP in Walworth, Washington (a flock of 25 on the 23rd), Winnebago, and Marathon Counties. One in Dane County 27 January and a flock of 30 in Iowa County 1 February may also have been migrants (m. obs.).

**Baltimore Oriole.**—A male at a feeder on the Shiocton CBC in Outagamie County, 21 December (Tessen, documented by Harriman).

**Pine Grosbeak.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for 9 northern counties and Portage County. Numbers fewer than 10, except for a group of 50 on 8 December in Forest County (Stutz), and a group of 66 on 21 January in Oconto County (Smiths).

**Purple Finch.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for 14 counties scattered throughout the state. Numbers generally low, the maximum being 38 on 13 January in St. Croix County (Persico).

**House Finch.**—Northward to these counties: Barron (TTP); Vilas (TTP); Langlade ("sparse"); Oconto (a total of 43 on 24 February, Smiths); and Door (TTP). Belter in Marathon County reported a maximum of 50+ on 23 February.

**Red Crossbill.**—Excluding the CBCs, these reports: Burnett County, 6 December and 1 January, maximum 20 on 6 December (McInroy); Menominee County, one on 22 December (Tessen); and Columbia County, 6 and 28 February, maximum 15 on 6 February (Schwalbes).

**White-winged Crossbill.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for these counties: Washburn, Vilas, Door, Outagamie, Winnebago, Portage, Dane (Figure 2), Waukesha, and Ozaukee. Numbers from 1–9, except for a count of 18 on 5 January in Ozaukee County, and a count of 47 on 11 December in Door County (m. obs.).

**Common Redpoll.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for 20 counties, mainly in northern and central Wisconsin, but also in Dane, Winnebago, Ozaukee, and Walworth Counties. The latest date in southern Wisconsin was 16 February in Dane County, whereas this species was reported TTP in a number of counties farther north. Large flocks (50–300+) in Jackson, Marathon, Portage, Waupaca, Outagamie, Door, and Oconto Counties; these flocks all in December and January (m. obs.).

**Hoary Redpoll.**—Reports for these counties: Oconto, 2 on 1 January (documented by the Smiths); Marathon, one in a flock of Common Redpolls on 15 December (documented by Belter); Waupaca, 2 on 13 January (documented by Hewitt); and Columbia, one at a thistle feeder on 13 January (Schwalbes).

**Pine Siskin.**—Excluding the CBCs, reports for 17 counties, south to Dane, Walworth, and Milwaukee Counties; not reported from much of northern and northwestern Wisconsin. Low numbers (1–10), except for a total of 35+ on 22 December in Menominee County, and a count of 24 on 23 February in Dane County (m. obs.).

**American Goldfinch.**—Northward to these counties, where TTP: Burnett, Vilas, Oconto, and Door (m. obs.). The Smiths in Oconto County reported a maximum of 157 on 22 December.

**Evening Grosbeak.**—Early December records for Washburn, Forest, Langlade, and Door Counties (1–15 birds in all cases), but not later in these counties. TTP in Vilas County and "small groups" in Marathon County (m. obs.).

**House Sparrow.**—Northward to these counties, where TTP: Douglas, Vilas, and Door (m. obs.).

## ERRATA

Several errors were inadvertently introduced into Mark Peterson's article, "The Fall Season: 2001," in the last issue (Vol. 64, Nos. 1&2, 2002). First, on



Figure 2. Many birders got good looks at a group of White-winged Crossbills that lingered in Madison's University of Wisconsin Arboretum, Dane County, during the winter of 2002. Photo by Mike McDowell.

page 95, Daryl Tessen found 3 (not 15) Harlequin Ducks in Sheboygan County on November 26. Second, on page 100, the Rufous Hummingbird in Marquette County was seen through September 20 (not August 20). And third, on page 104, Tessen found 15 Magnolia Warblers (not 165!) in Winnebago County on September 13.

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## “By the Wayside”—Winter 2001–2002

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*Rare and unusual species documentations include Gyrfalcon, Purple Sandpiper, American Woodcock, Black-headed Gull, Mew Gull, Ross's Gull, Eurasian Collared-Dove, American Pipit, Summer Tanager, Spotted Towhee, Rusty Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, and Hoary Redpoll.*

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### GYRFALCON (*Falco rusticolus*)

**7 December 2001, Buena Vista grasslands, Portage County**—I took a small detour into the Buena Vista grasslands to look for the earlier-reported Gyrfalcon on my way to an all-day meeting in Steven's Point. As I approached the Townline/Griffith Road intersection, I saw a Red-tailed Hawk-sized raptor with a relatively small head on top of the utility pole next to the silo. The bird was facing me and didn't look like any hawk I had seen before. Its entire front was heavily streaked vertically, with a pattern that looked like a faint “necklace” below that. There were few markings to note on its head, but there was a faint mustache mark and a faint line through or near the eye. The bill looked dark. I thought the bird had an overall pale brown color.

The hawk looked to the right and left a couple of times, and scratched its head once with its foot (no color noticed, i.e., it was plain or dark, not yellow). I only saw the front of the bird, then it flew southeast into the sun across a landscape hoary with hoar-

frost. My general impression was of a pointed-wing falcon in flight.—Karen Etter Hale, Lake Mills, WI.

**8 December 2001, Taft Road, Buena Vista grasslands, Portage County**—It was easy to tell this was a falcon by the vertical dark stripe below the eye, although the stripe was much lighter in color than on a Peregrine or Prairie Falcon. The bird seemed at least the size of a Red-tailed Hawk, maybe a bit larger. The overall color was gray, although the thick broad streaks down the breast were a tannish-gray color, and the feathers on the back of the bird gave a scalloped appearance since they were edged in a buffy color. (When I checked Sibley after I got home, I decided the bird I saw was not as dark gray as the adult gray form shown, nor as brownish as the juvenile pictured.) The head seemed small for the size of the bird, and it had a heavy eyebrow look. The face (cheeks) and top of head were the same soft gray as the overall bird, and the mustache stripe was only a bit darker gray than the rest of the head; it did not stand



out boldly. The feet were not dark, but not yellow, either (maybe what is called horn color), and the cere and eye area were not yellow, but more the same gray tone of the feathered area. Due to the way the bird was sitting, I never saw the tail well enough to describe it. We decided this was a juvenile bird, not a full adult.

We watched this bird until 3:35 P.M., and when we left to find some other birders we had seen earlier, the bird was still sitting. I mention the time because the other birders saw a gray Gyr-falcon about 3:30 P.M. some two or more miles away from our location that was being flown by a falconer and showed tethers on the legs. We did not see any tethers on the bird we saw, but we never saw it flying. After the sighting, I heard that the bird the falconer was flying was a gray Gyr-falcon  $\times$  Prairie Falcon cross. I have no idea what such a bird would look like, but everything about the bird we saw looked like a Gyr-falcon, not a Prairie Falcon. It did not have the strong white-and-dark contrast on the breast and face that the Prairie Falcon does, and it was certainly as large as a Red-tailed Hawk. I never saw it fly, so cannot say if the underwings had dark coverts and axillaries.—*Bettie Harriman, Oshkosh, WI.*

**20 January 2002, East Bluff at Devil's Lake State Park, Sauk County**—The bird was a white and large falcon, close to two feet in length, with an individual wing length a bit less than one foot. It had a distinctly long tail. The wings were pointed and exhibited black tips, which were darker than any markings on its underside, tail, or head. The legs and cere were yellow, and the eyes appeared black. The bird used the up-draft coming off the cliffs to sail along

the cliff edge (the wind was out of the northwest at about 30 MPH). I don't recall seeing the wings used for powered flight.—*Mark Franz, Fond du Lac, WI.*

**5 January 2002, Superior Entry, Douglas County**—On 5 January, I observed an immature Gyr-falcon at the Superior Entry, where it forms the geopolitical boundary between St. Louis County, Minnesota, and Douglas County, Wisconsin. The bird was observed from 12:30 to 12:35 P.M., and though seen in both states, the description was based on notes taken while it perched in a tree on the Wisconsin side of the entry.

I had been counting gulls and did not notice this falcon until I drove right by it. I stopped and knew that it was a Gyr as soon as I looked at it through binoculars. After watching the bird for several minutes, I slowly reached for my camera. Confiding up to that point but apparently camera-shy, it took off and flew towards Minnesota Point, where I lost sight of it as it continued in the direction of the Duluth harbor. After completing my sketch and field notes, I searched waterfront areas in Superior and Duluth where Gyrs have overwintered in past years, but could not relocate the bird.

I estimated that it was the size of a Red-tailed Hawk, though none were available for comparison. Like every other Gyr-falcon I have seen over the years, it had a distinctive shape while perched, due to its relatively small head, thick neck, hunched "shoulders" that looked extremely broad and powerful, a long tail that extended well beyond the tips of its wings, and a thick, powerful-looking chest. Its lower neck sloped outward and downward like a weight lifter's, an impression that was accentuated by the thickness of its

neck. The Gyr was perched in such a way that I could see its head, most of its back, all of its folded wings, the upper surface of its tail, and the sides of its breast and flanks. Its face was in profile, except when looking directly at me or toward the flock of goldeneyes near the breakwater.—*Peder H. Swingen, Duluth, MN.*

**4 February 2002, Conner's Point, Douglas County**—Shaun Putz had found a Gyr falcon on Connor's Point, so on February 4 we went looking for it. We found it sitting on part of the Peavy Elevator. It made lazy attempts to catch pigeons for a while, then flew low, directly over us. We followed it for about one and a half hours as it hunted and rested near the elevator, the top of the "high bridge," and the elevators just west of the bridge. During this time, we had ample opportunity to see the bird sitting and in flight through binoculars, scopes, and camera lenses.

It was a huge falcon, twice the size of the pigeons, and was an even medium gray above, almost white below, with tiny streaks on the breast and faint streaks and blotches on the belly. The underwings appeared to be almost white as well, basically one tone (indicating an adult) with faint streaking. The legs were yellow. The bird's head was gray with paler cheeks, large eyes, and a darker stripe from the eye down through the cheek.—*Robbye Johnson, Superior, WI.*

#### **PURPLE SANDPIPER** (*Calidris maritima*)

**2 February 2002, Myers Park, Racine County**—I located the sandpiper with my compact "car" binoculars about 3:15 p.m., and realized that it was some-

thing I had never seen before. It initially looked like a small Dunlin in that the bill was a bit long and the bird was short and squat. When it came a bit out of the water, I wondered where its legs were! I recognized the semi-defined bib on the chest and noted the gentle streaking down the sides. I felt it might be a Purple Sandpiper from previously studying that species. I raced home, checked and bookmarked the Purple Sandpiper reference, and raced back with "real" binoculars, scope, and camera in the car. I was lamenting the fact that I did not have Rick Fare's phone number when I really needed it. Not to worry, he was standing there with his scope on the bird, confirming it to be a Purple Sandpiper.

I was concerned about the reference in the shorebird book I had showing all the birds with yellow coloration at the beak's base and on the legs, as this bird clearly was showing orangey—even considering the late afternoon lighting. Rick's *Peterson* guide didn't show it either. Finally, Sibley's book had it nailed down as the adult non-breeding. The bird was picture-perfect to that drawing; except, I thought, more towards the brownish coloration instead of the gray pictured—again, perhaps, due to the afternoon light. That night the temperatures went down into the teens and the harbors froze over. The bird was not relocated the next day.—*Helen Pugh, Racine, WI.*

#### **AMERICAN WOODCOCK** (*Scolopax minor*)

**17 February 2002, Cliffside Park, Caledonia, Racine County**—The only part remaining from the dead bird was the head and bill; this was enough to identify it, however. At first, because of the

length of the bill (about two and a half inches) and the habitat, I thought it could only be either a woodcock or a Wilson's Snipe. Luckily, the feathers on the top of the head were still intact. The black head had rusty-colored bars (only two were remaining) running perpendicular to the bill; in the snipe, the stripes run parallel to the bill. The upper mandible had serrations, which assist the bird in removing worms from the soil while foraging. The eye sockets were set back on the head. The woodcock had been recently killed, because the remains (feathers were also present) were on a blanket of fresh snow and the blood was still wet.—*Rick Fare, Racine, WI.*

**BLACK-HEADED GULL**  
(*Larus ridibundus*)

**2 December 2001, South Metro Pier, Milwaukee County**—After reading about the appearance of this bird on Wisbirdn, Nick Walton and I quickly headed for Milwaukee to find it. We scoped the area from the top of the stairs at South Metro Pier, and after waiting for a few minutes we found the Black-headed Gull. It spent a significant amount of time perched on a railing right next to a few Bonaparte's Gulls. This was a perfect situation to make comparisons between the two species.

The Black-headed Gull was an adult bird in basic plumage. Perched next to the Bonaparte's, we noted the larger size of the Black-headed Gull; it was about a head taller than the Bonaparte's. The mantle and wings were similar in color for both species, which eliminated Laughing and Franklin's Gulls from the picture (both are darker gulls). Other striking features

of the bird were its red feet and bill. All the basic-plumaged Bonaparte's had gray or pale pink legs and small black bills. Both the Bonaparte's and the Black-headed had similar markings on their heads—a dark ear spot and darker markings near the birds' eyes. We also were able to note the clean white breast and neck of the Black-headed Gull (on the Boni's, the gray from the mantle extends up the neck and towards the breast). In flight, the Black-headed Gull showed the dark underwings typical of this species. Other than this feature and its size, the Black-headed and Bonaparte's showed similar plumage in flight.—*Aaron Stutz, Madison, WI.*

**3 December 2001, South Metro Pier, Milwaukee County**—My best looks of the gull were when it was perched on the railings at the edge of the sewage treatment ponds. It would come in to the ponds from Lake Michigan in the company of 50 or so Bonaparte's Gulls, and then rest for several minutes at a time on the railings before diving out of sight to feed in the ponds. At these resting times, it was easy to notice that the Black-headed was larger than the Bonaparte's: When in this position, the gull would sometimes stretch its wings and reveal that the underwing primaries were a charcoal color. The exceptions were the far outer primaries, which were white and tipped with black. The underwing inner primaries and the secondaries were a dull gray and significantly less dark than the outer primaries. The primary tips on the resting bird were blackish. The bill was more robust than on the Bonaparte's and was reddish-orange in color, with a slight dark smudging at the distal end. This was in strong con-

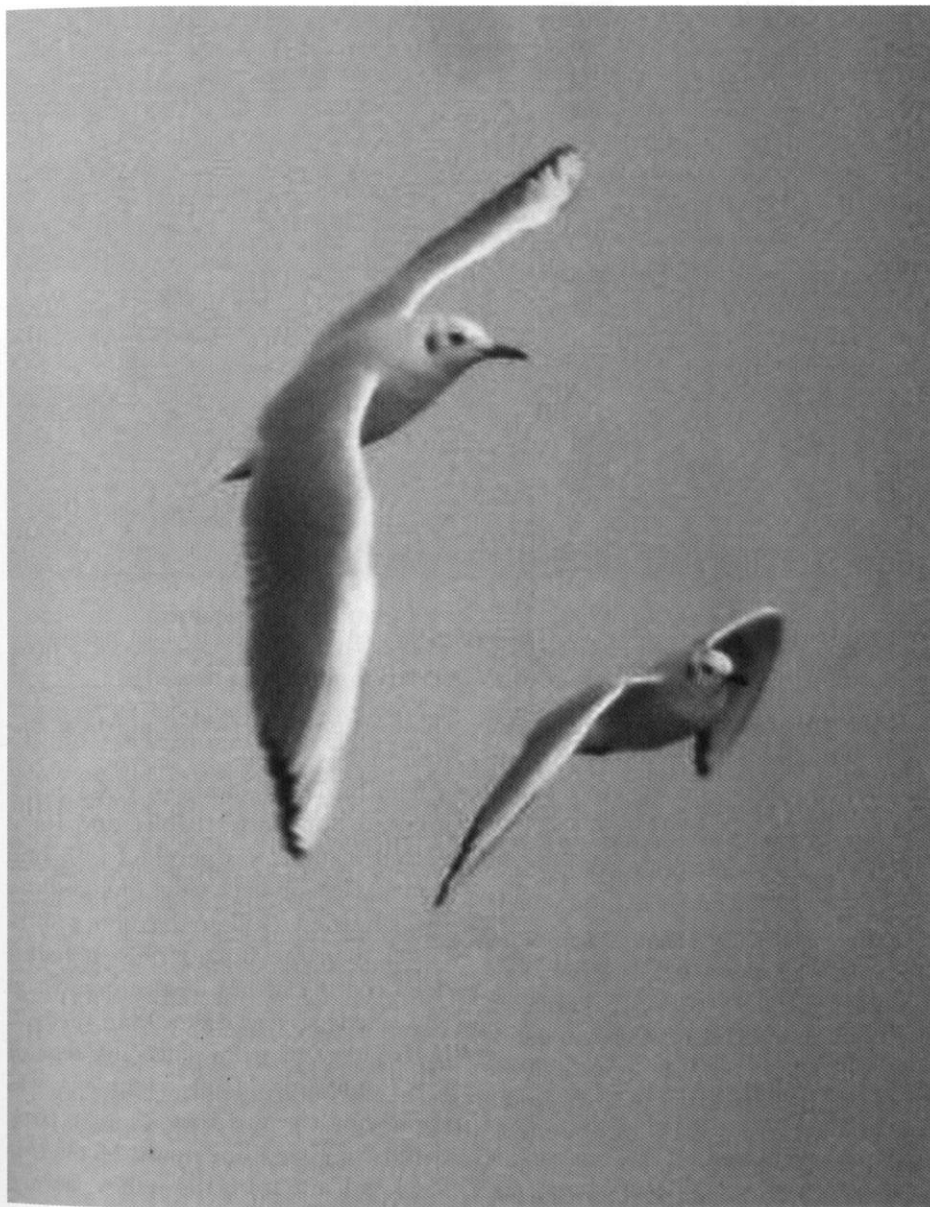


Figure 1. A basic-plumage Black-headed Gull (left), shown here flying next to a smaller Bonaparte's Gull, was present at the South Metro Pier in Milwaukee County from at least 2–12 December 2001. Photo by John Idzikowski.

trast to the smaller bills of the Bonaparte's and that species' black bill color. A dark eye and a dark ear patch

accentuated the basically white head of the Black-headed Gull. The mantle and wings were pale gray; this gray was



Figure 2. Another view of the Milwaukee County Black-headed Gull, showing the bold underwing pattern. Photo by John Idzikowski.

just the slightest tone paler than that of the Bonaparte's. The underside was unmarked white. The legs were a bold reddish orange.—*Robert C. Domagalski, Menomonee Falls, WI.*

**8 December 2001, South Metro Pier, Milwaukee County**—Because this was a life bird for me, and also because a Mew Gull had been reported to me by a previous observer, I spent most of the day in the area, leaving only for lunch and to bird Grant Park for about one and a half hours.

My observation was made with a 20–60× scope from a distance of about 200 yards. The gull was seen on the beach, on the rails surrounding the sewage tanks at the treatment plant, in flight between the tanks and the beach, and resting on the water. Viewing conditions were excellent due to cloud cover, except for a brief period of sun-

shine when there was some heat distortion.

The bird was always in close proximity to Bonaparte's Gulls, and for a period of time was perched with one Bonaparte's on each side. I judged the Black-headed Gull to be about 30% larger than the Bonaparte's. It had a deep red bill with a black tip and red legs; the legs were duller than the bill, but redder than the pale pink legs of the Bonaparte's Gulls. The eye was dark, and there was a black spot in back of the eye. Extending upward from this black spot and from above the eye were two pale gray vertical bars, and when the gull tilted its head I could see that they passed over the crown and joined the corresponding gray bars on the other side of the face. The back and wing coverts were a pale gray, and the wing tips were black. The primary tips were thinly edged in white, so white



spots were nonexistent, only thin white lines. In flight, on the upper surface of the wing, the pattern resembled the Bonaparte's with a bright white leading edge. However, when the under surface was seen, most of the primaries, except for the first two or three, were dark black for most of their length. The tail was a clean white, as were the underparts, and I saw no streaking anywhere on this bird.—*Thomas C. Wood, Menomonee Falls, WI.*

### **MEW GULL (*Larus canus*)**

**20 December 2001, South Metro Pier, Milwaukee County**—After scoping through the large flock of Ring-billed Gulls on the beach, I finally picked out one with a distinctly darker mantle. I next checked the eye, which was dark brown. There was quite a lot of streaking on the head and nape, which had a white background color, along with white on the breast, belly, and tail. The bill was distinctly thinner and shorter than a Ring-bill's, with a pale yellow color (maybe a tinge of green) and no black. The mantle and back were gray, but a shade darker than the Ring-bills. The overall size was shorter, slimmer, and smaller than the Ring-bills, with a more rounded crown. The legs were a pale, greenish gray. Briefly seen when a jogger flushed the group was a wing tip with less black and more white at the tip of the primaries.—*Dennis Gustafson, New Berlin, WI.*

### **ROSS'S GULL (*Rhodostethia rosea*)**

**6 December 2001, Head of the Bay, Chequamegon Bay, Bayfield County**—When first seen, the bird was flying and the gray pointed wings (darker underneath than on top) were noted. There

was a trailing white edge on both dorsal and ventral sides. The pink tinge to the ventral portions of the body was also noted. When the bird was sitting, its dovelike form was noted (long pointed wings). The head was white with a black vertical crescent behind the eye. The most striking feature of the head was the very short black bill. The back and upperwings were a uniform light gray, with the same color on the hindneck. The legs were short and orange-red in color. Occasionally, the bird would fly and could be followed in the scope. The wedge-shaped tail was obvious when flying and landing. All these characteristics were confirmed when the bird was viewed over the next several days, sometimes within 50 feet. When the bird was first seen, Travis Mahan and Tracy Heckler were with me and helped with the identification process.

The bird fed by pecking at soil and water as it walked or swam. It was also seen preening, sleeping, and flying. It was with Bonaparte's and Ring-billed Gulls, but I didn't observe any notable interactions.—*Dick Verch, Ashland, WI.*

**6 December 2001, Head of the Bay, Chequamegon Bay, Bayfield County**—The initial sighting of the gull took place roughly 100 yards east of the Best Western Motel in Ashland at approximately 9:35 A.M.. The sky was cloudy and a slight wind was present. I was watching a few Bonaparte's Gulls that were flying over the water at about 60 yards out, when I noticed a gull that had dark underwings. As it flew past us to the west, I noted a pinkish hue on the breast and flanks and a black spot behind the eye. I informed the other two people in our birding group of this odd gull. We were able to watch it in flight and compare





Figure 3. Wisconsin's first Ross's Gull was found on 6 December 2001 in Chequamegon Bay, Bayfield County, by a lucky trio of birders. Photo by John Idzikowski.

its characteristics to the Bonaparte's Gulls that were in the same field of vision in the binoculars. The gull of interest lacked the white wedges, darker gray wings, and black-tipped primaries of the Bonaparte's. This gull possessed a nearly white appearance above. The wings were long and pointed. At this time, the bird flew out of range for a good identification, so the decision to follow its path for location and identification was made.

We drove to a location called Long Bridge, which is about a quarter-mile to the west of the Best Western. Thankfully, we were able to relocate the bird. It was standing on a mudflat roughly 155 yards away among a group of Bon-

aparte's and Ring-billed Gulls. It was small in comparison to the other gulls (much smaller than the Ring-bills, slightly smaller than the Bonaparte's), and the faint pink color was very noticeable. The black spots behind the eyes resembled crescents and were very clean around the margins. The all-black bill was very short. Its legs were bright red-orange, but more on the orange side. The body shape of the suspicious gull was compared to the Bonaparte's Gulls near it. The neck was shorter, the head was more rounded, and the bill much shorter, all of which gave the gull a rather chunky appearance towards the front end of its body. The long wings were pointed and the



Figure 4. The Bayfield County Ross's Gull (right) standing next to a Ring-billed Gull. Photo by John Idzikowski.

primary extension gave a lengthy appearance to the posterior end of the gull. No black on the primaries could be seen.

It walked with a head bob reminiscent of a Rock Dove. The gull seemed to move about like it had its own business, rather than associating with the group of other gulls. Another behavior we noted was that it pecked the surface of the water as it fed. At one time, the group of gulls that was proximal to the suspicious gull flew from their spot. This seemed to startle the gull, and as it looked up and around, a distinct peak on the top of its head was noted. Occasionally, it would fly to a new location a few yards from its original spot, and on a few of these flights a dis-

tinctive wedge-shaped tail was noted. The entire tail was white and did not display any pattern.

At around 11:00 A.M., the gull flew to some newly exposed mudflats and landed roughly 50 yards from our viewing location. From this point, we noted a small extension of pale gray from its back to its shoulders. The bird appeared to have black eyes due to small black markings directly under its eyes. The bird remained in the new location for about five minutes. The large group of gulls that were also on this mudflat flew away, and this gull was the only one that remained behind. Eventually, it flew to its old location. During this flight, I was able to see a white border on the trailing edge of its



Figure 5. The Ross's Gull in flight, showing the lack of markings on the pale gray and white wings. Photo by John Idzikowski.

upperwings. The light gray underwings and pink hue on the breast and flanks were noted again.—*Travis Mahan, Decatur, IL.*

**7 December 2001, Head of the Bay, Chequamegon Bay, Bayfield County**—When we (myself, Daryl Tessen, and Dan Bel-

ter) arrived after a middle-of-the-night departure, someone was already on the beach. It was Tom Schultz, and he had a beautiful small gull *in the scope* for us! It was significantly smaller than the Ring-billed Gulls nearby. The bird was white-headed, with a black smudgy mark on the neck. The wings and wing tips were pale gray. The bill was small

and black. The shape of the head was interesting—peaked, with some feathers standing up almost like a crest toward the back of the head. The overall shape when sitting was like a Bonaparte's Gull, with wings angling upward more than a Ring-bill. The eye was black. When it flew, we could see the wedge shape of the tail nicely and even the white trailing edge of the wing. The most remarkable quality was the “sunrise” glow of the breast—a beautiful, pale pinkish-orange tinge that made me think it was reflected off the water or ice. I kept turning around to check, but it was just the bird's own color. What a special event!—*Janet Avis Hewitt, Iola, WI.*

#### EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

*1 and 24 January 2002, Holy Cross, Ozaukee County*—On January 1, I was walking the streets of the downtown, unsuccessfully looking for “the dove.” A neighborhood dog had been following me for the previous 20 minutes, and he eventually flushed it up into a cottonwood from the long grass underneath the tree. The bird was 10–12 feet up in the tree, about 20 feet away from me. On January 24, the bird was perched on a wire along Highway A in the town.

The collared-dove was more bulky than a Mourning Dove, more slender than a pigeon. The tail was longer than a pigeon's, but was squared off, not pointed. Overall, it was gray brown, with a black crescent on the nape of the neck. The primaries were a bit darker gray than the rest of the bird. The undertail coverts were dark gray, bordered by black on the proximal

part of the undertail. The distal two-thirds of the tail were white.—*Jim Frank, Mequon, WI.*

#### AMERICAN PIPIT (*Anthus rubescens*)

*21 February 2002, Ozaukee County*—A small grayish bird flew up from the edge of the roadside ditch. It seemed more warbler-sized than sparrow-sized on my initial impression, which was literally a glimpse. Dark streaking on the upper breast and white outer tail feathers were all I could remember, and something in me said “Palm Warbler?” Then I realized that the white extended up the sides of the tail, not restricting itself to the tail tips.

The bird flew behind the car and out into a flooded area about 50 feet off the road in a plowed field. I backed up the car and got the scope on a small bird—it still seemed smaller than a sparrow, but maybe this was the slenderness of the bird and not its length. It sat on a dirt clump in the water, pumping its tail. The back was grayish, and the breast paler gray-white with a buffy wash to the upper breast. Dark, rather heavy streaks extended down the upper breast from a dense collar of streaks. The throat was white and unmarked, but a heavy streak was present in the malar region. There was a lighter line through the supercilium. The bill was thin and warblerlike, not like a sparrow or finch bill. After several minutes, it took flight and gave a two-note, high-pitched, squeaklike call a couple of times.

I have seen American Pipits many times before, but never before May 4 nor later than early November.—*Jim Frank, Mequon, WI.*

### SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*)

**28 December 2001 and 4 January 2002, Appleton, Outagamie County**—This tanager cooperatively came to the feeder area during both my visits, giving great views. Noted were its large, pale, and fairly long tanager bill; the overall greenish-yellowish-orangish body color; and the lack of wing bars or of much contrast of the wings with the rest of the body color (wings slightly more gray). The orange showed up most on the throat area and tail/rump area. There was a slight, whitish eye ring. It was heard giving the *pitty chuck* call during the second visit.—Dennis Gustafson, New Berlin, WI.

### SPOTTED TOWHEE (*Pipilo maculatus*)

**15 December 2001, north side of Lake Mendota, Dane County**—We were driving north on Kupfer Road about one mile west of Route 113, when we saw a Northern Cardinal and perhaps a chickadee. We stopped to count what

we saw, and played a screech-owl tape to try to call out of the woods any other birds present. Almost immediately, a towhee jumped up on a tree branch about 10 feet off the ground and about 15 feet away. It was obvious right away that we had a Spotted Towhee.

The bird had the white belly, rusty flanks, and black head and tail as one would expect for the Eastern Towhee, but with the other upperparts being black with large and extensive white spots. We immediately wrote the following notes in our record book: "Extensive large white spots on wings and back. Dark male, call note a rising *spreew*. Note harsh or buzzy. Flanks light rusty as opposed to dark rusty. Head slightly crested." There was no question about it being a Spotted Towhee, but of which race? We checked with Sibley, p. 474, with the bird still in view. The bird in question agreed with the examples of the male Great Plains Spotted Towhee.—Paul and Glenna Schwalbe, Pardeeville, WI.

### RUSTY BLACKBIRD (*Euphagus carolinus*)

**14 December 2001, Waterloo Wildlife Area, Dodge County**—While working the Columbus Christmas Bird Count (CBC) at the Waterloo Wildlife Area in far southwestern Dodge County, I saw a flock of 30 or so blackbirds moving quickly past. I stopped and walked through some woods and into an open field about where the blackbirds had crossed. When I got to the field, I saw flock after flock of dark-colored blackbirds flying directly overhead. They passed in flocks ranging from 30 to 150 individuals each. Although I missed the start of the movement, I did count what came over while I was in the

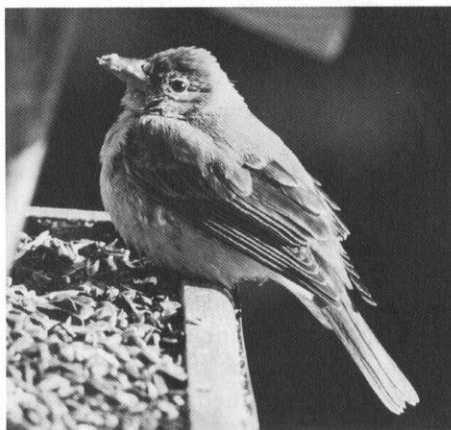


Figure 6. Wisconsin's third winter record of Summer Tanager appeared at a feeder in Appleton, Outagamie County, in late December 2001. Photo by John Van Den Brandt.



field. Some 2,200 birds came past. By shape and size, I determined a small number of these were Common Grackles. On a larger number, I could notice the red wing patch of the Red-winged Blackbird. Even so, almost all the birds were dark and even-sized, with no noticeable markings.

Once most of the birds had passed, I walked back to the car intending to continue the count. Reaching my car, I found that the birds had roosted in the trees right next to where I had parked! I got out my scope and went through the closer birds. They were all Rusty Blackbirds, except for now and then a grackle. Suddenly, the birds landed on a nearby field. I went into my car and scoped them from my window mount. Many birds were only 100 to 200 feet away.

Examining several hundred individuals, I saw that each of them had yellow eyes. The females had a broad rust-yellow eyebrow and were a paler tone of rust. These markings made this gender stand out in the crowd. The males were darker, yet well marked with rust. In both, the tertials and wing coverts were marked with rust. I made a great effort to find a bird with dark eyes or without rust on the tertials and wing coverts. I could not find such a bird, except for a small number of grackles and cowbirds—there was not a single Brewer's Blackbird that I could locate.

My conservative estimate is of 1,700 Rusties, though there could have been as many as 2,500. What makes this report so unusual is the large number of these birds. Previous to this, the highest count of Rusty Blackbird on a Wisconsin CBC was 337 in 1968. In all the CBC counts from 1965 through 2000 combined, only 1,825 Rusty Blackbirds have ever been reported. This makes a

report of 1,700 in one part of a single count circle unique. Robbins, in *Wisconsin Birdlife* (p. 583), writes concerning fall migrant Rusties: "As in spring, this bird travels almost exclusively in flocks. Sometimes these flocks mix with flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and Brown-headed Cowbirds. More often the flocks remain by themselves, numbering up to 1,000 or more, and concentrating more on the edges of swamps than in grain fields." The Rusties I witnessed were just as Robbins writes, only later and more numerous than he mentions.—Robert C. Domagalski, Menomonee Falls, WI.

#### **BREWER'S BLACKBIRD** (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*)

**23 December 2001, Dodge/Jefferson County line**—Hoping to follow up on the report of great numbers of Rusty and Brewer's Blackbirds in the Mud Lake Wildlife Area of southwestern Dodge County, I went to the location where Kevin Kearns suggested I watch for the roosts leaving the wildlife area. By the time I arrived at 7:05 A.M., the blackbirds were already streaming across County Q and heading south into Jefferson County. There were thousands of blackbirds. Many of them were a dull brown color. This caused me to think they were Brown-headed Cowbirds. I later searched the area where Kevin suggested I go to find feeding flocks of blackbirds. In this location (Berry Road and the intersection of Highway 19, as well as West Road further to the south), I found a feeding flock of some 4,000+ Brown-headed Cowbirds. Cowbirds in these numbers have never been reported before in Wisconsin in the winter season.



The cowbirds often fed on the road and the edges of the road. They even surrounded my car! Mixed with the cowbirds were Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and both Rusty and Brewer's Blackbirds. My guess is that there were some 300–400 Brewer's Blackbirds and only 10 or so Rusty Blackbirds.

The Brewer's Blackbirds were only 100 feet or so away from my parked car. I had excellent looks at them with my window-mounted spotting scope. I could notice only males. They were in both breeding-type plumage and in the fall "variant" plumage. Both types had bright yellow eyes with a dark iris. The breeding types were an all-dark color, not shiny, with the head having a purplish tinge. The "variant" birds showed a buffy feather edging, but had none of the rich "rusty" color of a Rusty Blackbird. In both variations of plumage, the wings were entirely dark. I looked very closely and there was absolutely no tinge of brown or rust on any of these wings. In the "variant" birds, these all-dark wings stood in strong contrast to the buffy feather edgings over the remainder of the body. Also, here and there, a lone Rusty Blackbird could be found. These few birds were significantly different from the Brewer's. They were marked with a strong rust color over their bodies and their wings were marked with rust.

While I was watching the Rusties and Brewer's, mixed mainly with cowbirds, I saw a huge flock of other blackbirds (perhaps 6,000–7,000 birds strong) flying in a long ribbon northwest to southeast across Berry Road. Although I could not scope these birds at close range, I did notice that they had few of the dull brown birds (that would indi-

cate female cowbirds), there were few grackles in the mix, and I noticed no reddish wing patches (that might indicate Red-winged Blackbirds). I feel this huge ribbon of birds was made up mainly of Rusties and Brewer's. This might well have been the roost of 6,000+ individuals that Kevin Kearns reported for the Hustisford CBC on December 18. Through all of this, I never saw a single European Starling!—Robert C. Domagalski, Menomonee Falls, WI.

### HOARY REDPOLL (*Carduelis hornemanni*)

**15 December 2001, southwest of Rib Mountain, Marathon County**—While scanning through the flock of 150 or so Common Redpolls I had just found in a weedy field with a few scattered trees, I came across a very white-plumaged redpoll mixed in with the group. This bird was the same size and shape as compared with the Common Redpolls, but its plumage was whiter. What I noticed right away was that this bird had its wings held lower alongside its body, thus exposing the unstreaked, white rump. When the bird turned around, I saw very little streaking along the flanks and a whitish breast with a little pinkish coloring to it. The wings appeared to have more whitish markings than on the Common Redpolls. I was not able to view the undertail coverts.—Dan Belter, Wausau, WI.

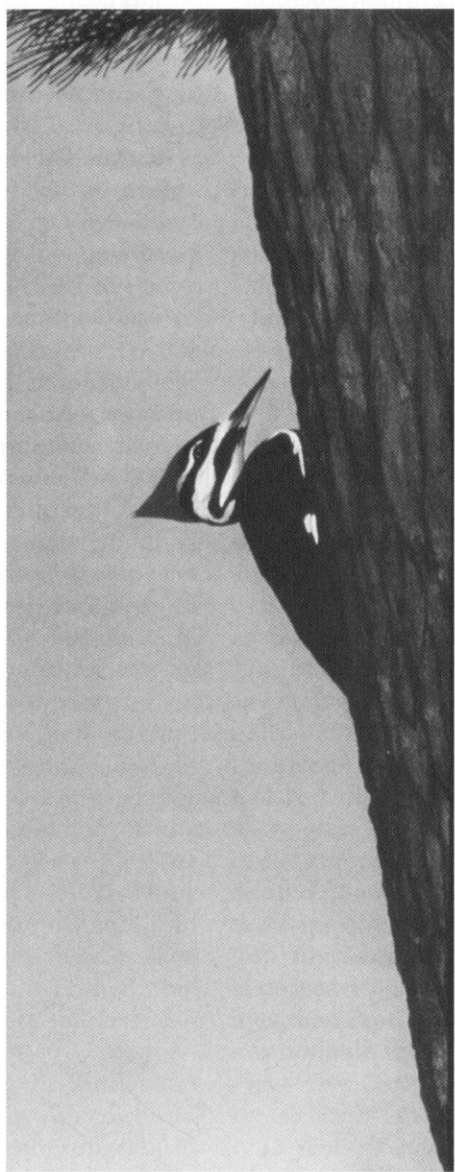
**13 January 2002, Pardeeville, Columbia County**—The bird was on our backyard thistle feeder, so we viewed it out the window from about 11–12 feet away. It came in with a sizable group of Pine Siskins. The redpoll and the siskins were eating as if they were raven-

ously hungry. We have noted this before when flocks will suddenly appear at a feeder; one would guess that they had been flying a great distance before landing. At any rate, the Hoary Redpoll was eating very rapidly, not allowing itself to be pushed off by other birds. It left the feeder once and soon returned to continue to eat. We did not see it again after it left the second time.

The most outstanding thing about the bird was its paleness and overall frosty appearance. It had the red cap, black lores and throat, wing bars, and small bill of a redpoll. The frostiness extended from the back of the head, over the nape, and over the back. The auriculars (face) were not white, but a pale gray. The white on the wing bar and on the secondaries was not quite as extensive as shown on the adult male (southern form) in Sibley (p. 533), but

the amount of white was more like that shown for illustrations "70d" or "70e" in Clement, Harris, and Davis. The bird was facing us the entire time, and we had no really good looks at the rump. The underparts were pure white, with no pink at all, and one or two faint streaks on the flanks. The bill was intermediate in size; not as short as pictured in Sibley, but not as long as he shows for the Common Redpoll. The culmen looked a little straight, but we can't be sure. The undertail coverts were pure white with one or two streaks.

The bird was like the adult male (southern form) in Sibley, with darker auriculars and no pink, or like illustration 70d in Clement, Harris, and Davis, again with no pink, but with the streaking on the flanks as in Sibley.—*Paul and Glenna Schwalbe, Pardeeville, WI.*



Pileated Woodpecker *by Scott Schiller*

## WSO Records Committee Report: Winter 2001–2002

The WSO Records Committee reviewed 72 records of 27 species for the winter 2001–2002 season; 58 of the records were accepted. In addition, four of five older records were accepted upon review. Of particular significance was Wisconsin's first record of a Ross's Gull, pushing the state list to 418 species. The mild winter was apparently responsible for the establishment of a number of new late fall dates for several species, in addition to several earliest spring arrivals.

### ACCEPTED

#### *Red-throated Loon—*

#2001–090 Sheboygan Co., 29 December 2001, Brasser, Brasser.

Two birds were seen in passing flight at a distance of 100 feet. They were similar in size and shape to Red-breasted Mergansers. Overall, they had gray upperparts and white underparts. In particular, the face and neck were very light in color. The head and neck were held below the plane of the body in flight.

#### *Least Bittern—*

#2001–091 Chippewa Co., 22 December 2001, Polk.

A heron smaller than a Green Heron flushed from a roadside ditch. The daggerlike bill was yellow with a dark tip. The trailing legs were also yellow. Buff feathering was noted on the face, neck, breast, and upperwing surface. Dark coloration covered the remainder of the bird.

This is the latest Wisconsin record and a Christmas Count first for the state.

#### *Great Egret—*

#2001–077 Dodge Co., 4, 7 December 2001, Frerik.

#2001–092 Dodge Co., 18 December 2001, Michael.

This large egret-shaped bird was entirely white, had a large yellow bill, and black legs. These are Wisconsin's second and third December records.

#### *Greater White-fronted Goose—*

#2002–002 Rock Co., 10 January 2002, D. Christensen; 11 January 2002, S. Christensen.

These birds were noticeably smaller than the associated Canada Geese. The brown plumage was broken by black barring on the breast, a white face mask surrounding a pink bill, orange legs, white undertail coverts, and a black tail with a white terminal band.

The single individual on January 10 and 4 individuals on January 11 represent Wisconsin's first January records.

***Barrow's Goldeneye—***

#2002-003 Milwaukee Co., 21 January 2002, Gustafson, Tessen; 26 January 2002, Wood.

As many as two drake Barrow's Goldeneyes were observed to have a dark head with a crescent-shaped, white facial spot; a steeper forehead than the Common Goldeneyes; black extending down the flanks encompassing white spots (instead of white extending up the edge of the back encompassing black spots); and a stubbier, dark bill.

These birds were present at a site only 1.5 to 2 miles south of Virmond Park, the wintering location of a Barrow's Goldeneye for the previous seven winters, but not reported there this winter.

***Gyr Falcon—***

#2001-078 Portage Co., 4 December 2001 Hall; 7 December 2001, Hale; 8 December 2001, Uttech, Harriman; 26 January 2002, M. Peterson.

#2002-004 Sauk Co., 20 January 2002, Franz.

#2002-005 Douglas Co., 5 January 2002, Svingen; 4 February 2002, R. Johnson.

The falcons reported in Portage and Douglas Counties were the size of Red-tailed Hawks, gray to gray-brown in

overall color, and fairly heavily to lightly streaked on the breast. The Sauk County bird was white with black wing tips. The wings, although broad, came to a point at the tip. The tail was proportionally long and heavy. A faint, but evident, malar or mustache streak was also reported.

Of note is the report of a birder witnessing the flying of a falconer's bird on December 8 at the Portage County site. It was reportedly a hybrid Gyr Falcon/Saker Falcon. There is also a suggestion that this practice is not unusual for the Buena Vista Marsh area. Although the reports of these Gyrfalcons were supposedly a few miles from this observed falconer's release, and the observers of the Gyrfalcons feel they saw a different individual than the falconer's bird, the possibility exists that these reports are of a "captive" bird. If there were two birds, and if one was a falconer's bird, could a second falconer's bird also be working on the same day?

See comments later in this article about the problem of determining the origin of Gyrfalcons.

***Purple Sandpiper—***

#2002-007 Racine Co., 1 February 2002, Howe (photo); 3 February 2002, Pugh.

A Dunlin-sized shorebird was short and squat, with a slightly longer than proportional beak, with an orangish base to it. The short legs were orange as well. The overall color was brownish gray breaking into streaking down the sides of the breast.

This is Wisconsin's first February record.

***American Woodcock—***

#2002-008 Racine Co., 17 February 2002, Fare.

This identification was made from the remains of a freshly killed bird. The head had eye sockets set in a decidedly caudal position, a 2.5-inch-long beak with fine serrations on the upper mandible, and black and rusty bars on the back of the head instead of longitudinal stripes as a Common Snipe would have.

This is Wisconsin's earliest spring record by two days.

***Black-headed Gull—***

#2001-079 Milwaukee Co., 2 December 2001, Walton, Stutz; 3 December 2001, Domagalski, Mueller; 4 December 2001, Gustafson, Belter; 8 December 2001, Wood; 9 December 2001, Tessen; 4, 12 December 2001, Bontly.

This bird was in basic plumage, slightly larger than the accompanying Bonaparte's Gulls. The mantle was slightly paler gray than the Bonaparte's and there was a dark eye and dark spot behind the eye, as the Bonaparte's had. In addition, the upperwing pattern was similar in having the white outer primaries contrasting with the gray mantle. The bill was larger than the Bonaparte's and was red with a black tip. The legs were also reddish. The underwing pattern was striking, showing dark outer primaries contrasting with gray inner primaries and secondaries, as well as the white of the two outermost primaries.

This is Wisconsin's eleventh record.

***Iceland Gull—***

#2001-095 Door Co., 22 December 2001, Swagel.

This gull was larger than associated Ring-billed Gulls, with an all-white plumage except for the pale gray man-

tle. No black was evident in outstretched wing tips. The legs were pink, the bill yellow. The overall size of the bird was felt to be Herring Gull-like, and not the massive bulk of a Glaucous Gull.

***Lesser Black-backed Gull—***

#2001-096 Sheboygan Co., 29 December 2001, S. Baughman.

The size was intermediate between the surrounding Herring and Ring-billed Gulls. The mantle was dark gray, the legs yellow. The head was heavily streaked with brown.

***Ross's Gull—***

#2001-080 Bayfield Co., 6 December 2001, Verch (photo), Mahan; 7 December 2001, Tessen, Hewitt, Belter; 8 December 2001, Domagalski, Gustafson, Bontly.

This individual was markedly smaller than the Ring-billed Gulls, with a pale gray mantle and wings along with a white body and head. The bill was strikingly small and "dainty" compared to other gulls in the observers' experience. The rounded white head was broken only by a dark eye and a dark ear patch. In flight, the tail was noted to be white and wedge-shaped, and the wings were devoid of any dark markings dorsally or ventrally. The white of the breast was washed with an orangish-pink color.

This is Wisconsin's long-awaited first record of a Ross's Gull.

***Mew Gull—***

#2001-081 Milwaukee Co., 9 December 2001, Tessen; 20 December 2001, Gustafson.

Picking this bird out from the flock of Ring-billed Gulls necessitated look-



ing for the darker gray mantle. Overall, it was a shade smaller than the Ring-bills with a more rounded head; a head more heavily streaked with brown than a Ring-bill's. The bill, shorter and thinner than the bill of the Ring-bills, was colored entirely yellow. The legs were greenish gray. Instead of the yellow iris of the Ring-billed Gulls, this bird's iris was brown. When seen in flight, the outer primary tips had larger white spots than did the Ring-bills.

***Eurasian Collared-Dove—***

#2000–067 Oconto Co., 17, 28 February 2002, Smith, Smith.

#2001–039 Ozaukee Co., 1, 24 January 2002, Frank; 5, 19 January 2002, Tessen; 17 January 2002, Gustafson; 17 February 2002, Wood.

#2002–009 Grant Co., 9 January 2002, Hewitt (2 birds), H. Peterson (4 birds).

These doves were closer to Rock Dove than Mourning Dove in size. The tail was longer than a Mourning Dove's and was squared off rather than pointed. The overall color was paler than the brownish plumage of a Mourning Dove. The nape of the neck had a black crescent across it. In flight, the primaries were darker than the secondaries. The distal two-thirds of the underside of the tail were white, in contrast to the black of the proximal third of the undertail and the dark gray undertail coverts.

***American Pipit—***

#2002–011 Ozaukee Co., 21 February 2002, Frank.

This bird flushed from a roadside ditch and landed 50 feet away in a flooded field. In flight, white was noted up the lateral edges of the tail. It was

smaller or more slender than a sparrow, but grayish on the back with a buffy wash to the breast. Dark streaks extended down the upper breast to form a collar of heavier streaking. The throat was white and unmarked, but a dark malar stripe was evident. A light superciliary line was also noted. The bill was thin, more warblerlike than sparrowlike. Most of the time the bird was seen to pump its tail as it stood on a dirt clump. When it flew off, a two-note, high-pitched, squeaklike call was heard a couple of times.

Wisconsin has three January records and a March 15th record of this species. This appears to be the earliest spring record.

***Palm Warbler—***

#2001–097 Rock Co., 15 December 2001, S. Christensen.

This small bird was initially thought to be a pipit. It had a dark crown, dark eye line, and light superciliary stripe with a light breast faintly streaked with darker color. There were faint wing bars noted. The bill was small and thin. Of significance were the yellow undertail coverts.

This is Wisconsin's latest fall record.

***Summer Tanager—***

#2001–083 Outagamie Co., 28 December 2001, 4 January 2002, Gustafson.

This tanager was seen at a feeder. The overall color was yellow-orange with little contrast with the wings, though they were slightly grayer than the body. The throat and rump were more orangish than the rest of the body. Finally, the bill was heavier, longer, and paler in color than that of a Scarlet Tanager.

This is Wisconsin's third winter record.

**Spotted Towhee—**

#2001-084 Dane Co., 15 December 2001, Schwalbe, Schwalbe; 16 December 2001, Heikinen, Unson.

This male towhee resembled an Eastern Towhee, with the exception of the heavy white spotting on the upper wings and back. The heaviness of the spotting suggests this was the Great Plains race.

**Rusty Blackbird—**

#2001-085 Dodge Co., 14 December 2001, Domagalski.

It was estimated that this flock contained 1,700 individuals. The females were a pale rusty color with a rusty yellow eyebrow. The males were dark in color, but still with a rusty wash. The eye color of both sexes was yellow.

This flock equals the total number of Rusty Blackbirds cumulatively seen on all of the previous Wisconsin Christmas counts for the past 36 years!

**Brewer's Blackbird—**

#2001-086 Dodge Co., 23 December 2001, Domagalski.

Some of these birds were dark in color, with a purplish tinge to the head color in addition to a yellow eye. Some of the individuals were dark, but had buffy edgings to the body feathers in contrast to the black wings.

There were 300-400 Brewer's Blackbirds seen in a mixed flock of several thousand blackbirds.

**Hoary Redpoll—**

#2001-087 Marathon Co., 15 December 2001, Belter.

#2002-014 Columbia Co., 13 January 2002, Schwalbe, Schwalbe.

#2002-015 Oconto Co., 1 January 2002, Smith, Smith.

The identification of this difficult species is based on the cumulative notation of a number of characteristics. Reliance on one or two can be misleading because individual Common Redpolls can have similar markings. Most observers' attention is initially drawn to an overall paler bird within the flock, but some Commons can be quite pale. Looking next at specific areas, the rump is usually unstreaked in Hoaries; however, the rump is often partially obscured by folded wings, so the rump on some Commons can appear to lack streaks if just a small area of it is exposed.

If the angle of view allows a look at the undertail coverts, the Common is expected to have a number of streaks, at least more than three although some can have one streak. The Hoary would be expected to exhibit at most one or two fine streaks, but, here again, younger birds can have several streaks.

Flank streaking is thin and limited to the forward half of the flank in Hoaries; Commons are more heavily streaked even on the lower flank. Again, younger Hoaries can show more streaking, similar to some Commons.

In addition to a paler white background mantle color on a Hoary, though again this overlaps many Commons, the lower scapular area should be looked at. The streaking on the back is separated from the brown of the wings by a white crescent of unmarked scapular feathers on a Hoary.

The bill of a Hoary is shorter and stubbier than that of a Common. Coupling this with the steeper forehead of the Hoary, the facial profile is de-

cidedly different, characterized as "pushed in."

The above reports relied on the overall pale color and the limited flank, rump, and undertail markings.

For a more thorough discussion of redpolls, see *Birding*, Vol. 27, No. 6, 1995, pp. 447-457.

### NOT ACCEPTED

#### *Cattle Egret—*

#2002-011 Ozaukee Co., 28 February 2002.

A white bird described as two to three feet tall was seen taking flight from a roadside ditch from a car moving at high speed. This afforded only a three-second look in the observer's estimation. The brevity of the look precluded any good look at the beak's shape or color. There was also uncertainty as to whether black was seen at the wing tips or not. There was conjecture that this could have been a goose or heron/egret, but with so few details it is not possible to identify this individual.

#### *Green Heron—*

#2001-093 Ozaukee Co, 15 December 2001.

This bird was seen in flight, was felt to be larger than a crow, and flew like a heron. No color patterns were discernible in the lighting conditions. A Green Heron is similar in size, but shorter in wingspan than a crow, whereas a night-heron is slightly larger than a crow in both respects. The only reference the observer supplied is that it was stockier than a crow, but not as much as a night-heron. Without any information on coloration, it is difficult to decide if the description fits a Green Heron or a night-heron.

#### *Osprey—*

#2001-094 Burnett Co., 15 December 2001.

Seen from behind as it perched in a tree, the description is limited to a large dark-backed bird with a light face and dark line through the eye. The bill was dark and deeply hooked. Although this was likely an Osprey, the possibility of an immature Bald Eagle having a similar face pattern must be considered. Reference to the expected white crown in addition to white face would have been helpful.

#### *Gyr Falcon—*

#2001-078 Portage Co., 30 January 2002.

#2002-006 Racine Co., 2, 9, 10, 13 February 2002.

The brevity of the description of the Portage County bird left uncertainty as to the identity. This "large hawk" was only seen sitting on a silo. The mantle and breast streaking were gray.

The Racine County bird was seen by numerous observers over several months time. The Red-tailed-sized bird had broad but pointed wings and a relatively long but thick tail. Various reports described the mantle as gray-brown to brown, with similarly colored breast streaking. A malar streak was also evident.

Although there were reports of photographs suggesting remnants of jesses, these were not forwarded to the Records Committee. Other observers obtained extremely close looks at this bird from the upper floors of the courthouse, but could not see any sign of jesses. A few observers have even speculated as to the possibility that this bird appeared to be a Gyr Falcon/Saker Falcon hybrid. The variability in Gyr Falcon plumages and the paucity of infor-

mation on the plumages of various hybrid possibilities made this theory difficult to evaluate.

Of concern to the Records Committee was the report of a juvenile-plumaged Gyr Falcon or hybrid on this building the previous year during observations of the Peregrine Falcon nest box. It would be possible for a wild Gyr Falcon to return to winter at the same site, even at this more "southerly" location. If, by chance, this was the same bird of the previous year and if it was an escapee, jesses could well be long gone. More disturbing was the continued presence of this bird in Racine on April 14, seemingly long after the urge to find the Arctic should have overtaken a Gyr Falcon. There were just too many aspects of this story that didn't fit the expectations of a wild bird. Connecting this circumstance with the Portage County observation of flying falconers' birds near an area where a Gyr Falcon was reported leaves birders in a definite quandary when witnessing this species.

#### *Mew Gull—*

#2001-081 Milwaukee Co., 8 December 2001.

This bird was seen in direct comparison to Ring-billed Gulls. The observer indicated the size to be the same rather than slightly smaller, the mantle color was not indicated, and the bill was not described to be slightly shorter and thinner than the Ring-bills. Identification appeared to be based on a greater amount of white on the back formed by the folded rear edge of the wing. The bill and legs were yellow, the bill having a faint darker area toward the tip. The eye appeared dark. Without indication of the overall size, mantle color, and bill shape, there isn't

enough detail reported to rule out a Ring-billed Gull.

#### *Great Tit—*

#2001-087 Racine Co., 5 December 2001.

This chickadee-like bird was seen for a couple of months coming to a feeder. It was a little larger than a Black-capped Chickadee, but had the expected black cap and bib surrounding a white cheek. Instead of ending on the throat, the black bib extended down the middle of the breast in a diminishing line. The breast was yellowish. The back was greenish gray and the tail gray with white stripes on the sides. A white wing bar was also noted.

The identity of the bird is not in question; however, its origin is uncertain. The species is extremely sedentary. There is apparently one Alaskan record. There is an April 1997 rejected report from southern California and a rejected record of a Blue Tit from Ontario (October 1973 to April 1974). The yellowish breast suggests European races rather than Asian ones. No other records are known for North America, Greenland, or Iceland. It also does not appear to be a caged bird of any regularity in collections, but this still seems a more plausible source for the species than vagrancy.

#### *American Pipit—*

#2002-010 Dane Co., 17 February 2002.

#2002-012 Walworth Co., 25 February 2002.

The first report is of an unseen individual. A single two-note call identified this as a pipit. As with a momentary glimpse of a bird, an unexpected single call could be "misheard." Without repetition/reproducibility, it could

conceivably be the call note of a Horned Lark altered by distance, wind, or the unexpected momentary nature of the auditory encounter.

The second observation was of four individuals heard giving two-note flight calls as they flew 10–15 feet directly overhead. The shape of these birds was indicated to be slender and larklike, with unstreaked, buffy breasts. The observer indicated this to be consistent with the “paler adult breeding” individual depicted in Sibley. This minimally marked, buffy breast is consistent with the Rocky Mountain race of American Pipit, rather than the more streaked Arctic breeding birds that pass through Wisconsin. This unexpected racial suggestion again allows the question of this call note being a Horned Lark, whose breast would also be unstreaked, although a pale bib mark is often visible. The acceptance of this report would require a better look at the birds to confirm the species and unexpected race.

*Chestnut-collared Longspur—*

#2002–013 Kenosha Co., 18 January, 2 February 2002.

Seven males were reported among a flock of Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, and Lapland Longspurs. Of first note was a “smudgie” breast in contrast to the speckles on the breast of the Laplands. The belly was described as charcoal, but the vent and throat were white. The crown was reported as “darker” than that of the Laplands, the face whiter. As on the Laplands, the nape was “apricot,” but the observer did not see any faint orange in the wing that could be seen in the wing of the Laplands. Of note was the tail appearing to be white with a black wedge in the center of it. The decid-

edly shorter primary extension that would be expected in the wing of a Chestnut-collared was not noted.

Although this observation raises serious questions as to the possibility of Chestnut-collared Longspur, it should be considered in light of historical information as well. As of this report, there are no winter records of this species east of southern Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. There are only three fall records east of the Great Plains. In the spring, there have been 33 accepted reports east of the Great Plains, including three in Wisconsin.

Given the difficulty in distinguishing winter-plumaged longspurs, coupled with the historical void of reports, it would be easier to accept a report of this nature with photographic or specimen evidence. On the other hand, the habitat and distance most observers are from longspurs make it conceivable to miss numerous unusual vagrant longspurs. This report may serve as an incentive to birders to put some patient effort into looking for oddities among the flocks of Lapland Longspurs.

*Hoary Redpoll—*

#2002–016 Forest Co., 9 January 2002.

This briefly described observation suggested the bird to be paler than the Commons, but smaller in size. In general, they would be similar or slightly larger than the Commons. It made note of an “easily seen” unstreaked rump and a general observation that this bird was “distinctly” different from the Commons.

As previously noted, the identification is not an easy one and should be based on close looks, with an accumulation of evidence from more than one or two bits of information. Many birds

will have to be accepted simply as "red-polls."

### OLD RECORDS

#### *Swainson's Hawk—*

#2001-088 Ozaukee Co., 20 Sept.  
2001, Uttech.

This accepted report was of a long-winged buteo observed in a group of Broad-winged Hawks. The brown upper breast and dark flight feathers contrasted with the white lower breast and underwing coverts. The tail was dark with a dark terminal band.

#### *Whooping Crane—*

#2001-018 Winnebago Co., 4, 11 May  
2001.

This written information did not describe the birds seen, only stated that they were seen. Coupled with previously reviewed distant, blurred photographs, there still isn't evidence to confirm that Whooping Cranes were seen, although it is generally accepted that they were present. In addition, even with confirmation, the suspected ori-

gin as recently released birds from Florida would still relegate these observations to non-wild status.

#### *Long-tailed Jaeger—*

#2001-056 St. Croix Co., 6 September  
2001, Hertzell.

This is further accepted documentation on a previously accepted sighting.

#### *Eurasian Collared-Dove—*

#2001-039 Ozaukee Co., 10 August  
2001, M. Peterson.

This is further accepted documentation on the bird in Holy Cross.

#### *Great Gray Owl—*

#2001-089 Shawano Co., 5 November  
2001, M. Peterson.

This accepted report is of a dead bird presented to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources by the Shawano County Highway Department.

Jim Frank

WSO Records Committee chair





American Goldfinch by *Virgil Diodato*

# Wisconsin Big Day Counts: 2002

*By Jim Williams*

Birders with *big* North American Big Day totals have in the past made their marks in Texas and California. Wisconsin joined that short list of locations with great possibilities on May 19, 2001, when Randy Hoffman and Al Shea counted 230 species of birds during a 20-hour and 20-minute adventure. The trip began at Mud Lake Wildlife Area in Columbia County at midnight sharp, and included stops in Green Lake, Marquette, Portage, Wood, Sauk, Dane, and Dodge Counties before ending at Horicon Marsh. This is believed to be the fifth highest Big Day count ever recorded for North America by birders traveling by car and on foot (see their article elsewhere in this issue for more details).

Hoffman and Shea had the best Big Day, but theirs was hardly the only one. Wisconsin birders made their usual concessions to sleep and fuel conservation, beginning on April 8, when Jim Frank broke the 100-species level with 101, birding in Ozaukee County and the Milwaukee harbor. Warbler species were hard to find at that early date, as you might imagine; he had only six. But shorebirds (eight species) were be-

ginning to appear, and ducks were strong with 18 species found.

Jim worked Ozaukee County on May 11, with that single-county Big Day producing 139 species of birds. He counted 21 warbler species, 2 tanager, 11 sparrow, 5 gull, 9 shorebird, and 13 duck. His gulls were Ring-billed, Herring, Thayer's, Iceland, and Glaucous.

Back at it four days later (May 15), in Ozaukee and Dodge Counties, Jim had 141 species for his 14-hour day, finding more of almost everything, including 19 species of warblers.

Jim Frank and Scott Diehl birded May 19 from 4 A.M. to 8 P.M., working from Cedarburg Bog to the Milwaukee Coast Guard impoundment. They found 157 species, including a Eurasian Collared-Dove. Three days later, on May 22, Jim joined Dennis Gustafson for nine hours of birding from Baxter's Hollow to Goose Pond. They had 116 species, strong on passerines. On June 13, Jim took to the field again, for a swing through Dodge, Ozaukee, and Sheboygan Counties; included in the 117 species seen that day were Western Grebe and another Eurasian Collared-Dove.

Daryl Tessen recorded 100 species on his first Big Day of the season, on May 1. He was fresh from a Florida trip and needed a Wisconsin fix, he reported. This was an impromptu trip, he said (as he always does), done with one good eye. The day was about what you would expect at that time of year—heavy on ducks, light on passerine migrants. He worked from Menasha to the New London area.

Back at it on May 4, Daryl had a 123-species day, beginning at Horicon Marsh, working into Milwaukee and up the coast to Two Rivers. He found thousands of Bonaparte's Gulls and over 300 Caspian Terns.

With a day of rest, Daryl was back on the road on May 6, birding the UW Arboretum in Madison, Baxter's Hollow, Arlington Ponds, Mud Lake Wildlife Area, and over to Horicon Marsh. He found 161 species, including 25 species of warblers. Nine of those species were represented by one individual only, a testament to the early date.

Kay Burcar was out on May 8, her 14-hour day taking her from Thousand Rocks prairie and Governor Dodge State Park to Iowa, Sauk, and Dane Counties. She found 140 species, including a White-eyed Vireo at Governor Dodge. Her list was strong across the board for the date, with 14 duck species, 6 raptor, 11 shorebird, 7 woodpecker, 5 flycatcher, 6 swallow, 4 thrush, 5 vireo, 21 warbler, 10 sparrow, and 8 blackbird.

Robbye Johnson and Shaun Putz set out on May 11 to scout out a Big Day route in Douglas County, then decided at 9:00 A.M., with over 100 species already booked for the day, that they would "press on until dark," Robbye reported. They found 161 species, a

count they could not better on tries the following two days.

Robbye in her report did question one species they listed: Trumpeter Swan. The three birds they found all bore neck bands. The question is whether the birds were banded as wild-born young or as introduced adults. "Countability seems to depend on who one talks to," she said.

Their day was "blessed with calm winds but cursed (or perhaps not?) with rain all afternoon and evening. "I wonder," she wrote, "if the rain brought us migrants or prevented them from moving, and a few from singing?"

Their list had both Common and Red-throated Loons, Mute and Trumpeter Swans, White-winged Scoter, 3 falcon species, 2 grouse, 3 owl, and 13 species of sparrow.

Mark Peterson was out on May 18, from the Navarino Wildlife Area to Horicon Marsh, logging 499 miles and 152 bird species. He found 3 rail species (King, Virginia, and Sora) and 23 species of warblers. He was strong across the board in passerine species. Mark was out again on May 21, this time in Menominee, Shawano, Brown, and Manitowoc Counties. He once again found 152 species. He found 4 species of vireo, including 5 Blue-headed, had 7 thrush species, 20 warbler species, and 8 species of blackbirds.

Sean Fitzgerald and Wayne Rohde took in Walworth, Rock, Dane, Sauk, Columbia, Dodge, and Waukesha Counties on May 7. Highlights included a Cattle Egret at Horicon, 16 species of waterfowl, a Merlin, 11 species of shorebirds, 4 species of terns, 16 species of warblers, an Orchard Oriole, and 10 species of sparrows, including a

pair of Lark Sparrows northwest of the Sauk Prairie area. Their tally for this "Scouting Outing" was 142 species.

Eric Howe and Mike Ramsden joined Wayne on May 13 for a swing through south-central and southeastern Wisconsin. They observed Tufted Titmice on Wayne's parents' farm in Green County, an Osprey at Cadiz Springs State Park, a Wilson's Phalarope at Monticello, an Olive-sided Flycatcher at Nine Springs, a Louisiana Waterthrush at Baxter's Hollow, and Whip-poor-wills at Horicon. Despite the cool temperatures, overcast conditions, and corresponding lull in bird song, 143 species were counted.

Being a glutton for punishment, Wayne Rohde spent May 15 retracing the route he took two days earlier, in search of 150 species. Prime conditions (bright sun, little wind) enabled him to locate 100 species by 10:00 A.M., having visited only his parents' farm southwest of Monroe and Cadiz Springs State Park. During one stretch, he spotted 14 species of warblers, including a Mourning Warbler, within 15 minutes! Although the day had a promising beginning, rain settled in by the time he reached Horicon (where he missed cormorants and harriers!). He concluded the day with 149 species, one shy of the goal, despite rousing some Eastern Screech-Owls in Williams Bay at 11:40 and finding a House Finch on its nest at his home at 11:55 P.M.

Andy Paulios and I birded Burnett County on May 20, finding 161 species for a new one-day county mark. We did well with warblers, particularly along the St. Croix River, and had good shorebirds (including Hudsonian and Marbled Godwits and Red Knot) at the Phantom Lake drawdown in Crex Meadows. We had one of those days

when one of this and one of that slowly but surely filled our list. We worked the southern half of the county from its west to east edges.

### WSO BIG DAY COUNT RULES

For those unfamiliar with the rules for WSO Big Day Counts:

- 1) Count must be taken between May 1–31.
- 2) Count must be taken within a 24-hour calendar day (midnight to midnight).
- 3) Count must be taken within the state boundaries, but it may cover as many parts of Wisconsin as birders can reach in the time limit.
- 4) All participants must be within direct conversational contact at all times during the birding and traveling periods. This excludes meal and rest stops if birding is not conducted during these times. This limits the number of parties involved to **one** and participants to that number safely and comfortably contained in one vehicle (1–6?).
- 5) Areas can be revisited during the day.
- 6) Counting individuals is **optional**.
- 7) The same areas may be covered on **different** Big Day Counts.
- 8) No fees are involved in conducting the counts.
- 9) An official Big Day Count Form (available from WSO's Bird Reports Coordinator) should be filled out for each count. It is critical that all unusual species—whether they be late sightings or rare species—be completely documented. Capitalized species on the form may be documented on the back of the form. New additions to the form

should be documented on the traditional WSO Exceptional Record Documentation Form with probable review by the WSO Records Committee.

Big Day reports for 2003 should be sent to Wayne Rohde, W6488 Beloit Rd., Walworth, WI, 53184.

Jim Williams  
345 Ferndale Road N.  
Wayzata, MN 55391

## 50 Years Ago in *The Passenger Pigeon*

The front cover showing a Whip-poor-will nest with two eggs was a good start to an issue that featured reports from 1951 of several interesting species. These included a second state record of a Black-necked Stilt that appeared in Horicon Marsh on May 18, the first spring record of an adult Little Blue Heron near Oshkosh, an American White Pelican in Chequamegon Bay, a Ferruginous Hawk in Oconto County, Northern Hawk Owl in Milwaukee County's Grant Park, and "a small flock of five or six magpies on the north side of Milwaukee during the second week of April."

Listing probably always has been a favorite pastime for some bird watchers. While today's annual target is 300 species in Wisconsin, the target appears to have been 50 species lower 50 years ago. Mary Donald had the second highest count for 1951 with 250 species, behind her good friend, Dixie Larkin, with 253 species. Sam Robbins was fourth on the list with 239.

The WSO field trip calendar for 1953 included trips to Milwaukee's lake-front on March 8, with the group meeting at McKinley Beach Parking Area (sound familiar?), Adams County on June 21-22 with Roche a Cri park being the headquarters, and a September 27 hawk migration watch near the Cedar Grove hawk banding station. WSO now meets at Harrington Beach State Park for this last trip.

The field notes from spring 1952 list Bewick's Wrens from five counties! (Excerpts from Vol. 14, No. 3, 1952)

# Wisconsin May Counts: 2002

by *Jim Frank*

Only 10 May Counts were held in 2002 (Table 1), which is the lowest number in recent memory and follows a trend developing for the past six years. In the past decade, counts have numbered in the low twenties. But, in spite of the poor level of participation, records dropped by the wayside in many places and observers were treated to numerous unexpected birds.

Leading the way in participation, as usual, was Winnebago with 37 participants, followed by Ashland with 22 birders, and Portage and Sheboygan with 20 birders each. In spite of the diminished number of counts, three of

them set new count records, and two of those were the highest May Counts ever recorded in Wisconsin.

Winnebago remained on the top of the species list with a spectacular total of 205 species, edging out an incredible Milwaukee/Ozaukee total of 201! Three additional counts reached 170 species: Oconto had 176, Marathon had 174, and Portage shattered their previous best by 11 species with 170. Even more surprising is that three of these high counts were significantly cut short by rain.

The total species list of 252 is two short of the best ever, and compares to an average of 244 over the previous 13

Table 1. The 2002 Wisconsin May Counts.

Count	Date	Time	Sky	Wind	Temp	Observ.	Party	Species
Vilas	5/25	02:44-21:44	Clo.	NE 5	37-44	1	1	138
Ashland	5/21	04:00-16:00	Clear	SW 5	30-69	22	5	145
Burnett	5/20	04:00-21:00	Clear	Calm	22-64	3	1	131
Oconto	5/25	02:00-20:00	Rain	SW 10	32-50	7	5	176
Marathon	5/11	01:30-20:45	Rain	SE 10	34-55	12	?	174
Portage	5/11	04:00-21:00	Clo.	SE 15	35-50	20	4	170
Winnebago	5/11	00:30-22:00	Pt.Clo.	SE 15	41-52	37	22	205
Sheboygan	5/11	03:45-17:00	Clo.	NE 10	42-47	20	9	141
Milwaukee/Ozaukee	5/11	03:00-18:00	Rain	NE 10	49-44	16	12	201
Kenosha	5/04	04:00-18:00	Clear	S 6	36-76	2	2	126



years. The 14-year-total for species is now 291.

Species new to the May Count list included Red-throated Loon and Thayer's Gull in Milwaukee/Ozaukee, and Lark Sparrow in Sheboygan. Also, but not surprisingly, the Eurasian Collared-Dove made it onto the list not once, but twice, in Oconto and Milwaukee/Ozaukee. For other species of note, see Table 2.

In general, numbers of species were average, but warblers and shorebirds made stronger than usual showings on most counts in spite of the early dates for the majority of counts. Reported in

higher than anticipated frequency were Red-necked Grebe (5 counts, a record high number), Red-breasted Nuthatch (seen on all 10 counts), American Pipit (5 counts, another record high number), and Harris's Sparrow (4 counts, one short of record number). Lower than anticipated numbers were recorded for Common Moorhen (only one count), Scarlet Tanager (only 5 counts), and Western Meadowlark (only 2 counts).

Jim Frank  
10524 O'Connell Lane  
Mequon, WI 53097

Table 2. Species of note seen on Wisconsin May Counts in 2002.

Species	Count(s) seen
Red-throated Loon	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Eared Grebe	Ashland
American White Pelican	Oconto, Winnebago, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Snowy Egret	Oconto
Cattle Egret	Winnebago, Kenosha
Greater White-fronted Goose	Marathon
Snow Goose	Winnebago
Tundra Swan	Winnebago, Oconto
Surf Scoter	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Black Scoter	Oconto
Long-tailed Duck	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Northern Goshawk	Ashland, Oconto
Sharp-tailed Grouse	Burnett
Greater Prairie-Chicken	Marathon, Portage
Yellow Rail	Winnebago
King Rail	Winnebago
American Golden-Plover	Oconto, Winnebago
Willet	Winnebago, Ashland
Hudsonian Godwit	Burnett
Marbled Godwit	Burnett, Winnebago
Red Knot	Burnett, Oconto
Baird's Sandpiper	Oconto
Laughing Gull	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Thayer's Gull	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Iceland Gull	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Glaucous Gull	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Great Black-backed Gull	Oconto
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Milwaukee/Ozaukee, Oconto
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Portage
Western Kingbird	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Gray Jay	Vilas, Oconto
Boreal Chickadee	Vilas
American Pipit	Marathon, Portage, Winnebago, Milwaukee/Ozaukee, Kenosha
Cerulean Warbler	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Louisiana Waterthrush	Winnebago, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Hooded Warbler	Milwaukee/Ozaukee, Kenosha
Summer Tanager	Milwaukee/Ozaukee
American Tree Sparrow	Winnebago
Lark Sparrow	Sheboygan
Le Conte's Sparrow	Ashland, Marathon, Vilas, Burnett
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	Vilas
Harris's Sparrow	Marathon, Winnebago, Sheboygan, Milwaukee/Ozaukee
Lapland Longspur	Marathon, Portage, Winnebago
Orchard Oriole	Winnebago, Oconto, Sheboygan, Milwaukee/Ozaukee



Immature Broad-winged Hawk *by David Kuecherer*

# North American Migration Count 2002: Wisconsin

by *Jim Frank*

The 10th North American Migration Count took place on May 12, 2002, in numerous states and counties across the country. The count differs from Wisconsin's traditional May Counts in that this count attempts to determine the *individual numbers* of each species (as you do on Christmas Bird Counts) and the number of *party-hours* is also reported (again as on Christmas Counts). It differs from the Christmas Counts in that the count area is an entire county, not a 15-mile-diameter circle. In addition, this count is taken on the *same day* across the country to, in essence, take a "snapshot" of the spring migration in North America. The premise is that *numbers* of birds will create useful comparative data for the future, something the mere "ticking" off of species doesn't generate.

The count is always held on the second Saturday of May, a time when some of the northern states haven't reached their peak of migration, but still have lingering early migrants. The southern states may be past their peak, but late migrants may still be present. Because spring migration is so dy-

namic, counts have to be held on the same day to avoid repetitive counting. Obviously, nothing is foolproof, we all are aware of how far some birds can fly in one day's time if they are on the move.

Please note it is possible to conduct a traditional May Count on the same day as a Migration Count, as long as it occurs on the second Saturday in May and individuals are counted for the species. In the year 2003, the date of May 10 will be used for the Migration Count.

In examining the data from 2002 (Table 1) relative to the previous nine years, the weather is obviously an influence on the numbers. The spring migration had been sluggish, with the exception of several days of warm, southerly winds in the middle of April, and, until a few days before the count, the weather wasn't conducive to further significant movements. These factors combined to push neotropical migrants into Wisconsin in good numbers in the days before the count, but also allowed numerous other species to linger later than usual. This created a new record of 236 species seen on the 11

Table 1. The 2002 North American Migration Counts in Wisconsin.

County	Species	Observers	Party-hours
Bayfield	136	29	62
Ashland	69	16	4
Vilas	102	3	32
Oneida	23	1	12
Clark	152	14	81
Marathon	175	12	60
Florence	98	3	20
Winnebago	205	28	120
Ozaukee	13	1	12
Milwaukee	56	9	4
Kenosha	125	1	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>409</b>

counts. This "best of both worlds" scenario allowed one county to achieve a record-setting day.

Individually, Winnebago County, as usual, led the way, this time finally shattering the 200-species barrier with an awesome 205 species. Marathon County compiled an impressive list of 175 species. Bayfield County's 29 observers inched past Winnebago's 28.

In this 10th year of counting, new to the count list were Red-throated Loon (7, Bayfield), Eared Grebe (1, Bayfield), Greater White-fronted Goose (1, Marathon), Buff-breasted Sandpiper (1, Vilas), Stilt Sandpiper (2, Winnebago), Thayer's Gull (1, Ozaukee), Dickcissel (1, Bayfield), and Rusty Blackbird (2, Winnebago). The 10-year total is now 273 species recorded on Wisconsin Migration Counts.

Other species of note were Yellow Rail (2, Winnebago), King Rail (1, Winnebago), Willet (7, Bayfield, Ashland), Marbled Godwit (1, Winnebago), Iceland Gull (1, Ozaukee), Glaucous Gull (2, Ozaukee), Short-eared Owl (2, Winnebago), Olive-sided Flycatcher (1, Clark), Gray Jay (3, Vilas), American Pipit (22 on three dif-

ferent counts), Prothonotary Warbler (1, Kenosha), Louisiana Waterthrush (1, Winnebago), Connecticut Warbler (2, Marathon, Winnebago), Hooded Warbler (1, Bayfield), Summer Tanager (1, Ozaukee), Henslow's Sparrow (1, Marathon), Le Conte's Sparrow (3, Marathon), and Orchard Oriole (3, Winnebago, Kenosha).

The following species recorded the highest total numbers in 10 years of Migration Counts: Double-crested Cormorant, 2,114 (double the previous high); American Bittern, 60; Great Egret, 240; Trumpeter Swan, 15 on three counts (double the previous high); Blue-winged Teal, 682; Ruddy Duck, 317; Bald Eagle, 58; Merlin, 8 on three counts; Sora, 328; Semipalmated Plover, 34; Lesser Yellowlegs, 292; Semipalmated Sandpiper, 77; Least Sandpiper, 260; Pectoral Sandpiper, 75; Short-billed Dowitcher, 52; Blue Jay, 983; Orange-crowned Warbler, 16 on five counts; Pine Warbler, 59 on seven counts; Lincoln's Sparrow, 33 on six counts; Harris's Sparrow, 12 on four counts (5 seen total in previous 9 years); and Dark-eyed Junco, 310 on seven counts (more than the previous 9 years combined). The pattern of mi-

gration allowed for the second highest count records of Yellow-rumped Warblers (1,363) and Palm Warblers (272).

"Late lingerers" of interest were 6 Horned Grebes on three counts, 211 Buffleheads on eight counts, 128 Common Mergansers on eight counts, 21 American Tree Sparrows on four counts, 6 Fox Sparrows in Clark (second highest count total), 2 Common Redpolls in Bayfield, and the previously mentioned 310 juncos.

In spite of the generally excellent shorebird numbers, only one Sanderling could be found, and a record low 3 Ruddy Turnstones were recorded. In addition, only one Common Night-hawk graced the state's total. Of concern was the second lowest total ever of Field Sparrows (34), the lowest Savannah Sparrow total (512), the first total absence of Grasshopper Sparrow, and the continued dismal showing by Western Meadowlarks (total of 2).

The 2003 North American Migration Count is to be held Saturday, May 10. Compilers of the 2002 counts are listed below. If you are interested in joining one, contact them. If you want to initiate a new one, contact Jim Frank, 10524 N. O'Connell Lane, Mequon, WI, 53097. Even if you count alone, the data are useful because they are analyzed by party-hours.

**Bayfield Co.**—Phyllis Johnson, P. O. Box 303, Cornucopia, WI, 54827.

**Ashland Co.**—Dick Verch, 906 Ellis Ave., Ashland, WI, 54806.

**Vilas Co.**—Bill Reardon, 1700 Open Acres Lane, Eagle River, WI, 54521.

**Oneida Co.**—Rosemary Boxrucker, 4413 Highlander Rd., Rhinelander, WI, 54501.

**Florence Co.**—Jean Strelka, 12366 N. River Rd., Mequon, WI, 53092.

**Clark Co.**—Ken and Jan Luepke, B894 Eau Pleine Rd., Spencer, WI, 54479.

**Marathon Co.**—Dan Belter, 5903 Heath St., Weston, WI, 54476.

**Winnebago Co.**—Tom Ziebell, 1322 Ceape Rd., Oshkosh, WI, 54901.

**Ozaukee Co.**—Jim Frank, 10524 N. O'Connell Lane, Mequon, WI, 53097.

**Milwaukee Co.**—Jim Frank, 10524 N. O'Connell Lane, Mequon, WI, 53097.

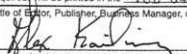
**Kenosha Co.**—Ron Hoffman, Box 886, Kenosha, WI, 53141.

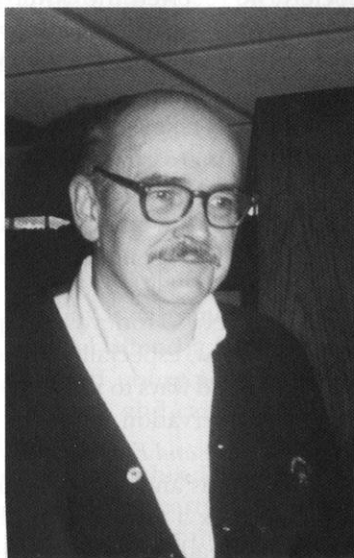
Jim Frank  
4339 10524 O'Connell Lane  
Mequon, WI 53097



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**Alex F. Kailing**  
**1933–2002**

**F**amily and friends; birds and horses; nature and the outdoors; WSO and Stone Bank Lions Club—all will be poorer with the passing of Alexander F. “Alex” Kailing, age 69, on 19 October 2002. But, all are richer for having known this gentle, generous man who gave so much time and energy to the people, animals, and activities he loved.

Alex was born 8 February 1933 in Milwaukee, the son of Philip and Katherine (Smith) Kailing. He attended Milwaukee Area Technical College and graduated with an engineering degree from UW-Madison. He worked for General Motors Corporation in Milwaukee and was later employed at a New Berlin electronics company. Retirement in the early 1990s enabled Alex to spend even more time with his family, raising hay and working with horses boarded at the family horse farm (New Hope Stables), gardening, and with the organizations he loved.

Alex started his 25 years of service to the WSO when he assumed the chair of Membership in 1978. As with many WSO Board positions, a committee chair has lots of flexibility in defining work duties, and under Alex this position was elevated to a new level. He embraced the arrival of the computer age and quickly realized the advantages of using this technology. The Board became spoiled by wonderfully organized and thorough membership reports that tracked historical trends for the various membership categories and listed new and deceased mem-

bers, non-renewals, and other pertinent information. He also accepted the responsibility of annually mailing more than 20,000 *Passenger Pigeons*, *Badger Birders*, annual meeting notices, dues notices, and other Society materials.

For his service to the Society, he received the Silver Passenger Pigeon Award in 1985. And when the Society had difficulty finding a Treasurer who could organize and modernize the Society's finances, Alex agreed to tackle this huge undertaking. This was a monumental task, and even though some of the often thankless chores of dealing with the IRS, property taxes, liability insurance, budgets, and preparing a case for a dues increase caused considerable consternation, he faced these challenges professionally, openly, and honestly. His recountings at Board meetings of his dealings with the changing and often conflicting directives of the U.S. Postal Service became legendary, yet he often found humor in them.

Alex was a champion for the Society's Honey Creek property in Sauk County and he worried about its management, especially the continuing need to maintain the Cox Nature Center and to find ways to make necessary repairs. He urged the Society to do more in bird conservation and education. He prepared and printed a *Directory of Wisconsin's Nature and Environmental Education Organizations*, which he updated on several occasions and which is now on the WSO web site.

In 1996, the Society presented Alex a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of his exceptional continuing leadership of and service to the Society. As would be expected, he continued to throw his energies into even more new initiatives. He was a valued member of the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas Steering Committee and was on board during the earliest discussions. He served as Treasurer for the Atlas and recently "adopted" the Red-headed Woodpecker for the Atlas. When talks began about possibly holding the Midwest Birding Symposium in Wisconsin, there was Alex with checkbook close at hand serving as the Symposium's Treasurer.

While the status of birds statewide was a major interest of his, he never ignored the local scene. He loved watching birds on his property and while running his many errands. As we stood in his driveway during my last visit to his home, we watched spellbound as a Cooper's Hawk coursed a nearby small subdivision and then set its sights on Alex's bird feeding station. Together, we admired how the "Coop" flew low over the ground and used the house as a shield before streaking around its corner and through the feeding station, causing a panic among the many feeding sparrows.

He was serving as President of the S. Paul Jones Bird Club in Oconomowoc at the time of his death, and he was looking forward to the group's annual Christmas Bird Count. He also was a longtime member, former Treasurer, past President, and organizer of the annual "Brat Fest" for the Stone Bank Lions Club.

In addition to his long-term assistance in handling the *Passenger Pigeon* and *Badger Birder*, he recognized the value of printed material, and worked at preparing and overseeing the production of the Society's daily bird checklist and "Red" checklist. When I served as the Society's Publicity Chair, Alex was among the first to volunteer his time to staff a WSO booth, and he worked hard to

develop suitable educational handout materials that could be distributed to visitors to the booth.

Several of the tasks performed by Alex went mostly unnoticed, and the Board is just now realizing that someone else will need to prepare the award certificates and plaques, print the Honey Creek Birdathon/Bandathon pledge cards, supply WSO stationery, and rent a unit to store boxes of *Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts*. Alex also served as the Society's unofficial historian and maintained myriad records and other information for the Society.

On the morning of his death, he had risen early; walked the dogs; done other necessary chores; started coffee for Maxine, his loving wife for nearly 42 years; and was preparing to leave for the WSO Board meeting in Ripon. He suffered a brain aneurysm and died later that evening. In addition to Maxine, he is survived by two daughters, Becky (Carey) Stapleton and Tamara (James) Lund Jr., who live in Waukesha County, and by four grandchildren and his brother.

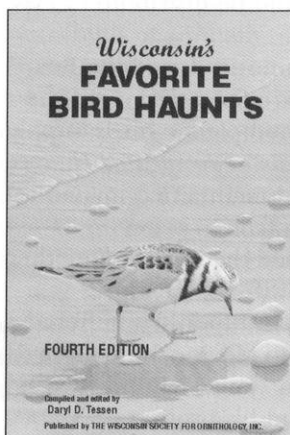
It will be many years before I attend a WSO Board meeting or other bird-related function in the state and not expect to see Alex there, dressed in his traditional brown shirt and pants, and carrying either his silver-sided briefcase or a box of bird materials.

While reflecting on Alex following his death, Bettie Harriman had a vision of Alex talking with his good friend Ed Peartree about Honey Creek banding, with Sam Robbins and Bill Foster birding in the background with binocs raised. In the days following Alex's passing, Bettie has realized that in her mind, at least, Alex personified the WSO—making the link to its past, invigorating the present, and planning for the Society's future. To imagine the WSO without him is almost impossible.

Every organization needs at least one Alex—he provided a solid foundation, he provided stability and a lasting commitment to service, he was a leader and a follower, he was a doer, and, last but not least, he was the supreme volunteer. The Society sorely misses Alex Kailing.

"The secret is never to lose the power of wonder of nature. If you keep that alive, you stay young forever."—Sigurd F. Olson, 1936.

Noel J. Cutright  
3352 Knollwood Road  
West Bend, WI 53095

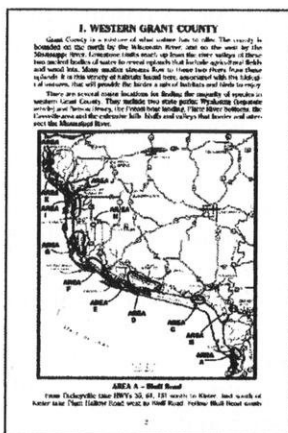


## *Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts,* Fourth Edition (2000)

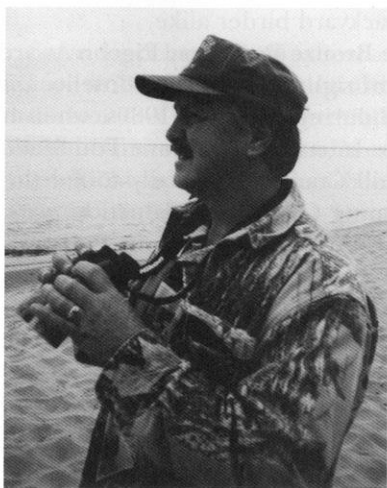
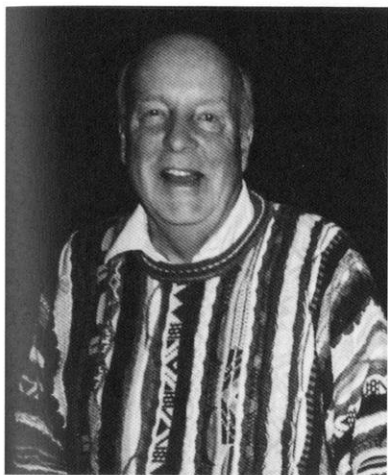
Compiled and edited by Daryl Tessen with contributions from birders throughout the state. Features artwork by Thomas Schultz, David Kuecherer, Rockne Knuth, Judith Huf and Jeannie Perry.

- Covers all 72 counties
- Contains 135 favorite haunts detailing more than 1,000 areas
- Includes detailed directions as well as a map for each location
- Features some 45 bird illustrations, 15 of them in color
- Includes a list of 400 valid Wisconsin state species and 15 hypothetical species (current as of January 2000)

This book, designed for durability and functionality, is printed on heavy coated paper and has a spiral binding so it lies flat when open. 6" by 9". 544 pages.



Contact WSO Bookstore for price and ordering information.  
262-692-6085 or [sommerj@execpc.com](mailto:sommerj@execpc.com)



WSO's service awards for 2002 were presented at the annual convention banquet at Ripon College in Ripon, Wisconsin, on 1 June 2002.

**The Sam Robbins Lifetime Achievement Award** was presented to William L. Hilsenhoff (left, above) of Madison. This award, created by the WSO Board of Directors in 2001, honors individuals who continue to give outstanding service to the Society after already receiving both WSO's Silver Passenger Pigeon and Certificate of Appreciation, as well as to honor the shining example of organizational service provided by the late Sam Robbins.

Bill Hilsenhoff has devoted countless hours to WSO and to Wisconsin's birds since joining the Society in 1955. A lengthy career as Professor of Entomology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison allowed him many hours in the field, and when not watching insects he kept detailed notes on birds and the flow of spring migration. In 1966, Bill took on the task of collecting and summarizing the data from Wisconsin's many Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) into succinct and readable articles for *The Passenger Pigeon*. He continued as WSO's Christmas Count editor for a remarkable 34 years, publishing his final CBC report in 2000 (along with a companion article that examined population trends over 60 years of Wisconsin CBCs). He also served as the Winter Field Notes Compiler from 1966 to 1975, and was one of the original members of the Records Committee (1979 to 1982), serving as its chair for two of those years. He received the Silver Passenger Pigeon Award from WSO in 1978, and a Certificate of Appreciation in 1989.

Though he is now retired and divides his time between Wisconsin and southeastern Arizona, Bill continues to contribute in substantial ways to Wisconsin



ornithology. His latest project, published in this very issue, is a summary of 40 years of personal observations of spring migration in southern Wisconsin. This article serves as a prime example not only of Bill's lifelong skill and persistence as a record keeper and field observer, but of his dedication to presenting complex data on Wisconsin birds in a manner that can be read and used by scientist and backyard birder alike.

**The Bronze Passenger Pigeon Award** for 2002 was awarded to Daryl Christensen (on right, p. 229) of Montello. Daryl's efforts on behalf of Wisconsin birds began during the early 1980s, when he coordinated the annual Crane Counts for the International Crane Foundation for about 10 years, and collected wild Sandhill Crane eggs locally to aid the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Florida Whooping Crane reintroduction project. He has also volunteered with the Bureau of Endangered Resources (BER) of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for 18 years, supplying and deploying Forster's Tern nesting platforms in Lake Puckaway, then following up by gathering nest success data on this state endangered species. Since 1996, he also has helped the BER with banding and nesting surveys of Common Terns on Lakes Butte des Morts and Winnebago. A founding member of the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, he also initiated the Marquette County Christmas Bird Counts six years ago, and still coordinates them. He was a tireless volunteer for the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas project, working extensively in Marquette, Green Lake, and Waushara Counties. He currently serves as WSO's Vice President.

## Notices and Advertisements

### **MINUTES OF THE 2002 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING OF THE WISCONSIN SOCIETY FOR ORNITHOLOGY**

President Bill Brooks convened the business meeting of the WSO Annual Convention on Saturday, 1 June 2002, in Barr Auditorium, Farr Hall, at Ripon College, Ripon, Wisconsin. The convention was held in Ripon from 31 May to 2 June, with the help of the Oshkosh Birding Club, Tom Schultz, and Daryl Christensen. President Brooks extended his welcome.

A reading committee, made up of Kent Hall, Jim Anderson, and Ann Swengel, approved the minutes of the last meeting. The Reading Committee for the minutes of the WSO 2002 Annual Business Meeting comprises Barbara Blackmore, Jean Zachariesen, and James (J. J.) Goodwin.

[A copy of the complete minutes, excerpted here, is available from WSO Secretary Jane Dennis.]

### **ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS**

*President—Bill Brooks*—Most of my work for WSO this year has been as co-chair of the 2002 Annual Convention. As Kent Hall warned me at the annual meeting last May, this *is* quite time consuming! The convention committee has been meeting and working on it since April 2001, and I believe all of us are ready to cease and desist and just enjoy the convention.

Steve Kupcho retired after a long tenure as WSO's Youth Education Coordinator this year, and we thank him for all his fine work. Barbara Duerksen, from Richland Center, has been appointed to the position. Don and Christine Reel are also retiring as Bookstore Managers, and we thank them for their years of dedication to this task for WSO. Joan Sommer is the new manager. We welcome Barb and Joan to the Board.

With the retirement of Mike Mossman, a new Honey Creek Committee has been formed (Bettie Harriman volunteered to put it together) and approved by the Board. The committee consists of Alex Kailing, Harold Kruse, Robert Molitor, Anna Pidgeon, Jay Walters, and myself. All are WSO members, except for Jay, who is The Nature Conservancy's Baraboo Hills Land Steward. The committee will begin meeting in June of 2002 to review and implement management procedures for the Honey Creek property and programs.

In this connection, on 4 May 2002, I was pleased to accept a plaque presented to WSO by the Bureau of Endangered Resources, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary celebration of the State Natural Areas Program. The program was the kickoff of the 50th anniversary, and was held at Parfrey's Glen State Natural Area to rededicate this, the very first Wisconsin State Natural Area. The Nature Conservancy, WSO, and several other

groups that have worked to protect parts of the Baraboo Hills were recognized for their "steadfast commitment to the protection of Wisconsin's natural areas." The beautiful, inscribed wooden plaque, inlaid with a small piece of Baraboo quartzite from Parfrey's Glen, was presented to WSO for having set aside and protected the Honey Creek Preserve.

[President Brooks added that Jan Hansen has retired as WSO's Associate Editor and that Wayne Rohde, of Walworth, had accepted the position in his place.]

#### *Vice President—Daryl Christensen—*

Please let me begin by saying that it is a privilege to be vice president of such a wonderful organization. After attending several meetings throughout the year and seeing what everyone does to make WSO work, it is obvious that I have the easiest position on the Board. In fact, when former WSO President, Sumner Matteson, asked if I would be willing to serve as vice president, he stated that the position was not very time consuming at all. So I said, "yes."

Be that as it may, I have served on many boards and committees of several organizations over the years and always felt that a proactive role was important. As a result, I volunteered to be co-chair of the 2002 convention, as well as chair of the silent auction. Fun stuff. I also had a great year of birding, surpassing the 300 state-bird mark this past summer, a lifetime goal that seemed to take forever. After that, I recorded 14 more species. The spring and summer were busy with travel, but I still managed to clean up the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas reports from my 20 sites, as well as attend some outings.

In May, I led a bird tour in Iron River, WI, returned home from a road trip just in time to be elected vice president, and placed several Forster's Tern nesting platforms on Lake Puckaway for the seventeenth year in a row. From the platform nests and nests on natural vegetation, I recorded 61 fledglings. It was a great year for this state endangered species. This May, I doubled the number of nesting platforms, hoping for a repeat performance.

In August, I volunteered to assist Kent Hall in two birding trips at the Midwest Birding Symposium in Green Bay, leading one to Mosquito Hill. In autumn, I spoke at Hutler's Wild Country Workshop in Wautoma at two separate events about fall birding and winter bird feeding.

December was exciting, doing Christmas Bird Counts in Marquette, Green Lake, Columbia, and Waushara Counties. I also managed to make three WSO field trips during the past year, which is always a rewarding experience, even when 100 cars show up on a warm January day in Milwaukee and Goose Pond is frozen solid in March.

I also stay subscribed to Wisbirdn, where I continue to beat the drum for WSO membership, at times experiencing the wrath of those who often not so politely disagree with me about being a proactive birder.

Let me say that I am very pleased with WSO and its vision for the future. I'm excited about the Sam Robbins Shorebird Endowment Fund, the publishing of our first Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas, our support of the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative, the Wisconsin Bird Trail, our scholarship fund, and all of the other programs and projects that we fund and support.

The future of WSO looks great, and I am happy and proud to be part of that.

**Secretary—Jane Dennis**—The WSO Board sent permission to the Kickapoo Valley Reserve of eastern Vernon County to reproduce its entry in the latest edition of *Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts*, compiled and edited by Daryl Tessen and published by WSO. WSO asked only that the source of the reproduced material be prominently placed in the pages provided gratis to visitors to the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. The WSO Board automatically gives approval to nonprofits for reproduction of its copyrighted material, as the Society seeks to share Wisconsin birding information with an interested public.

Permission was granted to Dan Spuhler, Land Manager, Milwaukee County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture, to include some or all of the WSO Code of Ethics in the proposed Birding Trail Map for Milwaukee County.

The WSO Secretary began compiling a weekly checklist for birds seen (if only casually) in Dane County. Since 1983, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and WSO have been receiving sightings to monitor annual, seasonal, and geographic changes in abundance of Wisconsin birds (see Checklist Project, Research, <http://www.uwgb.edu/birds/wso/>).

**Treasurer—Alex Kailing**—Kailing explained a minor change in presentation of the WSO Treasurer's report (See Tables 1–4). Because Special Projects—for example, the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas and the Sam Rob-

bins Shorebird Endowment Fund—do not really affect total Society income, they are now isolated from general Society functions to simplify financial reporting (Table 3). These projects and activities generally balance income and expenses over a multi-year period. All are compatible with WSO's goals and do not directly utilize WSO funds. Most of these projects take advantage of the Society's 501(c)3 non-profit status. Kailing did not go through details of the remainder of the report, but was open for questions.

When asked to give a synopsis of the financial statement, Kailing said that finances are a lot better than last year. WSO is experiencing fewer problems, he said, though it still has not solved the marketing problem of how to increase membership at the same rate as costs are increasing. WSO had increased its dues with the expected results of a short-term decrease in total membership. In addition, WSO is losing some revenue as a result of its aging membership and through people converting to the less expensive senior membership category.

WSO investments are all held in reserve as Certificates of Deposit, Kailing explained, though some funds were established some 50 years ago as mutual funds.

The Costa Rica trip showed a gross imbalance (revenue of \$19,200.00 versus expenses of \$5,555.63, see Table 1) because individual accounts were kept by annual financial summary, not by the trip itself. Yes, Kailing said, the Costa Rica trip did pay for itself.

It was moved and seconded to accept the WSO Treasurer's report for 2002. The motion carried with voice approval.

Table 1. WSO Statement of Revenue, 1997–2001.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
BOOKSTORE	3,312.54	2,926.27	2,379.93	1,137.08	2,968.67
HAUNTS				12,811.00	12,079.00
INTEREST	1,412.63	986.97	734.51	442.41	293.06
INVESTMENTS		1,250.59	16,162.18	62,127.00	
CONVENTION	911.40	2,168.22	370.00	1,951.94	1,470.92
ADVERTISING	624.50	905.50	472.00	580.00	437.50
PIGEON-SUBSCRIPTIONS	759.00	908.00	545.50	296.98	456.00
MEMBERSHIP- DUES	26,585.50	26,212.80	27,088.71	28,097.79	25,366.00
MEMBERSHIP-LIFE	1,651.00	2,050.00	3,325.00	1,700.00	2,200.00
CONTRIBUTIONS					
ENDOWMENT	1,479.00	283.00	827.00	161.00	183.00
SCHOLARSHIP	3,923.26	640.86	1,410.50	1,813.55	834.22
HONEY CREEK	1,367.00	1,167.50	1,692.50	1,191.00	936.00
BANDATHON	1,968.48	4,910.95	3,118.50	2,640.38	2,440.00
FLEDGLING			587.70	642.00	318.00
MEMORIALS	5,445.00		195.00	150.00	757.67
PIGEON				1,500.00	
OTHER			357.67	1,181.22	926.00
HAUNTS				474.94	500.00
ROBBINS TRIP		280.00	4,335.00		
COSTA RICA TRIP			7,800.00	21,860.00	19,200.00
VIDEO	5,000.00	100.00	100.00		
MISC				163.30	11.40
SEMINARS	3,370.00	1,488.00	5,402.00		
<b>TOTAL SOCIETY REVENUE</b>	<b>57,809.31</b>	<b>46,278.66</b>	<b>76,903.70</b>	<b>140,921.59</b>	<b>71,377.44</b>

**The Passenger Pigeon Editor—Tod Highsmith**—Last year at this time, I reported that increased paper and printing costs were forcing us to find ways to trim expenses. I'm pleased to report this year that our efforts to do so are bearing fruit. Our new printer (Allen Press of Lawrence, KS) has now done three issues for us, and we appear to be saving about 30% compared to the previous printer (total cost per page for the journal has dropped from about 4 cents to about 3 cents).

Another part of our strategy to reduce costs involves printing double issues of the journal when feasible (it's cheaper to print a double issue than two separate issues). Since the 2001 convention, two double issues have been published and another one is in preparation.

Finally, I must sadly note that I'm now entering the fifth and final year of my commitment to WSO as *Passenger*

*Pigeon* editor. I have greatly enjoyed my tenure both as editor and as a board member, but other tasks are beckoning for my attention and it's time for me to begin searching for my replacement. I hope to have the new editor on board by early 2003—this should allow time for a “training period” as I prepare the final issue of volume 64, and put the new person in position to get out the first issue of volume 65 without delay. I am willing to offer the new editor as much (or as little!) assistance as they wish in getting up to speed with the job. If you are interested in the position, or know someone who might be, please contact me.

#### ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**Associate Editor—Jan Hansen**—Seasonal Reporting Forms—My major undertaking during the past year was to

Table 2. WSO Statement of Expenses, 1997–2001.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
ADMINISTRATION	459.66	541.66	603.75	478.71	63.75
ASSOC. EDITOR	768.52	1,167.18	1,030.66	772.80	118.52
BIRD HAUNTS		58.00	297.69	55,765.06	780.00
AWARDS	145.93	48.84	104.02		218.49
BIRDER-PRINTING	7,780.50	8,894.85	6,672.99	10,534.86	5,440.22
BIRDER-MAIL	2,368.72	2,487.39	2,829.16	2,730.62	2,477.51
CONVENTION	400.00	725.00	800.00	400.00	400.00
BOOKSTORE	466.00	620.00	390.00	680.82	1,824.37
FIELD TRIPS	312.50	120.00	192.46	194.35	
HONEY CREEK	4,237.91	2,994.64	3,228.94	3,712.28	3,685.73
HOT LINE	281.10	256.30	198.08	254.80	90.50
MEMBERSHIP	2,469.35	2,362.24	2,009.54	2,174.85	2,398.59
PIGEON-PRINTING	20,784.16	18,732.16	24,700.78	29,570.73	17,569.44
PIGEON-MAIL	1,980.42	2,300.26	2,620.76	3,206.62	1,742.97
PRESIDENT	218.55	32.00	32.00	20.90	
PUBLICITY	319.11	626.32	691.87	665.23	401.06
RECORDS	175.88	154.69	27.00	252.68	176.04
GRANTS	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	1,350.00
YOUTH GRANTS			570.00	790.00	
PRINTING	61.72	965.87	5,224.60	1,130.91	
TREASURER	124.05	129.72	89.70	60.80	
YOUTH			333.16	288.97	100.84
LISTERS				181.60	454.60
PRAIRIE POSTERS	1,000.00	250.00			
BARABOO HILLS BOOK		4,000.00			
ROBBINS TRIP			3,043.40		
COSTA RICA TRIP			8,175.00	21,566.00	5,555.63
VIDEO			1,497.21		
MISC.					
SEMINARS	5,200.15		6,397.97		
EQUIPMENT			1,550.00		
<b>TOTAL SOCIETY EXPENSES</b>	<b>51,554.23</b>	<b>49,467.12</b>	<b>75,310.74</b>	<b>137,433.59</b>	<b>44,848.26</b>

Table 3. WSO Special Projects, income and expenses, 1997–2001 (SRSEF = Sam Robbins Shorebird Endowment Fund, MBS = Midwest Birding Symposium).

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
ATLAS - INCOME	74,167.35	100,218.21	58,923.18	8,260.85	54,547.84
- EXPENSE	72,092.33	74,844.22	68,441.98	36,591.01	7,884.73
SRSEF - INCOME				4,613.52	3,643.33
- GRANTS				300.00	
OSPREY PROJECT-INCOME			2,000.00		
-EXPENSE			2,000.00		
1 BIRD 2 HABITATS-INCOME				2,721.44	
1 BIRD 2 HABITATS-EXPENSE					181.60
MBS - INCOME				2,000.00	93,967.77
- EXPENSE				592.62	93,463.64

revise all of the standard reporting forms and make them available electronically to the reporters. This process was completed in the fall of 2001. The following forms are now on disk and are available to any seasonal reporters wishing to complete and submit them electronically: WSO Single County Re-

porting Form, WSO Multi-county Reporting Form, WSO Rare Bird Report, and the WSO Christmas Bird Count Form. These forms were revised to reflect recent nomenclatural and taxonomic changes. Reporters will receive the forms as an MS Word attachment and can then save them to a hard drive



Table 4. WSO Financial Balance Sheet, as of 2001.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
CASH	2,279.20	859.43	1,085.88	2,612.27	2,822.52
SAVINGS-GENERAL	15,108.68	8,222.60	3,615.85	17,890.65	28,987.33
-ENDOWMENT	13,793.43	17,532.68	7,136.37	1,559.35	3,982.44
-ATLAS	30,617.15	20,966.14	51,630.37	23,161.20	40,490.13
-SRSEF				5,000.00	3,991.50
-MBS					2,504.13
INVESTMENTS-GENERAL	957.38	957.38	957.38		
-ENDOWMENT	35,021.06	35,021.06	50,025.56	50,025.56	50,025.56
-GRANTS	15,300.00	15,300.00	15,300.00		
-ATLAS		40,000.00			30,000.00
-SRSEF					15,000.00
INVENTORY- BOOKSTORE	17,292.17	18,503.53	18,587.30	59,640.03	44,888.65
- SLIDES	6,756.97	6,959.54	8,040.32	7,546.05	8,164.20
FIXED ASSETS- EQUIP.	7,418.74	7,369.10	8,919.10	8,919.10	8,919.10
- LAND	31,895.13	31,895.13	31,895.13	31,895.13	31,895.13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>177,838.37</b>	<b>204,053.59</b>	<b>197,162.17</b>	<b>208,249.70</b>	<b>271,671.38</b>

or to a disk. They can then be printed out in the future as they are needed. This will substantially decrease the time and costs associated with past mailings of these forms. Reporters have two options for completing and returning the forms: 1) they can be printed out, completed manually, and returned via regular mail; 2) they can be filled out on screen and returned to the associate editor as an MS Word attachment. Many reporters have been using the second option and it has been working very well.

**Christmas Bird Count (CBC) Forms**—In 2001, 51 of 92 count compilers opted to use the electronic version of the CBC form, which reduced WSO's associated mailing costs by over half. Also in 2001, for the first time, completed CBCs were returned directly to Bob Domagalski, the CBC editor, rather than to the associate editor. This enabled Bob to begin analyzing the data and writing his article for *The Passenger Pigeon* more quickly. Because of the number of compilers using the electronic format, it was also much easier and cheaper to request any missing documentation. When the CBC sum-

mary was complete, a copy was mailed to the associate editor, who then was able to easily glean any pertinent data for use in preparing the winter article for *North American Birds*.

**Seasonal Reports Numbers**—During the past year, the number of individuals submitting data for *North American Birds* and *The Passenger Pigeon* has increased slightly. This increase is probably due largely to proliferation of birders tuned into Wisbirdn. Since so many people are reporting their sightings in that forum, it has become very easy to request documentation and seasonal reports electronically. In spite of the fact that good numbers of reports continue to be received each season, there are still some parts of the state that are over-reported and others that are under-reported. As you might expect, these correlate with the state's population centers. Over-reported areas include Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Winnebago, and Dane Counties, while under-reported areas are largely in the northern and western parts of the state.

**New Associate Editor**—As I write this, the WSO board is conducting a

search for a new Associate Editor. In January of this year, I relocated to North Carolina and have continued to fulfill the responsibilities of the position. Since much of the work is done via phone and e-mail this hasn't been a serious problem. However, it is my feeling that the best interests of WSO are served if the position is filled by someone living in, or near, Wisconsin. I have enjoyed the nearly two years that I have spent in this role and will be happy to continue in the capacity as long as I am needed. Thanks to all of you who have given me support and advice during this time and for making the position a pleasure to hold.

[At its 17 July 2002 meeting, the WSO Board welcomed Wayne Rohde as Jan Hansen's replacement, and voted to change the name of this position from Associate Editor to Bird Reports Coordinator, which better reflects the duties of the position. Wayne begins his duties with the fall 2002 reporting season.]

**The Badger Birder Editor—Mary Uttech**—Over the past year, there has been a gradual increase in the volume and range of items submitted for publication in *The Badger Birder*. This is encouraging, as it serves to create an expanded range of content for our readers. I'm hopeful this trend continues. However, birds and birding-related activities remain our primary focus and will always receive top priority when considering items for publication.

**WSO Bookstore—Don and Christine Reel**—Sales in 2001 totaled \$24,445 through the traditional bookstore that we run out of our home, and \$2,430

through the online bookstore. Convention sales in 2001 were \$4,660.

Sales of the fourth edition of *Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts* from publication in 2000 through 31 March 2002 totaled more than 950 copies, with revenue for WSO of \$26,275.

During 2001, we asked the Board of Directors to find a replacement for us. In an effort to attract a new manager(s), the Board decided at its October meeting to scale back the services offered through the WSO Bookstore, returning it to its early purpose of primarily distributing items published by WSO. By slashing prices, we basically eliminated non-WSO stock, with the exception of several titles that are of special interest to members (e.g., the two recent Sibley books, National Geographic Society field guide, Stokes CD). The 10% discount and free shipping offered to members also have been discontinued. Although the services offered to members are now severely limited, this greatly reduced bookstore will take much less time and energy to manage.

The bookstore will continue to stock the following items:

- Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts*
- Wisconsin Birds: A Checklist with Migration Graphs* (Redbook)
- Wisconsin Birds, Field Checklist*
- WSO Decal
- WSO Cap
- WSO 50th Anniversary Print
- Wisconsin Wildlife Viewing Guide*
- Birds of the Apostle Islands*
- Breeding Birds of the Baraboo Hills* (Mossman and Lange)
- Natural Areas in the Baraboo Hills* (Kruse)
- Wisconsin Birdlife* (Robbins)
- Wisconsin Birds: A Seasonal and Geographical Guide* (Temple et al.)

The bookstore also has stock of the following items, which were donated to the bookstore with special instructions as to the use of the proceeds. Income from *Birds Tomorrow* (Barger) and *Best of the Nest* (Robbins) goes to the Sam Robbins Shorebird Endowment Fund. Income from Common Loon postcards and note cards (Hagge) go to the WSO Scholarship Fund.

The online bookstore (<http://www.withoutbricks.com/WSOBookstore>) remains unchanged. It features thousands of items available only through the web site, and not directly from the bookstore managers.

We began managing the bookstore at the convention in June 1996 in Superior, and as of the 2002 convention in Ripon we are retiring from that role and from serving on the Board of Directors. It has been entirely our pleasure to serve the organization and you, its members, for six years. We thank you for your support and patience, and for your many kind and appreciative comments—this is definitely not one of those “thankless jobs.” We have enjoyed getting to know many of you, and we will miss the need for frequent dialogue with you. For future inquiries, contact your new bookstore manager, Joan Sommer, at 114 S. Milwaukee Street, Fredonia, WI 53021, (262-692-6085), [sommerj@execpc.com](mailto:sommerj@execpc.com).

#### *Conservation—Noel Cutright—*

- Attended all four WSO Board meetings.
- Continued coordination of the Honey Creek Birdathon (Bandathon back on board).
- Continued involvement with the American Birding Association's Birder's Exchange program, includ-

ing sending seven pairs of binoculars for donation to Central and South American bird research and education projects.

- Participated with the formation of the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (WBCI) by representing WSO on Coordinating Council, chairing the Important Bird Areas Committee, and serving on the Bird-related Recreation Subcommittee.
- Submitted written comments on the Snow Bottom SNA (supported), CARA legislation (supported), poisoning of Red-winged Blackbirds (opposed), Stewardship Fund (supported), Light Goose management (supported), cats and TNR efficacy (opposed), and Double-crested Cormorant control (alternative supported).
- Tracked developments and supplied comments, where appropriate, on the Lower Wolf River planning study, Brule River Master Plan, Fox River planning study, Necedah NWR planning, Gypsy moth control, Whooping Crane reintroduction, West Nile Virus, Habitat and Highways program, CREP, National Forest planning efforts, and Mourning Dove hunting season.
- Testified before NRB on Mute Swan control program (supported) and the Bayfield Communications Tower (supported adding WSO as a party seeking a federal Environmental Impact Statement).
- Supported WSO efforts toward shorebird management, including the A&W wetlands.

*Education—Mariette Nowak—*A brochure on creating a bird-friendly yard using native Wisconsin plants is being created. It is now in draft form and,

once revised, will be submitted to the board for final approval. After approval, it will be posted on the WSO web site. If there is sufficient interest and funds become available, the brochure will be printed for distribution and/or sale at WSO functions.

**Field Trips—Tom Schultz and Jeff Baughman**—We have completed another great year of field trips, with very strong attendance for most of them, including what may have been a record—125 to 130 people showing up for the January Milwaukee lakeshore outing! We continue to use the family-band radios for some of the field trips, but starting this year we switched to new channel settings—channel 11, code 22—to comply with the recommendations established by the American Birding Association, which attempts to universalize radio use for birders across the country.

This spring (2–13 April 2002) we hosted a very successful tropical birding tour to Costa Rica with 13 participants, led by Tom Schultz. The tour lasted for 12 days (10 days of birding), and the group accumulated a trip list of 406 species. (Details, including a listing of the bird species, can be obtained by contacting Tom.)

We would like to extend a special thank you to several people who volunteered to lead some of the outings over the last year: Fred Leshner, Dan Belter, Kent Hall, Noel Cutright, Daryl Tessen, and Scott Baughman. Thanks to all of you, and to everyone who contributes to making our field trips successful.

**Membership—Alex Kailing**—See Table 5.

**Publicity—Bettie Harriman**—The large, six-panel WSO Display was updated during the summer of 2001 by Judith Huf, who created the original display. I greatly appreciate Judith's willingness to share her training and skills as an artist with WSO.

I organized and managed a WSO booth at the Midwest Birding Symposium in Green Bay, 30 August–2 September 2001; at the Wild Bird and Wildlife Backyard Habitat Expo in West Bend on 2–4 November 2001; and at the Fox Valley Wild Ones meeting in Oshkosh on 19 January 2002. I arranged for a WSO display at the International Migratory Bird Day event at the Milwaukee Zoo (staffed by Alex Kailing) on 11 May 2002.

WSO cosponsored "Marge Gibson's Field of Dreams" presentation at the "Birds in Art" show at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wausau on 7 October 2001.

I edited the second edition of the WSO Speakers' Bureau booklet, which includes a listing of persons (48 entries, from all over the state) willing to give presentations about birds. It is now ready for distribution to bird clubs, Audubon societies, nature centers, other groups interested in talks on birds, and to classroom teachers.

I attended all four Board meetings during this year and served on the convention planning committee. I continue to serve as WSO's representative to the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and have supplied information about ABC issues to *The Badger Birder* and on Wisbirdn. I provided information to newspaper reporters (mostly from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*) on numerous occasions about a variety of bird-related events or issues.

Table 5. WSO membership status, as of 1 May 2002.

CATEGORY	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
SENIOR	50	48	49	46	48	50	51	37	52	68	117
REGULAR	616	610	672	679	663	638	622	669	661	639	559
FAMILY	346	321	349	358	336	330	335	318	322	336	289
SUSTAIN	91	88	84	86	84	58	48	55	41	52	34
1/4 LIFE	6	10	7	9	3	7	8	9	7	7	5
LIFE	86	87	93	98	105	108	110	117	120	124	127
PATRON	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
HONORARY	7	7	7	6	6	6	5	4	3	3	3
BOARD	2	2	4	3	5	9	8	7	5	5	5
LIBRARY	46	40	44	47	44	45	42	37	42	36	40
EXCHANGE	36	40	41	43	44	50	48	47	47	46	45
TOTAL	1292	1259	1356	1381	1344	1306	1283	1306	1306	1322	1230
DECEASED	5	6	9	5	3	8	11	3	2	1	2
NON RENEW	189	237	172	177	191	200	166	150	170	156	193
LIBRARY DROP	2	3	1	0	4	2	4	8	2	5	1

MEMBERSHIP STATUS: [RENEWED AS OF MAY 1ST]

NEW MEMBERS: [New members for the calendar year]

1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
140	171	176	180	163	134	147	120	130	131	164	92

**Records—Jim Frank**—Of special mention this year were the first nesting of a Rusty Blackbird in Wisconsin and the first official record of a Vermilion Flycatcher. The state list now stands at 417 species.

Season	Records Accepted	Not Accepted	Reviewed
Winter 2000–01	41	31	10
Spring 2001	57	39	18
Summer 2001	24	17	07
Fall 2001	51	45	06

The Records Committee members were Janine Polk, Dennis Gustafson,

Bob Domagalski, Scott Baughman, and Jim Frank. Dan Belter has accepted a position on the committee to replace Janine Polk for 2002.

**Research—Robert Howe**—The WSO Archives have been moved into the new Cofrin Center for Biodiversity of the UW-Green Bay. Exhibits on Wisconsin ornithological research will be developed, and the permanent home for WSO records will be organized during summer 2002, in time for the Green Bay convention in 2003.

**Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas—Bettie Harriman**—Fieldwork on the atlas

ended with the end of the 2000 breeding season; however, data were still being received from both 2000 and earlier work well into 2001. A final request for all records gave 1 May 2001 as the absolute deadline for data to be submitted, resulting in a rather large number of responses with data dating back to 1995, when fieldwork began. This caused data entry by the staff at the Data Management Office (DMO) to continue until about 1 September 2001.

In addition, Jennifer Davis, DMO manager:

- prepared and sent summary reports of the 2000 data and of all the late data to the atlasers for rechecking.
- sent letters to atlasers requesting Verification Forms and information on unlisted Brown-headed Cowbird hosts.
- provided data to WDNR and other organizations, researchers, etc. upon request.
- sent bird record database to Jim Frank for quality control, and upon receipt of Jim's reports, marked records Jim determined were invalid.
- prepared Species Author databases to keep track of authors and species assigned to authors.
- prepared Species Datasheets and Data Query to provide authors with WBBA data.
- updated the Species Datasheets and Data Query regularly on the authors' secured web site.
- maintained the regular WBBA web site, updating data on this web site regularly.

Due to problems with the WSO-owned computer, both the open and secure WBBA web sites had to be

moved to the UW-Green Bay computer in late summer.

While Jennifer was continuing with collection and entry of data, work began on the production of the atlas book. Some 75 authors have been submitting species accounts all year, and these are in the process of being edited by the three editors: Noel Cutright (chief editor), Robert Howe, and Bettie Harriman. Other work on the book includes preparation of graphs, tables, and maps by Jennifer Davis, and the compilation of bird photographs by Thomas Schultz and David Kuecherer.

#### *Scholarships and Grants—Janine Polk*—WSO Grants were awarded to:

- Alice Brylawski—*Is Mate Guarding an Effective Paternity Guard in House Wrens?*
- Michael J. Guzy—*Productivity and movements of individual Eastern Meadowlarks in relation to nesting success and grassland habitat availability*
- William E. Stout—*An Urban Cooper's Hawk Nesting Study in the Metropolitan Milwaukee Area*

The 2002 Nelson Grant was awarded to:

- Bruce Bacon—*Is Food a Limiting Factor for Nestling Osprey Survival in North-Central Wisconsin?*

The Steenbock Grant was awarded to:

- Richard L. Smallwood-Roberts—*Wilson Creek MAPS Station*

Nelson and Steenbock Grants were also awarded to:

- Donald E. Mitchell—*Survey of Cerulean Warbler and other State Threatened*



*and Endangered Avian Species at Tiffany Wildlife Area*

**WSO Web Site Coordinator—Jennifer Davis**—Continued to maintain the WSO web site, including: posting items in the Important Dates section and the Birder News section based on information in the Badger Birder; archiving Hotline Reports (with Jane Dennis preparing the reports for the web); posting the Table of Contents from each issue of *The Passenger Pigeon*; updating National and Wisconsin Organization entries; updating changes in the Birder Contact list; updating changes in WSO administrators and committee chairs; revising online Report/Count Forms and WSO State Checklist in conjunction with Jan Hansen, Jim Frank, and Bob Domagalski.

Created web site for Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative. Continued to maintain web site, including posting new current endorsers, newsletters, and meeting information.

**Youth Education Coordinator—Steve Kupcho/Barbara Duersken**—Since accepting the position of Youth Education Chair in October 2001, Barb has presented bird talks to several area schools and assisted teachers with bird field trips and workshop activities; attended a workshop on environment-based education at the Wisconsin Charter Schools Conference and provided information on the youth grant program and other resources of the WSO; and started work on a new project to compile a Wisconsin Birds compact disc, designed primarily for use in schools.

The WSO Youth Grant Program awarded two grants in May. An Onalaska High School class for cognitively disabled students received a grant for a birdhouse study. The class is learning bird identification, constructing bird houses, and charting the bird use. Students in Washington Elementary School in Richland County received a grant for bird study, learning bird identification on a field trip to see rehabilitated raptors, and visiting bird habitats in Wyalusing State Park. Youth Grants are awarded in spring and fall for bird research or education.

### NEW BUSINESS

Bettie Harriman presented the findings of the Nominating Committee for the 2002–2003 WSO officers. The committee, made up of Harriman, Barbara Blackmore, and Tod Highsmith, reported that all five WSO officers had volunteered to serve for another year.

Harriman then asked for any nominations from the floor. Hearing no additional nominations, it was moved and seconded that the WSO nominations be accepted as presented; the vote carried.

Thus, the following slate of officers was approved to serve WSO until May 2003: President, Bill Brooks; Vice President, Daryl Christensen; Secretary, Jane Dennis; Treasurer, Alex Kailing; and *Passenger Pigeon* Editor, Tod Highsmith.

Brooks accepted a motion to adjourn the WSO annual business meeting. It was so moved, seconded, and approved, and the meeting adjourned at 2:25 P.M.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND ARTISTS

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**William S. Brooks** is Professor of Biology at Ripon College, specializing in ornithology and ecology. He was involved with WBBA atlasng in Marquette, Waushara, and Green Lake Counties for six years, and wrote the grebe species accounts for the atlas book. He continues to be active in a 10-year wetland restoration project on Rush Lake, Winnebago County, the largest prairie pothole east of the Mississippi and the center of Red-necked Grebe distribution in the state.

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**Noel Cutright** is a Terrestrial Ecologist with We Energies and founder of the Riveredge Bird Club. Currently WSO's conservation chair, he also has served as its President, Vice President, and publicity chair.

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**Virgil Diodato** is an amateur photographer of ornithological and related subjects, especially of visitors to his backyard in northwestern Milwaukee County. He is a freelance indexer of books in science, technology, and other fields.

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**Jim Frank** has been one of WSO's most active contributors to Seasonal Field Notes. He now assists WSO by compiling and summarizing the annual May

Day Counts and Migration Day Counts, and is the Records Committee Chair. He is a veterinarian in Milwaukee with an interest in avian medicine.

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**R. Tod Highsmith** is a freelance environmental sciences writer and is editor of *The Passenger Pigeon*. He received a Ph.D. in Zoology from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where he studied the vocal behavior of wood-warblers.

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**William L. Hilsenhoff** is a retired professor of entomology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He was the Christmas Bird Count editor for *The Passenger Pigeon* from 1965 to 1999, and received WSO's Sam Robbins Lifetime Achievement Award in 2002.

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**Randy Hoffman** is a conservation biologist with the State Natural Areas Program in the Wisconsin DNR's Bureau of Endangered Resources. His duties focus on the evaluation, protection, and management of natural communities and rare species habitat. Randy has spent thirty years observing birds in Wisconsin, with a special interest in breeding bird habitat associations. He is the author of the UW Press book, *Wisconsin's Natural Communities*.

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**John Idzikowski** has been a student of birds ever since his second grade teacher gave him a WSO checklist. A past President, field notes compiler, and Records Committee chair for WSO, he writes widely about birds and is developing new techniques in digital photography. He is currently an Educational Technologist in Anatomy and Physiology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

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**David Kuecherer** recently retired after 30 years as a high school art teacher and began to paint birds. Encouraged as a child to respect and enjoy nature by his father, he now combines his artistic talent with a love of birdwatching. His work has been exhibited in the traveling "Birds in Art" show, and he looks forward to continuing his newfound pursuit at his home in Neenah.

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**Kenneth I. Lange** is the retired Naturalist of Devil's Lake State Park. He has a master's degree from the University of Arizona. Ken has been a frequent contributor to WSO publications, as a field note compiler and author of articles and the book *Breeding Birds of the Baraboo Hills*. He formerly worked at the Smithsonian Institution's U.S. National Museum. He is the 1993 recipient of WSO's Silver Passenger Pigeon award.

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**Roy Lukes** is the retired naturalist of The Ridges Sanctuary at Baileys Har-

bor. He is past president of WSO and the Inland bird Banding Assoc., is the author of five books (including his latest, *Tales of the Wild, A Year With Nature*), and writes weekly nature essays for three state newspapers. He is the 1984 recipient of the WSO's Silver Passenger Pigeon award and received the Bronze award in 1999.

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**Scott Schiller** is a self-taught artist with a Bachelor's degree in biology from Ripon College whose colored pencil art has been featured in two solo exhibitions. Samples of his trademark realism can be seen at his web site at [www.schillerstudios.com](http://www.schillerstudios.com).

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**Al Shea** works for the Wisconsin DNR as Director of the Bureau of Watershed Management, a position he's held since 1997. He is a past President of WSO and has also served on the Records Committee and as the spring field notes compiler. In addition to his passion for birds and birding, he is also an avid angler, as well as a turkey and deer hunter.

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**Jim Williams** has seen 90% of his Wisconsin birds in Burnett County. When not afield, he works for the American Birding Association as associate editor of *Birding*, and as editor of *Minnesota Birding* and *Bluebird*, the latter published by the North American Bluebird Society.

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## THE WISCONSIN SOCIETY FOR ORNITHOLOGY

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology is an educational and scientific non-profit organization founded in 1939 "to encourage the study of Wisconsin birds." The Society achieves this goal through programs in research, education, conservation, and publication.

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